

**LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF HEALTH SERVICES TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

**FRIDAY, 24 MARCH 2023 AT 1.30 PM**

Present: Councillors            R Goodchild  
   V Harvey (Vice-Chair)  
   S Jones  
   T Morris  
   S Owen  
   G Perham (Chair)

Also in attendance:            M Saccoccio, Town Clerk  
   S Sandiford, Deputy Town Clerk  
   A Selous, MP South-West Bedfordshire – joining  
   remotely – left at 14:05  
   M Prior – Leighton Road Surgery Patient  
   Participation Group  
   E Griffith, Bassett Road Surgery Patient  
   Participation group  
   R Gunter, Bassett Road Surgery Patient  
   Participation Group  
   Dr J Henderson, Bassett Road Surgery &  
   Leighton-Linslade Primary Care Network –  
   joining remotely

Members of the public:        0  
Members of the press            0

**51/HS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor D Bowater.

**52/HS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor R Goodchild declared a personal interest as Chair of Salisbury House GP Practice Patient Participation Group.

No pecuniary declarations were made or dispensations requested.

**53/HS QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 minutes per person; maximum 15 minutes)**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**54/HS MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

(a) The Task and Finish Group received the minutes of the Health

Services Task and Finish Group meeting held on 5 December 2022.

Minute reference 50/HS: Councillor Harvey pointed out that the “disappointment expressed” in the last paragraph of Page 31 had not been applicable to all members present at the meeting. It was noted that meeting minutes did often contain comments made by individuals or a proportion of those present and did not intimate that such comment was agreed by all; only resolutions were a clear expression of the majority view.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health Services Task and Finish Group meeting held 5 December 2022 be approved as a correct record.**

(b) Updates arising from previous meeting:

Correspondence dated 9 February 2023 from the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (BLMK ICB) in response to the “no confidence” motion resolved by Council in January 2023 was received by the group.

#### **55/HS HEALTH SERVICES IN LEIGHTON-LINSLADE**

Mr Selous gave an update regarding recent meetings with the ICB, Department of Health officials and NHS Property Services. Legal advice received from NHS Property Services showed that the four acres of land on Vandyke Road owned by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care could be used to expand healthcare within the town. A statement issued by BLMK ICB advised that “external expert support has been commissioned to provide the detailed financial and technical advice required to progress this work” and that “in-depth scoping work will be undertaken as soon as possible”.

In addition, Mr Selous had met with Councillor K Collins of Central Bedfordshire Council on 23 March 2023 and had been assured that healthcare uses were a possibility for future development on land south of the High Street.

Task and Finish Group members welcomed this news but expressed a hope that there would be tangible results. Mr Selous confirmed he would continue to fight for additional healthcare in the town as this had been a long term objective.

A concern was raised regarding the capital which might be realised from the land at Vandyke Road and how the remaining funding gap for new provision might be met.

It was suggested that the town needed to express its wishes clearly rather than waiting for the health authority to determine this. The newly launched patient survey being promoted by the patient participation groups would provide resident feedback which was essential. It was important to engage

with all demographics.

Dr Henderson thanked the group for its support of general practice and noted that with its population growth and distance from secondary care facilities, the situation in Leighton-Linslade was unique.

It was confirmed that no practices were against the provision of another building as they were currently at capacity and additional capacity was needed to improve access and patient experience.

In the short term, this “additionality” could perhaps be provided by the Primary Care Network (PCN) hiring additional practitioners such as pharmacists, paramedics and caregivers, but they would need premises from which to work. In the short term, consideration was being given to possible temporary premises in the town such as currently empty or under-utilised town centre buildings. In the longer term, capital spend would be required and the PCN would be happy to be a part of the process for developing this.

The PCN was working on better ways to manage high volume immediate needs with ongoing and longer term care needs, with a focus on improving patient experience. Expanding same day access and developing an integrated neighbourhood team (for example including complex care needs and preventative care) were objectives but this did not all have to be located on one site. Dr Henderson clarified that the PCN budget did not allow for recruitment of doctors and noted that there was a national recruitment crisis in general practice.

Councillor Harvey stressed the need to keep people healthier to reduce pressure on the NHS and Mr Selous agreed he was fully supportive of the preventative agenda.

The patient participation groups expressed a wish to work with the PCN on appointments and same day access for patients. A question was also asked by the PPGs about whether the existing three GP practices could use a fourth site to see patients even if this was not an additional separate practice; it was confirmed this was possible.

Councillor Owen gave a brief summary of his document which outlined a review of events from December 2022 – February 2023 and stressed that the pressure needed to be kept up to ensure progress was made on additional health facilities.

The group was advised that the patient participation groups had been working on a draft specification for services which was now with Dr Henderson for consideration. The results of the patient healthcare survey being run by the PPGs until the end of April would then be fed into the specification by mid to late May. By this time, it was hoped there would also be an update from the BLMK ICB on its scoping work and all of this information would help inform short, medium and long term solutions.

**56/HS NEXT STEPS**

A future meeting could consider the draft specification and feedback from the BLMK ICB scoping work.

It was suggested that a letter be sent to the ICB regarding the current patient survey being run by the patient participation groups and the anticipated timescale for results and draft services specification.

The PPG representatives advised they were happy to be consulted and to attend meetings when appropriate but would prefer the town council to lead on activity.

The meeting closed at 3.01 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 24 MARCH 2023.

Chair

TBA