

Date: 23rd July 2020

Dr James Kent, Accountable Officer
and Executive ICS Lead,
Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and
Berkshire West ICS.

Dr Nick Broughton, Chief Executive,
Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
(by email)

Dear Dr Kent and Dr Broughton

**Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview
and Scrutiny Committee**
County Hall
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1ND

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Re: OX12 Task and Finish Group recommendations

Following the meeting of the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) on 25th June, committee members agreed a set of recommendations put forward by members of the OX12 Task and Finish Group, relating to the OX12 project. The committee fully acknowledges that a number of workstreams have had to be paused in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The timing of the pandemic was both unforeseeable and unfortunate. A lot of time and resource has been invested in this project, both from the local stakeholders and system partners. Additionally a level of expectation has been set within the OX12 community that they will see a positive evolution of their health and care services, whatever form that may take. This is also set against a backdrop of Wantage Community Hospital having been temporarily closed to inpatients in July 2016. We are now at the fourth anniversary of that closure, a significant period of time to be considered temporary. As we move into a phase of COVID-19 recovery as a system, it is imperative that this project be resumed, with the appropriate engagement and consultation having taken place.

This project was a pilot exercise for the Health and Care Needs Framework and whilst there were inevitable delays associated with that, which HOSC initially supported to enable a thorough review to take place, subsequent delays associated with the pre-election period were not supported. I reiterate my comment from the meeting itself, that if these projects take up to two years each to complete and only one can take place at a time, then it could take at least a decade to roll this out across the whole county.

HOSC understands the need to ensure the consultation and engagement takes place in a safe and secure manner, and that this project will need to fall into a programme of recovery. However it is important that this is afforded a priority within that programme. I would like to reiterate the commitment from HOSC and the OX12 Task and Finish Group to work alongside health system partners, to help ensure the project delivers effective outcomes for not only the residents of the OX12 locality, but also valuable learning is captured and understood ready for the framework to be utilised in other localities.

The OX12 Task and Finish Group presented the following recommendations to HOSC for endorsement and onward recommendation to system partners. Members of HOSC agreed the recommendations as follows:

1. The OX12 project re-starts by the 15th September 2020 with engagement from System Partners. The group accepts that this is subject to the continuing downward trajectory in the county COVID-19 cases. Although the Task & Finish group accepts the continuing need to focus on the COVID-19 response, OX12 must be a top priority for non-COVID project work.
2. That the engagement is characterized by enthusiasm, active involvement and real partnership involving all stakeholders. Immediately identified areas of work include:
 - a. Continue capital works to address *Legionella* in Wantage Community Hospital.
 - b. A planned return of maternity and physiotherapy services to Wantage Hospital by 15th September 2020.
 - c. Fully addressing the recommendations and comments of the T&F group. *(these have been passed onto the Health and Wellbeing Board for a response)*
3. That the project should specifically address the following issues:
 - a. How the plans for OX12 fit into a county-wide policy including all community hospitals
 - b. How healthcare will dovetail with social care, which was advocated.
 - c. How Primary Care Networks will work and what they will do (in some detail), for example increasing home care, the role of medical support staff etc as a result of the projected increased staff as a result of the BOB ICS.
 - d. How the projected 35-36% population increase will affect health provision,
 - e. How staff changes (likely shortage of GPs, nurses and lower paid staff salaries) affect the plan
 - f. Whether funding issues exist in terms of any financial constraints on what is planned as the optimal situation for OX12.

The OX12 Task and Finish Group raised the following recommendations specifically for consideration of the committee:

4. The Committee takes the view that the COVID-19 pandemic has put an interval in the timeline for the project but has not changed the substance of what was discussed and agreed at the HOSC meeting. However, we note that at the last HOSC meeting it is recorded in the minutes that the community hospital should fully re-open by September 2020. We suggest this date be postponed to 1st January 2021. In the meantime the Task and Finish Group believes the Wantage Community Hospital is valuable to the response of COVID-19, the recovery and post COVID-19 phases and this should be kept under active consideration.
5. That the JHOSC should consider that, if the system partners are unable or unwilling to engage on this basis, it should consider:
 - a. That the interim report from the system partners is rejected.
 - b. Other recommendations which will be submitted by the T&F group to the September JHOSC meeting.

In response to the above, it was discussed at HOSC and understood by all parties that this was indeed a pause on the project and not a cancellation. Consideration will be given to recommendation 5 at a future HOSC meeting, once the status of the project becomes clearer. We note in the CCG update paper the commitment to agree a new timeline with HOSC and would strongly encourage this at the earliest opportunity.

I would invite you to please consider the recommendations and respond accordingly.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arash Fatemian', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Cllr Arash Fatemian
Chairman Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee