



Ref: FOIA Reference 2023/24-216

Date: 21st July 2023

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

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

As of 1st 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 I make the following FOI request of UHNM NHS Trust. I ask that the timelines in fully responding to my request below be adhered to. If there is a likelihood of delays in providing the information I request I be fully kept in the loop as to such.

I understand that UHNM NHS Trust has undertaken and completed a review of its facility namely the Free Standing Birthing Unit (FBU) County Hospital Stafford that has been closed since March 2020 and ownership of the aforesaid review does sit with UHNM NHS Trust.

I also further understand that this review above has informed UHNM as to its future usage or otherwise of the FBU County Hospital and that UHNM has made these intentions known.

1. Please provide me with the Review as per above and the reviews recommendations/conclusions.

A1 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.

Q2 Please provide me with UHNMs communications with any and all 'interested' parties where UHNM makes explicit its 'intentions' regarding utilising or otherwise the at present closed FBU County Hospital Stafford.

A2 As answer 1, once the information has been approved via the public consultation, we will publish what we are able on the Trust web site:

Section 21 exemption: *freely available* and section 22: *Information for future publication*

*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.

If following review of the responses I can be of any further assistance please contact my secretary on 01782 671612.

Yours,



Rachel Montinaro
Data Security and Protection Manager - Records