

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

24 JANUARY 2017

ITEM NO 11 - CLOSURE OF ROYAL BERKSHIRE HOSPITAL HYDROTHERAPY POOL

Councillor Hoskin to move:

This Council notes:

- Reading's Royal Berkshire Hospital has announced plans to close its hydrotherapy pool at the end of March 2017
- the hospital's own website declares that hydrotherapy can help with the relief of pain and muscle spasm, increasing range of movement and improving both the strength and control of muscles as well as helping encourage weight-bearing especially where land-based exercise is very difficult
- the strong objections to the closure by a range of charities and support groups including Berkshire Disabled People Against Cuts, Arthritis Matters, Parkinson's UK, Reading Families' Forum, Reading Fibromyalgia Support Group, the MS Society and the Berkshire MS Therapy Centre.

This Council welcomes the wide-ranging community campaign to save Reading's Hydrotherapy Pool, including local cross-party support for the campaign involving councillors, MPs and a former MP.

This Council is disappointed by the lack of detail to the RBH's rationale for closure of the pool which is described by the hospital as making a small loss and not a facility it thinks an acute hospital should provide.

This Council believes that decisions about the future of our local NHS services should be made after involving and consulting with patients and Reading residents.

The Council supports the resolution of the December meeting of the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee to request that the Royal Berkshire Hospital performs a full consultation before making a decision on the Hydrotherapy Pool.

This Council believes there is a strong probability that the human and financial costs caused by the detrimental impacts on people's health and wellbeing from the closure of this therapy service will far outweigh any short-term savings.

This Council resolves that the Managing Director writes to the Chief Executive of the Royal Berkshire Hospital and the Chief Officer of the Reading NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups to convey this Council's objection to the closure of the Hydrotherapy Pool, to repeat its demand for a full public consultation and that a comprehensive assessment of the full health and wellbeing impacts of the loss of the therapy pool is performed.