

CABINET – 27 SEPTEMBER 2022**PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Public Questions****Question (1): Anne- Marie Griffin**

11 women a day die from ovarian cancer in the UK. Less than 1/4 are diagnosed in early stage when the cancer is easier to treat.

Unfortunately there are some myths around the symptoms of ovarian cancer, such as they cannot be identified until it is too late, but this is not correct in most cases. The main 4 symptoms are:

- Bloating tummy
- Always feeling full
- Needing to wee more
- Tummy pain

Awareness of the symptoms is key to reducing late diagnosis and unnecessary deaths.

Surrey Heartlands CCG 2015-2017 statistics showed:

- 326 women were diagnosed with ovarian cancer.
- Only 27% of women were diagnosed early, stage I or II.

Nationwide:

- Over 4,000 women lose their lives each year.
- if diagnosed at the earliest stage, 9 in 10 women will survive. But 2/3s are diagnosed late, when cancer is harder to treat.
- Nearly half of GPs (44 per cent) mistakenly believe symptoms only present in the later stages of ovarian cancer.

I am an ovarian cancer survivor of stage 1A, yet my diagnosis took a very long time, and I was forced to pay for a private scan as my then GP failed to recognise that the 20cm tummy mass and other symptoms all indicated ovarian cancer. At that point I could barely breath due to the tumour pushing up against my lungs, yet I was left waiting for a scan for over 7 weeks as a non urgent case. Even when the private scan identified the 20cm tumour, the GP told me, it was nothing sinister as the blood tumour marker CA125 had been normal. Up to 20% of ovarian cancers do not show on CA125 tumour marker blood tests, so they cannot be relied upon as a sole indicator. I had however been exhibiting growing symptoms for around 2 years and presented them repeatedly.

I have been in contact with Surrey Heartlands CCG, for a year regarding this, and they have so far not been willing to change anything about their current ovarian cancer communications or awareness raising. I have instead received a list of the activities they carry out, but with no acknowledgement that this is not having a positive impact on reducing the amount of women diagnosed in late stage or diagnosed late.

I have also asked for Mr Crispin Blunt MP, to assist me in raising awareness, but he appeared unwilling to speak up on my behalf to the CCG or anywhere else and responded referring me to the CCG and NHS England. I had already submitted a question to the CCG Board Meeting at that point. It took 10 months, and with chasing, for the CCG to provide the answer to me that they had stated they would provide to me in the June 2021 board meeting. I am not aware that they have taken any action at all to improve earlier diagnosis in response to my communication, not even to review it.

The CCG were made aware that Target Ovarian Cancer, the charity, offer a professional toolkit to GPs and healthcare professionals for free and also support and advice. This could not only save lives but also healthcare costs. We really need urgent action.

Does Surrey County Council run any awareness projects on Ovarian Cancer, and do they measure the outcomes of such projects, if not would they be willing to look into ways of raising ovarian cancer awareness in Surrey?

Reply:

Firstly, I would like to thank Ms. Griffin for the information provided about Ovarian Cancer and in sharing details of her own personal experience. We were concerned to hear of the difficulties she experienced and that on behalf of the Council we wish her well with her recovery.

We recognise the importance of early cancer detection. Surrey County Council's Public Health Team Service Plan 2022-23 includes strategic and operational objectives to promote early cancer awareness and to support communication campaigns on cancer prevention. A link to the Service Plan is below: [Public Health Service Plan 2022-23 \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/public-health/service-plan-2022-23). The Public Health Team also work closely with NHS partners, specifically the Surrey and Sussex Cancer Alliance and the Surrey Heartlands Cancer Screening & Early Diagnosis Sub-Group on this important area.

Currently awareness campaigns are not specific for ovarian cancer and therefore we are not able to report on any related outcomes. To help improve this, through close partnership with the Surrey Heartlands Cancer Screening & Early Diagnosis Sub-Group, the Surrey County Council Public Health Team will look into increasing awareness of ovarian cancer, and other cancers, as part of their health promotion campaign plan, utilising various media outlets and linking to various organisations and charities such as the NHS, Macmillan cancer support, Cancer Research UK, Ovacom, Target Ovarian Cancer and Eve Appeal. A cancer awareness page on the

[Healthy Surrey](#) website will also be developed, where information, advice and campaign information can be accessed.

All the activities will be monitored and evaluated to assess impact.

Mark Nuti
Cabinet Member for Adults and Health
27 September 2022

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Question (2): Malcolm Robertson

The County Council and its contractor Suez operate 15 recycling centres across Surrey. Some incorporate bulking facilities, however there is only one so called 'eco park' at Charlton Lane, Shepperton.

To make it an 'eco park', the site incorporates an incinerator - also known as a gasifier, and an anaerobic digester. Although they generate electricity from waste, they use vast quantities of climate changing fossil fuel called gasoil (- a type of heating oil or diesel) to do so.

Neither process is environmentally friendly. The incinerator needs gasoil to start up the fire, keep it up to temperature, and even to shut it down. During the first five months of this year it used over 380,000 litres of fuel, the equivalent of the tanks of almost 7,000 medium sized cars. In effect what comes out of the chimney are the pollutants from the burnt waste together with the exhaust from thousands of diesel cars.

Surprisingly the anaerobic digester isn't self-supporting, and needs gasoil to fuel the backup heater of its food waste. There is insufficient gas storage and so, on occasion, excess gas is flared off, sending unfiltered exhaust gases skyward, in a process considered illegal in some countries.

To call it an 'eco park' is greenwash. It's a practice to which the County should never have stooped. It was dreamt up to persuade local people to accept the presence of an incinerator in their community. To accept the unacceptable. The plant is unsustainable, and uses colossal amounts of fossil fuel to contribute to climate change.

Now that it can be seen 'eco park' is a description which should be consigned to the dustbin of the past, will the County Council remove the name 'eco park' from all literature and property it possesses, and as a first step and sign of good faith, arrange for the 6.5 metre tall sign erected on Surrey land outside the site to be removed forthwith.

Reply:

The Eco Park development at Charlton Lane is an important contributor to meeting the strategic waste objectives of Surrey County Council as set out in the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy. The anaerobic digester and gasifier at the

Eco Park treat waste which would otherwise be landfilled (or incinerated elsewhere) and both facilities generate electricity in the process. The use of gasoil is for the safe heating of the equipment prior to feeding in waste and for cooling it down slowly to allow maintenance.

The visible 'smoke' seen coming out of the chimney (or 'stack') is mostly treated ('cleaned') water vapour which is more visible in colder temperatures, and any residual emissions remaining after treatment are only those permitted by the Environment Agency and are constantly and carefully monitored.

The Council has no immediate plans to rebrand the Eco Park or remove current signage but is considering how best to develop the wider site now that the construction phase of the main facilities is complete. The Council will engage with the local community to look at opportunities to develop these plans including additional landscaping.

Natalie Bramhall
Cabinet Member for Property and Waste
27 September 2022

Question (3): Paul Kennedy

In terms of NHS services and public health provision, Mole Valley is one of the most deprived and underfunded districts in Surrey, with a widespread perception that its residents are taken for granted by national Government and MPs.

Given Surrey County Council's responsibility for commissioning and coordinating public health services in Mole Valley, will Cabinet authorise its Local Committee to establish a working group consisting of local county and district councillors, and others as appropriate, to take the lead in:

- addressing the lack of GP provision in Mole Valley, tackling waiting times and securing effective access to secondary/tertiary care;
- working with local integrated health and care partners to assess and secure Mole Valley's neighbourhood and preventative care needs?

Reply:

Thank you for your question and for highlighting the importance of ensuring we focus on areas of deprivation and the resulting inequality that do unfortunately exist across Surrey. The contributory factors to this are clearly wide ranging and as you rightly indicate it is important that a collaborative approach is adopted if we are going to have any chance of making a difference. Encouragingly the recently refreshed [local health and wellbeing strategy for Surrey](#) provides a focus on reducing health inequality through specifying a number of priority populations including particular areas across Surrey. Alongside this, it also highlights the importance of communities

needing to have a lead role within this if any action taken is going to have a real impact.

In relation to greater collaboration on this work, this is being taken forward through the new local integrated arrangements that are forming across the county at a more local level. Having shared your question with colleagues in the area they recognize all the points you are making and have confirmed that work is happening to strengthen the relationship between Mole Valley Borough Council and Surrey Downs Place (Health) both in relation to membership on the place board and also establishing a local neighbourhood / Mole Valley integrated leadership group. Rather than establishing a new working group therefore, the latter is encouragingly already in the process of forming and will be the most appropriate place to hold these partnership discussions to address the points you raise whilst also ensuring they include and engage communities and use this insight to understand how best to improve the multiple factors that drive such inequality and factors of deprivation.

Mark Nuti
Cabinet Member for Adults and Health
27 September 2022

Question (4): Sally Blake

In late July/early August, about 70 mature tree trunks were cut down in Blackberry Wood, Norbury Park, in an area of Ancient Woodland and Priority Habitat, with no public Rights of Way. The wood is alongside a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation. Many of the trees were more than 100 years old, and the cut wood shows they were healthy. They supported complete ancient woodland ecosystems, so ecologically they were invaluable. The Council has confirmed they were not felled due to ash dieback. They were felled to prevent the possibility of damage to a tenant farmer's barbed wire fence, to protect sheep, even though there are no roads nearby.

These trees had a large value left in place. Mature trees sequester far more carbon, now, if retained, than large numbers of small whips being planted under the Council's New Tree Strategy. Many of the whips will not have survived Surrey's drought. The others will not reach maturity for many years - future droughts willing. Ancient trees support massive biodiversity. Mature trees cleanse the air of pollutants.

As set out in the Greener Futures Strategy, climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution should be prioritised in all decisions in the Council's nature sites. Otherwise, they will cause an increasing number of deaths and costs from heatwaves, droughts, food and water shortages, diseases, floods, sea level rises and wildfires.

This exercise in Norbury Park did not prioritise these issues in that

- the trees were cut down rather than the fence being replaced with a more robust one

- the cut wood may now be burned as biomass and emit greenhouse gases, rather than being left in place, environmentally better
- there was no tree survey to determine trees to be felled, with their characteristics and location, and balancing their value to climate change, biodiversity and pollution against their risk to sheep
- there was no ecological survey when there are rare plants, insects and birds, and protected bats, dormice and badgers, living there
- the work was carried out at a time when birds were still nesting and at prime time for bat activity
- the contractors were employed by a third party who wanted the trees felled, which would not have satisfied the Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy you are considering today.

Please would you advise why the Council handled this exercise in this very concerning way and provide reassurance that projects at this and other Surrey nature sites will in future be handled professionally to prioritise climate change, biodiversity and pollution.

Reply:

On the 1st August 2022 approximately 25 diseased (predominantly ash) trees were removed from Blackberry Wood in Norbury Park. Blackberry Wood is located next to, but not within the park's Site of Special Scientific Interest or the Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment Special Area of Conservation.

Following initial discussions with the Countryside Operations Team the works were carried out by a contractor employed by one of our tenant farmers to repair damaged fencing and prevent further damage to fencing as a result of failed or failing trees located along the fence line. The farm is operational, and the fencing prevents grazing sheep from straying and protects them from such things as dog attacks.

A felling license was in place and the necessary works took place outside the defined season for bird nesting. The site of operation falls outside the boundary of the SSSI and therefore Natural England consent is not a requirement. Only dead or dying trees, and then only those that could damage or threaten the integrity of the fence, were removed. Not all trees with ash die back are leafless or look diseased to the untrained eye. Signs of the disease are more commonly found in the branch nodes so a tree can easily be mistaken for not being affected by the disease when, in fact, its structural integrity has already been undermined, posing a threat to safety or property.

However, the Council does recognise that permission for tree removal on its sites requires a more rigorous approval process due to proximity to sensitive areas which should include an ecological assessment. A revised process, which will require Director sign off before any felling occurs, will be for immediate implementation. The full process will be outlined in the Council's new Land Management Policy which will be consulted upon in the Spring.

The felling was not part of the Council's ash die back programme due to commence this autumn. Works under this programme continue to be drafted in consultation with the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the Norbury Park Community Forum. A

specialist Ecologist is currently being recruited to oversee contractual works and the Council's arborists are advising on which trees it will be absolutely necessary to remove from the park. Residents and stakeholders will be invited to informative walks about ask die back tree removal on Council owned sites from late November this year.

Marisa Heath
Cabinet Member for Environment
27 September 2022

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