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Councillor Mary Angell
Vice Chair
Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
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13 OCT 2008

Dear Councillor Angell

**West Sussex Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee "Fit for the Future"
referral for changes to acute services in West Sussex**

I am writing further to your formal referral of 25 July 2008 and your further letter of 1 September 2008, providing supporting evidence relating to the proposals for West Sussex.

You will know that the IRP has recently concluded an initial review on this case and their advice will be published on their website at a future date.

Since receiving their advice, two of the hospitals involved in the proposals for service change (Royal West Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust and Worthing and Southlands Hospitals NHS Trust) have formally agreed to merger talks and consequent to this, the West Sussex Primary Care Trust has suspended their decision to reconfigure acute services (the proposals contested by the JHOSC in their formal referral to me).

As I am sure you will appreciate, this is a new and significant development for the local NHS and as a result, they now need to consider what impact this might have on local services. Therefore, I have written to the IRP to formally ask them at this juncture not to undertake a formal three month review until such time a merged Trust is in place and that a new and incoming Board has had the opportunity, in conjunction with the local JHOSC, to review original and future reconfiguration proposals.

I am sure you will continue to work with the local NHS and other stakeholders as work progresses.

I am copying this letter to Dr Peter Barrett, Chair of the Independent Reconfiguration Panel, Candy Morris, Chief Executive NHS South East Coast and John Wilderspin, Chief Executive, West Sussex Primary Care Trust.

*Your sincerely
Alan Johnson*

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