

**Councillor Alan Webb,
Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

6th March 2017

Dear Sirs,

Response to Oxfordshire Health and Care Transformation

I write to provide a summary of the points raised by the Warwickshire County Council Adult Social Care and Health OSC, following its consideration of the Oxfordshire Health and Care Transformation on 1 March 2017.

The Committee has sought input from South Warwickshire Clinical Commissioning Group (SWCCG) and South Warwickshire Foundation Trust (SWFT). This is a joint response from the three bodies. The key points discussed at the Committee were:

- SWCCG has received assurances from Oxfordshire CCG that the south Warwickshire population will be included in all consultation activity and that there will be a regular dialogue between the two commissioners about the process.
- SWFT have been in regular dialogue for over a year with Oxfordshire providers, to ensure that it is able to respond to any increase in activity resulting from the Oxfordshire transformation. The approach taken by Oxfordshire providers and level of engagement is commended by SWFT.
- The Stratford District Council (SDC) representative on the Committee reported the concerns of residents about the proposed changes to maternity and accident and emergency services at Horton General Hospital (HGH). There had been previous endeavours to reduce these services resulting in the intervention of the Secretary of State.
- Many residents of the south Stratford district use HGH services and there is concern about the travel distances to alternate hospitals at Warwick and Oxford.
- The Committee notes that patient safety is the key issue. There are difficulties in attracting specialist doctors to smaller hospitals such as HGH and a balance has to be achieved between clinical excellence and travel distances.
- A consultant staffed rota will be required for higher risk births and potential high risk situations.
- There are concerns amongst some members about the midwife-led approach to maternity services, as statistically one in four low risk births in the study data presented subsequently requires transfer of the mother to specialist care at another hospital.
- The resourcing of home births and the need to consider wider staffing aspects, including anaesthetists were raised.
- Understanding more about what midwife-led services actually offer.
- A need to look creatively at cross border arrangements to service delivery.

- The split of the consultation into two phases is not helpful. There is little detail in this first phase of the consultation, making it difficult to respond effectively.
- The Committee has requested a further briefing from SWFT on the comparative data for serious cases and mortality occurring at midwife-led units and those at more specialist obstetric hospitals.

I trust this input is helpful to your Committee's deliberations and look forward to receiving a copy of your minutes and the submission to the Oxfordshire Health and Care Transformation.

Yours faithfully,

Councillor Alan Webb,
Chair of the Warwickshire County Council
Adult Social Care and Health OSC