

Consultation on the reconfiguration of Healthcare Services for Children, Young People, Parents and Babies in Greater Manchester, East Cheshire, High Peak and Rossendale

Rossendale Borough Council's response on behalf of its citizens

This Council recognises the need for reorganisation of services and the establishment of centres of excellence for the care of mothers, babies and children in order to maintain and improve skills and provide specialised medical and nursing cover at all times and enhance training opportunities for all staff.

"It cannot however support any changes to the services for children and families that would see a reduction in the level, quality or location of facilities and lead to a detrimental effect on the health care provided to the people of Rossendale" (Council Resolution 11.08.04).

All the options have great impact on Rossendale (except E, Status Quo, which we recognised is a non-starter) due to lack of any provision in the North of Greater Manchester. All options contain recommendations for closure of Rochdale and the Fairfield, Bury, maternity and special care services.

The main concerns of the Council are:-

1. Lack of choice – as all options contain the same proposals for the closure of the two hospitals which are used by Rossendale people, this results in there being no real alternatives.
2. Inequality of access to services – compared to other boroughs, Rossendale people would have to travel roughly twice as far as others to access services, at least twenty miles, a round trip of 40 miles.
3. Logistical problems – over 4,500 women from Rochdale, Bury and Rossendale will have to travel south towards the city centre for care, adding to already congested roads, pollution, parking problems and the distance and time compromising safety.

The Consultation Document, Making it Better, should address the needs of everyone. It fails to do so because 500,000 people in Rossendale, Rochdale, Heywood and Bury would actually have much less favourable access to services which would be enjoyed by others in Greater Manchester.

This Council would support an option which resulted in a fairer and more equal accessible site to serve this conurbation in the north of Greater Manchester.



Councillor Duncan Ruddick
Leader of the Council