

# **“Best Care, Best Place” – Joint Health Committee**

## **Press statement**

(Reactive – to be issued if approached by the press in connection with the letters of complaint received from Mid Sussex District Council and Councillor Paddy Henry)

“The scrutiny process was thorough and carried out in compliance with the rules and guidelines for such a process. The Joint Committee met on six occasions between November 2004 and July 2005 to consider written material and expert witness evidence. The Committee also carried out a site visit on 14th January 2005 to the Princess Royal Hospital, Hurstwood Park Hospital, The Vale Primary Care Centre, Brighton General Hospital and the Royal Sussex County Hospital. Individual Committee members also attended public meetings to gauge the level of public interest and consider the various views being expressed.”

“The team responsible for the scrutiny process and the members themselves have fully considered the representations by Mid Sussex District Council and have been able to refute all of the criticisms of the process and remain satisfied that the proposals have been subjected to a thorough and effective consultation exercise. The grounds on which the Committee can refer the matter to the Secretary of State are very specific and have not been met in this case.”

“The Joint Committee continues to take this matter very seriously and has been monitoring implementation of the proposals to ensure clinical safety and proper access are maintained for the residents of Mid Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. The Joint Committee is planning to reconvene in February 2006 to formally consider how the implementation is progressing. In particular the Joint Committee is keen to monitor the following issues:

- recruitment of ANNPs (Advanced Neonatal Nurse Practitioners) at the Princess Royal Hospital
- the business case for neurology and neurosciences, to ensure that all the options (including building the new department on the Hurstwood Park site) are properly considered before a final decision is taken
- any proposals for alternative uses for the Brighton General Hospital site
- any proposals affecting routine surgery, by individual specialty
- transport issues
- investment and financial issues.”

### ***If there are specific enquiries about Robin Brown coming off the Joint Committee:***

“Robin Brown has now come off the Joint Committee and has been replaced by Anne Marie Morris, his Vice Chairman. This is because of a review of workload distribution between the two Members.”

### ***ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFO:***

What the Joint Committee did as part of its scrutiny of the proposals:

- Six meetings (26th November 2004, 11th January 2005, 25th January 2005, 8th February 2005, 22nd February 2005, 12th July 2005 – evidence taken from a range of witnesses, consideration of published documentation, written statements and other data (e.g. financial and patient flow information).
- Attendance at public meetings to gauge the level of public interest and the various views being expressed.
- Site visit on 14th January 2005 to the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH), Hurstwood Park Hospital, The Vale Primary Care Centre, Brighton General Hospital (BGH) and the Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH). The members of the Committee met Peter Coles, Chief Executive of BSUH, clinicians, managers and patients. The Committee members were also shown plans for the new Intermediate care Centre and other primary care developments.