

*County Council Meeting – 16 October 2012*

**STATEMENT BY MEMBER**

**PHARMACY in ASHTEAD**

I wish to raise a serious issue which has occurred in Ashtead, not concerning the youth centre as I feel this is being dealt with by the appropriate officers. Some months ago a Lloyds Chemist and Pharmacy closed in the Street in Ashtead – this pharmacy was used by many residents in the north of Ashtead – possibly 2000 homes – many of which have elderly residents. A local pharmacy in the south of Ashtead has applied to replace that pharmacy and has the support of the local MP, Councillors and most if not all of the local community.

This application has been refused by Surrey NHS earlier this year, where a report a few years old appears to have been used as evidence. This report is both incorrect and out of date as it includes the pharmacy that closed. Their rationale was that there are enough pharmacies in Ashtead – the remaining 2 do not in any way cover the area in the north of Ashtead (the Ashtead Park ward of Mole Valley District Council).

This application has now also been to appeal at the NHS Litigation panel in Leeds, who have recently also refused the application, with identical reasons. It is fair to say that this appeal did not only include all the previous supporters but now had in addition local doctors – and there is some concern that all these support documents/emails did not actually get to the Leeds tribunal.

As you can imagine everyone in Ashtead is appalled by these decisions as it shows little if any regard for Localism or any such local decision making. An Ashtead premises lies empty and a local pharmacist wishes to provide a much needed service to the public and is being stopped by what appears to be faceless bureaucrats.

I have asked Akeem Ali, Director of Public Health for Surrey to investigate this issue and he has agreed to do so. I also will be writing, on behalf of the community to Jeremy Hunt, Minister of Health, and would appreciate meeting with him perhaps via his Surrey County Councillor to discuss what action that can be taken to solve this very serious problem.

**Chris Townsend**  
**Local Member for Ashtead**  
**16 October 2012**