1 October 2026

Cambridgeshire County Council

Service Provision at Doddington Hospital, March and North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech

Health Scrutiny Committee Findings and Recommendations

Evidence received from:

i. Nicola Ward, Deputy Director of Neighbourhood Health at Central East Integrated Care Board

ii. Angela Moodie, Chief Finance Officer at the East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust (EECHC)

iii. Charlotte Williams, Deputy Chief Executive at North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust (NWAFT)

iv. Stephen Legood, Chief Strategy and Commercial Officer at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT)

v. Joanne Segasby, Group Chief Delivery Officer for Norfolk and Waveney University Hospitals Group (NWUHG), which includes The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Kings Lynn

vi. Dr Rob Sherwin, Group Chief Medical Officer for Norfolk and Waveney University Hospitals Group (NWUHG)

vii. John Rooke, Director of the North Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Care Partnership

viii. Dr Nazia Ulla, GP in Fenland and a member of the member of the North Care Partnership Board; and

ix. Claire Stoneham, Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer for Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CUHFT) [via Zoom]

01.10.26	Service Provision at Doddington Hospital, March and North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech (report)
01.10.26	Oral evidence to the Health Scrutiny Committee

Also present:

Jess Slater, Chief Executive of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Healthwatch has a standing invitation to submit evidence and take part in all of the Health Scrutiny Committee's public meetings to amplify the public voice. Healthwatch is not being scrutinised.

Key Lines of Enquiry:

The committee's questioning focused on:

- the evidence base for changes to service provision at Doddington and North Cambridgeshire Hospitals
- the cumulative impact of service reductions
- communication and engagement
- accessibility and transport issues in Fenland
- endoscopy and Radiology at North Cambridgeshire Hospital
- Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT), Audiology and Dermatology services
- assurances on the future of the hospitals
- The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Kings Lynn

Findings

In the context of its statutory health scrutiny function, the Health Scrutiny Committee:

1. welcomes the public statement that there are no plans to close Doddington Hospital or to withdraw NHS services from that site.
2. welcomes confirmation by Central East Integrated Care Board and the Provider Trusts represented at the public scrutiny session that they are not planning a programme of service withdrawal from North Cambridgeshire Hospital, and that work is actively taking place to stabilise and modernise its out-patient services.
3. welcomes the public statement that the future role of North Cambridgeshire Hospital will be pivotal to reducing inequalities, and that local authorities, Healthwatch and the local population will be engaged in shaping services at that site.
4. regrets the lack of timely information about service changes being shared with local residents, local councillors, the local MP, Fenland District Council and the

Health Scrutiny Committee, which caused unnecessary anxiety to residents over an extended period of time and undermined public trust.

5. notes a number of service changes and reductions, possibly temporary, at both Doddington and North Cambridgeshire Hospitals, and the explanation that these were a reaction to particular circumstances rather than a planned service reduction. However, the committee is not reassured that the cumulative impact of changes to service provision at Doddington and North Cambridgeshire Hospitals has been assessed, especially given the reference to new modalities of care that are more difficult to quantify.

6. remains concerned about the use of data, including the new DELPPHI local linked data platform, and how the intelligence obtained from it informs decisions on tackling inequalities and other aspects of healthcare provision.

7. is encouraged that there is collaboration between Central East Integrated Care Board and the provider Trusts to discuss issues around access to services and transport to hospitals.

8. welcomes the appointment of a Head of Audiology by North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust and recognises this as a positive step forward.

9. is pleased to learn that 91% of audiology patients are being seen within six weeks, although the position is less clear on whether local audiology services are being provided again at Doddington Hospital.

10. welcomes the clarification from North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust that its staff base at Doddington Hospital has been retained and that staff continue to be permanently based there.

11. notes that a decision by on whether endoscopy services will return to North Cambridgeshire Hospital is expected in six months and welcomes the commitment by Norfolk and Waveney University Hospitals Group (NWUHG) to engagement on this issue.

12. welcomes confirmation that there are no plans for the temporary closure of facilities at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Kings Lynn.

Requests for Further Information

1. The Health Scrutiny Committee requests the following information:

    a) biannual written updates until further notice on how Central East Integrated Care Board's new DELPPHI linked data platform is being used locally, and how the intelligence obtained from it informs decisions on tackling inequalities and other aspects of healthcare provision. The first update to be provided by April 2027.

    b) further assurance that the cumulative impact of changes to service provision at Doddington and North Cambridgeshire Hospitals has been assessed, especially given the new modalities of care being delivered that are more difficult to quantify.

Recommendations

1. The Health Scrutiny Committee makes the following recommendations in the context of its statutory health scrutiny function:

    a) that Central East Integrated Care Board and NHS Trusts delivering services at Doddington Hospital March and North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech commit to incorporate strategies to address historic inequalities in Fenland in implementing the NHS 10 Year Plan, including additional provision in local health centres where needed. The committee requests biannual written updates until further notice containing timescales and meaningful and measurable metrics on how this is being delivered, commencing April 2027.

    b) that Central East Integrated Care Board and the NHS Trusts providing services at Doddington Hospital, March and North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech engage proactively with local residents, the Health Scrutiny Committee, Fenland District Council, local town and parish councils, local councillors and the local Member of Parliament on any proposed closures of services or significant changes to service provision at Doddington Hospital, March and North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech, and takes into account the cumulative impact of such changes.

    c) the Central East Integrated Care Board and the NHS Trusts delivering services at Doddington Hospital March and North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech commit to providing regular written updates to this committee on service provision at Doddington Hospital, March and North Cambridgeshire

Hospital, Wisbech, containing meaningful and measurable metrics on how this is being delivered, commencing April 2027.

d) seeks an assurance from Central East Integrated Care Board and the NHS Trusts providing services at Doddington Hospital, March and North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech that the cumulative impact of changes to service provision at Doddington and North Cambridgeshire Hospitals will be assessed.

e) encourages Central East Integrated Care Board and the NHS Trusts providing services at Doddington Hospital, March and North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech to ensure that their communication with local residents and partners is identified as a priority for urgent improvement, including when reductions in services are unavoidable.

f) encourages Central East Integrated Care Board and the NHS Trusts providing services at Doddington Hospital, March and North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech to discuss patient transport options with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) and with Cambridgeshire County Council.

g) requests a written update by April 2027 from Norfolk and Waveney University Hospitals Group (NWUHG) on whether endoscopy services will return to North Cambridgeshire Hospital.

h) requests a written update from Central East Integrated Care Board by April 2027 on whether dermatology services will be restored at Doddington Hospital.