

Maidstone Borough Council

Community, Environment and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 9 December 2014

Review of Maternity Services in Maidstone Borough

Report of: Tessa Mallett, Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At their Future Work Programming workshop on 17 June 2014 the Committee agreed to carry out a review of Maternity Services in Maidstone Borough since they were moved to Pembury Hospital, Tunbridge Wells, in September 2011.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee are recommended to interview the following witnesses regarding the maternity services provided to Maidstone borough residents:
 - Dr Bob Bowes, Chairman of the West Kent CCG Health and Wellbeing Board;
 - Councillor Susan Grigg, and;
 - Maternity service users since September 2011.
- 2.2 The committee may want to focus their questioning on the following areas:
 - Since the move of maternity services from Maidstone Hospital to Pembury Hospital what has been your experience?
 - What has worked well?
 - What could be done better?

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 At the end of October 2010 consultation regarding the proposed changes to the way maternity services were provided in Maidstone ended.
- 3.2 During the consultation many concerns were raised about the changes. A particular concern was the journey time and route Maidstone residents would have to make to access services at Pembury Hospital in Tunbridge Wells.

- 3.3 The changes to the service have been in place for three years. The committee agreed, at their Future Work Programme workshop in June 2014, to review the service to establish if the concerns raised during the consultation in 2010 have proved to be the case.

4 Background

- 4.1 In 2010 Kent and Medway NHS's ambition was to provide women with the best possible choice over where to have their babies, in safety at all times. The proposal was to continue to provide antenatal care at both hospitals and in the community. Midwives would support home births and midwife-led units and inpatient obstetric care would be concentrated on at Pembury Hospital.

- 4.2 Kent and Medway NHS had put specialist gynaecology for cancer at Maidstone Hospital and then planned to put inpatient gynaecology that was not cancer-related at Pembury Hospital. They also planned to develop rapid access early pregnancy services at both hospitals. The idea being to make best use of highly skilled clinical teams and enable both hospitals to work very closely together. The plan was, this would:

- Create a focus on normal deliveries, give women choice and continue providing outpatient and antenatal care locally;
- Develop day case surgery, early pregnancy services, foetal medicine, outpatients and diagnostics, and urgent assessment and short stay treatment on both sites;
- Create a single, consultant-led unit for high risk obstetrics at the new Pembury Hospital.

It was also planned to create at both hospitals:

- Midwife-led care, with a high focus on normal deliveries, home births and the provision of birthing centres, and;
- Continuation of the vast majority of women being seen in outpatients and as day cases.

- 4.3 The location and extent of the services provided at the birthing centres was decided with the input of a consultation exercise undertaken during 2010.
- 4.4 The consultation document "Excellence in Care, Closer to Home – Kent and Medway NHS the future of services for women and children" from 2010, is attached as **Appendix A** and outlines the proposed changes to maternity services at the time.
- 4.5 **Appendix B** "Having Your Baby – choosing the right care for you" outlines the maternity services currently available to expectant

mothers. This leaflet was produced by Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust in March 2011 and was revised in March 2013.

5. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 5.1 The review will primarily impact on the Council priorities: 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live'.

6 Relevant Documents and information

- 6.1 **Appendix A** – Excellence in Care Closer to Home – Kent and Medway NHS the future of services for women and children consultation document 2010.
- 6.2 **Appendix B** "Having Your Baby – choosing the right care for you" outlines the maternity services available to expectant mothers.