

Report to: **East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)**

Date: **6th July 2009**

By: **Director of Law and Personnel**

Title of report: **Developing Maternity Services for East Sussex**

Purpose of report: **To summarise progress in relation to the development of maternity services in East Sussex, with particular focus on engaging and informing local people and organisations.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

HOSC is recommended to:

- 1. Consider and comment on progress with the maternity services programme as outlined in appendix 1, with particular focus on the engagement plan.**
 - 2. Request a further monitoring report in September 2009.**
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1. Background

1.1 Following the outcome of the NHS East Sussex Downs and Weald (ESDW)/NHS Hastings and Rother (H&R) consultation on the configuration of maternity and related services, HOSC agreed to undertake ongoing monitoring of progress. This has focussed on four areas:

- The maintenance of safe childbirth services in Eastbourne and Hastings pending the development of a long-term sustainable model.
- Progress on the development of a service model which would ensure the continuing provision of consultant-led childbirth, special baby care and inpatient gynaecology services at both hospitals.
- Progress on the development of a broader maternity strategy for East Sussex which would include enhancements to ante and post-natal care.
- The development and use of a 'maternity dashboard' which would provide a selection of data about maternity care to facilitate monitoring of quality and safety.

1.2 Early in 2009 new governance arrangements were established to take forward work on maternity strategy, including the development of a model for childbirth services in Eastbourne and Hastings. These arrangements include a Maternity Services Development Panel, Chaired by Richard Hallett of the Maternity Services Liaison Committee and a Maternity Services Clinicians Forum, chaired by Professor Robert Shaw of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. The HOSC Chairman attends the Development Panel as an independent observer.

1.3 At the HOSC meeting on 19th March 2009, the Committee supported the first iteration of a Maternity Strategy for East Sussex which particularly focussed on developing ante and post natal care in the community. The Committee also endorsed a paper, supported by the Clinicians Forum, describing a potential model for childbirth services which involves networking between hospitals in Eastbourne, Hastings and Brighton.

1.4 The Maternity Strategy and the proposed networking model were subsequently endorsed by the Boards of NHS ESDW and NHS H&R at the end of March.

2. Progress update

2.1 It was clear from the reports to HOSC in March that work on developing the model for childbirth services would be ongoing for several months, as it would take some time to flesh out how the networking approach would work in practice. This work is being undertaken by the Clinicians Forum and its sub-groups.

2.2 The Maternity Services Development Panel has continued to meet regularly and has been examining aspects of the strategy for community services in more detail, as well as monitoring progress of the work being undertaken by the Clinicians Forum. In addition, the Panel has focussed on developing a plan for engaging and informing local people and organisations about the developments in maternity services.

2.3 NHS ESDW/NHS H&R have supplied a short update report on progress with the maternity services programme which is attached as appendix 1. Given that the work being led by the Clinicians Forum is still ongoing, there is a limited amount to report at present, although the next steps in the process are set out. The report therefore takes the opportunity to focus on the engagement plan and presents HOSC with an opportunity to consider in more detail how local people are being informed about progress.

2.4 HOSC may wish to consider:

- Whether all appropriate groups and audiences are included in the engagement plan.
- How users of services are being involved in the development of the service model for childbirth services.
- How front-line staff are being involved in the development of the service model.
- Whether appropriate methods are being used to inform the public of developments.
- How groups who may be harder to reach are being informed and engaged.

2.5 It is recommended that HOSC request a further progress report in September 2009, when work on the service model will be further advanced.

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