

Council – 19th July 2018

Agenda Item 29

Opposition Business – Mid and South Essex STP Proposals

The proposed changes in health and care provision in Southend and across the Mid and South Essex footprint are destined to bring lasting change to care provided to patients. That change must carry a guarantee of better patient outcomes for everyone who needs care. The recent consultation on the measures in the Sustainability and Transformation Plan did not set out the impact of proposed changes and evidence of patient outcomes has not been demonstrated despite requests from the People Scrutiny Committee, the Joint Health Overview Committee, Southend Health and Wellbeing Board, and individual councillors, over a period of 18 months. Proposals by the STP Team are still unclear even though the potential for amendment of those proposals has almost concluded.

The council therefore asks for the following to be placed on record

Earlier this year, the Council's response to the STP consultation expressed dissatisfaction with the STP proposals in a number of very important areas.

- We would not support the STP without better rationale and evidence for moving stroke services to Basildon Hospital
- We said that the proposals are weak in terms of guaranteeing investment in localities without the impact of which, the acute reconfiguration is not viable
- We believed that proposals around transport and transfers were unclear and poorly defined, and would not be able to support the STP until detailed workable proposals were set out
- We found the proposals on consolidated discharge and repatriation arrangements unclear
- We noted the challenges in workforce recruitment, retention and long-term sustainability

This council believes that even at this late stage there is still not sufficient clarity in respect of these serious concerns. We further note that the consultation process reached only a small fraction of the population in the footprint of these proposals.

It has still not been made clear to residents that six out of the seven therapeutic areas consulted upon will be wound down at Southend Hospital, with patients being moved to Basildon and Broomfield hospitals. The consultation document made no mention of closing down services and wording is vague when public-facing documents refer to treatment being available to patients who seek help at Southend, but don't mention they will be transferred to another hospital for that care.

Southend Borough Council understands the reasons for change - 20,000 GP appointments not provided to patients, which will rise to 60,000 within only a few years, and hospitals in the STP footprint not performing as patients expect. It disagrees with the current process for delivery of change and wants to see a true process of consultation being undertaken, setting out the full impact of proposed changes, including the impact on patients, and clarity about what will happen to current services.

The council notes that the STP proposals are now subject to a formal scrutiny procedure. The council requests that the Joint Scrutiny Committee take full account of the council's continued objections to the STP. The Council further requests that the People Scrutiny Committee gives due consideration to a referral to the Secretary of State, taking these objections and other relevant factors into account.