

Questions and answers – Lutterworth Public Consultation (19/10/23)

Q1. Why has it taken so long to draw up the proposals for Lutterworth, as you have been talking about changes since 2016?

Answer

Early proposals for Lutterworth were developed as far back as 2016 and were part of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Sustainability and Transformation Partnership. This was the name given to organisations working together to improve services in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. This has now been replaced by the Integrated Care System.

Post pandemic, all plans including for Lutterworth have been updated and refined. The current plans reflect the population growth expected in Lutterworth and the expected younger demographic of the population. They also consider the future population health needs and the upward trend of people wanting more care at home. We have also taken the learning from Covid-19 which shows that Feilding Palmer Hospital no longer meets the Infection Prevention Control standards.

We have also ensured that the insights from patients and the public have informed the design of the proposals to ensure that they ultimately improve the lives of local people, improving their health and wellbeing.

Q2. Why aren't you building a new hospital?

Answer

When the NHS develops plans to improve services, it undertakes an Options Appraisal. This appraisal allows a few different alternatives to be evaluated against a set of agreed national criteria. It looks at how strong and weak each option is against the criteria. It also considers whether each option is affordable and will provide a high quality and safe service that meets the needs of the population.

One of the options reviewed was the development of a new larger hospital. The estimated cost of a new build would be £23.2 million at September 2023 prices. This would include space for clinics, in patient ward comprising of 14 beds including en-suite accommodation, service space and equipment.

This level of capital funding is not available, so the new build option would not be a viable option to pursue. Even if there were available funds, then the need for a 14-bed unit based on the number of people who would use it and the cost effectiveness would be extremely difficult to demonstrate and any business plan would fail.

In addition, it would be difficult to demonstrate the need for a 14-bed hospital, with such a small bed base. The ability to keep the beds occupied at the required 93% (to provide the most cost-effective solution and best practice) means that the service would need to be offered to patients from further afield. This would increase, not decrease travel times for people, which contradicts our requirement to reduce travel

and our carbon footprint. Taking these elements into consideration the options appraisal ruled a new build out.

Q3. Why are you closing beds?

Answer

There has been a downward trend, since the pandemic, of people using community hospital beds in general and a reduction in the demand for inpatient beds at Feilding Palmer Hospital. There has also been an upward trend in people receiving more care in the place they call home.

Recent Department of Health and Social Care information on hospital discharges and community support identifies that 95% of people are likely to be discharged home of which, 50% require no new or additional support and 45% need additional packages of care or their care prior to going into hospital, restarted.

In addition, Feilding Palmer Hospital is not able to accommodate some patients. This includes those who are bariatric (classed as having obesity) and people with high levels of acuity (the sickest patients) who require a lot of equipment, which can't be provided due to limited space. Also, the inpatient facility does not meet Infection Prevent Control standards.

The small capacity of just 10 beds in a community hospital like Feilding Palmer means that we still have to meet minimum staffing requirements. If we compare the number of nurses with the number of patients being cared for at Feilding Palmer it is closer to the patient and staff ratio in an Intensive Treatment Unit, which is a special ward providing intensive care for people who are critically ill.

The housing growth in Lutterworth is expected to attract young people and families who may require outpatient and diagnostic services, rather than inpatient beds.

Q4. You set out the estimated cost of refurbishing Feilding Palmer Hospital. How confident are you it will be sufficient?

Answer

The investment to pay for these changes and improvements is estimated to be £5.8 million. This will fund the internal refurbishment of Feilding Palmer Hospital. We believe that this will be sufficient based on current estimates.

Q5. Feilding Palmer is a much-loved hospital, why have you not maintained it?

Answer

Backlog maintenance is estimated to be circa £1.5 million over the next 10 years.

75% of this expenditure would be within the next 4 years. However, maintenance of the building would not cater for the services that will be required in the future to support a growing Lutterworth East population. The proposal to modernise the infrastructure to support net zero carbon objects, would address the maintenance issues through the developed and improved use.

Q6. How are these proposals going to cope with a big increase in the population?

Answer

Lutterworth currently has a population of approximately 9,500. There will be a significant growth in the population of Lutterworth in the next few years, as there are estimated to be 2,750 more homes being built. This development is part of the Lutterworth East Development Area. These proposals will meet future needs as the age group of people moving to the new homes is expected to be of working age. This will significantly increase the number of people living in the area, who will require diagnostic, outpatient and GP services, rather than intensive treatment and rehabilitation provided by being in a community hospital bed.

Q7. Are you going to have enough staff to provide services in Lutterworth?

Answer

People are our greatest asset and the Integrated Care Board has seen a 7.7% growth in employed NHS staff in the last 3 years. However, we know there are workforce challenges. We have responded to these challenges with our People Strategy which is delivering intervention programmes to attract and recruit new staff, retain existing staff.

The services to be provided under the proposals will primarily be provided by staff from University Hospitals of Leicester and Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust. We believe that working in a newly refurbished hospital in a small town will be both attractive to people living in Lutterworth and the immediate surrounding area. Travel times are reduced and car parking is easier. This contributes to supporting work/life balance and general health and wellbeing.

Q8. Under the proposals, why can't you refurbish the hospital and keep the inpatient beds and provide outpatient services?

Answer

This building is not of sufficient size to accommodate both inpatient and outpatient services.

Reopening the 10 community beds to make Feilding Palmer a community inpatient bed site is not in line with national policy where there is a preference to provide more community provision in the patient's home.

Also, the ability to keep the beds occupied at the required 93% (to provide the most cost-effective solution and best practice) means that the service would need to be offered to patients from further afield. As a result, this would increase (not decrease) travel times.

Having relatively small sites also creates staffing issues, with recruitment, cover, training and education particularly difficult (e.g. lack of mix of patients to develop nursing skills).

The fully refurbished accommodation, providing facilities specifically designed for the outpatient and community services will comply with up-to-date healthcare standards. Retaining the external character of the building will allow the local area to retain its charm and history, whilst also increasing its ability to provide safe and effective modern healthcare. The redevelopment of the building will enable utilisation to be increased by providing additional facilities to provide care.

Q9. Who are the patient representatives who have been involved in developing the proposals?

Answer

The Lutterworth Plan Steering Group was founded in June 2021. The group comprises of key stakeholders and was formed to work in partnership to develop a plan for Lutterworth to meet the future needs driven by the significant housing growth expected in the area.

The group has co-designed the plan for Lutterworth. The group has grown over time and comprises of representatives from:

- Local primary care
- Lutterworth Town Council
- Harborough District Council
- Leicester Partnership Trust
- Mary Guppy Group (Patient/Public representatives)
- MPs office
- Leicestershire County Council

In order to stimulate further engagement and co-design the public consultation and engagement (including this document and the Consultation Document) a Task and Finish Group was established in February 2023.

The group comprises of representatives from:

- Lutterworth Hospital Campaign Group x 3 members
- Lutterworth Town Council x 4 members
- Masharani Practice Patient Partnership Group x 1 member

- Wycliffe Practice Patient Partnership Group x 1 member
- Leicestershire County Councillor x 1 member
- Harborough County Councillor x 2 member
- Save our NHS and other campaign groups x 1 member
- Rural Community Council (voluntary and community sector) x 2
- MPs office x 1 member
- Leicester Partnership NHS Trust x 1 member
- U3A (voluntary and community sector) x 1 member

Q10. You say in your proposals that the hospital is not fit for modern healthcare, yet the proposals are to refurbish it, isn't this contradictory?

Refurbishing Feilding Palmer Hospital and creating space to accommodate outpatients services meets the required building standards and provide fit for purpose, flexible space, ensuring any service provision is flexible and adaptable for future needs.

Importantly, this maintains a 'health campus' approach, with healthcare services provided from Feilding Palmer Hospital and the adjacent Lutterworth Medical Centre (and its resident 2x GP practices and supporting services).

This would also significantly address/resolve any backlog maintenance issues in the current building.

Answer

Q11. How much will everything cost?

Answer

The investment to pay for these changes and improvements is £5.8 million. This will come from local NHS capital funding which is set each financial year by the NHS Integrated Care Board.

The public consultation will enable us to get the views of local people on these proposals which will then form part of a final Decision-Making Business Case which will include the details of capital funding. This Decision-Making Business Case will then go to the ICB Board for approval.

Q12. How can I have my say?

Answer

This public consultation will run from Monday 23 October 2023 until 11.59pm on Sunday 14 January 2024.

We want to know what you think about these proposals to improve services. Come along to one of our drop-in events.

- Lutterworth Library, George Street, Lutterworth LE17 4ED
Drop-in sessions for support to complete the questionnaire
Every Thursday throughout the consultation, 10am – 1pm (except 7th November, 28th December, and 4th January)
- Lutterworth Sports Centre, Coventry Rd, Lutterworth LE17 4RB
Drop-in session to ask questions or receive support to complete the questionnaire
Monday 6 November, 2pm – 7pm
- Wycliffe Rooms (Main Hall), George Street, Lutterworth LE17 4ED
Drop-in session to ask questions or receive support to complete the questionnaire
Thursday 7 November, 10am – 2pm

Full details will be available on our website: www.haveyoursaylutterworth.co.uk
Complete the consultation questionnaire online at: www.haveyoursaylutterworth.co.uk

Email your views to: llricb-llr.beinvolved@nhs.net

Telephone: 0116 295 7572

Write to us at: Freepost Plus RUEE–ZAUY–BXEG, Lutterworth consultation,
Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board, Room G30, Pen Lloyd Building,
Leicestershire County Council, Leicester Road, Glenfield, Leicester LE3 8TB

Follow our social channels: @NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
 @NHS_LLRL

Further information supporting the consultation is available on our website at
www.haveyoursaylutterworth.co.uk.

Q13. What happens after the public consultation ends?

Answer

All the feedback we receive from the consultation will be independently analysed and evaluated by an external organisation. They will also undertake a review half-way through the consultation and advise the Integrated Care Board if there are communities that are not being reached. If the review shows any gaps, then we would adjust our engagement plan accordingly.

A final report of the consultation findings will be received by the Integrated Care Board in public meetings and the public consultation will be considered in any decisions they make.

We will promote the Board Meeting to enable people to attend and hear the discussions. All decisions will be made public after the Board Meeting. This work will include communicating the decision via local newspapers, social and broadcast media.

Q14. Will the site changes have to approved by the council planning department.

Answer

Developments of this nature need to go through the necessary planning processes. We are already working with NHS Property Services and Harborough Council in regard to this project.

Q15. Have you liaised with healthcare providers on the boundary of Lutterworth?

Answer

We talked to our colleagues over the border and have received letters supporting our plans from George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust and University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire.

Q16. Is there anything the general public can do to help you achieve your goals?

Answer

Yes, please encourage as many people as possible to participate in this consultation and complete either the online or paper copy questionnaire. The closing date is 14 January 2023 and all feedback, including completed questionnaires must be received by mid-night on this date.

Q17. How much disruption will there if the proposals come to fruition and you refurbish the hospital?

Answer

As with all refurbishments, there will be some disruption to services, but we will ensure that this will be kept to the minimum for our patients. The services located in the hospital are likely to be temporarily relocated in order to undertake the required work. It maybe that things like car parking and access are likely to be disrupted as building work commences.

After the engagement a final decision will be made regarding services and this will be communicated to the public with a likely timetable.