



A lifetime of specialist care

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4<sup>th</sup> December 2020

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**VIA EMAIL: [Cllr.Cem.Kemahli@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Cem.Kemahli@rbkc.gov.uk)**

Cllr Cem Kemahli

Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

Dear Councillor Kemahli

Thank you for your letter of 30<sup>th</sup> November.

I do, of course, recognise your responsibility to represent your residents' interests, but I similarly hope you recognise that my Board's responsibility is for the delivery of specialist healthcare – both cardiac and respiratory – to a national patient population. While approximately 1,600 Kensington & Chelsea residents used Royal Brompton Hospital (RBH) services last year, they accounted for less than 4% of all the patients treated at RBH – and of course the Trust's obligations necessarily extend to everyone served by both our hospitals.

We firmly believe that the transaction with Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust (GSTT) is in the best interests of all our current and future patients and staff. My colleagues have explained to councillors and committee members in briefing papers and at meetings that the proposals we are considering this month are about a corporate transaction with GSTT, not about service changes, moving or closing RBH.

We have not reached this conclusion in haste – or in a vacuum. Extensive engagement led by our clinicians over more than three years leads us to believe that, together with GSTT, we can grasp exciting opportunities to make significant progress in the battles against heart and lung diseases – which remain among the UK's biggest causes of illness and premature death. During 2020, we have taken steps to engage with patient groups, NHS partners, your and other councils and local MPs (both Greg Hands and Felicity Buchan) about our plans for a formal transaction; and we have recently completed a full, 8-week period of engagement and formal consultation with our four thousand members of staff (of whom 3% are residents of the Royal Borough). Feedback, both directly and via their representatives, shows that they are increasingly keen to proceed and take advantage of the opportunities the new organisation will present. Any delay as you suggest would only serve to increase the uncertainty about the future for patients and staff. Our proposal seeks to remove this uncertainty.



We were not contacted by council members, officers or your professional advisers about the draft RBH Supplementary Planning Document before it was published last month. However, I can confirm that we will respond to it by the 30<sup>th</sup> December deadline. As you know, formal public consultation will be required on any plans to move services from RBH in future – and any potential consequences for the RBH estate will be the subject of future discussions with your council, taking full account of all relevant planning documents, including the Local Plan and the London Plan. Accordingly, as we expect to be operating in our current facilities for at least a decade, the world class facilities at RBH will be maintained. Furthermore, as colleagues from Royal Marsden, Chelsea & Westminster and ICHT acknowledged at your Select Committee meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November, we will continue to work with them for the benefit of patients in NW London during and beyond that time.

My Board has kept the progress and timing of all this work under review and has re-affirmed its commitment to the established transaction timetable. The Board of Directors will therefore formally consider and vote on the proposal on 9<sup>th</sup> December. If approved, the proposal will go forward for consideration at the Governors' Council meeting as planned on 15<sup>th</sup> December.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sally Morgan'.

**Baroness (Sally) Morgan of Huyton**

Chair

Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Foundation Trust

c Cllr.J Thalassites