

CABINET

2 December 2015

ST CLEMENT'S SURGERY, WINCHESTER – RESPOSE TO COUNCIL PETITION

REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

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RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB 2189 – St Clements Surgery – 15 June 2011

CAB 2272 – Silver Hill Update – 7 December 2011

CAB 2609 – Silver Hill Update – 10 September 2014

CAB2709 – St Clement's Surgery – 17 September 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This Report provides a response to the petition received at Council on 4 November 2015. The prayer of the petition was:

“We petitioners request that Winchester City Council commits to building a new surgery for the St Clements Practice in the centre of the city, irrespective of what happens with the Silver Hill development, so that the future of the practice and the interests of its 17,000 patients are properly protected.”

Following discussion at Council, it was agreed that the petition be referred to the next Cabinet meeting. A extract from the minutes of the Council meeting is attached at Appendix 1 to the Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That the contents of the petition be noted.
- 2 That the provision of a new surgery be kept under review as part of progress reports on the Silver Hill scheme.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At Council on 4 November 2015, a petition was submitted by Ms Gill Davies, containing 422 signatures. The prayer of the petition was as follows:

“We petitioners request that Winchester City Council commits to building a new surgery for the St Clements Practice in the centre of the city, irrespective of what happens with the Silver Hill development, so that the future of the practice and the interests of its 17,000 patients are properly protected.”

2 Background

- 2.1 The existing St Clements GP practice occupies a freehold building within the Silver Hill development site. The building is privately owned by current or former members of the practice itself.

- 2.2 If the Silver Hill development does goes ahead, the existing building will be acquired and redeveloped as part of the Silver Hill scheme. A new replacement surgery building would then be required.

- 2.3 The need to ensure that a replacement building is provided on a suitable timetable which also ensures continuity of service has always been part of the planning for Silver Hill. This is why a planning consent for a new building was obtained in 2012. It has expired because the legal delays which have prevented the Silver Hill scheme progressing.

- 2.4 If the Silver Hill development does not take place, then the practice may choose to remain in situ and in those circumstances there will be no loss of continuity of service. Alternatively it may still seek to move to new premises.

- 2.5 At its meeting on 17 September 2015, Cabinet approved the recommendations of report CAB2709 which set out the business case for the provision of a new surgery. Subject to a new planning consent being obtained, a successful tendering exercise and an agreement to lease, a new surgery can be provided for the St Clements practice. However, until the Silver Hill situation is resolved it is not possible for the Council's to commit to the establishment of a surgery 'irrespective' of what happens with the Silver Hill scheme, as it is the GPs who must obtain agreement to the terms of

occupation from the NHS and reach agreement with the owners of their current building. Those owners must, in their turn, determine the future of that building.

- 2.6 The business case for the new surgery presented in CAB2709 did not include the purchase cost of the existing surgery building as there is no commercial link between the provision of a new surgery and the acquisition of the existing building except through the Silver Hill redevelopment. Silver Hill Winchester No. 1, the Silver Hill developer, has made an unconditional offer to purchase the existing surgery building which is under consideration by the owners of the building.
- 2.7 The agreed business case depends on the willingness of the GPs to occupy new premises on terms acceptable to themselves, to the NHS and to the Council.
- 2.8 In the meantime, the Council is progressing with the planning application for the new surgery and with negotiations with the GPs (and the GPs with the NHS). This ensures that all options remain open.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

3 COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 3.1 The St Clements GP practice is an important service to the public. The new building which has been designed in partnership with the practice would be a considerable improvement on the existing facility and would enable to provision of new services in a better environment. It has also been scaled to allow for growth in service provision as the population of the city increases.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 Further work will be required in assessing the financial options impact upon the Council. This will be considered as greater clarity on the way forward emerges following the further discussions with the parties involved.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 5.1 There are no specific risk management issues arising from this report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[Petition seeking commitment from Winchester City Council to build a new surgery for the St Clements Practice in the centre of the City.](#)

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Minute extract from Council held 4 November 2015

EXTRACT FROM DRAFT COUNCIL MINUTES HELD 4 NOVEMBER 2015

1. PETITION

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15, a petition was submitted by Ms Gill Davies, containing 422 signatures. The prayer of the petition was as follows:

“We petitioners request that Winchester City Council commits to building a new surgery for the St Clements Practice in the centre of the city, irrespective of what happens with the Silver Hill development, so that the future of the practice and the interests of its 17,000 patients are properly protected.”

At the invitation of the Mayor, Ms Davies introduced the petition and highlighted the concerns of the practice patients and its doctors that the surgery may have to move out of the centre of Winchester, or close down. Ms Davies stated that the future of the practice should not be dependent on the progression of the Silver Hill development as the Council was unable to guarantee if or when the development would take place. Should there be any further delay to the scheme, what would be the alternative provision during any interim period, should the existing facility be forced to close? She also highlighted that the doctors had been unable to plan for the future of the practice during the recent period of uncertainty. Ms Davies welcomed the recent plans on display for a new surgery, but urged the Council to ensure that the basic requirement of the health and wellbeing of its citizens was ensured.

During the debate which followed, there was some concern expressed that there had been the prospect of redevelopment affecting the surgery building now for several years, with seemingly little progress. It was pointed out that many patients would be unable to travel easily outside the town centre to any alternative facilities should the new surgery not be completed ahead of the Silver Hill development.

A Member was concerned that by linking the replacement surgery to the Silver Hill development meant that there was a risk that it may not be forthcoming. The two schemes should therefore be decoupled. It was suggested that construction of a new surgery should have been started at least two years before the existing one was due to be vacated. The Council should have been investigating alternative solutions for the practice during this time.

In response to discussion, Councillor Godfrey clarified some of the detail of the latest proposals for the surgery and drew Council's attention to the related matters elsewhere on the agenda. Councillor Godfrey was concerned that members of the public had been misinformed and concerns unnecessarily raised. He drew attention to his response to a related Question (20) asked at the previous Council meeting on 21 October 2015 in which he given assurances about the timetable for the provision of the new surgery. He reminded Members that this was expected to be provided by August 2017, with

no interruption to medical provision for patients. He also stated that the uncertainty about the future of the existing facility was largely due to the delays to the Silver Hill development.

At the conclusion of debate, the Mayor thanked Ms Davies for her presentation and explained that a minute of the points made would be submitted to Cabinet on 2 December 2015 for its consideration.

RESOLVED:

That the petition be referred to the next meeting of Cabinet.