

## **Strategic Theme Motion to Full Council 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

This Council notes the enormous health inequalities, exacerbated by inequalities in access to healthcare, between the East and West of the borough.

Council notes that according to Public Health Outcomes Framework data, the slope index of inequality (an overarching measure of the life expectancy inequality gap which represents the gap in years of life expectancy at birth between the most deprived and least deprived communities), from 2018 to 2020 in Merton the gap was 5 years for females (95% CI 3.3-6.6) and 7.7 for males (95% CI 6-9.4).

Council notes the proposal to move services to Belmont will increase these inequalities and reduce access to healthcare for the people of Merton.

Council notes the cuts to funding and delays to the programme of hospital-building in Belmont that have already been seen, and believes them to be a matter of concern to people throughout South West London.

This Council has a long-standing commitment to ensuring that the residents of Merton have access to a full range of NHS acute services on the St Helier Hospital site, including a blue light A&E and consultant-led maternity service. Any attempt to relocate acute services away from an area of relative deprivation in St Helier in favour of a more affluent area such as Belmont would be incompatible with the statutory duty on the Merton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to have regard to the need to tackle health inequalities because it would make accessing acute health services significantly more difficult for those in our population who suffer the greatest level of inequality. Instead, council supports the previous strategy to re-build St Helier hospital on its current site with its full range of services intact.

It is the firm belief of this Council that the retention of all services at St Helier is the very best way to ensure equality of healthcare provision for the residents of Merton, and ensure that those in the east do not further lose out.

The Council notes that the Leader of the Council has written on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to the Chief Executive Officer designate for the South West London ICS to ask for an explanation of any reassurances she has received that the hospital-building programme in South West London will not suffer from further delays or cuts to funding. Council calls on the CCG to publish the new business plan and explain the reason behind residents not being consulted on it, and for information about the business of the Strategic Executive Group and the Strategic Oversight Group.

Council resolves to:

Write a letter to the CCG and other affected local authorities requesting that, in the ongoing spirit of cooperation identified by an independent review panel to the Secretary of State in October 2020 as essential to identifying the best possible outcomes for the whole population being served, they support the retention of all services at St Helier.

Cllr Helena Dollimore

Cllr Agatha Akyigyina

Cllr James Williscroft

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