

Chairman's Note

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Trust Board Reconfiguration paper C

Dear Board Member,

The reports before us highlight a number of issues including:

- the public consultation process undertaken over a three month period by our commissioners closed on 21st December 2021 , and we await to see their conclusions
- further meetings have taken place with senior officials at the Department for Health and Social Care and there has been some progress with seeking approvals of business cases
- an update of the project concerning Phase 1 of the Children's Hospital project (EMCHC)
- an update on work relating to looking at alternative travel options to the hospital sites.

The main item for discussion is how we ensure that equality and diversity considerations are embedded into the framework for decision making in relation to the reconfiguration programme. It is an obvious fact that our Trust serves a very diverse community and over one third of our staff are from BAME communities. Other dimensions of equality relating to gender and disability also underpin the reality that the profile of senior decision makers within our own organisation and elsewhere in other local organisations is not reflective of the communities we serve. The pandemic has highlighted existing health inequalities and these are linked to lifestyles, physical environments, employment and other opportunities, and access to opportunities and facilities. A key expectation of the development of integrated health systems is for provider organisations (such as ourselves) to take an active involvement in the creation of social and economic opportunities for their local communities. In our case this may be as an employer, a procurer of services and provision of training opportunities either by ourselves or partnership with different stakeholders.

The implications for our reconfiguration programme are that we need to ensure that these opportunities include individuals and businesses that would not traditionally be considered and have a focus on securing positive outcomes. Historically this focus within regeneration programmes has not been as successful in this country as the active contract compliance undertaken within economic development programmes in the United States. Given our demography and geography I hope we can aspire to be a national leader on these issues.

I look forward to seeing you at our next Trust Board meeting on Thursday 4th February 2021.

Regards

Karamjit Singh
Chairman, UHL