Stepping Hill Hospital Cuts – Altered Motion

This Council notes that:

- The dedicated staff working at Stepping Hill Hospital provide vital, life-saving care for residents across Stockport all year round.
- On 28th July 2016 a Stockport NHS Foundation Trust ‘Financial Improvement Plan’ was made public which stated that Stepping Hill Hospital is currently losing £75 every minute and will have a £40.1 million deficit during the 2016-17 financial year.
- The plan proposes significant cuts at Stepping Hill, including the closure of a 22-bed surgical ward, the loss of a further 8 trauma and orthopaedic beds, increased parking charges for staff and patients, and voluntary redundancy for up to 410 staff.
- The Chief Executive and Director of Operations of Stockport NHS Foundation Trust attended a meeting of the Executive on 16th August to answer questions and were asked to provide assurances to the Council that local patient safety and outcomes will not be compromised by these plans.
- That the plan was not subject to any formal consultative process with Councillors, patients or the wider public by the NHS Foundation Trust before implementation of it began.
- Severe pressure is being placed on our local NHS by long-term challenges from the rising costs of treatment and medicines and an increasingly ageing population.
- The impact of these trends has been greatly exacerbated by tight national funding settlements which don’t reflect increased demands on the NHS or the true level of cost inflation in health, unnecessary and unwanted top-down health reforms, increasing privatisation, and damaging cuts to Local Government which provides community-based adult social care services.
- The Conservative government is cutting the vital preventative work which our Public Health Budget supports. This makes little sense. Preventing an illness in the first place is always better than curing it once it occurs. Recent in-year government cuts represent a massive backward step with less proactive health services leading to a rise in expensive hospital admissions. They are the falsest of false economies and misguided short-termism that will only cost us more down the line. They are to be followed by a further 2.5% cut next year.
- Stockport Together is a major transformation programme bringing together Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Stockport Clinical Commissioning Group, Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust, Stockport Council and Stockport’s GP federation, Viaduct Health, to improve how care is provided in our borough.
- On 19th July 2016 the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership announced that Stockport Together will receive £19 million from the GM Transformation Fund over 3 years in order to progress innovative joint-working between the NHS, Stockport Council and other health partners.

This Council believes that:

- The current NHS funding model leads to a system of perverse incentives which sees health and care services forced to compete for finite resources or re-charge each other for their activities.
- The financial crisis at Stepping Hill cannot be seen in isolation and is indicative of a national picture of under-funding which is in stark contrast to the publically-run, properly-funded NHS which patients want to see.
• The scale of the financial challenge being imposed on the local health economy in Stockport means that integration of health and social care through the Stockport Together Programme is the only way to continue to provide the standard of care which local residents expect and deserve.

This Council resolves:-

• To work constructively with Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, and support hard-working staff at Stepping Hill Hospital, in providing the highest possible standard of care to local people in very difficult circumstances.

• To welcome the announcement that Stockport has been allocated £19 million from the GM Transformation Fund and work with healthcare partners in supporting the borough to better integrate health and social care services.

• For the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Health outlining our deep concerns at Stepping Hill’s Financial Improvement Plan and outline why it is vital that Stockport has a properly funded NHS and Local Authority working together to deliver the best quality of care to residents.

Moved by: Councillor Tom McGee
Seconded by: Councillor Wendy Wild