

DRAFT LETTER TO HEATHER O'MEARA

Dear Ms. O'Meara,

Re : Health for North East London proposals

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham has fully considered the Health for North East London proposals, both at our Health and Adult Services Select Committee meeting on 27 October 2010 and at our Cabinet on 23 November 2010, for delivering high quality health services for local people.

Whilst we consider that much of what is contained in your proposals is to be welcomed and will improve health care, we have, nevertheless, a number of concerns. We believe that some of the proposals could have a detrimental impact on the residents of Barking and Dagenham being able to access both high quality health care and appropriate treatment in a timely fashion. We are therefore unable to fully support these proposals unless the following assurances are given:

1. A clear written unequivocal commitment to developing a midwifery led Birthing Centre at Barking Community Hospital together with an agreed start date for this service in 2011.
2. A clear written unequivocal commitment to developing the East Dagenham Community Hospital to provide the care closer to home that this reconfiguration requires, together with an agreed start date for this essential healthcare provision.
3. A clear written unequivocal commitment that no changes will be made as described in the proposals until such time as our local Community Hospitals are operating at full capacity.
4. A clear written unequivocal commitment that no changes will be made as described in the proposals until such time as all CQC restrictions on Queen's Hospital have been lifted and there is evidence of continued improvement in the quality of basic patient care
5. A clear written unequivocal commitment that no changes will be made until such time as there is sustained and evidenced improvement in the management of the Accident and Emergency services and increased capacity at Queen's Hospital
6. A clear written unequivocal commitment that no changes will be made until the implications of increased travel times for Barking and Dagenham residents are fully addressed.
7. A clear written unequivocal commitment that no changes will be made until the detailed forecasts of the full financial impact on the whole health economy are shared and full financial implications of the proposals are understood.

We need to emphasise that without these assurances we cannot support the Health for North East London proposals and in the unlikely event of the assurances not being provided, we must consider whether we exercise our right to request an independent review.