

**Executive – 16 August 2016**

**Public Questions**

No.	Questioner	Exec Cllr	Question Summary	Response	Written or Verbal
1	Mrs Pat Ruaune	Cllr Sheila Bailey	Now that we have a new Executive Committee, how do Councillors feel about re-entering the Green Flag scheme to show support to the dedicated volunteers and the Friends of the RVCP Group?	Regrettably, the Council no longer has the revenue funding nor the staffing resources to reintroduce the Green Flag accreditation. However, I am very aware of the valuable contribution volunteers make to the vibrancy and quality of our parks and greenspaces and this should be recognised. I have, therefore, asked officers to consider how we can formally recognise this commitment through the 'Proud of Stockport Awards', the planning for which is due to begin soon. This will, hopefully, give an opportunity for Friends of Parks Groups throughout Stockport to participate in what is a celebration of voluntary activity.	Written
2	Mr Graham Trickey	Cllr Alexander Ganotis	What is the timetable for decisions by SMBC on the SEMMMS Relief Road Phase 2 (A6-M60); will there be any review before the completion of the Feasibility Study; when will the feasibility study be completed (if it is completed); and has funding been applied for (through Greater Manchester?) for further development of the Business Case beyond the Feasibility Study?	<p>The Feasibility Study will be completed in spring 2017 and Stockport Council's Environment and Economy Committee and the Executive will receive a report on the outcome of the study for them to consider.</p> <p>Stockport Council officers are part of a project group monitoring the progress of the study. Stockport Council in conjunction with GMCA has submitted a bid for funding to continue to develop the full business case for the scheme. The bid for funding will be considered by the Department of Transport (DfT) this autumn. The bid was submitted in advance of the completion of the feasibility study in order to meet the timescales set by the DfT for future funding</p>	Written

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				<p>of development costs for potential large schemes.</p> <p>Stockport Council will decide at the appropriate time if the initial feasibility study identifies that the scheme has an acceptable outline business case for a scheme and full business case to be progressed.</p> <p><i>The Leader of the Council answered a question at the Council Meeting on 30 June 2016 about the feasibility study for the A6-M60 Relief Road scheme, and this can viewed on the Council's website <a href="http://goo.gl/JtdJiQ">http://goo.gl/JtdJiQ</a> (please note: the webcast of the meeting is available for 6 months from the date of the meeting)</i></p>	
3	Mr John Pearson	Cllr Tom McGee	<p>Cognisant that the role of the Stockport Health &amp; Wellbeing Board includes duties to "seek to improve the health and wellbeing of Stockport residents" and to "seek to secure improvements in the availability, delivery and value for money of health and care services for Stockport residents", does the Executive Councillor (Health), share the alarm expressed by the North West Regional Director of the Royal College of Nursing, as reported in the Stockport Express on 3rd August 2016, at the cuts being made at Stepping Hill hospital and her concerns that :</p> <p>(1) "Bringing forward the closure of ward B3 is based entirely on the need to save money, with the government forcing trusts to put the need to balance their books before patient care".</p>	<p>The Executive Councillor (Health) acknowledged the points made about the role of the Health &amp; Wellbeing Board in improving health and wellbeing in Stockport and seeking to secure improvements in health and social care services, but highlighted the specific challenges of ensuring an ageing population remained healthy, and healthy for longer, while reducing inequalities that existed across the borough. He stressed the importance of prevention and early invention to make best use of resources that were reducing year on year. He also acknowledged the wider challenges for the health and social care economy of suitable care provision and the delays in discharge from hospital.</p>	Verbal

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			<p>(2) “That hospitals such as Stepping Hill have struggled to cope with fewer resources, an ageing population and rising patient demand. So the early closure of this and other wards could have a dramatic effect on patient care”.</p> <p>(3) “That staff and trade unions are concerned about the impact on staff working in these areas, who feel uncertain about their future and where they will be working over the coming months”.</p> <p>(4) That the impact will be felt across the hospital with increasing patient numbers and pressure on other wards and patients waiting longer for treatment?</p> <p>Will the Executive Councillor (Health) undertake to recommend to the Council that, in the interests of the people of Stockport, it unequivocally opposes the ward and bed closures and job cuts which Stockport NHS Foundation Trust has announced?</p>	<p>The Executive Councillor than addressed the points raised by the Royal College of Nursing highlighted in the question:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In relation to the closure of the B3 Ward, he stated that his understanding was that closure of this ward was a seasonal occurrence and was part of normal hospital operations.</li> <li>• He agreed that year on year reductions in resources across the NHS was putting additional pressures on the local Trust and on others, and was a challenge also facing the Council.</li> <li>• He reiterated the point already made about an ageing population locally but also highlighted that as well as a general increase in age, there were increasing numbers of the very old who had particular needs.</li> <li>• Rising demand at the hospital needed to be addressed as Stockport was a significant outlier in relation to the number of patients attending A&amp;E and then being admitted.</li> <li>• He accepted the staff and trade unions had understandable concerns, but stated that the current situation could not continue. He added that he understood the Trust had been seeking to engage staff and other</li> </ul>	

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				<p>in a 'conversation' about the future direction of the Trust.</p> <p>The Executive Councillor stated that since he was not part of the management of the Trust, and these matters were mostly outside the ability of the Council to influence, he could not unequivocally oppose the measures, but gave an assurance he would continue to seek to work with the Trust to make best use of resources both parties had, and to engage with the Government to seek to redress the funding shortfall.</p>	
4	Mr Ashley Walker	Cllr Tom McGee	<p>Bearing in mind that the role of the Stockport Health &amp; Wellbeing Board includes duties to "improve transparency and accountability for local people" and to "respond to consultation from partner organisations", does the Board's Chair, the Executive Councillor (Health), agree with the view of the Chief Executive of Stockport Healthwatch, as published in the Stockport Express on 3rd August 2016, that the failure by the Board of Stockport NHS Foundation Trust "to involve and consult with patients and patient representative bodies such as Healthwatch when making plans to close wards and beds within the hospital" is an outrage?</p> <p>Will the Executive Councillor (Health) undertake to ensure that full disclosure is made to the public of Stockport :</p> <p>(1) of the types of jobs from which 410 Stepping Hill hospital staff are to be dismissed as redundant</p>	<p>The Executive Councillor (Health) stated that the requests for information were matters for the Trust's management and not something the Council could influence. The Executive Councillor undertook to write to the Chief Executive of the Trust to ask for the release of this information.</p> <p>The Executive Councillor further stated that the challenges with funding at this hospital, and others, were widely known and therefore not a surprise. He suggested that consultation could have been undertaken sooner, but acknowledged that the Trust had planned to consult with staff earlier. He suggested that a protocol may be useful to set out how such matters would be approached in the future as there was much activity underway that would impact the operation of the hospital.</p> <p>The Executive Councillor, in reference to</p>	Verbal

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			<p>(2) of all of the impact and risk assessments of the closure of ward B3 and of the trauma and orthopaedic beds which are under threat of closure</p> <p>(3) of all of the impact and risk assessments of the dismissal of 410 staff, which constitutes 7% of the hospital's workforce".</p>	<p>the wording of the question, stated that the he understood the Trust were only seeking voluntary redundancies, and that he understood that risk assessments were a standard part of the planning process for the Trust. He suggested that were the Trust to achieve the required number of voluntary redundancies that Trade Unions should engage with the Trust about the future direction.</p>	