



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Chris Hastings
(Area Director)
Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care
Surrey County Council

Our reference: BS19134

31 December 2021

Dear Mr Hastings,

Re: The Future of the Eight Residential Care Homes for Older People Run by Surrey County Council

I write in response to the consultation above, with particular reference to Birchlands care home in Englefield Green and the wider impact this decision may have on care home provision across Surrey.

Decisions regarding care home provision are clearly an emotive issue for staff, residents, and their families. Whichever option is determined to be the best way forwards, whether building maintenance, refurbishment or closure, there is likely to be significant disruption to residents and it is essential that their needs are prioritised, not only in the initial decision but also implementation of any following actions.

I therefore welcome the Council's clear commitment to the wellbeing of the residents and staff at the homes, this full and open consultation, and that the wellbeing of residents and those in need of care services is the priority in making these decisions.

In order to ensure their needs are met throughout this process, I would be grateful if you could address each of the queries raised below.

1) I welcome that the consultation states new assessments of needs will be carried out and families would be supported to find alternative care home provision if required. However, if residents are ultimately required to move, either temporarily or permanently, what practical support will be provided to assist this? What should people expect in terms of the range of options that they may be available for them to choose from? what assessment will there be of any cost implications for residents and their families, and what financial support may be available if required?

2) Ensuring everyone who requires residential care has access to quality places is vital. What assessment has there been on the impact any closures may have on overall care home capacity in each area and across Surrey as a whole? What are current occupancy rates of residential care settings, and also high needs settings? Has the Council discussed these issues with private care home providers?

3) I welcome the work Surrey County Council has done to support rapid transfer of care from health services to the community, but there remain delays in securing appropriate care preventing patients leaving hospital, resulting in increased costs and reduced

capacity. The health and care sectors work closely together and rely on availability and smooth transition of care. What assessment has been made of any impact this decision may have on the ability of the health sector to discharge patients into care settings?

4) The Council will be aware that broad reforms to the care sector are due to be introduced in the near future. Would these reforms have any material impact on the options presented in this consultation?

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Spencer". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Dr Ben Spencer MP
Runnymede and Weybridge