

Briefing on the Presentation of the Annual report at the Annual General Meeting of STFT

Save South Tyneside Hospital Campaign

September 5 2016

South Tyneside Foundation NHS Trust is holding a presentation of its Annual Report “highlight of the year 2015-2016” and financial statements on Friday September 9 2016 at an Annual General meeting at the Education centre in the hospital. The Save South Tyneside Hospital Campaign is submitting its own briefing on South Tyneside Foundation NHS Trust's annual report. The report points out that “emergency demand has increased at a time when resources have been under huge pressure” and it also “recognising the outstanding level of care provided by our staff” which was highlighted in particular by the recent Care Quality Commission inspection. At the same time, whilst recognising the achievements of the clinical and non-clinical staff at the hospital, whilst recognising the important collaboration with community services and other hospitals including City Hospital Sunderland (CHS) the main thrust of the annual report is to take the Hospital in a direction that without any consultation with the people of South Tyneside and Sunderland creates a so-called “alliance”. This has been formed under one Executive team led by the Chief Executive of CHS which was also a hospital declared in deficit and financial difficulties in 2015. The whole direction of the report is that STFT is to be taken over by City Hospitals Sunderland and the people of South Tyneside will lose access to acute stroke, maternity, emergency surgery services in South Tyneside and eventually all of their acute services at their hospital with people having to travel to Sunderland where services will be even under even more pressure than at present.

The report points out that “Towards the end of 2015/16, Trusts across the country began significant planning for the next 5 years with the development of Sustainability and Transformation Plans which are due to be submitted in the summer of 2016. Our plan will be focussed on the South Tyneside and Sunderland geography, which will form part of a wider Northumberland, North Tyneside, Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland overarching plan. As part of this 5 year plan, we have developed an innovative healthcare group alliance with City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust to help transform the quality and financial sustainability of our hospital services. With the unprecedented demand and financial pressures facing the NHS, partnerships like this will be critical to supporting sustainable local healthcare.” Page 6 May 25 Chief Executive's Report.

No-one not even the governors of the hospital have seen a copy of this “Sustainability & Transformation Plan (STP)” let alone the people of South Tyneside and Sunderland whose vital acute and emergency services this effects. Neither has the South Tyneside Clinical Commission Group published its STP for South Tyneside and Sunderland area which was stated as a cut of the NHS budget of “£229 million by 2020-21” and a massive “15-20% by 2020-21” of these hospital budgets according to a letter to staff at both hospital trusts. If this STP is being discussed and submitted then why is it being kept so secret when it is based on cuts of some £229 million to health services in South Tyneside and Sunderland by 2020. Where is the accountability and why should people accept this wholesale wrecking of our local health services when clearly it is not based on clinical need but on massive financial cuts to the NHS budget over the next 5 years.

In fact whole premise of this direction in the report is the claim that the government will cut the funding of the NHS by almost one third over the next next 5 years by some £30billion and are only offering some paltry “transformation funding” reported in the report as £4.9million as long as NHS Trusts agree to these massive cuts to their budget. The report says “Looking ahead to 2016/17, temporary transformational funding support may be available to Trusts with compelling

Sustainability and Transformational Plans to support change and transformation over the next 12 months. Given our unsustainable financial performance over recent years, this transformational funding and the necessary compelling Sustainability and Transformational Plan, will be a critical part of our on-going success.” Page 7 Performance Report. The report continues: “Both organisations now believe that to protect the future sustainability of healthcare across both communities requires more significant transformation leading to greater integration of services, and that this needs to be delivered at speed and scale. Both Trusts recognise the importance and value of having a local hospital providing a range of emergency and planned services, but they equally recognise the urgent need to rebalance services across South of Tyne and Wear as it is no longer safe or sustainable for either organisation to duplicate the provision of services in each location.” Page 55 Disclosures relating to quality governance patient safety, quality and experience -2015/16 quality governance reporting.

In other words the report says that maintaining future sustainability of health care across South Tyneside and Sunderland requires the transfer of funding for acute, maternity and emergency services to Sunderland closing down these acute services in South Tyneside Hospital even though they “recognise the importance and value of having a local hospital providing a range of emergency and planned services”! Yet it means that thousands of people will no longer have access to these acute and emergency services at South Tyneside Hospital and as a consequence it is more likely that the already pressured services in Sunderland will come under even further unsustainable pressure. We can justly question that if this goes ahead is it not this direction that the report gives that is not sustainable, or safe, for the future health care of the people of South Tyneside and Sunderland. Is it not this direction that will be a disaster for the future of the NHS once South Tyneside Hospital is stripped of its acute and emergency health services.

This whole direction in the annual report is unacceptable and we think that the people of South Tyneside, the Foundation Trust members and the governors of the Trust should reject it. Let all the people of South Tyneside unite in action to really safeguard the future of South Tyneside Hospital and its acute and emergency services. Access to health care is a right of all in a modern society, and this right must be guaranteed for our acute and emergency services at South Tyneside District Hospital in a new Annual Report and a direction for our health service to safeguard its future and the future of our hospital.