

## **Minutes of the Open Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2015 in the Letherhead Institute**

The meeting opened with the introduction of the guest speaker, Mr. James Blythe, the Director for Commissioning and Strategy for the Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group who is in charge of the Review of Service 2015/16. Accompanying him were two further members of the same Commissioning Group, Jade Brelsford who is the Acting Head of Communications and Engagement and Usman Nawaz, the Patient and Public Engagement Manager.

It was also announced that the chair would be taken by the Surrey County Councillor, Tim Hall, who would take questions from the audience.

1. Apologies: were received from Bridget Lewis-Carr and from David Woodhead, David Ashton, Fran Smith, Norma Tatham-Thompson and Paula Sabine.
  2. The Minutes from the closed meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> January were agreed as an accurate record.
  3. There were no matters arising.
  4. Correspondence: The Chairman was pleased to tell everyone that Flip Cargill had written to say that sufficient Barrister's fees had been raised for the neighbours of Leach Grove to be able to be represented in law to fight for Village Green Status for that wood. It was believed that the hearing would take place over a week from either 13<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> April here in Leatherhead. (It is now arranged for the 13<sup>th</sup> either in the Institute or in the Theatre)
- It was also learned that a large part of Forty Foot Road and Beech Holt had now been adopted, largely due to local action from the local councillor, Tim Hall, and the 40' Road campaigners which included Flip.
5. On Fran Smith's behalf the Chairman then went through the [Planning Report](#).
  6. Cheryl Allen then did the same with the [Environment Report](#).
  7. The Forward Planning Report, presented by Hubert Carr and John Wilson, was chiefly concerned with Church Street, but the Hague Investments' proposals for a radical change in the retail aspect of the street had now come in and were occupying both the Planning and Forward Planning groups. These plans can

be seen either on the MV website, or by requesting them to be sent to the Help shop and do send your comments to the council by 26 Feb. The planning application reference is MO/2015/0062."

County Councillor Tim Hall then took over the chair and started the "Improving Care together" part of the meeting. Mr James Blythe explained some of the proposed transformation of the services under review, outlining the problem of a finite pot of money to pay for a) an increasing population requiring care in hospital and home, b) more elective surgery and c) increased numbers of child and maternity services. His aim was for more community services and primary care to be seamlessly joined, especially for the frail and vulnerable.

Tricia McGregor, the MD of Central Surrey Health, then talked about the 4 community hospitals, Molesey, Leatherhead, Dorking and Epsom and the Ewell new community hospital on the West Park site. She said that 2 hospitals had 12 beds each and the other 2 had 15 beds each; these cost a lot of money, especially when having to hire agency staff. This was what had led up to the closing of Leatherhead's Leach Ward before Christmas, as there were too many agency nurses who, not only cost a lot, but many of whom were not 'up to the job' and, therefore, patients were not in a safe environment. She said that there was still the same number of beds in the district as there were before, but now with 27 beds at Dorking and thus it was cheaper as less nurses were needed, especially expensive agency nurses, on one large site than two small, separate sites".

When questions followed it was Leatherhead Hospital which was the centre of attention and questions and emotional comments flowed. It was, however, acknowledged that the Gynae, X-Ray and Physio departments there were extremely good. When asked about closing Leatherhead hospital, James Blythe said **"we have an open mind and are looking at all possibilities"**.

The input from Present and former staff members from Leatherhead Hospital highlighted the fact that the transfer of beds and staff to Dorking Hospital had had the unfortunate consequence that six staff had been unable to adapt to the changes of rota and had therefore been a loss to the permanent staffing. Some had, consequently, joined Agencies.

James Blythe then summed up his hopes for a seamless provision of care in the community, the recommendations for which will be announced in July of this year. Tim Hall brought the meeting to a close by supporting the hopes of the

CCG but warning the CCG that SCC's Health Scrutiny Committee representing the 'people' would be part of the team producing the recommendations.

If these local medical issues concern you and you would like to be consulted and informed, you are encouraged to complete a form to request updates from Surrey Downs CCG. [www.surreydownsccg.nhs.uk](http://www.surreydownsccg.nhs.uk)

**The meeting closed at 9.30 and the next meeting, a committee meeting, was announced for 2 March 2015.**