**Summary:**

Winter is a time of high demand for hospital services, including Accident & Emergency services in particular. With much-publicised concerns about the performance of local hospitals, in particular Queen’s Hospital in Romford and its A&E department, effective joined-up planning for the winter period is critical to prevent services deteriorating.

The discussion is an opportunity for Barking, Havering & Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust to present the winter plans to the Select Committee, in the context of their general improvement activity, and for Members of the Committee to raise questions and to scrutinise the robustness of the plans. The plans are led by BHRUT, as the local hospital trust, but involve all partners across local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and community health services.

**Recommendation(s)**

Members of the Committee are recommended:

- To scrutinise Barking, Havering & Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust’s measures to manage winter pressures and the ability of its Emergency Department to perform well at a time of higher demand.
1. Overview

1.1. The NHS centrally has issued guidance and a structure within which to plan for the winter across all of the organisations in the ‘local health economy’, which includes Barking, Havering & Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust, North East London NHS Foundation Trust, the borough-based Clinical Commissioning Groups and the local authorities for Barking & Dagenham, Havering & Redbridge.

1.2. BHRUT are leading the co-ordination of this planning, which is backed up by £7m of investment locally from the Department of Health, which is a reduction on amounts previously received by individual partners to support this period of activity.

2. Discussion at the Health & Adult Services Select Committee

2.1. At the Health & Adult Services Select Committee, BHRUT will present the proposals for ensuring that the local health economy, and BHRUT in particular, are prepared for the winter period.

2.2. This activity comes against a backdrop of an ‘Improving Emergency Care’ Plan for the hospital trust, which has previously been presented to the Select Committee and includes:

- Accelerating recruitment and retention of Medical and Nursing Staff in the Emergency Department (ED);
- Delivering improved pathways to redirect patients from the ED, and provide improved assessment capacity and capability particularly focusing on older patients;
- Improving the experience of patients in the ED;
- Implementing 7 day working, improving weekend discharge arrangements;
- Implementing improvements focused on the London Quality Programme’s Acute Medical and Emergency Surgery Standards.

2.3. Winter planning activities include a range of developments, principally focused around:

- Facilitating the move to 7-day working, including investment in community health services and social care to facilitate this, and increased consultant cover at weekends in the hospital;
- Additional capacity in social care and health services to be able to meet increased demand;
- Focused work in the community with people at high-risk of needing hospitalisation due to long-term conditions or frailty.

2.4. BHRUT will present more detail on the winter plans and how they relate to their general improvement planning, and Members are invited to question the Trust on their proposals and their performance to date.