

Notices of Motion Submitted Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No .18

To receive the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Aikman, seconded by Councillors Court and Horne MBE:-

“The Borough Council notes with concern the increasing and damaging financial mismanagement of the National Health Service by this Government. Nationally the NHS is forecasting a gross budget deficit of almost £1.2 billion and some 20,000 jobs have already been lost from hospitals around the country.

Government interference and mismanagement is already having a detrimental effect on our local health services in the West Kent area.

The recent disruptive and costly wholesale reorganisation of Primary Care Trusts in the county has been bad for residents of Tonbridge and Malling. Our previous key local Trusts: Maidstone Weald and South West Kent have worked hard and successfully to meet the Government’s stringent financial targets. However, the creation of West Kent PCT has joined us with the Dartford, Swanley and Gravesham PCT. They bring a massive financial deficit with them, a deficit which is forecast to reach some £19 million by the end of this year.

Our local health services are already under threat.

We have a closure threat hanging over our local community hospitals, facilities which we would regard as essential to the health care infrastructure to meet local community health needs.

We have proposals before us that will lead to a significant reduction in health visitor services in our area, services which are valued by the community. Lost vital support and lost local jobs.

Important projects and initiatives to tackle the key causes of ill-health and to focus work on those more needy communities where help is especially needed have had to be shelved due to the funding crisis.

No doubt further cuts will need to be made locally to offset the funding black hole in profligate NHS services provided in North Kent in the coming financial year.

This Council therefore calls on the Government:

(1) to ensure that adequate NHS funding is provided by the Government to reflect local health needs and to encourage more funding for local health providers such as GPs and community hospitals to enable them to plan health care in the best interests of patients;

(2) to provide an assurance that there will be financial safeguards put in place to protect local health services in the former financially stable Primary Care Trust areas now put at a financial disadvantage by the ill-considered enlargement of Trust areas to encompass former Trusts with considerable financial deficits.