

## Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission Briefing

### Report on St Leonard's

Contained within this report is a briefing on the work being undertaken in relation to the St Leonard's site and an update on current work within the organisation.

St Leonard's Hospital continues to be a hospital with considerable affection by the local community and concerns are building within the community regarding the future of the site – its condition, use and ownership. Campaign groups, such as Hackney Keep our NHS Public, are becoming increasingly vocal and are calling upon Mayor Glanville and the Council to redevelop the site and prevent the sale of any land for housing. The site remains in a poor state of repair, but NHS PS have commenced a programme of remedial works (committing £2.4m over two years) and are undertaking various essential capital works to improve the core condition of main buildings.

Since September 2022, greater collaboration between the Integrated Care Board (ICB), NHS Property Services (NHS PS) and Homerton Healthcare has led to a working group of these parties being established to review and align around the current condition of the site and initiate progress in key areas to maximise site utilisation where possible. The primary themes relate to:

- The proposed asset transfer of St Leonard's to Homerton Healthcare
- Review of admin spaces for opportunities, efficiencies and possible consolidation
- Homerton's short and medium term site utilisation plans
- Review of void spaces to identify potentially usable vs dilapidated space
- Current view of the one-three year maintenance requirements for the site
- Condition surveys of buildings (which will feed into maintenance schedules)

#### Asset transfer

On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) closed the 'property transfers policy', which means that it is no longer possible to transfer ownership of the St Leonard's site from NHS PS to Homerton Healthcare and it will, therefore continue to remain under NHS PS's ownership. The DHSC's decision was based on a lack of interest (nationally) and because the introduction of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) now ensures that the necessary conditions are in place for partnership working at the local level irrespective of property ownership status. We are, therefore, closing the business case and concluding this workstream. The commercial and financial liability for the upkeep of the site and listed buildings will remain with NHS PS.

#### What happens next

We continue to recognise the value of the St Leonard's site for the local community and have commenced several workstreams in line with the themes stated above:

- We are moving administration functions from St Leonard's to our Orsman Road offices to consolidate administration services into one centre.
- We will conduct a review of historical medical records stored at St Leonard's and either scan, dispose of or archive these records in accordance with Information Governance regulations. Clearing this space will enable reconfiguration of our clinical services on the site.



- These moves and clearances will enable the remaining clinical services to reconfigure their location on site for better access, flow and create efficiencies in terms of site utilisation. This will also enable us to hand back a small volume of space / leases, reducing our financial commitments.

In parallel, we are committed to a longer-term review of site utilisation in line with population growth estimations for North East London. We are actively assessing options for increasing the range of clinical services which could operate at St Leonard's and expansion of existing services, for example, the potential opportunity for Locomotor services to expand into the vacated GP surgery.

Any lease hand back (by Homerton Healthcare or any other tenant) may result in cost savings for NHS PS if space can be 'moth-balled', even temporarily. These savings could be repurposed and fund refurbishment of other areas, for example the vacated GP surgery. These arrangements are yet to be agreed and are part on ongoing dialogue.

We are working with the ICB to determine new guidelines for space and budget allocations in North East London, as indicated by the DHSC, rather than the historical need for contractual and complicated lease arrangements – in line with local partnership working aspirations.

Despite the asset transfer no longer proceeding, we continue to be a key partner, involved with complex strategic discussions regarding future use of the site and further engagement will continue to be sensitively managed in a co-ordinated and empathetic way.

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CEO/ Place base leader

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023