



Sent via email

02 September 2022

Dear Colleague

We are writing to let you know that the boards of Queen Victoria Hospital (QVH) and University Hospitals Sussex (UHSussex) have agreed not to continue their work exploring possible merger.

In August 2021 the boards of UHSussex and QVH approved a strategic case for merger and agreed to do the further, detailed work needed to prepare a full business case, with an initial timeline for decision making in spring 2023.

This process has been impacted by the COVID pandemic and pandemic recovery, and will continue to be impacted by forecast operational pressures.

The boards of both organisations have agreed that this is not the right time to move forwards with developing a business case for merger. This has also been agreed with NHS Sussex and NHS England South East Region.

The case for change published by QVH in 2020 remains relevant. QVH has high quality, safe services, but as the smallest acute trust in the country QVH does not have the full range of clinical services that would be found in a large teaching or general hospital. Staff work very hard to mitigate some of the risks that arise from that, for example through protocols for the level of patient co-morbidities accepted in patients requiring surgery. In small clinical and non-clinical services, where a team may consist of very few people, staff work above and beyond their usual hours when colleagues are absent and when vacancies arise. The Trust also has an underlying financial deficit.

In the coming months, the leadership team at QVH will be working with staff and system partners to consider next steps in order to secure a sustainable long term future for the hospital.

Please do let us know if you have any questions about this.

Yours sincerely

Alan McCarthy
Chair
University Hospitals Sussex
NHS Foundation Trust

Jackie Smith
Chair
Queen Victoria Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust