

Public Questions

Questions from Sarah Carney

1. We understand that £700,000 was spent on the hire of hotel beds to enable discharge of vulnerable patients from acute hospitals. Is it possible to know how many people in total were accommodated in the hotel rooms?
2. Is it possible to explain how and by whom the decision was made to hire these rooms?

Response

The Leader did make it clear that one off funding could not be used to reopen closed community hospitals and beds to change the outcomes of the Clinical Services Review. He made this point because there are some people who still do not accept the final decision made by the Secretary of State on the Clinical Services Review and who argue that Covid funding made available to the Council should have been used to reopen community hospitals on a continuing basis. It was right that the Leader should be very clear about this important point.

The aim of the hotel accommodation was to provide temporary accommodation for individuals who were medically able to be discharged from hospital and were awaiting further social care support to be arranged at home. A hospital setting was not considered due to the anticipated needs of the individuals being discharged not requiring a ward environment which may cause increased dependency, but instead to have an environment with similar facilities to home in order to maximise their independence.

The decision to make these arrangements was made by Dorset Council senior officers in consultation with the cabinet lead for Adult Social Care and Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group.

Other options were considered e.g care homes, however, none were available that could accommodate the anticipated numbers at the time. Fortunately for Dorset the anticipated demand was not realised and only 3 individuals required accommodation.

The council will consider all of the lessons learned through the covid-19 outbreak when looking at any future actions required should there be any further outbreak scenarios.