

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 13th April 2017

Questions by Members

Question by:	To be answered by:	Subject:
Cllr Ms B. Thomson	Executive Member for Health, (Councillor Mrs R. Turner)	South Park Doctors Surgery
Cllr J.C.S. Essex	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Environment and Infrastructure, (Councillor Dr L.R. Hack)	Government Anti-Littering Strategy

Council Meeting: 13 April 2017

Councillor Ms B. Thomson will ask the **Executive Member for Health, Councillor Mrs R. Turner** the following question:

South Park Doctors Surgery

Is the Portfolio Holder for Health aware of the impending closure of South Park Doctors Surgery and is there any more action that we can take as a Council?

There are currently 4,600 patients registered at this Surgery some of whom are very frail, elderly and disabled who will have to travel by public transport to other surgeries to obtain health support, advice and treatment. The threat of this closure is very unsettling for the residents.

I understand that the root cause of the proposed closure relates to unaffordable proposed increases in the rent for use of the land and buildings. Is there any action that the Council can take to Compulsory Purchase the building on the basis of the community need for this facility?

Observations

During a meeting between the Chief Executive and Head of Health and Wellbeing with the Clinical Chair of East Surrey CCG in July 2016, Dr Elango Vijaykumar stated that the future of the South Park Surgery was under review and a probable outcome of that review would be the subsequent closure of the surgery.

Whilst Dr Elango VijayKumar did state that whilst increasing rental costs would be a contributing factor in their considerations, he also stressed that operating a surgery with less than 5000 registered patients was considered, by both and the CCG and NHS South East, as financially unviable and unsustainable and that existing patients would most likely be subject to dispersal to other local surgeries.

Furthermore, he stated that the CCG with NHS South East would be undertaking an extensive public consultation process, prior to making any final decision.

The option of running a reduced satellite service was discussed and RBBC officers suggested the potential use of the Woodhatch Community Centre, currently operated by Staywell.

Following initial discussions with Staywell colleagues, the Head of Health and Wellbeing confirmed to East Surrey CCG that the Council would be happy to further explore this option.

Subsequently on 24 August ESCCG and NHS South East colleagues visited the Woodhatch Community Centre, accompanied by the Head of Health and Wellbeing in order to assess the viability of using the centre for drop in GP appointments.

Whilst initial conversations seemed very positive, ESCCG subsequently confirmed that this option would not be suitable. They stated that the issues were still primarily financial but not linked to any rental charges that the Council would propose for use of the centre. They assured officers that ongoing Public Consultation was taking place including with Members of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.

In relation to the option to CPO the site; CPO powers are available to a number of public bodies and are used to acquire property for specific purposes that generally relate to the functions of each relevant public body.

None of the powers currently used by district/borough councils would appear to allow the acquisition of a property specifically for health purposes. It is likely that a compulsory acquisition for this purpose would have to be taken by a health service body.

Even if the relevant powers were available to this Council, the process of preparing, making and confirming a CPO, which includes a requirement to obtain ministerial consent, is time consuming and unlikely to be achievable given that the surgery is facing imminent closure.

In addition, the licensing of any surgery would require the approval of NHS England and would need to fit in with the overall vision and strategy for primary care across the region.

The future provision and transformation of primary care is a key workstream within the East Surrey and Sussex Sustainability and Transformation Plan. This planning process is also currently subject to public consultation. Senior Council officers are involved in this workstream and are doing all they can to represent the interests of all Reigate and Banstead residents.

Council Meeting: 13 April 2017

Councillor J.C.S. Essex will ask the **Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Environment and Infrastructure, Councillor Dr L.R. Hack** the following question:

Government Anti-Littering Strategy

The government has recently published its anti-littering strategy (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-publishes-new-anti-littering-strategy>).

Proposed measures include: stopping councils from charging householders for disposal of DIY household waste at civic amenity sites (e.g. Earlswood Community Recycling Centre) as legally, household waste is supposed to be free to dispose of at such sites. This aims to reduce fly tipping and other littering.

Please can you confirm that Reigate and Banstead Borough Council intends to respond to this consultation, and confirm that this response is also copied to Surrey County Council so that a coordinated approach is taken to reduce littering and fly tipping in our borough?

Observations

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council will respond to the consultation currently being undertaken by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The wording of the consultation is as follows:- “We want to know what you think about whether to increase the on-the-spot fines for littering, graffiti and fly-posting in England. We are also proposing new fines for the owners of vehicles from which litter has been thrown.”

I note that other measures are presently being considered including stopping councils from charging for the disposal of household DIY waste at Civic Amenity Sites (Rubbish Dumps). I have consistently stated that I believe that allowing for the disposal of small amounts of genuine DIY waste at Civic Amenity Sites encourages our residents to ‘do the right thing’; charging is counterproductive and evidence suggests that it may result in an increase in fly-tipping.

I strongly support increased on-the-spot fines for littering and in particular new fines for litter thrown from vehicles.