

Dr Andrew Murray, GP and Clinical Chair at NHS South West London CCG
and
Dr Charlotte Canniff, GP and Clinical Chair at NHS Surrey Heartlands CCG

Sent via email - hello@improvinghealthcaretogether.org.uk.

1 July 2020

Dear Dr Murray and Dr Canniff

Thank you for this opportunity to make a statement and ask questions before the joint decision meeting on 3rd July on the siting of a specialist emergency care hospital (SECH). I welcome the much-needed extra investment in secondary care provision in our area and I fully understand why Epsom & St Helier and the CCGs are keen to make a decision, particularly given current economic and political uncertainty.

Unfortunately, the contribution by MVDC and its residents to the recent consultation was curtailed by the pandemic. The MVDC Scrutiny Committee meeting with representatives from Epsom & St Helier, which was expected to generate a formal response on behalf of MVDC, had to be cancelled, as was the only planned consultation event in Mole Valley. There were of course opportunities for residents to attend other consultation events and contribute online. However, the views of Mole Valley residents may still have been under-represented in consultation responses.

I hope you will therefore give particular weight to the following factors and questions:

1. Epsom Hospital lies roughly a mile from the border with Mole Valley, and many residents from the North of Mole Valley – Ashted, Leatherhead, Fetcham, Great and Little Bookham, and villages to the North and East of Dorking - are affected by these proposals. Epsom Hospital remains the most convenient site for many Mole Valley residents, including staff.

If Epsom Hospital is not selected, how can we ensure that Mole Valley residents have the transport and traffic infrastructure they need to access the selected site?

How can we ensure that Epsom Hospital will receive sufficient investment and funding to continue to provide high quality non-SECH care to Mole Valley residents?

2. The majority of the 8,000+ new homes proposed in Mole Valley's recent consultation on its draft Local Plan are in the North of Mole Valley - especially Leatherhead, Ashted and Bookham. A number of respondents have rightly highlighted the need for additional primary and secondary care infrastructure to support any such development.

How can we factor the siting of the SECH into discussions between MVDC and its partners about the next stages in developing Mole Valley's Local Plan?

3. It is important to bear in mind the adequacy of secondary care outside the existing catchment area of Epsom & St Helier in order to make an optimal decision. Many residents in the South and East of Mole Valley are served by East Surrey Hospital. However, roughly 20,000 residents in the North-West of Mole Valley (Bookham and Fetcham) who currently use Epsom experience some of the longest travel times in accessing secondary care. The selection of Sutton or St Helier would make Royal Surrey the closest SECH for many of these residents but without bringing that hospital any closer.

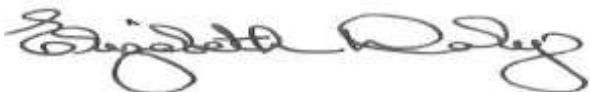
How can the needs of Bookham & Fetcham residents best be served?

4. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many Mole Valley residents have been treated and lives have been saved by the hardworking staff at both Epsom and St Helier hospitals during the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has raised many issues about the adequacy of secondary health provision nationally as well as locally, while also potentially providing greater national commitment and resources to address some of the issues that have driven the proposal to have a single SECH - such as shortages of funding and critical care staff.

Do the drivers behind the consultation still apply?

I shall follow these proceedings with interest and I look forward to working with Surrey Heartlands CCG and Epsom & St Helier as these decisions are taken forward.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Elizabeth Daly
Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, Mole Valley District Council