

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 29th March 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Communities

PORTFOLIO: Health and Adults

SUBJECT: Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To outline for Executive Board members, Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust's proposals to become a Foundation Trust (FT).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- i) **The Council supports**
 - a. **the proposal, submitted by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust, to become a FT.**
 - b. **the membership arrangements proposed by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust. (see paragraph 3.5)**
 - c. **the public membership constituencies proposed by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust. (see paragraph 3.6.1)**
 - d. **the staff membership proposals proposed by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust. (see paragraph 3.6.2)**
 - e. **the Governors structure and numbers proposed by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust. (see paragraph 3.7)**
- ii) **That the Council Executive Board Portfolio Holder for Health be the nominated as the Halton Governor Representative should Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust achieve FT status.**
- iii) **The Council will encourage Halton residents to take up the opportunity to become Members of the proposed Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS FT.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Bridgewater provides NHS services to a population of 1,015,370 people living in Ashton, Leigh and Wigan, Halton & St Helens, Trafford and Warrington. They also provide specialist community dental services in these areas plus Bolton, Stockport, Tameside & Glossop and Western Cheshire.

- 3.2 Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust is aiming to become a Foundation Trust by April 2013 and as such is currently seeking views from patients and the public on its plans for becoming a FT. The FT will have unique governance arrangements which will include **Members** (public, patients and staff) and a **Council of Governors** (elected by members or nominated by partner organisations).
- 3.3 Patients, local people and partner organisations have been invited to express their views on the proposals for becoming a FT, including the governance arrangements during a 12 week consultation period, ending on April 30.
- 3.4 Kate Fallon, Chief Executive and Harry Holden, Chairman of Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust attended the Health Policy & Performance Board on 6th March to outline the proposals to become a FT.

Summary of Proposals

- 3.5 **Membership** – Bridgewater’s proposals outline that the membership base will reflect the communities that Bridgewater serves. It will be made up of patients, their carers and families, residents, its members of the local communities and Bridgewater’s staff. Bridgewater is proposing that to become a member will be free and will be open to anyone aged 14 or above, and that all members would be able to vote in governor elections from the age of 14. NB. Members aged 16 years or above, would be able to stand for election as a governor.

Bridgewater are also proposing three levels of membership :-

- **Level 1** - Receive information about the Trust and issues affecting local health services at regular intervals, including invitations to events including the Annual Members’ Meeting and Annual General Meeting, receive voting papers for the elections to the Council of Governors.
- **Level 2** - Members will receive the same information as Level 1 members and receive invitations to participate in surveys and discussion groups, which will allow members to comment on service developments and the Trust’s future strategic plans.
- **Level 3** - Members will receive the same information as Level 1 and 2 members and will also receive more detailed information about governor vacancies, how to stand for election as a governor and receive invites to events for potential governors.

- 3.6 **Membership Constituency** – Bridgewater are proposing two membership constituency categories :-

3.6.1 **Public Membership** – These will be divided into sub-constituencies which are based on local authority boundaries, Primary Care Trust boundaries and the operational divisions within

the Trust, as outlined below :-

- Ashton, Leigh and Wigan - comprising the Borough of Wigan and mirroring the area covered by Ashton, Leigh and Wigan Division of the Trust
- Halton - comprising the Borough of Halton and is part of the area covered by the Halton & St Helens Division of the Trust
- St Helens - comprising the Borough of St Helens and is part of the area covered by the Halton & St Helens Division of the Trust
- Warrington - comprising the Borough of Warrington and mirroring the Warrington Division of the Trust
- Trafford - comprising the Borough of Trafford and mirroring the Trafford Division of the Trust
- Community Dental - for people receiving specialist dental treatment in the boroughs of Bolton, Stockport and the PCT areas of Tameside & Glossop and West Cheshire
- Rest of England - comprises all other parts of England and will ensure that carers, or relatives of Bridgewater's patients can also have a say on services

3.6.2 Staff Membership – It is proposed that eligibility for staff membership will be open to any individual who is employed by the Trust under a contract of employment with the Trust provided they are:

- employed by the Trust under a contract of employment which has no fixed term or has a fixed term of at least 12 months; or
- been continuously employed by the Trust under a contract of employment for at least 12 months.

The Trust intends to operate a system of automatic membership for staff, the impact of which is that all staff eligible for membership will become members unless they advise that they do not wish to be included. All staff members will be entitled to vote to elect governors.

The Trust Propose to structure staff membership under sub-constituencies, as follows:-

- Registered Nurses/Midwives
- Allied Health Professionals/other registered healthcare professionals
- Clinical support staff, including Assistant Practitioners/Healthcare Assistants
- Medical
- Dental
- Non-clinical support staff, including managerial and administrative staff

3.7 Council of Governors - The Council will be made up of members of the public and staff constituencies as part of a democratic voting process. In addition to this, a number of governors will be appointed to represent the Trust's partner organisations.

Bridgewater is proposing a Council of Governors made up of 34 governors. This includes 18 governors (2 from Halton) elected by

members of Bridgewater's Public Constituency and nine governors elected by the Staff Constituency. The number of public governors must exceed the staff and partner governors combined. This will allow Bridgewater to invite nominations for seven governors from partner organisations/forums. One nomination from Halton's Health and Wellbeing Board has been identified within Bridgewater's consultation document

- 3.8 Bridgewater's consultation document containing full details of the proposals can be found below, along with a link to their website.

<http://www.bridgewater.nhs.uk/ft/>

- 3.9 By supporting Bridgewater's application for Foundation Trust status this will help ensure better outcomes for the residents of Halton by giving the Trust greater freedom to respond to their needs and giving local residents a greater say in how the services provided are run in the future.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None identified at this stage.

5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None identified at this stage.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

See section 6.3 below.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Not applicable

6.3 A Healthy Halton

All issues outlined in this report and Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust's proposals to become a FT from April 2013 focuses directly on this priority.

Some of the key benefits of becoming a FT would be :-

- Local decision making as opposed to being dictated by central government.
- Local people and organisations having a much greater say in services through becoming members.
- Public and staff members being able to elect the majority of representatives on the Council of Governors.
- The Council of Governors being able to influence key decisions about the Trust and having a say on senior appointments.
- Greater financial freedom to invest in new services.
- Independent regulation by Monitor

6.4 **A Safer Halton**
Not applicable.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**
Not applicable.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None identified at this stage

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Any services provided which seek to address the health needs of the residents of Halton needs to be fully accessible.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.