



**University Hospitals  
of North Midlands**  
NHS Trust

**Royal Stoke University Hospital**  
**Data, Security and Protection**  
Newcastle Road  
Stoke-on-Trent  
Staffordshire  
ST4 6QG

Ref: FOIA Reference 2023/24-429

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Email [foi@uhn.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@uhn.nhs.uk)

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 5th October 2023 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding Free Standing Birthing

As of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014 University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UHNM) manages two hospital sites – Royal Stoke University Hospital, and County Hospital (Stafford). Therefore the response below is for the two sites combined from that date where appropriate.

**Q1 On July 5th 2023 I requested that UHNM please provide me with the review of the Free Standing Birthing Unit (FBU) at County Hospital Stafford which has been closed since March 2020.**

**The PDF below is UHNMs refusal and reasons for refusing to the above FOI request. However I am now assured that the ‘Future’ of the FBU is subject to a public engagement process. As such it is required that any such engagement be open and transparent and that all relevant and pertinent information as to reviews opinions data etc be available so informed responses to engagement or if need be future Consultation as to the FBUs future be Fully Disclosed.**

**I now request and require that UHNM now revisit their refusal to my FOI request and provide the information as per my original FOI request of 5/7/23.**

**A1** UHNM has reviewed this request and feel that the Section 22 and section 36(b) exemptions as stated in FOI response reference 216-2324 dated 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023 still applies, see below.

Please note that once this information becomes available any future requests regarding this subject should be directed at the Staffordshire and Stoke Integrated Care Board (ICB) directly. [ssotics.comms@nhs.net](mailto:ssotics.comms@nhs.net)

I can confirm that the Trust holds information regarding this request, but feel this information is exempt under section 22: *Information for future publication.*

In addition UHNM is applying the following exemption:



I can confirm that the Trust holds information regarding this request but feel this information is exempt under section 36(b) of the FOI Act :inhibit the free and frank provision of advice or exchange of views; The Trust has determined whether disclosure of would have a detrimental effect, as defined by the section 36 exemption and has refused this request on the grounds that it could prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs and inhibit free and frank discussion within the Delivery Board going forward.

\*Please note that any individuals identified do not give consent for their personal data to be processed for the purposes of direct marketing.

***UHNM NHS Trust is a public sector body and governed by EU law. FOI requestors should note that any new Trust requirements over the EU threshold will be subject to these regulations and will be advertised for open competition accordingly.***

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An anonymised copy of this request can be found on the Trust's disclosure log, please note that all requests can be found at the following link: <http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/aboutus/Statutory-Policies-and-Procedures/Pages/Freedom-of-Information-Disclosure-Log.aspx>

This letter confirms the completion of this request. A log of this request and a copy of this letter will be held by the Trust.

If you have any queries related to the response provided please in the first instance contact my office.

Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and request an assessment of the manner in which the Trust has managed your request.

The Information Commissioner may be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF or via [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

Yours,





University Hospitals  
of North Midlands  
NHS Trust

**Rachel Montinaro**  
Data Security and Protection Manager - Records

