



Great Western Ambulance Service



NHS Trust

Joint HOSC Meeting

To be held on Friday 14 October, 2011 at 11am

At Wiltshire Council Monkton Park offices, Chippenham

Key in title here

1 Purpose

To update members on trust plans to seek a partnership rather than pursue an independent application for foundation trust status.

The following report details the position as at time of submission to the Joint HOSC – any subsequent developments will be outlined verbally at the meeting.

Paper supplied – 5 October, 2011



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UPDATE FOR JOINT HOSC ON PARTNERSHIP/FT ARRANGEMENTS

In August, GWAS announced it was exploring the possibility of partnering with another organisation as the best way of continuing to improve patient care for the future.

The decision, supported by NHS South West and lead commissioner NHS Gloucestershire, was taken by the trust Board, which came to the conclusion that it was not viable for GWAS to continue to pursue an independent application to become an NHS foundation trust.

All NHS trusts are required to become foundation trusts and are facing financial challenges, needing to become more efficient while simultaneously improving patient care.

The announcement included GWAS's preference that the partnership would be with another ambulance trust, while acknowledging that the process would need to follow very clear rules that govern co-operation and competition in the NHS.

Expressions of interest have been sought from all English ambulance trusts and South Western Ambulance Service subsequently publicly declared its interest in exploring a partnership with GWAS. This is the only ambulance service to do so. Discussions between GWAS and the SHA have been ongoing since then to determine the most appropriate way of taking the partnership process forward.

This will require us to take into account the views of the Competition and Co-operation Panel, which advises on competition in the NHS.

Therefore, the current situation is that progress towards securing an agreement on a preferred partner is continuing – GWAS Chairman Peter Carr hopes to conclude this and be able to make a further announcement before the end of October.

Alongside this work, GWAS is also in the final stages of arranging an interim chief executive for the next 12 months, following Martin Flaherty's return to his substantive post with London Ambulance Service. Again, the expectation is for an announcement on this to be made during October.

In the meantime, Dr Ossie Rawstone – Medical Director and Chief Operating Officer – will act as interim CEO until the longer term replacement is announced.

In addition, Kieran Lappin has joined GWAS as Director of Finance, replacing Rod Barnes, who has left to take up a similar post with Yorkshire Ambulance Service.

GWAS will, of course, ensure members are updated outside this meeting as and when further announcement are made.