



## Minutes of Meeting OF the Leatherhead Residents Association

Held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 7.30pm in the Leatherhead Methodist Church,

Church Road, Leatherhead

**Present:** Caroline Brown, Martyn Williams, Louise Herrity, Percy Hawkins, Pam Wilson, John Wilson, Hilary Porter, Geoffrey West, Glynis Peterkin (ARA), Bridget Carr, Gill Hanson, Paula Sabine, Jane Pratt, Mike Lewis, Ian Seifert, Irene Seifert, Ray Brown, Susan Eddleston, Paul Sutherland Waite, Pam Chouls, Diana Carr, Ray Ward, Kathleen Pike, Jenny Day, Julia Jarrett, Jean Vanstone, Jerry Richards, Bernard Salisbury, Margaret Richards, Maureen Conrad, Carol Webster, Alan McDonald, Margaret Sims, Tim Howard, Valerie Howard, Pat Harris, Robert Hilton, Sara Kane, Joanna Slater, Ian Anderson (FRA), Terry Savage, Linda Clark, Helen Tribe, David Woodhead, Josephine Brinker.

**In attendance:** Speakers Jacqueline Totterdell and James Blythe, MVDC Cllr Keira Vyvyan-Robinson, MVDC Cllr Bridget Kendrick, SCC Cllr Tim Hall.

**1. Apologies received from:** Fran Smith, Ann Clark

**2. Chairman's Report:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, including our regular LRA meeting attendees, friends from Bookham, Ashted and Fetcham RA's and especially our guest speakers, Jacqueline Totterdell, General Chief Executive Officer of our 3 largest local hospitals (St. Georges, Epsom and St. Helier) along with Mr. James Blythe M.D. of Epsom & St. Helier .

The Chairman then provided good news for Leatherhead, after learning from our local PCN that the Ashlea Medical Practice has now added a clinical physiotherapist to their group of 3 clinical pharmacists and the paramedic. These highly qualified additional staff members obviously help the doctors offer a wider range of treatments to patients of the practice.

The Chairman also reminded members that we have a small local hospital offering a wide variety of day care which is easily accessible to local residents. Unfortunately, it sits on a generous plot and currently features in our Draft Local Plan for development, but it is envisaged that the health function will be retained. Regardless, the LRA remains concerned about its future.

In fact, Leatherhead is likely to become a location of choice for both nursing and care facilities. The Town already has one proposed development seeking planning consent (the United Reform Church on Epsom Road) and another is formulating plans for a similar scheme on Kingston Road.

Residents would also be pleased to know that the LRA has submitted a representation to the consultation on the possible extension of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The

representation supported the suggested extension of the present AONB area that extends across south and east Leatherhead and then across the M25 and into west Ashted. There are extensive areas of beautiful local countryside and it is felt that as much of it as possible should be protected.

**3. Forward Planning :** Fran Smith was not in attendance and so Martyn Williams provided a report on 'Forward Planning' and "Planning" as follows:-

The Draft Local Plan: was approved by MVDC on 03/02/22 and will now be submitted to the Secretary of State, for onward transmission to a Planning Inspector.

Transform Leatherhead: The most recent information on Claire & James House is that a Development Partner is now selected, but it is not yet known if a contract has been placed. For Bull Hill & the Swan Centre, a preferred Developer has been selected but there is more work to be done before an appointment can be made.

Planning Decisions: Beaverbrook House, Reigate Road: an objection was submitted and Consent was refused. No's 12-16 Kingscroft Road, an objection was submitted and Consent was refused.

Planning Applications where a representation was lodged: Thistle Cottages, Kingston Road, objection on density lodged, but no decision yet. Leatherhead Station, support in principle but representation made arguing for a more sympathetic design, no decision yet. United Reform Church, Epsom Road, representation made arguing for some reserved matters, no decision yet.

Planning Applications where a representation has not been lodged: Ambulance Station, Kingston Road, where it is decided that no representation is necessary.

**4. Speakers :** Jacqueline Totterdell, Group Chief Executive Officer of Epsom & St. Helier and St. Georges Hospitals opened the speaker session with a comprehensive slide presentation, explaining that the Epsom & St Helier Hospitals and St. Georges Hospital will continue as separate Trusts, but will now operate under one executive team, after a decision for closer collaboration taken about one year ago. It is hoped that this will bring many advantages to all three, including:

- A first class trauma and emergency facilities to be available at St. Georges
- At St. Georges, new, state-of-the-art, Renal Services at a cost of £80m
- A S.W.L. Pathology Dept to be housed in a new state-of-the-art laboratory ;
- A new, centralised Electronic Patient Records (EPR )system :
- And shared Patient Transport services;
- And a seamless Patient Care programme.

James Blythe, Managing Director of Epsom & St. Helier, then outlined the latest developments of Epsom & St. Helier, followed by an outline of the latest developments relevant to Leatherhead Residents.

As regards the pandemic, he informed the meeting that pressure was easing (300 patients were being treated in Epsom at the peak at the end of 2021, but today the figure is 99). In many cases, Covid is

secondary to other health issues. Staff attendance has also improved from 85% to approx. 95% over the same period.

He confirmed the ongoing redevelopment of a new Langley Wing at Epsom, for high quality neuro-facilities, with an expected completion for late this year.

Regarding Leatherhead Hospital, he confirmed that it remains an extremely important facility to the Trust providing a green (non-Covid) pathway to hospital services. Apart from the new X-ray machine installed some time ago, the obstetrics department has also been recently upgraded. Other developments are to be considered over the coming months. But acute services will remain at Epsom & St. Helier.

The proposed new Acute Care Building at Sutton is also progressing. In addition to the medical facilities, it is expected it will likely also provide: a multi-storey car park for 800 vehicles; extended bus routes to access the facilities; a possible park and ride service plus possible improvements to the local road network. It is hoped that the building may be complete by 2025/2026.

On a broader level, the Epsom & St Helier University Hospitals also work closely with the new National Hospital network, where 48 executive teams operate across the entire nationwide NHS with a view to generating economies of scale.

A lively questions and answers session then took place, with Q&A's including-

C. Brown asked: "Is it intended that GPs should continue to provide many services only via the web or by phone." JT replied that this had been the best way to operate during the pandemic.

I. Anderson asked: "What, specifically, are the proposals for the further improvement of Leatherhead Hospital?" JB advised that, now that many other urgent issues had been resolved, Management would be turning their minds to this question over the coming months

H. Porter commented that she had been advised on a visit to St. Helier that her request for services should be directed to Epsom as that was her closest hospital. JT replied that she was surprised to hear this, and asked HP to provide her with details so she could investigate the matter.

M. Williams asked why the Fetcham branch of the Molebridge GP Practice, which, he understands, is run by the Epsom & St. Helier Trust, appears to be closed on occasions when it should be open. JB replied that the Trust gives support to this Practice, but does not actually operate it, so could make no further comment.

A. Clarke asked whether the future of the S.W. London elective Orthopaedic Centre was secure as she very much values it and feels our aging population needs the service. JT replied that it was held in high esteem and was in no danger of being closed.

A vote of thanks was given to Jacqueline Totterdell and James Blythe by the Chairman.

**5. AOB / Matters arising** : No matters arising

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.