



THE CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTIES OF  
LUDLOW, MONTGOMERYSHIRE, NORTH SHROPSHIRE,  
SHREWSBURY & ATCHAM, TELFORD AND THE WREKIN  
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4 June 2018

**Future Fit: Not Fit and No Future – An Open Letter**

Dear Dr Freeman and Mr Evans

The Constituency Labour Parties of Shropshire and Montgomeryshire are united in their rejection of the Future Fit proposals for the reshaping of our local NHS which neither offer a sustainable future for our health services nor meet the diverse needs of our communities.

At a time when our local NHS faces an annual shortfall of some £135 million as a direct result of year-on-year Government underfunding, we need a long-term vision for our local health and social care services and the investment to go with it.

Instead, Future Fit offers nothing more than a short-term cost-cutting exercise which will leave us with just one A&E department (or so-called emergency department) to serve the whole of Shropshire and Mid Wales while reducing other key services and making others harder for patients and their families to access. What is more, Future Fit will require a capital expenditure of £312 million which will be part funded through PFI-type deals and incur interest charges of at least £11m a year which will lead to still further cuts in our health services.

We very much regret that local Conservative MPs have welcomed a package which will result in expensive new buildings but around 40 fewer medical hospital beds, some 330 fewer nurses and none of the previously promised improvements to the community NHS services, public health programmes and social care provision we so urgently need.

In addition, a down-graded Princess Royal Hospital in Telford will lose its A&E department and its new £28 million Women and Children's Centre, the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital will no longer undertake planned operations and rural areas will lose their Maternity Units. The ambulance service will be placed under still greater pressure and patients will have to travel further for routine treatment.

We are open to any set of proposals which will improve the level and quality of care for our communities. But we cannot support measures which will have the opposite effect and which place both patients and staff at risk.

Moreover, we deplore a consultation exercise which is designed to divide communities by forcing them to choose between two much needed hospitals.

Finally but not least, we have grave misgivings about Future Fit's viability. We were shocked to see from Dr Freeman's tweet on 30 May that "the exact structure of funding has yet been finalised" (sic) though it is likely to involve the sale of NHS land as well as private finance. In addition, we see from SaTH's latest annual report that, though the Future Fit business case depends on a reduction in the Trust's deficit to £10.1 million by 2020-1, it is actually forecast to rise this year from £17.4 million to £20.5 million.

We would be grateful to know how you justify proceeding with Future Fit before you can be confident whether, how, when and at what cost it can be funded.

We will stand up for our communities and campaign for the maintenance of A&E departments and other essential services at both hospitals and for fair funding for Shropshire's NHS to provide the highest quality of care for all of us, when we need it and whatever our income or postcode.

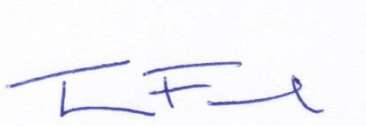
We urge you to withdraw the current proposals and replace them with a strategic plan designed and funded to meet the needs of all the communities of Shropshire and Mid-Wales.

We look forward to hearing from you.

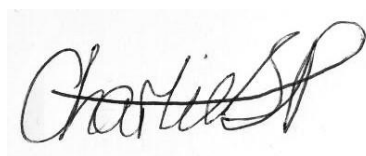
Yours sincerely



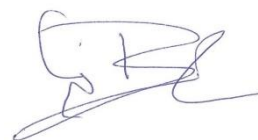
Peter Bradley, Chair, The Wrekin CLP



Tim Finch, Secretary, Telford CLP



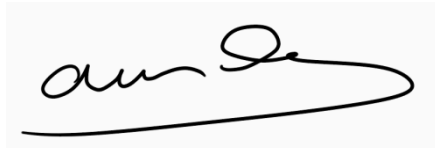
Charlie Scotton-Peters, Chair, Ludlow CLP



Gillian Blackburn, Chair, Montgomeryshire CLP



Roger Walker, Chair, North Shropshire CLP



Alan Mosley, Chair, Shrewsbury & Atcham CLP

cc Simon Wright, Chief Executive, The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust

**Please reply to Peter Bradley, Chair, The Wrekin CLP, at [petercsbradley@gmail.com](mailto:petercsbradley@gmail.com).**