

Appendix 2

Godfrey Horne MBE
Chairman: Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Member for Tonbridge
44 Royal Avenue, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2DB

The Rt Hon Andrew Lansley CBE MP
Secretary of State for Health
Department of Health
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London SW1A 2NS

2 August 2010

Dear Secretary of State

Womens and Childrens Services – Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust

I am in receipt of your reply to the referral sent to you on the Womens and Childrens Services – Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust by my Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee. This was reported in full to my recent Committee meeting on 23rd July, complete with the advice you had received from the Independent Reconfiguration Panel. Some Members of my Committee with their County divisions in the Maidstone area expressed their bitter disappointment. They were not mindful to accept that all the 10 points raised with you had been properly addressed. I believe you will be aware of their disquiet and that their thoughts will have been brought to your attention by the new Member of Parliament for Maidstone & The Weald, Helen Grant. It would seem most likely that they will be arranging public meetings in the Maidstone area to explore any opportunity that there may be to retain some of the Maternity Services that are due to be changed in Maidstone or transferred to new Pembury Hospital in Tunbridge Wells.

My Health Overview Scrutiny Committee is formed of a wide variety of Elected Members from across the County of Kent who reflect the views of those local people who elect them. This Committee is disappointed that in referring these matters to you that your reply to me is not bringing closure on the issues as had been hoped.

Can I assure you that in moving forward we will seek to ensure that the 4 criteria you have asked to be taken into account in any Reconfiguration of Women's and Children's Services are borne in mind by the Strategic Health Authority in the report back to you which you have requested. We do not believe that all the 10 points raised as the basis for this Committee's referral have been adequately dealt. Indeed, some of these issues are not local matters e.g. the dualling of the A21.

We will do all that we can to ensure that the requirements identified in your letter are carried out in full and will let you have any evidence / detail that can be provided to show that there is a genuine call to ameliorate reduction of services as planned in the Maidstone area realising that any such evidence will need to be clinically based.

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Yours sincerely

Godfrey Horne MBE

Chairman

Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee