

## Appendix A

### East Barnet Health Centre: Report to London Borough of Barnet Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

#### Background:

This project began on 30 June, 2014 and was scheduled to be a 10-week asbestos removal. However, once the building was sealed and the contractors began invasive works, additional asbestos containing materials were discovered within the structure of the building, which proved difficult to remove. The intensive nature of the removal of this additional material caused cosmetic damage to the building and owners NHS Property Services (NHSPS) deemed the site unfit to move tenants straight back into as planned.

A feasibility study was launched to examine whether it would represent better value to the taxpayer and the NHS to undertake a more comprehensive refurbishment of the building, or even to rebuild. Following receipt of the conclusions of this report, and feedback from users of the building, it has been decided that a full refurbishment represents the most efficient and best value option.

NHSPS is therefore undertaking a wholesale refurbishment of the building, to include full redecoration, improved disabled access, new UPVC double-glazed windows, and installation of a lift. The programme for the works is 120 working days, a preferred contractor has been chosen and final discussions are under way to agree the finer points of the specification and contract.

The East Barnet GP Practices have been relocated to Vale Drive Primary Care Centre while the works are being undertaken. This is a purpose-built health centre located in High Barnet, and is the closest clinically-suitable site to East Barnet. The building is owned by Community Health Partnerships (CHP) and the IT and telephony on site is run by provider trust Central London Community Healthcare (CLCH).

#### Answers to specific questions by Committee:

- 1. NHS England as a matter of urgency to examine and outline the current problems about patients using Vale Drive during the refurbishment work and to examine local alternatives in the immediate vicinity of East Barnet Health Centre as facilities to be used in the interim.*

The options for relocation of the East Barnet Health Centre Practices were considered at great length prior to the start of works. The criteria for relocation were that the premises needed to be clinically-suitable, have sufficient vacant space available to move a five-GP practice into, and be within a reasonable catchment area of East Barnet. If there had been a clinical building in the immediate vicinity of East Barnet Health Centre, the GPs would have been located there. In the absence of such, three options were identified: Vale Drive, Finchley Memorial Hospital and Edgware Community Hospital. The option preferred by the practices and NHSPS's project manager was Vale Drive, as this was the closest of the three to the existing premises.

NHSPS has examined in detail a possible alternative of a "pop up" surgery in a vacant commercial or industrial premises closer to East Barnet. The project team visited Durkan

House (next door to East Barnet), a commercial property on Station Road and a local empty warehouse. All properties were unsuitable. The option of Portacabins was also investigated but this was discounted as there is not enough space on the East Barnet site to locate them. In addition, any option outside of existing clinical premises would require an N3 connection (secure network connection) to allow the practices access to their booking and prescription systems, and this takes a minimum of three months to install.

NHSPS appreciated the inconvenience caused by this relocation and introduced a free weekday shuttle bus service on 26<sup>th</sup> May between East Barnet Health Centre and Vale Drive. The shuttle bus runs on a continuous route and operates between 7am and 6.30pm.

- 2. For the Committee to receive a further update on the telephone communication and BT systems issue*

Following the previous report which acknowledged the problems experienced by patients in contacting the East Barnet Practices and documented some of the technical issues, it can be confirmed that the telephone system was successfully relocated from East Barnet to Vale Drive and is fully operational. Furthermore, the Jayex automated patient booking in system has also been successfully installed at Vale Drive. This allows patients to check in for their appointments, where practicable, to help reception staff answer and respond to urgent telephone calls.

- 3. For NHS property services to provide an update on outstanding problems with current facilities*

As previously reported, the overarching design for East Barnet Health Centre was finalised and a programme of works drawn up. NHSPS instructed contractors to begin substantive works on both internal and external refurbishment of East Barnet Health Centre; this has commenced. Phase one of the project – stripping out old plant and readying the building – was carried out during March. The second phase is the refurbishment itself, which includes installation of a lift and improved disabled access, new UPVC double glazing, a redesigned reception and fresh new clinical rooms. The project timetable for this phase is 120 days and it is expected that the building will be available for reoccupation by autumn 2015.