

## Reconfiguration of the acute services within the STP footprint

On Tuesday 2nd July 2019 a cross party panel from Southend on Sea Borough Council (Southend Council) met with representatives of the Mid and South Essex University Hospitals Group (MSE Group) to discuss the recent communication from the MSE Group regarding the reconfiguration of the acute services within the STP footprint (letter attached at **Appendix 1**).

In attendance were: from Southend Council, Councillors Lesley Salter (Chair), Cheryl Nevin, Anne Jones (substituting for Trevor Harp), Beth Hooper and Anne Chalk, plus officers from the Council. From the MSE Group, the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Medical Officer, the Group Clinical Director for Musculoskeletal, plus the Independent Chair of the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP).

The aim of the meeting was to clarify the detail of the letter (**Appendix 1**) and to understand and discuss further the implications for Southend residents. Further, the aim was to explore with the MSE Group their commitment to pursuing their proposals should the Southend Council referral to the Secretary of State be upheld. Councillors also wanted assurances from the MSE Group that no changes to the provision of emergency and elective health services across the STP would be made until the Secretary of State has issued his decision, following advice from the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP).

At the outset, the Chief Executive of the MSE Group gave assurances that the MSE Group is committed to respecting the democratic process under the process of a referral to the Secretary of State. The chair of the meeting acknowledged this assurance and further confirmed that it was important to the residents of Southend that the right process is followed.

During the meeting all of the proposed changes to health services were discussed and explored with a focus on the impact on Southend residents. The cross political party panel found the discussion helpful and progressive in terms of understanding the detail and the impact on residents. Councillors reminded representatives from the MSE Group of the importance of communication and how these proposed changes were being evidenced to the residents. Councillors stated that at times some of the communication to residents was confusing and contradictory.

What was clear at the end of the meeting was that both Southend Council and the MSE Group were committed to regular communication both formally and informally. The Chair reminded the MSE Group that this approach was consistent with previous communications from Southend Council. The MSE Group welcomed this approach and welcomed the opportunity to discuss further once the IRP advice was released.

The Council remain committed to ensuring that any proposed changes to health services in the Borough does not have an adverse impact on our residents.

Councillor Lesley Salter  
Chair, People Scrutiny Committee  
9<sup>th</sup> July 2019