



## HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY BOARD

**17 September, 2018**

<b>Subject:</b>	Proposed Closure of Halcyon Birth Centre
<b>Contribution towards Vision 2030:</b>	 
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Rachael Carter Director of Midwifery Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust

1. Halcyon is a stand-alone midwifery led birthing centre which is located in Sandwell, as part of maternity care provision for low risk women in Sandwell and West Birmingham. It was designed and purpose built to support women to have choice regarding place of birth, as part of the Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals (SWBH) reconfiguration of Maternity services. Halcyon was created to provide women a venue for birth that was located within the Sandwell borough after the relocation of intrapartum activity from Sandwell to City hospital site.
  
2. Since opening in November 2011, 337 women have accessed the birthing centre for intrapartum care, of which 290 gave birth at Halcyon, with 17 births in the most recent year (2017-18). This is significantly fewer births than the forecast of 400 births per annum (12% of target).
  
3. Despite significant initiatives to attract more women to give birth in Halcyon, decreasing numbers of women have made this choice. Initiatives to promote and raise awareness of Halcyon as a choice for births have included:
  - Offering the facility to all suitable women as an option through their antenatal care.
  - Promoting the facility through open days and events.
  - Increasing the use of the facility for a range of antenatal purposes including regular clinics, birth and parenting preparation, reflexology sessions and also postnatal clinics (so that Halcyon can be considered as an option for subsequent births).

4. Offering choice alongside high quality, safe and sustainable care for all women is a priority for the Trust in line with National Agenda (Better Births, 2016) however the vast majority of local women (over 99%) have not chosen Halcyon as their preference for their place of birth, instead opting to use Serenity, the birth Centre at City Hospital which is close by the delivery suite and inpatient wards, as it will be within the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital when it opens in 2022.

Women's preference for this option is reflected in Table 1, below:

**Table 1: Clinical activity by place of birth:**

Year	Home Births	Babies born before arrival of health care professional (BBA)	Serenity Births	Halcyon Births	City Hospital Obstetric Unit births (all birth types)	Total Births
2011 - 2012	46	50	1120	(Nov-Mar) 47	4422	5685
2012 - 2013	32	104	1446	68	4359	5941
2013 – 2014	37	82	1273	50	4066	5508
2014 – 2015	16	78	1292	59	4160	5605
2015 - 2016	12	77	1328	32	4200	5649
2016 - 2017	15	107	1337	18	4788	5967
2017 – 2018	13	109	1341	17	4324	5804
%TOTAL births (n)	0.43% (171)	1.51% (607)	22.75% (9137)	0.72% (291)	75.5% (30319)	40159

5. Within the existing contract, the Trust has a 'break clause' option in October 2018. For the break clause to be valid there is a six month notice period required, following which the building will be handed back to NHS properties. After a review of women's uptake of Halcyon and the static low uptake, despite the initiatives to increase activity, the Trust Board determined at its public Board meeting in March 2018 that Halcyon was no longer sustainable as a viable option. The Trust is still able to offer women three choices for births – in the community, at Serenity (the alongside midwife-led birth centre) supported by the same midwives, and the consultant-led delivery suite service at City Hospital.

6. The matter has been considered by the Clinical Commissioning Group at the Strategic Commissioning and Redesign Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> May where it was decided to progress with closure of the facility. The Accountable Officer and the Trust's Director of Midwifery subsequently met with the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board's Chair to discuss the closure.
7. The Trust has implemented a communications plan to ensure that stakeholders, staff and the public are aware of the forthcoming plans to close the facility.

This has included:

- Open meetings with maternity service staff.
- Informing neighbouring Trusts of forthcoming closure.
- Publicity in local media.
- Information at the Trust's public meetings.
- Individual conversations with women who are booked to offer them alternative places of birth should they need to deliver beyond the date of closure (two women).

Information will also be shared with primary care colleagues so that they can be aware of the options available to local women and families.