



PRESS RELEASE

Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee

The Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) met at County Hall, Oxford Thursday (15 September). Responsible for overseeing the safe and adequate health provision for all Oxfordshire residents, the Horton General hospital in Banbury was discussed at length.

Prior to Item 8 – Obstetrics and the Strategic Review (The Horton Hospital) - Oxford University Hospitals Foundation Trust (OUHFT) representatives, Paul Brennan and Andrew Stevens, received a ‘very sharp rebuke’ from Chairperson Yvonne Constance, due to the Trust’s removal of beds from Oak Ward and F ward at the Horton, with no prior warning. Members of staff were only aware after the event confirming there had been no consultation or communication beforehand.

For Keep the Horton General (KTHG) attendees, item 8 was of significant importance. Chairman Keith Strangwood was allowed three minutes to make his representation, along with a statement by local MP Victoria Prentis read by her assistant and Cherwell District Council’s position given by Councillor Lawrie Stratford.

It appeared that Yvonne Constance was close to referring the matter to the Secretary of State for Health but stayed her judgement until 30th September. At a previously arranged meeting, on that date, to discuss the implications of the Five Year Sustainability Plan (STP) the OUHFT will have to credibly justify its claim that they have secured reasonable safe provision for the transfer of mothers, in need of emergency care during labour, to Oxford. The Chairperson ‘ridiculed the proposal for a 24/7 standby ambulance and emphasised that she wanted to see the risk assessment in terms of travel time to all alternative hospitals other than the John Radcliffe’ .

‘We look forward to the meeting on the 30th’ concluded Keith Strangwood.

Ends

19 September 2016

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