

Our Ref: FOI 983 - IR

16 November 2016

Jeff Matthews  
By email: [request-355122-076804d4@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-355122-076804d4@whatdotheyknow.com)

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Dear Mr Matthews

### **Freedom of Information Request – Internal Review Response**

Further to your email dated 22 October 2016, I can confirm that, in accordance with Section VI of the Section 45 Code of Practice, the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has undertaken an internal review of the decision to apply the Section 22 exemption under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and whether the original response provided answered the question posed in relation to the consultation schedule.

The CCG Director of System Transformation conducted the internal review and a copy of his report is enclosed. The internal review will be reported to and reviewed through the Somerset CCG Information Governance, Records Management and Caldicott Committee.

In light of the internal review findings, please find following Somerset CCG's response to your request:

**Question – My understanding was that the STP proposals were to be put out for consultation before being submitted to government this autumn. The reply from Somerset CCG suggests they have not yet put their proposals together and they chose not to tell me what their consultation schedule was. Have they fulfilled their duty under the Freedom of Information Act?**

Following review, Somerset CCG upholds the decision relating to the original disclosure of information made in respect of the requested information. As outlined in the enclosed review report, at the time of the request, it is concluded that under section 22 FOIA, the Somerset STP proposal and details of consultation was justifiably withheld on the grounds of future publication.

Although the CCG recognises the interest of the media and public in future plans for NHS services in Somerset, it is considered that the public interest in withholding the requested information at the time of the request outweighed its disclosure.

However, since your original request, I can advise the STP proposal for Somerset has been published as part of the CCG Governing Body papers for the November 2016 meeting, and is available to view at the following [link](#).

In respect of your request for information about the consultation process, following review of the response provided, it is concluded that this accurately reflects the position that there will be an opportunity for patient and public engagement ahead of consultation on any major changes that might be proposed. This position has not changed since the original response was provided.

## **Appeal**

If you wish to raise any points of clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you remain dissatisfied, you can appeal to the Information Commissioner under section 50 of the Act. The Information Commissioner's Office can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

**Paul Goodwin**  
**Director of Commissioning Reform and Governance**

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