

Councillor Ruth Dombey OBE

London Borough of Sutton
Leader of the Council
Liberal Democrat Councillor for Sutton North Ward



Address: Leadership Office, Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton SM1 1EA
Telephone: 020 8770 5406
Email: leadership.office@sutton.gov.uk

Rt Hon. Victoria Atkins MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0EU

Letter sent by email to: **Victoria@victoriaatkins.org.uk, dhsc.sofs@dhsc.gov.uk**

30 January 2024

Dear Secretary of State

We are writing to you as the Leaders of the six South West London borough councils and the Leader of Surrey County Council to express our grave concerns about the proposal to move Paediatric Cancer services away from the Royal Marsden hospital in Sutton to either St George's hospital in Wandsworth or the Evelina hospital in central London.

Parents and clinicians tell us that the services provided by the Royal Marsden and St George's are second to none and they already work well with other clinical services in the surrounding area. We are concerned about the impact that this reconfiguration will have on families with very vulnerable children who are undergoing cancer treatment.

The consultation has now closed and we await the final decision. If NHS England were to decide to proceed with the reconfiguration, we believe very strongly that St George's is in a much better position to provide these important services. It has a strong track record in delivering children's cancer care, already works closely with the Royal Marsden and has a much more robust business case in terms of finances, infrastructure and clinical expertise. Issues around patient access also need to be considered, given that immunocompromised children are unlikely to be travelling on public transport and the different travel times involved in reaching the two hospitals.

We are also concerned about the impact on clinical services at St George's hospital if they were to lose the services that they presently deliver as surgeons working across SW London and Surrey would be drawn away into central London. This could have an impact on the future sustainability of St George's hospital while the Evelina would not be similarly affected as they do not provide these services at the present time.

As the seven cross-party Council leaders representing the views of residents living in a large part of the catchment area of these services - as well as the views of many parents across a wider area who have contacted us to express their concerns - we are firmly of the view that St George's hospital has a stronger case for this reconfiguration, should it go ahead.

We await the result of the consultation and the decision by NHS England. If the decision is in favour of the Evelina hospital, then we will explore using our more formal call-in powers to ensure that our concerns are addressed.

Best wishes



Cllr Ruth Dombey
Leader of Sutton Council



Cllr Tim Oliver
Leader of Surrey County Council



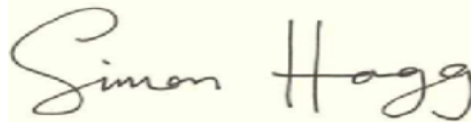
Mayor Jason Perry
Croydon Council



Cllr Gareth Roberts
Leader of Richmond Council



Cllr Andreas Kirsch
Leader of Kingston Council



Cllr Simon Hogg
Leader of Wandsworth Council



Cllr Ross Garrod
Leader of Merton Council