

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE HEALTH SUB-COMMITTEE OF WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ONLINE USING ZOOM ON THURSDAY, 16 JULY 2020 AT 7.30 P.M

Sub-Committee members present:

Wantage Town Council: Councillors JT Hannaby (Chairman), A Dunford and J Sibbald.

Grove Parish Council: Councillors R Batstone, D Rolfe and J Stock.

Other members: County Councillor J Hanna, J Hutchinson (part), S Blake, J Maberley, J Parker and M Swain.

Others: One members of the public.

Town Clerk: Mr W P Falkenau.

A. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Town Councillors A Crawford, J Goodman, E Johnson, A Menzies, I Sheldon and C Walters.

B. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

Councillor Hannaby declared an interest as a member of the Hospital League of Friends and a Trustee of the Wantage Nursing Home Trust. M Swain is secretary to the League of Friends. Councillor Hannaby, J Maberley and M Swain are members of the OX12 CCG Stakeholder Reference Group. J Maberley and J Parker are members of the Newbury Street Patient Group. All the above were also members of the Save The Hospital Group. Councillor Hanna was a member of the HOSC Task Force and a CEO of a locally based health charity.

C. Statements and Questions from the public

None.

D. Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2020

The minutes were approved.

E. Minutes of the Sub-committee meeting held on 27 February 2020 and review and consideration of actions, having regard to the Covid-19 crisis

Councillor Hanna gave a briefing on what had occurred since the previous meeting in February:

- HOSC Task Group had continued to seek the withdrawal of the OX12 report
- Letters to Leader of the County Council and the CEO of Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust seeking role for Wantage Community Hospital in response to Covid-19 crisis and requesting Covid-19 test and trace to be based in OX12
- Response was staffing issues precluded role for Community Hospital and test and trace decisions made at a national level
- At HOSC meeting 25th June two new chief executives, one for a new Covid-19 body covering Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (BOB).
- CEO of BOB indicated no progress on OX12 and was subject to national instruction
- HOSC unanimously did not endorse BOB's position
- Letters from Chair of HOSC to others indicating expectation that previous commitments made be met by 15 September

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- Things unlikely to return to same as pre Covid-19 and need to actively and quickly identify what health services needed in OX12 post Covid-19
- Use of engagement software to provide quick and authoritative identification of local needs

It was agreed that letters between county councillors and the health services were to be passed to members.

Action: Clerk

Councillor Hanna agreed to seek a copy of the letter from the Chairman of HOSC referred to above.

Action: Hanna

In further discussion the following points were raised:

- Why hasn't the Community Hospital been used for Covid-19 rehabilitation?
- What repair works have been undertaken in the Community Hospital?
- Does the Community Hospital have air changing ventilation system (confirmed not)?
- What is the cost of keeping the Community Hospital beds closed?
- What are the latest legionella results for the Community Hospital?
- Are there any other factors that would prevent the Community Hospital being used during the Covid-19 crisis?
- The deadline for reporting on the outcome from the CCG consultation on the future of the Community Hospital beds had been postponed from September to January.
- There was a lack of information on the future of any locally provided services.
- Due to COVID-19 the only real power HOSC retained was the ability to refer matters to the Secretary of State.
- Given a lack of understanding at a national level, a way forward might be for a local needs assessment to be prepared to inform government.

It was suggested that an engagement tool software be used to provide information for use in informing stakeholders and others. The software automatically provides a report that reflects input from the local community. Councillor Hanna agreed to pass to Councillor Sibbald information concerning the software.

Action: Hanna

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Hannaby,
SEDCONDED by Councillor Dunford,
IT WAS RESOLVED to investigate the acquisition of the engagement tool software.

It was agreed to invite representatives from villages within OX12 to participate in the sub-committee.

Mrs Hutchinson joined the meeting.

There was discussion about how to deliver the petition to government. There was a need to choose the right time and place to secure publicity.

It was agreed that letters be sent to the new Chief Executive Officer of the Oxford Health Trust asking the questions raised above.

Action: Clerk

There was discussion about arrangements for holding an online public meeting. There was a need for an update regarding the expansion of the Health Centre at Mably Way. GPs are being encouraged to move to virtual consultations which might affect the need to expand the premises.

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It was noted that S106 and CIL monies could be used for the provision of health facilities. There was a need to ensure that contributions from local developments be spent locally. Councillor Stock agreed to raise this with the Clerk to Grove Parish Council with regard to the airfield S106 contributions.

Action: Stock

It was queried why there had been no Covid-19 test centres in OX12? It was noted that decisions concerning the location of test centres were being made by an army officer responsible for organising the tests. It was felt that it was important to have information about where local Covid-19 hotspots were occurring.

Flu vaccines were due to be rolled out from September. It was queried how this would be achieved within social distancing rules. It was noted that GPs were looking at alternative locations for delivering the service.

It was noted that the maternity unit had reopened at the Community Hospital. This should enable the physiotherapy service to recommence there as well.

E. Other business

None.

F. Date of next meeting.

End of August – date to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

WPF