

Minutes of the Meeting of the HEALTH LIAISON PANEL held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 21 January 2026

PRESENT -

Councillor Christine Cleveland (Chair); Councillor Alex Coley, Councillor Liz Frost, Councillor Steven McCormick (as nominated substitute for Councillor Councillor Bernice Froud) and Councillor Kim Spickett.

In Attendance: Alex Shaw (Interim Managing Director) (Epsom & St. Helier University Hospital NHS Trust)

Absent: Councillor Bernice Froud and Councillor Bernie Muir

Officers present: Rachel Epton (Community Development Manager) and Bethan Langrish (Community Development Officer)

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Integrated Care Partnership

Councillor Alex Coley, Other Interest: Cllr Alex Coley declared 'In April last year I referred the Integrated Care Partnership to the NHS Counter Fraud Authority. Following email correspondence and phone calls with the NHS CFA Central Intelligence Unit the referral was passed to NHS England for investigation'.

7 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Panel confirmed as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 1 July 2025 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

8 EPSOM AND ST HELIER UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL NHS TRUST

The Panel received a presentation (subsequently published as a supplement to the agenda) from Alex Shaw, Interim Managing Director, Epsom & St. Helier University Hospital NHS Trust on the impact of winter pressures, industrial action and development plans for Epsom and St Helier University Hospital NHS trust.

The following matters were considered by the Panel:

- a) A councillor asked for an update on the car park situation which has been causing congestion, while recognising that a lot of work has gone on to

- improve car park facilities to alleviate the situation. The speaker confirmed progress is being made, including on the multi-story solution as well as seeking to purchase land back additional land from Legal and General, with support from NHS England. The speaker confirmed that he would have to come back with a further update to be provided on timescale.
- b) A councillor asked if both options were being progressed, regarding the multistorey carpark and the Legal and General land, which was confirmed by the speaker. The focus being on the multistorey first.
 - c) A councillor asked about the performance update, Slide 3, including why was the cancer target times not being met; what was the timeline in obtaining improvement; and plans on how to continue to tackle elective waiting times. The speaker confirmed that with assistance from a screening company, cancer response rates are, now above 90% and within targets; an expectation that performance standards are met again by March 2026; and that continued reduction in patient waiting list numbers will help reduce number of long waits. We aim to get elective waiting down to 1% by end of March, currently about 1.8%. For emergency care, the Urgent and Emergency Care Transformation programme will help improve the emergency care response and we hope to get it to 74% by end of March, with target of 78% for next year.
 - d) A councillor referred to Slides 11 and 12 with regards to daily financial overspend on patients balanced against the challenge in meeting the needs of local communities. The speaker confirmed that there is in place is an agreed deficit plan as well as deficit support funding.
 - e) A councillor asked about the plans for the site at St Helier Hospital; the intent with the positive birthing facilities at Epsom; and what a new hospital at Sutton would mean. The speaker's response was that plans at St Helier were for the next decade, with priority for the redevelopment of the Emergency Department; that a second theatre is due to open in February 2026 at Epsom maternity ward, which will help manage increasing c-section demand and emergencies; Sutton plans remain unfinalised.
 - f) A councillor referred to the large the number of people attending A&E through winter and the potential to tackle this by addressing support for carers who may become overwhelmed, leading to additional stress on A&E units, hospital wards, GP services and other care services. The speaker was in agreement with this view but there is a challenge in working with different partners across different regions, requiring different processes.
 - g) A councillor asked if the delay in the new hospital was affecting recruitment and retention of staff. The speaker stated that this was not considered an issue at this stage, and recruitment is doing well in challenging areas, such as the A&E. Also, the benefits from joining St George's Hospital is helping in this area.

- h) A councillor referred to media coverage of corridor care in hospitals. Was there a system or different solutions in place across our hospital services. The speaker stated that corridor care remains a big challenge across all hospitals during the winter period.
- i) A councillor provided positive feedback about the birthing services available as well as the midwife care provided over Christmas, proving again the 24/7, 365 days a year job delivered with such care. This was followed by a reassurance that if there was anything the councillors could do to assist in relieving pressures, to just let them know.

9 INTEGRATED CARE PARTNERSHIP

The panel was due to receive a presentation from Laura-Rose Hall, Jane Vincent and Arif Ladha from the Integrated Care Partnership, but this was unable to proceed as the presenters were not available.

The meeting began at 7.01 pm and ended at 7.45 pm

COUNCILLOR CHRISTINE CLEVELAND (CHAIR)