



## News Release

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For Immediate Release

### Report on hospital proposals agreed by Joint Committee

After ten months of work, the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee met today (Friday May 2) and agreed its report into the Fit for the Future proposals.

The Joint Committee's job is to examine the hospital proposals by West Sussex and Brighton and Hove Primary Care Trusts (PCTs).

For the past ten months the Joint Committee has reviewed evidence and heard views from a wide range of witnesses - all leading up to its report to the PCTs.

The recommendations in the report will be taken into account by the PCTs in making their decisions about the future of health services in West Sussex.

Key recommendations include:

- The only option being proposed by the PCTs that the Committee feels might meet the needs of health services in West Sussex and surrounding areas is the new 'LGH+' model. This would see one major general hospital (MGH) and two local general hospitals (LGH) in West Sussex (with either St. Richard's or Worthing becoming the major general hospital). One of the important features of this option would be the retention of A&E at Princess Royal, St Richards and Worthing Hospitals.
- The Committee does not feel it is yet in a position to comment on the best location for the MGH, on the basis of the evidence it has heard to date.
- The Committee is concerned about the capacity of hospitals outside West Sussex to cope with the additional pressure under any of the proposed options (e.g. Royal Sussex County in Brighton, and Queen Alexandra in Portsmouth). It is asking the PCTs to provide evidence that adequate plans are in place to meet any such additional pressure.
- That West Sussex PCT needs to rebuild public confidence in hospital services.
- That the Committee is not persuaded of the safety/desirability of only one Consultant-led maternity unit in West Sussex (especially with the changes in East Sussex), and would prefer to see the retention of a second Consultant-led unit north of the South Downs, at Princess Royal Hospital.

Joint Committee Chairman Peter Griffiths said:

"It is important that the PCTs take on board the Committee's views when taking the critical decisions in May and June about the future of the three main hospitals in West Sussex. The proposals will have an impact on the hospitals and residents in the areas in and surrounding



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West Sussex, and the Committee has considered these issues in making its report. We have spent the past ten months thoroughly examining a vast amount of evidence and background information, and are giving some strong recommendations to the PCTs to consider.”

West Sussex PCT will be deciding the model for future health services at its Board meeting on Wednesday May 7, and the location for centralised hospital services (the major general hospital) on Wednesday June 4.

The Joint Committee will then meet on Wednesday June 25 to consider the decisions made by the PCT and will respond with any comments and final recommendations.

The PCT Board is due to meet on Thursday July 10 to either confirm or amend the decisions made, taking into account the views of the Joint Committee.

If the Joint Committee is not persuaded by the Primary Care Trusts' final decisions, it retains the right to make a referral to the Secretary of State for Health.

## **ENDS**

Notes to editors:

A Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) is formed when NHS proposals affect more than one area and in this case comprises those local authorities consulted by the West Sussex and Brighton and Hove PCTs. The JHOSC has the power to scrutinise the proposals, make recommendations to the PCTs and if not satisfied by their response, to refer the disputed issues to the Secretary of State for Health.

Further information on JHOSC meetings and agenda is available at:

<http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ccm/content/your-council/scrutiny-and-review-unit/health-scrutiny/joint-health-overview-and-scrutiny-select-committeeen>

This press release has been issued by the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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