

East Hampshire 
Primary Care Trust

Raebarn House
Third Floor
Hulbert Road
Waterlooville
Hampshire
PO7 7GP

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Detective Chief Superintendent S. Watts,
Head of CID,
Hampshire Constabulary,
Police Headquarters,
West Hill,
Winchester. SO22 5DB

Tel 
Fax

7th February, 2003

Dear Mr. Watts,

Gosport War Memorial Hospital

I am writing to you in my capacity as the Chairman of East Hampshire Primary Care Trust. As you know, East Hampshire PCT is the organisation which employs both the medical staff working at Gosport War Memorial Hospital and Mr. Tony Horne as Chief Executive.

Although we have had no direct contact before I have been kept informed by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority of the discussions they have been having with Hampshire Constabulary concerning the current police investigation into Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

I am aware of the debate that has taken place in recent weeks concerning the management investigation originally commissioned by this Trust, together with the Strategic Health Authority and Fareham and Gosport PCT, and whether or not that investigation should be allowed to continue or be suspended until you have completed your investigation.

This Trust and all its employees are committed to co-operating fully with the police in relation to the police investigation and we do not want to do anything which may prejudice your investigation. If, therefore, it is your view that the management investigation should be suspended then we have already agreed to do so (with both the Strategic Health Authority and Fareham and Gosport PCT). I am concerned, however, that I have not yet had written confirmation from Hampshire Constabulary that such is indeed your view, and, given the level of public interest in this matter and our responsibilities both as a public body and as an employer, I should be obliged if you would please provide me with such written confirmation by return.

You will also know that once the documents came to light which prompted the current police investigation, a decision was taken to redeploy our Chief Executive, Mr. Tony Horne, to other duties pending the outcome of the investigations into events at Gosport War Memorial Hospital. At that time we were operating on the basis that we would be in a position to conduct the management investigation at the same time as any police investigation and that as a result we would be able to establish fairly quickly whether or not Mr. Horne had acted in any way inappropriately prior to his employment with our Trust.

If, as I expect, the management investigation is to be suspended at your request, then we are obliged to reconsider whether or not Mr. Horne should remain redeployed pending the outcome of the police investigation, in the knowledge that the police investigation may take some months (and possibly years) to complete.

I understand that you have already indicated to my colleagues at the Strategic Health Authority that Hampshire Constabulary have no objection to Mr. Horne returning to his duties as Chief Executive whilst the police investigation continues but, again, I have not had any written confirmation that such is the case. I also understand that the police would like to see certain safeguards in place if Mr. Horne is to return to work, which I understand to be as follows:

- that Mr. Horne agrees not to discuss the investigation with any individual he knows or believes to be involved in it; and
- that Mr. Horne should not be involved in our management of or response to the ongoing investigation.

Please can you confirm in writing by return that my understanding of the position is correct. In particular, please let me know if there are any other "safeguards" you require to be in place if Mr. Horne is to return to work. In that respect I am able to confirm that if Mr. Horne was to return to work as Chief Executive the current arrangements we have in place within the Trust would continue, i.e. that Mrs. Paula Turvey will remain responsible for overseeing all aspects of the investigation from the police perspective, and Mr. Horne would not be present at or entitled to receive minutes of any discussions concerning the police investigation. I must make it clear, however, that if he returns to work as Chief Executive of this Trust Mr. Horne will remain accountable for the employees of this Trust who work at Gosport War Memorial Hospital and, as such, may need to have contact with staff working there, to attend meetings there, and to be involved in discussions relating to current practices and future developments in respect of Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

I look forward to receiving your written response to this letter. I realise that you have many other pressing issues to deal with but I am sure you will appreciate the importance of this issue to this Trust. In particular, if we are to allow Mr. Horne to return to work as Chief Executive, then we will need to be in a position to reassure the general public that such action is appropriate at this time, and in doing so we will refer to the police view on that issue. It is obviously essential for the integrity of both our organisations that we do not misrepresent the position and I do, therefore, need written confirmation of the police view on these issues as a matter of the utmost urgency.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Your sincerely,

Code A

Margaret Scott
Chairman