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## **Report to Brighton and Hove HOSC**

**April 2026**

### **NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board (ICB) Update**

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#### **Summary**

This paper summarises the latest key areas of focus for the new NHS Surrey and Sussex Integrated Care Board, including its delivery of NHS reform and planning for the next three to five years

#### **Recommendation(s) to the Board**

**The Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the update.**

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#### **1. Creating our new organisation – NHS Surrey and Sussex ICB**

NHS Surrey and Sussex ICB formally launched on 01 April 2026, bringing together NHS Surrey Heartlands, NHS Sussex and the Surrey Heath and Farnham parts of NHS Frimley and brings our former clustering arrangement to a close.

The change is part of wider NHS reform announced by the government in March 2025 - aimed at strengthening roles and responsibilities across the wider NHS and reducing duplication, so more funding can be directed to frontline care.

These changes signal a leaner way of working, where every part of the NHS is clear on their purpose, what they are accountable for, and to whom, and will help support delivery of the national NHS 10 Year Health Plan to improve outcomes for patients and communities.

As part of this NHS reform, ICBs were asked to significantly reduce their operating costs (by approximately 50%) and focus on their critical role as strategic commissioners – working to improve population health, reduce inequalities and improve access to more consistent high-quality care. After careful consideration, the Boards of NHS Surrey Heartlands and NHS Sussex agreed to pursue plans to collaborate and create a new organisation spanning the two counties.

This change includes a significant reduction of the overall ICB workforce and a new operating model and internal structures. Consultation process took place in the first quarter of the year in relation to the transfer of staff to the new organisation and proposed organisational structures for the new ICB. Overall, the ICB received more than 1,000 pieces of feedback, including key partners, which has helped us shape our final structure and ways of working. Our new ICB will become a much leaner organisation – about half the size of our two combined organisations at the outset of this change in March 2025 - moving from a combined total of 1298 whole time posts at that time to c. 624 for the new organisation.

We will shortly be starting the process of filling posts, whilst supporting as many staff as possible to find suitable alternative employment. Our priority remains to support staff as much as possible and we have a range of support offers in place from mental health and emotional wellbeing to practical help.

Moving forward, as a strategic commissioner, the ICB is responsible for setting a clear strategy for improving the health of the population, based on the needs of local people, and making sure that the way money is spent has a direct impact on improving people's health and in reducing the inequalities we know exist in how some people access and receive care and treatment.

In short, the ICB's ambition is to improve health outcomes, reduce health inequalities and secure the best value for money from NHS services for the people and communities living in Surrey and Sussex in line with the Government's 10 Year Health Plan.

## **2. Planning for improved outcomes for Surrey and Sussex**

In line with that ambition articulated above, central to our work will be the implementation of our new Surrey and Sussex Five-Year Strategic Commissioning Plan. This was submitted to NHS England on 12 February 2026. We will be finalising the plan over the coming months before publishing it on our new website later in the summer.

The plan sets out the strategic commissioning approach for the next five years, grounded in an Integrated Needs Assessment and aligned with national priorities including the recommendations of the Lord Darzi NHS Review and the Government's 10-Year Health Plan for England.

In line with national strategy our plan places particular emphasis on:

- Shifting care through prevention and early intervention.
- Transforming models of care to strengthen community-based services.
- Improving outcomes for the most disadvantaged communities.
- Modernising digital, workforce and commissioning infrastructure.

Collectively these priorities aim to improve outcomes for the population while ensuring resources are directed where they will have the greatest impact. While the Five-Year Strategic Commissioning Plan sets out the overall direction of travel, a more detailed Implementation Plan is required to translate the strategy into deliverable programmes and actions. This will be developed over the coming months with system partners.

## **3. Political changes in Surrey and Sussex**

We recognise that this month we are not the only statutory organisation going through significant changes in Surrey and Sussex.

Recognising the change across our local authority partners, we take this opportunity to thank the elected members and officers that we are working closely with as we continue to navigate a time of significant national and local change.