



GD/JS

30th April 2025

Mr. Michael Whitehouse
Chair
South East Coast Ambulance Service

BY EMAIL: michael.whitehouse@secamb.nhs.uk

Dear Mr. Whitehouse,

I am writing to you about the recent press coverage relating to the culture problem at South East Coast Ambulance Service. You will be aware of how shocking the allegations are and the serious questions this raises about the governance of the Trust.

This is clearly a serious matter which requires urgent action. Can I ask you to inform me what action the Trust has taken as a result of these very serious allegations? I am extremely concerned at your immediate and absolute defence of the Chief Executive despite clearly not having had the details of the allegations and certainly there being no time for you to have done any due diligence. I assume that your defence of the Chief Executive is based on him giving you reassurances.

Your statements so far will do absolutely nothing to reassure the large number of SECamb staff, who have been subject to these cultural problems, including those who have been in touch with GMB with further serious allegations since the Sky coverage.

Your attempt to blame the GMB rather than listen and reflect on the experiences of staff, serves to defend the indefensible and nothing will change until you and the organisation take these staff seriously.

I can assure you that these staff have tried, alongside GMB, to resolve these issues at every level of the organisation.

The cases raised in the Sky News article, other GMB member cases, alongside our wider concerns about culture, were raised directly with Simon Weldon and senior management at the trust. This includes written letters and meetings, direct with the Chief Executive as recently as February 2025, which can of course be evidenced. The previous executive board were also made aware and refused to meet GMB. The responsibility for this failure lies squarely at the feet of senior management in the Trust.

If anything, the organisation's response confirms GMB were right to request that the Secretary of State appoint an independent investigator to look at the culture of the organisation.

I must also raise a very serious matter with you. Several GMB members were approached last week by trust management trying to find out if they had spoken to Sky and attempting to intimidate them. GMB will not stand for any attempts by management to apply pressure or victimise our members.

GMB are confident that we and our members have tried to raise these issues internally, that the trust has failed to respond. Our members are therefore protected by numerous pieces of legislation including Whistleblowing legislation, the Equality Act and Trade Union and Labour Relations Act.

I am surprised that I must point this out, but it has become necessary to state, that any attempt to victimise those who the organisation believe to have in some way participated in whistleblowing, raising concerns about their own case or the case of GMB members they are representing, will be challenged in line with the above legislation.

Yours sincerely,



Gavin Davies
Interim Regional Secretary

C.c. The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP, Secretary of State for Health