

Michael Snelling
Chairman
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Kent County Council
Members' Suite
Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone
ME14 1XQ

02 April 2012

Dear Mr Snelling,

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting – 13 April 2012
East Kent maternity services review

We refer to the letter dated 09 March from Nick Chard requesting a report to cover the outcomes of the east Kent maternity services review consultation process.

This joint letter is to let you know that following discussions with senior clinical colleagues, we have decided to delay reporting to our respective boards for a month. This means that we request that HOSC now receives a joint report with our recommendations from this review at its meeting on 01 June as opposed to 13 April.

This additional time will allow the Maternity Service Review Group (MSRG) to reconvene and discuss the consultation findings from Greenwich University with due care and consider the national Birthplace study.

During this time we will make available the Greenwich University report to all interested parties including the east Kent Clinical Commissioning Groups so they have chance to read and comment on the outcomes and influence the recommendation of the MSRG. This inclusive approach is more in keeping with the guidance on the four tests used to assure service reconfiguration.

We are aware that reporting to the June HOSC as opposed to the April meeting is a significant delay and we would therefore like to propose a briefing session for Members in early May to discuss our proposals and recommendations once they have been considered by our Boards at the end of this month. HOSC Members will of course also be invited to attend the NHS Kent and Medway Board meeting on 25 April.

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If you are happy with this suggestion our officers will work with Tristan Godfrey to arrange a mutually convenient session in May.

We appreciate that Members will be anxious to hear the outcomes however having spent so much time and effort conducting the review it would be unwise to rush the final decision making stages and risk legal challenge. We hope this proposal is acceptable and look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Sutton

Ann Sutton
Chief Executive
NHS Kent and Medway PCT Cluster

Stuart Bain

Stuart Bain
Chief Executive
East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust