

**On 01 April 2020 at 18:37 Councillor Mark Allison wrote:**

I am contacting you partly in a personal capacity, as a lifelong resident of Sutton and Merton and as someone who was born in St Helier hospital and has accessed many local health services.

In addition, I am Deputy Leader of Merton Council, as well as the Cabinet Member for Finance and a local Councillor for Lavender Fields ward.

I can confirm that in 18 years as a councillor the single issue that has attracted most public interest has been the desire of residents to ensure that emergency and maternity and children's services are retained at St Helier hospital. If you had spent the time that we councillors have talking to residents throughout Merton you would recognise that there is no bigger issue for residents.

It is also an issue that has attracted numerous cross-party motions, all of which have demanded that existing health services are retained at St Helier hospital in LB Sutton (note that "Sutton hospital" is further from Sutton town centre).

*Before I state my views and my understanding of residents' views, however, I would like to express my disgust that you have continued with your consultation despite the fact that many of those involved in responding to your consultation are working incredible hours on providing an adequate response to the coronavirus outbreak.*

*Frankly, this consultation is an unwelcome distraction that is taking staff and community activists away from helping residents at a time when this is vitally needed.*

*I am very angry about this, and will never forget that during the biggest public health crisis in our lifetimes you have caused people like me to spend time writing consultation responses rather than helping my constituents.*

My broader views on your consultation is below.