

Patient Participation Group Meeting – By Videoconference

Tuesday 15th September 2020, 6.00 p.m.

Seaford Medical Practice

Minutes

Attendees: Sue Smith (Chair), Susan Hewer, Charis Isted, Penny Lower, Sandy Richards, Dr Dan Elliott (SMP), Phil Abbott (SMP), Lorraine Downey (SMP)

Apologies: David Burleigh, Pam Burleigh, Peter Norman, Zena Gibbs, Roy Dobson, Maggie Chitty, Min Stone, Christina Machan, Steve Machan, Des Prichard, Myrtle Kracke, Ruth Mitchell, Gill Allen, Val Callon, Dr Palo Almond and John Edson

1. Welcome:

- 1.1.** SS welcomed everyone to the meeting. This is the first meeting since January, the planned March meeting having been cancelled due to the COVID pandemic. The meeting is being done by way of videoconferencing so that the PPG meetings can recommence whilst maintaining safe social distancing. SS hopes that the technology behaves!
- 1.2.** PA will take brief notes of the meeting, which will be circulated to members and posted on the Practice website in the usual way

2. Proposed Seaford Health Hub:

- 2.1.** PA advised that Lewes District Council had sent the following message to the two Seaford Practices, which LDC had broadly subsequently published:

“As you will be aware, significant concerns were raised by residents about the plans for new health premises at The Downs site in Seaford, including its ‘out of town’ location and potential impact on green spaces

at the site. After a review of The Downs proposals by the Council's Scrutiny Committee, the Council determined that the development should not go ahead unless and until health bodies could demonstrate that there was no practical prospect of delivering new GP premises at Dane Road, in Seaford town centre.

The Council has helped the NHS Eastbourne, Hailsham & Seaford Clinical Commissioning Group to secure a viability study of the Dane Road site for delivering new GP premises. This included the site of Seaford Medical Centre, owned by NHS Property Services, and the adjacent Richmond Road Car Park. The study identified that, subject to further design work and securing investment, a scheme could be feasible if the car park was included in the development.

In view of the outcome of the study, it seems most unlikely that health bodies will be able to demonstrate that there is no practical prospect of delivering new GP premises at Dane Road and the proposals for a new Health Hub at The Downs site are therefore very unlikely to be taken forward.

The study has been passed to the CCG and the Council will continue to offer any advice and support that it can to health bodies if they wish to look at taking a scheme forward at Dane Road. This includes help to secure the Richmond Road Car Park. We are also very mindful that in the post Covid economic climate, Government support for projects like this, which do not directly support the core / statutory functions of the Council, will be increasingly important. Council representatives recently met with our local Member of Parliament, Maria Caulfield MP, to ask for support in this regard.

I hope this information is helpful as an update on the Seaford Health Hub / Downs project. I would like to close by saying that the Council remains committed to supporting enhanced healthcare provision in Seaford and will do everything it can to support local health bodies in their search for new accommodation."

- 2.2. PA advised that as far as the two Seaford Practices were concerned, following LDC's decision, the project to develop a health hub in Seaford is now ended. The feasibility study referred to made no reference to how a significant building project could be done whilst keeping a surgery with 18,000 patients running for a prolonged period of time. In addition, there is no funding to undertake the multi million pound project.
- 2.3. As stated throughout the process, there is no Plan B
- 2.4. CI asked how the revised clinical way of working, i.e. more phone and video consultations and less face-to-face consultations, affected the need for new accommodation. DE advised that this did make a difference, as did the ability to work remotely for some clinicians. With the expanding clinical team via Primary Care Networks and the aim to have more services provided locally, however, the current premises is still inadequate and will become increasingly so as time progresses
- 2.5. CI asked whether LDC would publish the feasibility study. PA did not believe LDC had any plans to publish.

3. Update from Practice on clinical working patterns in light of COVID-19:

- 3.1. DE updated members that SMP, in common with all other general practices nationally, has been following guidelines laid down by NHS England since a pandemic was declared in March 2020. In the early weeks, this involved "clearing the decks" to support secondary care in the immediate response to the escalating COVID crisis. As months progressed, NHS England guidelines required general practices to restart other medical services; SMP has followed this guidance
- 3.2. Throughout the period, GPs have been asked to undertake all consultations initially by phone or by video call. If and where it was then decided a patient needed a face-to-face consultation, this would be arranged for that day.
- 3.3. Whilst the balance of clinical work has shifted to much more telephone and video consultations, the Practice continues to see many patients face-to-face
- 3.4. SMP has remained open every day throughout the pandemic for patients. PA commended the Practice clinical and administrative staff for their dedicated work throughout the past six months. They have

worked in a dedicated and professional way throughout despite concerns they had for their own health and that of their families. The PPG members endorsed this view and expressed their gratitude to the Practice team

- 3.5. PL asked how the Practice team was being affected by the current shortage of COVID tests. DE explained that, in fact, he was currently having to work from home as he waited to be able to get a test. The current situation is affecting the Practice, but SMP continued to be able to provide a good service to patients, assisted by remote working technology that had been put in place by the Practice and the Clinical Commissioning Group
- 3.6. CI asked whether LIVI were still providing video consultations to assist the Practice and patients. LD said the service was still in use (undertaking approx. 40 appointments a week for the Practice) and was, in fact, working across more hours of the day than previously
- 3.7. Seasonal flu clinics: PA and LD explained that the seasonal flu clinics are commencing from this Saturday, 19th September. There has been a lot of planning to ensure safe social distancing for patients whilst ensuring that there will be sufficient appointments for patients. Whilst this means that there will need to be many more clinics put in place, SMP anticipate being able to provide approx. 6,000 vaccinations as in previous years
- 3.8. Staffing changes:
 - 3.8.1. PA advised that Dr Nikesh Parekh joined the Practice as a GP in mid-August
 - 3.8.2. As part of the Primary Care Network (PCN) initiative, the two Seaford Practices now have the service of a Practice Pharmacist part time and, as from next week, will have the services of a First Contact Practitioner (FCP) part time; the FCP will provide assessment for MSK-type conditions for patients. It is hoped that other resources will be recruited in due course, although the premises limitations will restrict some of these ambitions. SS asked if the Practice would be able to put some information on the Practice website about the new clinical resources – **action PA**

4. Comments/ updates from group members:

4.1. Care navigation: SS commented that on two occasions recently SMP staff had “care navigated” her to an alternative resource rather than to a GP and on both occasions it had worked very well

5. Review of the meeting:

5.1. SS asked how attendees felt the videoconference meeting had gone. Attendees felt it had gone well and that it was good to recommence the PPG meetings

5.2. Members felt that it would be good to have the next meeting, again by videoconference, sooner than the usual three months given how much is going on currently

6. Date of next meeting: in view of the request above, the next meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 17th November, 6.00 p.m. by videoconference. PA will send out a link for the meeting via SS a couple of weeks before the meeting

Minutes: *Phil Abbott, 18th September 2020.*