



**COUNCILLOR AGATHA AKYIGYINA OBE**  
(Labour, Figges Marsh Ward)

Mr Daniel Elkeles  
ESTH 2020-2030  
Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust  
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Date: 17 August 2017

Dear Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust,

**RE: Response to *Providing high quality healthcare services 2020 to 2030***

I am a Councillor in Mitcham and Morden, representing Figges Marsh ward and I am writing regarding your "engagement" document *Providing high quality healthcare services 2020 to 2030*. I want to make clear my support for the improvement of St Helier Hospital at its current Rose Hill site and with the full range of its current services retained, including a consultant-led maternity unit and a "blue light" A&E service.

Figges Marsh ward, like much of the Mitcham & Morden constituency, is a deprived area with many families and lots of young children. My residents have worse health and significantly lower life spans than people living in the Belmont and Epsom areas. Merton Council's strategy is to "bridge the gap" between more and less affluent areas of our borough. I believe the NHS has a similar goal to break down health inequalities. Moving crucial hospital services from an area of lower health outcomes and lower life spans to an area where people are healthier, more affluent and live longer simply does not do this.

It is true that my residents use both St George's hospital and St Helier hospital. However we all know that St George's is struggling and more and more of my residents are being directed to St Helier. If St Helier were to lose some of its core services, these residents would be very unlikely to go to Epsom or Belmont but would instead go to St George's, significantly adding to the pressure that hospital is already under (and the closure of the Wilson has only compounded this).

I am surprised that you have not contacted me directly regarding this "engagement" and that I had to find out about it myself. I am also concerned that you are carrying out this "engagement" over the summer period when families are away or distracted looking after their children and whilst the council (and parliament) is in recess. I'm also at a loss to know how you can "engage" on proposals which don't seem to have any funding associated with them and I think this is very misleading to residents, as well as potentially being a misuse of public funds.

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Finally, I am astounded that you are yet again consulting on the future of St Helier Hospital. I think there have already been 5 consultations in 18 years – why do we need another one when all of the previous consultations have ended up with St Helier staying on the same site and with the same range of services – but wasting £40m of taxpayers money in the process? I strongly believe that you should now stop playing bureaucratic games with our residents and – if you have capital funding to spend - just get on with improving St Helier hospital on its current site.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Agatha Akyigyina', written in a cursive style.

**CLlr Agatha Akyigyina OBE**