



Daniel Kawczynski MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

 shaun.davies@telford.gov.uk
 telford.gov.uk
 facebook.com/TelfordWrekin
 twitter.com/TelfordWrekin
 01952 383004

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Our Ref: SD/ce

Your Ref:

Dear Daniel

Thank you for your letter of the 19th July.

I met with Lord Riberio and two other members of the IRP panel last week. They had already spent a number of days in the county talking to stakeholders about Future Fit. They highlighted to us that the Panel does not usually take this step and that they needed to ask more questions of stakeholders. This reinforces my belief that the Council's referral was a legitimate and important step for the Council to take. I believe they should be allowed to get on with their review outside of a public arena and your attempt to place pressure on what should be an independent process is not helpful.

The Health Economy has not been *given* £312 million investment – they have been given permission to *borrow* this amount of capital and borrowing this huge amount of capital needs to be made in all of our interests as it saddles the local health economy with a multi-million pound repayment obligation for decades to come.

As Leader of the Council I represent the needs and expressed wishes of Telford and Wrekin residents – these views were not adequately taken into account during the consultation and given the inadequacy, in our view, of engagement with the JHOSC the Council made a rational and justified decision to refer the decision to the Secretary of State. I will continue to make decisions that are in the public interest of the Council's residents and, as highlighted in my response to the Shropshire Star, 'I will take nothing off the table.'

Cont'd

You cite that further delay could put at risk the lives of residents and jeopardise the capital. Had there been proper process in the first place it would have been completed by now. The fact is that it hasn't and the delays to the Future Fit programme are due to the inadequacy of the programme itself associated with lack of financial modelling, necessary impact assessments and poorly carried out option appraisal processes, not the intervention of this Council in seeking the best outcome for people in Telford and Wrekin.

As we correspond today the Trust still needs to go through the Outline Business Case and Full Business Case stage – it remains to be seen if these stages are delivered adequately and on time. In the circumstances I will give no such assurance.

Daniel, can I make you an offer? Rather than continue to attack Telford & Wrekin Council both in public and private – threatening our very existence, why don't both Councils and all Shropshire MPs work to persuade the government to provide fair funding for Health and social care and, as the new Prime Minister said "... fix the crisis in social care once and for all ...". Why don't we come together and lobby for an investment and improvement package that means there is not a community who feels so undermined?

Telford & Wrekin Council's position reflects that of our Council area but also of many Shropshire Council communities who surround us – we will not stop being their voice despite the tone and frequency of your attacks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Davies', with a horizontal line underneath.

Cllr Shaun Davies
Leader, Telford & Wrekin Council