

Cathy Augustine, Didcot Town Councillor and Oxfordshire delegate to national KONP Speaking to Oxfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board, 15th November 2018

The Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) is supposed to be the main oversight body in the local NHS. In its relationship with the Clinical Commissioning Group, it is a statutory duty of the CCG to "take proper account of" the health strategy agreed by the HWB. The board is the highest and most representative body in the local NHS. If it appears that the CCG is calling the shots and running the show, then something is wrong.

Despite the Care Quality Commission's criticism of governance arrangements in Oxfordshire, which has just been outlined, HWB papers indicate a policy of secrecy, of meetings behind closed doors, without scrutiny. Far from strengthening the checks and balances offered through this Health and Wellbeing Board and the Health Overview Scrutiny Committee, they are rendered toothless by all all of them being bound tightly into one structure.

We are deeply alarmed that the new Integrated System Delivery Board (ISDB), the main driver behind the proposed Integrated Care System, is buried deep in the structure, and virtually invisible from the scrutiny of elected representatives, meeting in secret and producing no public minutes. We are also concerned at the fact that today the CCG is hosting this meeting – another blurred line.

The draft terms of reference of the ISDB (at item 9), if passed, will confirm this unhealthy inter-dependent structure. We want the HWB to think again.

Lack of public consultation by OCCG. Consultation on further cuts and privatisation, under the heading of STPs and ACOs, has been limited, poorly publicised and frankly, dire.

Figures released for Phase 1 of The "Big Health and Social Care Conversation" about STPs reveal that the CCG spoke to 900 people in total across the whole of Oxfordshire

Just 46 people responded to the South West Oxfordshire Locality Plan Survey – 4 from Didcot which has a population of over 20,000. As a result, Ed Vaizey, MP for Wantage & Didcot raised this lack of

consultation in Parliament and is paying attention to the next phases of consultation and engagement.

So, it is confusing and upsetting to find no mention of the Phase 2 STP consultation that the CCG promised us after Phase 1, which was completed a year ago. No Phase 2 has emerged and no real explanation why.

Item 11. Integrated Care System to be installed by March 2019

The latest papers from this Board announce that Oxfordshire is set to become an ICS by April 2019, and that final papers will be available at the next public HWB meeting in March. This pre-empts consultation.

Also, Oxford KONP argues that this formal 'system' is not necessary to achieve much needed integration. In fact, with its potential for one large contractor which may be private, and a myriad of subcontractors, this is likely to lead to *dis*-integration. We urge the HWB to stand up to NHS England and halt this direction of travel.

Unscrutinised change is happening now and at pace, without adequate public consultation. This makes evaluation and scrutiny of the bigger picture for Oxfordshire almost impossible. Instead, the focus is on a loss of services in specific localities, for instance, in Wantage, Witney and Banbury, without recognition of the cumulative and domino-effect across the county.

The landscape is becoming increasingly (and deliberately) opaque for members of the public. The CCG's policy of 'engagement' with a number of 'stakeholders' is no substitute for consultation with the public and should be challenged by HWB.

Correspondence between Didcot Town Council and HWB and CCG members, and a public meeting in Didcot recently, included demands for transparency – none of which have been satisfactorily met.

So, again, we call on this Health and Wellbeing Board to:

- **rethink governance and terms of reference to ensure transparency, separation of powers from the CCG and robust scrutiny in the interests of local residents**
- **ensure full public involvement and effective consultation**
- **reveal how strong a case you are putting to government for a considerable increase in vital funding**

- **clarify in detail your real plans for the future of health and social care in Oxfordshire.**