

**Full Council – 19 February 2020****Councillor questions:****1. From Councillor Rolfe to Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Communities**

Ageing is a growing global phenomenon. This has widespread implications. Following extensive consultation, KCC are changing the way they distribute grants to Adult Social Care service providers who are now encouraged to take a more collaborative approach and 'bid' for funding as part of a consortium that will, if successful, win the contract to deliver services across a wide locality. The Romney Marsh Day Centre based in New Romney provides a lifeline for some of the most vulnerable people in our area. It offers a range of services tailored to meet the needs of older residents living on Romney Marsh and so helps tackle issues of rural isolation. The Centre's manager recently announced that its range of services may, be adversely affected, by the new funding regime. It is now part of a consortium that covers the first new contracts' locale which is South Kent Coastal CCG's geographic footprint (Romney Marsh through to Folkestone, Dover and Deal ), and Thanet. This is a very large catchment area.

Therefore my question to you is: How can this District Council support service providers such as the Day Centre and others across this District to ensure they can continue to deliver help and support to the elderly and other vulnerable groups living in our area?

**ANSWER:**

On 10 February KCC launched their consultation on their new Civil Society Strategy. This replaces KCC's Voluntary and Community Sector Policy and is based on engagement with the sector over the last 5 years and specific engagement with sector representatives and networks over the past few months. I would encourage all members to respond to the consultation which can be found on the KCC Website/civil society strategy. The consultation ends on 14 April.

As far as we are aware all key voluntary sector groups will have been invited to engagement events to discuss KCCs proposals and Age UK Hythe recently came in to the Council to describe the forward planning they were doing to proposed funding changes. Age UK have been aware of this change in the way KCC Funding is provided and have put in place a number of mitigating measures - although still hoping to receive KCC funding.

I have discussed KCC Funding of Romney Marsh Day Centre with Councillor Tony Hills who in turn facilitated a meeting for Jon Wilson, Romney Marsh Day Centre Manager with Claire Bell Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Public Health at KCC. Councillor Hills, along with other members is well aware of the services provided by the Day Centre and he is keeping a watching brief on the situation. He has put the Day Centre in touch with CALM (Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh) to see if there is a way of working together and also the Romney Resource Centre who may be able to assist with submitting the bid.

As a District Council we already signpost and make available information on where support services to vulnerable groups are, including use of Spotlight, hosting meet the funders events for the voluntary sector group, supporting the voluntary sector groups through networking events etc.

Some of the KCC work, we believe is aimed at reducing duplication and encouraging co-location where possible and encouraging groups to work together.

The most important aspect is that the elderly receive the services they require where and when needed.

**SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:**

This situation is only going to get worse, and we need to find a solution. Do you agree?

**ANSWER:**

Yes, I totally agree.

**2. From Councillor Davison to Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Communities**

Please could the portfolio holder for communities give an update on her work to tackle our GP crisis?

**ANSWER:**

Firstly, I would say that the shortage of GP's is not a matter that we can control, it is the direct responsibility of NHS South Kent Coast Commissioning Group. However I know how important this issue is to our residents and we are keen to support our GPs. We are regularly engaging with the health sector on this matter and it is an issue that I have raised on many occasions: I did raise it at the last Kent Health & Wellbeing Board. In addition, I have been updated on the East Kent Medical School and the work they will be doing with new Graduate GP'S and Dr Bryant, Lead Clinician of the South Kent Coast CCG is extremely positive about this initiative. The School is currently oversubscribed for the intake in September this year: and from the start of the course, students will spend time out in GP Surgeries. Dr Bryant has said that evidence suggests, Students will remain in the area where they study and as a District there are ways in which we can also encourage students to remain in the area ie housing.

Very recently we addressed the closure of Park Farm surgery and were encouraged that new GP resource is coming into the District - I issued a briefing note on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020 after the last Council Meeting, after a meeting the Leader and I had with Dr Bryant, Bill Millar, Director of Primary Care and our MP Damian Collins. Previous closures were also addressed at the time they were announced. The health service has been redesigning its services in order to ensure the most efficient use of GPs and this is also reflected in the note to

members. We are also awaiting decisions from Primary Care on the Urgent Treatment Centres which will provide an additional source of care to residents.

Additionally, consultation regularly takes place between our Officers and the CCG with regard to large scale housing development and particularly with regard to Otterpool Park where we are looking at best practice examples for a Health Centre such as the Estuary View medical facility in Whitstable.

With my Officers I will continue to liaise with Dr Bryant and the Health Service.

The note to all members was as follows:

**Note for Members on the Closure of Park Farm Surgery – From Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee**

On Friday 31 January 2020 , with the Leader, I met Dr Jonathan Bryant Clinical Lead of the CCG and Bill Millar Director of Primary Care. Our MP, Damian Collins joined us.

Dr Bryant and Bill Millar were keen to inform us that all patients registered at the Park Farm Surgery would have a choice of Surgery to register with locally. They also informed us that they were beginning to recruit new GP's to the area and that Dr Banik will remain in the District.

We emphasised the need to ensure patients were informed as soon as possible and that the more vulnerable patients be supported. We were advised that sessions would be held, probably at Three Hills, to help all patients and to assist with registration. Dates to be announced, probably in the letter to residents. We also suggested that they use Academy FM and BBC Radio Kent to inform patients more widely, in addition to social media and other methods of communication. The District Council will also communicate information as it becomes available through our own channels and Damian Collins will use his weekly newspaper columns to also communicate the information to residents.

The following statement was released by the CCG on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020, which I hope you will find helpful.

Dr Banik has decided to close Park Farm Surgery in Folkestone on 31 March 2020. All of the patients that are registered at Park Farm Surgery will receive a letter from the NHS within the next two weeks explaining how they can register with another local GP practice. The letter will explain the arrangements the NHS has made with six local GP practices so all of Dr Banik's patients will have a choice of local GP practices to register with. The letter will also give details of registration events where patients will be able to register with their chosen GP practice. Even though Park Farm Surgery is closing there will be more appointments at GP surgeries available in Folkestone as all the GP practices will receive additional funding to see Dr Banik's patients when they take on new patients. Patients who don't register with a new GP practice after they receive their letter will receive an additional reminder before the end of March informing them how to register with a new GP practice. If patients don't register with a new GP practice before 31 March 2020, the NHS will allocate them to a local GP

practice to make sure every patient currently registered at Park Farm Surgery knows who to contact should they need to make an appointment with a GP practice.

**SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:**

I'm not sure if the briefing note has been disseminated more widely, to members of the public. Do you have any view on the claim that there are more GPs are wanting to retire, and does it factor in population changes which mean that the ratio between GPs and the patient is actually lower now than it was previously?

**ANSWER:**

The CCG will soon be issuing a letter to all patients of Dr Banik setting out how they can register with other doctors, or if they don't register, they will be allocated another doctor. I will request the information on the other points you raised. All I can tell you is that Dr Bryant, I've had to ask him twice to say it, but more GPs are coming to this area.

**3. From Councillor Davison to Councillor Monk, Leader of the Council**

Please could the leader of the council give an update on any work being carried out to prepare the district for the end of the Brexit transition period?

**ANSWER:**

Officers continue to work with key partners across Kent under the umbrella of the Kent Resilience Forum. Close links are also maintained with central government via MHCLG. The Council has carried out much work recently updating emergency plans and business continuity plans and procedures. These plans will be updated further as the position becomes clearer. Key officers across the council have been identified and training needs have been assessed with training plans in place. The Council has a nominated Brexit Officer who will continue to monitor and cascade information where appropriate. Our Communications Team continue to monitor information coming in and will use social media channels to cascade this information where appropriate. Our Economic Development Team continue to work with businesses across the District to ensure that they are as prepared as they can be. Key Officers are continuing to attend both Strategic and Tactical level meetings concerning contingency planning for any potential disruption across the county. As more information becomes available throughout this year, Officers will inform residents and report to Members.

**SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:**

What work is being done in relation to food price rises?

**ANSWER:**

I don't know, but I will find out.

