

SPECIAL SUB-GROUP MEETING

A Special Meeting was held between the Parish Council Special Sub-Group and RCMG at Holsworthy Medical Centre, Dobles Lane, Holsworthy, on Thursday 20th December 2018 at 12.00

Present: Rich Clark (in the Chair), Nick Whatley and Joan Curtis (Shebbear Parish Council). Peter Parks. Chris and Terri Vicary (parishioners). Jane Wells and Dr Andrew Brown (RCMG). Mary Whatley, (parish clerk).

AGENDA Mary Whatley, Parish Clerk.

Introduction to all present.

Rich Clark introduced himself as taking the lead for the Parish Council.

Joan Curtis, Parish Councillor.

Nick Whatley, Parish Councillor and husband of the Clerk.

Peter Parkes, parishioner (non Facebook).

Chris and Terri Vicary, parishioners (non Facebook)

Jane Wells, Managing Partner, RCMG.

Dr Andrew Brown, GP Partner, RCMG.

There are many rumours abounding and we are anxious to provide some clarity on the situation.

We have heard on the grapevine that one of our residents has been interviewed by BBC Spotlight.

Have BBC Spotlight been in touch with you? Yes, Dr Brown confirmed he had been approached by a reporter concerning the bus service. He had been asked to do an interview or provide a statement to clarify the position. A statement was provided regarding both the bus service and the opening of the new Hatherleigh Medical Centre, and an NHS community bulletin will also be released shortly.

Is it true that the Free Patient Bus Service has been discontinued?

Yes, the bus service from Hatherleigh ceased last Friday coinciding with the opening of the Hatherleigh branch surgery. However, the bus service will continue to operate from Shebbear running once a day with new timings. The bus will leave the Square in Shebbear at 9.30am daily to arrive at the Medical Centre, Holsworthy for 10.00 am, returning 1 – 1½ hours later. NHS England are paying for this bus service and they proposed to extend the service twice daily until the end of January 2019. RCMG persuaded them to extend to the end of February but with one bus per day. NHSE has indicated at present that they will not continue the bus service beyond this date. Dr Brown reiterated his suggestion made at the previous meeting that the Parish Council should investigate other options for public transport to and from Shebbear with the bus company or the local council.

Could you up-date us on the situation with the Hatherleigh Surgery?

Hatherleigh Surgery officially opened on Monday 17th December 2019. We are currently providing all day every day access to doctors, emergencies, telephone enquiries and to the visiting team. We have a licence to dispense prescriptions from Hatherleigh although currently we are experiencing some initial hic-cups with IT and the dispensing service. It is hoped this will be fully operational by the end of the month.

Dispensing Medications.

We have identified a driver who initially will collect medicines from Hatherleigh and will deliver to the Square in Shebbear for one hour daily. We are aware that Black Torrington Surgery uses the village shop as a medicines collection point and it may be that we can develop our model in time, providing that any future model is sufficiently secure and is in compliance with the relevant control of medicines regulations. Medications can be collected from the surgery at Hatherleigh, or prescriptions

from Holsworthy to take to either Boots or Lloyds Chemists yourself.

Can I choose my Doctor?

Jane Wells confirmed RCMG operate a personal list system, with a 'usual GP' that patients would expect to see for routine appointments. Depending on personal circumstances it may be more convenient to be seen at either Holsworthy or Hatherleigh and patients are free to register at either, but that branch would then become their 'usual' surgery for routine appointments, although patients can be seen at either for an emergency appointment. Dr Brown has been working extra since August and has been the 'usual GP' for those previously registered at Beech House, although other permanent doctors and locums have also been seeing Shebbear patients. From January all Shebbear patients will be registered with one of the permanent Holsworthy GPs. We will write to you when this has been completed. Dr Lee and Dr Eggleston are the named GPs for patients registered at Hatherleigh.

Are you still seeking to secure premises in Shebbear or can you adequately deliver services from Hatherleigh and Holsworthy?

When we took on the patients of the former Hatherleigh and Beech House surgeries, we made every effort in good faith to secure premises in Shebbear. We were denied the use of Beech House by Dr Fernandez and a number of issues have subsequently come to light which mean we cannot use Beech House going forwards, regardless of ownership. The Lake Chapel rooms at Shebbear College were also looked at but ultimately found to be unsuitable and one kind resident offered to sell us her house. Under the terms of our existing PMS contract we are not obliged to open a branch anywhere and there are many factors to take into consideration. Now that our new branch is open in Hatherleigh we will see how provision of care from our two sites works over the next few weeks. We will then discuss all the issues as a partnership when we will be in a position to make a final decision about the future. We are taking care to make the right decision once rather than rush into any decisions we may come to regret or have to change. This is why we are ensuring we have all the information we need in order to make a final decision.

One or two issues which have come up regarding Quality of Care.

Somebody arrived for a flu jab by appointment and was told to come back another time. Another patient arrived for a flu jab and sometime after felt something running down his arm. He thinks the needle was still stuck in his arm. Jane Wells asked if details of the patient could be handed over so she could investigate and they were.

Are you happy for the Parish Council to assist patients with voicing their issues?

If patients wish to discuss complaints with the Parish Council then we are happy to listen, however if a patient wishes to make a formal complaint to us about their care it has to come from them. There are clear NHS and practice procedures for dealing with complaints and Dr Brown is the practice Complaints Lead to whom all complaints initially go. Should a complaint involve Dr Brown himself then it would be dealt with by another partner instead. If patients write to other organisations such as NHS England, CQC etc, these letters will normally be redirected to the practice in line with the standard complaints procedure and they are dealt with in the same way.

Getting Home Visiting Team Paramedics.

The home visiting team is available throughout the working day. Responsibility for visits lies with the practice if requests are made in hours (0800-1830). Out of hours, calls are diverted to Devon Doctors via 111 and they will visit if appropriate. Visits are usually triaged with a telephone call first and it is important to stress that not all requests for a home visit result in a visit, with many calls being dealt with over the phone. It is important that the patient gives as much information as possible to the medical centre on the phone to allow us to make good decisions. The visiting team comprises 5 staff of 3 paramedics, a senior nurse and is headed up by an Advanced Nurse Practitioner. GPs do not routinely visit in the first instance, except for very complex or terminally ill patients when they will normally visit rather than the visiting team. They can all assess patients in their own home or in residential / nursing homes and either arrange treatment themselves or discuss the case with the duty doctor who is always available by telephone in Holsworthy. This may result in medication being

prescribed, hospital admission being arranged or a further visit from a GP.

Why can't you tell us the reason why Beech House is closed? Last week you had a meeting with David Hurley and Barry Parsons when you confided in them the reasons for not using Beech House. What did you expect to achieve by doing so, when they have no authority or jurisdiction? At the Parish Council Meeting last week, the Chairman asked David Hurley if he could report on his meeting. He said he had been told the reason why Beech House remains closed but had to keep this confidential and was unable to relay any of the substance.

Dr Brown said that many of the reasons why Beech House premises cannot be used are confidential and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. RCMG are not in a position to discuss these issues in public. David Hurley and Barry Parsons requested a meeting with RCMG to discuss the future of Shebbear, having been petitioned by residents. Politicians of all types find themselves having to take sides on a number of issues and it is sometimes important that they can be briefed confidentially under 'Chatham House Rules' to allow them to take a stance on an issue that they will not subsequently have to reverse or come to regret. Cllr Clark wondered why the parish councilors who are bound by the same code of conduct as David Hurley and who are more in touch with the public in Shebbear could not be afforded the same protection and Dr Brown said he did not intend to discuss any further details of confidential meetings in this Parish Council forum.