

**MINUTES OF THE HEALTH SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY, WANTAGE,
ON TUESDAY 31 JULY 2018 AT 7.30 P.M.**

Sub-Committee members present:

Wantage Town Council: Councillor C McCarthy (Chairman).
Councillors C S Dickson, J Goodman, Mrs Hannaby and S Trinder.

Other members: Mr S Blake, Mrs J Hutchinson, Mrs J Maberley, Mrs J Parker and Mrs M Swain.

Others present: Two members of the public.

Town Clerk: Mr W P Falkenau.

The Chairman invited Mrs Parker to join the Sub-Committee as a member, which was accepted.

A. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Town Councillor A Crawford, Grove Parish Councillors Mrs J Stock, D Rolfe, D Parry and Mrs J Nunn-Price. The meeting had been called at short notice and coincided with a meeting of Grove Parish Council which meant that there were no representatives from the Parish Council at the meeting. The Chairman had sent a message to Grove Parish Council apologising for this and advising that in future there would be consultation before setting a meeting date.

B. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

None.

C. Statements and Questions from the public

None.

D. Update on matters relating to the local health services

The march by the Save the Hospital Campaign on 22 July had been attended by in the region of one thousand people and had generated a lot of publicity.

A response had been received from Mr Bell, the Chief Executive from the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust to the letter sent to him by the Clerk on 19 March 2018 requesting that the Community Hospital be brought back into use. Mr Bell advised that the Trust was still looking at options and that currently the Trust believed that it had sufficient community beds to meet demands.

A number of members commented on their recent experiences of the NHS services. It appeared that patients were being discharged from hospitals without any suitable care plan in place. The bed numbers cited in Mr Bell's letter were based on the assumption that care in the community was being provided. The Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) had previously indicated that there would be consultation on any changes to services in Oxfordshire. Plans to consult had now been scrapped and nothing had been put in their place.

It was noted that the OCCG were proceeding with a consultation on "Older People's Strategy for Oxfordshire" which opened on 26 July 2018 and was due to close on 3 September 2018. In publicity distributed it advised "if you are part of, or organise any groups with older people over the summer months and would like them to come and talk to you and your group, please contact us on 01865 334638

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and they will do their best to come along”. It was agreed to contact the OCCG and ask them to send representatives to a meeting of the Health Sub-Committee. **Action: Clerk**

The Wantage Community Hospital had been closed due to the risk of legionella. In the past Mr Blake had engaged with My Hardisty, the Chief Operating Officer of the Trust regarding results of legionella tests. It was agreed that the Clerk contact Mr Hardisty with a view to him providing more information to Mr Blake concerning legionella tests. **Action: Clerk**

Although the hospital was owned by the Oxford NHS Foundation Trust, the maternity services were provided by the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The University Trust’s occupation at the Wantage Community Hospital was subject to a lease which was due to expire on 1 April 2019. The Clerk was to write to the University Trust asking about its intentions concerning the continuance of the maternity services and of renewing the lease with the Health Trust. **Action: Clerk**

It was now two years since the Community Hospital was closed on a “temporary” basis. It was reported that the “Keep the Horton General” campaign had achieved some success in challenging the temporary closure of some of their services. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Secretary of State for Health seeking his intervention in getting the beds at the Wantage Community Hospital reopened and referring to the actions relating to the Horton General Hospital. Copies of the letter were to be sent Ms L Patten, Chief Executive of OCCG, S Bell, Chief Executive of the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, Dr Holthof, Chief Executive Officer of Oxford University Hospitals, Ed Vaizey MP, and the Chairman of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC). **Action: Clerk**

There was discussion about a member of the local community who had contacted the OCCG and others with a suggestion that he bought the hospital on behalf of the community and utilised it as a dementia home. It was noted that the Town Council had successfully registered the hospital property as a community asset and that any proposal to dispose of the property would have to be offered to the community, with it being given six months to raise funds to meet the selling price.

A meeting had been convened by Ed Vaizey MP, some time ago, with a view to solving obstacles that were preventing the extension to the Health Centre proceeding. It was reported that a resolution to this may now have been found.

There was discussion concerning the follow up to the Save the Hospital march. Campaigners were being encouraged to attend the HOSC meeting at County Hall in Oxford at 10 am on 20 September. Campaigners were organising a coach for those wishing to attend. A meeting of the OCCG was due to take place in Oxford at 6pm on 27 September. Campaigners were being encouraged to attend both meetings and write to the Chairman of HOSC and OCCG seeking the opening of the beds at Wantage Community Hospital. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to these Chairmen on behalf of the Town Council requesting their support in effecting the reopening of the Community Hospital beds and asking for the Town Council to be consulted on any proposed changes to health services. **Action: Clerk**

A question was raised about the outcome of the Health Survey conducted by this Sub-Committee. It was noted that the survey provided good information with regard to the need for the provision of health services locally. In narrative responses a high level of dissatisfaction was expressed for GP services. The questionnaire did not distinguish between the Church Street and Newbury Street practices and therefore it could not be determined whether it was one practice or both practices. It was agreed that the GPs be invited to the next meeting for this to be discussed.

E. Other business

None.

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F. Date of next meeting.

It was agreed, subject to consultation with the representatives from Grove Parish Council, to hold the next meeting on Thursday 13 September 2018. The GPs were to be invited to attend. **Action: Clerk**

The meeting closed at 8.49 p.m.

WPF/ME