

Appendix 2

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 Following recent critical media reports on city breast cancer screening services, the Chairman asked NHS Brighton & Hove and Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals Trust (respectively, the commissioners and the providers of city breast screening services) to address the committee on this issue.
- 3.2 Councillor Sven Rufus had also asked a Councillor Question on breast screening (see **Item 6** on this agenda). Cllr Rufus agreed that his questions should be taken together with the Chairman's.
- 3.3 Dr Peter Wilkinson, Deputy Director of Public Health at NHS Brighton & Hove, and Kate Parkin, Director of Screening at Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals Trust, presented a paper and answered members' questions.
- 3.4 Dr Wilkinson told the committee that the key local issue was a shortfall in radiographers. This longstanding problem had been aggravated by the recent (mandatory) move from 'one' to 'two view' screening, which provides an improved screening service, but requires more radiographer input. This issue is being addressed, and improvements have been made, with the new screening centre providing a more attractive environment to recruit staff into, but there are still recruitment problems. It is anticipated that the development of a school of radiography as part of the University medical school will address this problem in the medium term.
- 3.5 In answer to a question as to whether the slippage in the screening regime may have had adverse consequences for any individuals, Dr Wilkinson told members that this was extremely difficult to ascertain, but there was a risk that someone with breast cancer could have been diagnosed later than they should have been due to delays in screening.
- 3.6 The Chairman noted that, although he was partly reassured by the explanation for why breast screening services had been performing poorly and by NHS trust plans to improve matters, he considered it necessary to revisit this issue in several months time in order to make sure that the anticipated improvements had in fact been made.
- 3.7 **RESOLVED** – that the committee should receive an update report on city breast cancer screening in 6 months time.

