



## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Healthier Together  
Committees in Common  
c/o G.M. Service  
Transformation  
4<sup>th</sup> floor, 3 Piccadilly Place,  
Manchester, M1 3BN.

Trafford Town Hall  
Talbot Road  
Stretford  
M32 0TH

Telephone: 0161 912 4298  
Fax: 0161 912 1277  
Email: Joseph.Maloney@trafford.gov.uk  
Minicom: 0161 912 2012  
When phoning ask for: J. Maloney

---

Our ref:  
Your ref:  
Date: 30 September 2014

To Whomsoever it may concern,

### **“Healthier Together”: Consultation Response from Trafford Council’s Health Scrutiny Committee**

As Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Trafford Council’s Health Scrutiny Committee, we are writing to you on behalf of that Committee to advise of its views in relation to the current “Healthier Together” consultation in respect of Healthcare in Greater Manchester.

As a Committee, we have considered the consultation in detail on two occasions, have received a presentation from Dr. Jonathan Berry and Gina Lawrence, and heard the views of a number of key stakeholders. Our comments are summarised below.

#### **The Consultation Proposals**

The Committee has a number of principal concerns. Firstly, during the 12 weeks available, only two public meetings were scheduled in Trafford, and neither of these in the south or west of the borough, such as in Partington and Altrincham, which would have represented better coverage of the population in Trafford as a whole. Accessibility issues are already well known, notably in respect of patients in Partington who will potentially be faced with significant challenges in getting to a hospital, whatever the conclusions of this consultation. Secondly, the consultation is inherently complex, and the potential implications do not emerge clearly from the consultation documentation. By contrast, the questionnaire questions appear as simplistic, and in some cases directed at securing particular responses. On occasion, responses are likely simply to be made on the basis of the respondent’s physical proximity to a healthcare provider unit, and this will not necessarily promote a rational basis for any assessment decision. Finally, the Committee was very concerned that three hospitals had already been designated as Specialist Hospital sites in advance of the consultation. This effectively pre-judges the outcome to a significant extent, and does not promote thorough consideration of the range of available options.

## **The Consultation Context**

The Committee is aware that the outcome of the process has potentially significant implications for the services provided at, and thus for the sustainability of, local providers. In responding to the previous “New Health Deal” consultation in respect of Trafford General Hospital, the Committee argued for an integrated approach between this and “Healthier Together”, which had already been announced. The context is further complicated by the South Sector Review. Current developments confirm the Committee’s view that an integrated approach to these consultations should have been followed, to allow a holistic view to be taken in the implications in the round, bearing in mind the many co-dependencies within the local health economy.

## **Impact on Local Health Provision**

As indicated above, the Committee is seriously concerned at the prior designation of three hospitals as Specialist Hospital Sites. If this was being done, it is unclear to the Committee why the same did not apply to the University Hospital of South Manchester. The Committee is aware of a broad range of major specialisms which are already provided at the hospital. The hospital has major advantages, in terms of accessibility, for patients in South Manchester, Stockport and Trafford, and more broadly, for example via air ambulance; and its non-selection would be likely to generate significant transport issues for local patients. The Committee notes that a very significant proportion of Trafford patients currently attend UHSM. The Committee is also aware of significant qualitative advantages in some specialisms at UHSM, as compared to other potential specialist hospitals within the conurbation; and would welcome reassurance that such qualitative aspects will be taken into full account in any eventual selection decision.

Yours faithfully,

*Councillors Judith Lloyd and Mrs. Patricia Young*

(Chair and Vice-Chairman of Trafford Council’s Health Scrutiny Committee)