

Contact: Cllr John Robinson
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Our ref:



Tracey Martin,
Practice Manager,
St Andrew's Medical Practice,
Sensier House,
St Andrew's Road,
Spennymoor,
County Durham.
DL16 6QA

19 March 2018

Dear Ms. Martin,

Proposed Closure of Byers Green Branch Surgery

I am writing to you regarding recently announced proposals to close the Byers Green Branch Surgery which is being considered by the Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield CCG Primary Care Commissions Committee on Tuesday 20 March 2018.

I have been approached by several County Councillors from the Byers Green and Spennymoor area who have expressed concerns at the lack of consultation and engagement with them regarding the proposed closure of the Byers Green Branch Surgery. As Chairman of the County Council's Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, I too am concerned that I have not been informed of the proposals until this last week or so. As you will be aware there are statutory obligations placed upon the NHS to consult with local authority health overview and scrutiny committees regarding any proposals to change health service provision which appears not to have occurred in this instance.

Whilst I acknowledge that a briefing report has been prepared in respect of the proposed closure this has not been seen by either myself or local Councillors until the last week with the exception of County Councillor Kevin Thompson although this was sent to Councillor Thompson in his capacity as a Spennymoor Town Councillor and not as a Durham County Councillor.

In view of the absence of such consultation and the appropriate information that has been received as part of the patient engagement process, I would request

Members

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that consideration of the business case for the proposed closure of the Byers Green Branch Surgery be deferred for a period of 1 month to allow for detailed engagement with local members and also to allow the practice to provide further details to me in respect of:-

- details of the proposal and the rationale for the proposed closure of the Branch;
- the engagement undertaken with patients served by the branch including information regarding proposed alternative service provision;
- results of the patient and stakeholder engagement prior to a final decision being made.

I have copied this letter to Joseph Chandy, Director of Primary Care, DDES CCG and David Steel, Primary Care Business Manager, NHS England, Cumbria and North East as there are wider issues that need to be discussed with the County Council's Adults Wellbeing and Health OSC in respect of the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement in respect of changes to primary care.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Robinson', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Cllr John Robinson
Chair of the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Durham County Council