

**Combs Ford Surgery Patient Participation Group
Minutes of Meeting on 23rd April 2019**

1. Present

Dr. Jackie Muir

Anna James, Trevor McLeese, Sandra Palmer, Colin Reeder, Debbie Reeder
Christine Steward, Ron Whymark, Ian Clark (Reporting)

2. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Dianne Simpkin.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (AGM, 29th January 2019) and Matters Arising

The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record and signed. There were no matters arising.

4. PEACE Plan

Dr. Muir thanked PPG members who had offered comments on the draft PEACE Plan document regarding end of life care. All of the comments had been passed on to the working group that was responsible for taking things to the next stage. The intention was for the document to be completed by clinical staff in consultation with patients, rather than by patients themselves. The need for the family to be involved wherever possible was emphasised and acknowledged. It was noted that the document could be useful in prompting sometimes difficult conversations between patients and close relatives, as well as between patients and clinical staff.

Recent experience within the PPG indicated that patients and their families could encounter real problems in accessing 'joined up' services for end of life care, at what was already a difficult and stressful time. For the PEACE Plan to work the various services would need to improve their joint working. However, it was agreed that this initiative was a step in the right direction. It was important to try it, get feedback and then improve on the process in the future.

5. Staffing and Capacity

Dr. Muir confirmed that a new Practice Manager had been appointed and would be starting in June. The delay was due to the need for her to work a period of notice in her present post.

Ian Clark asked where the Practice was in terms of patient capacity, particularly in light of the proposed development of 160 plus houses on nearby Poplar Hill. Dr. Muir said that practices were no longer allowed to set a ceiling on their capacity. They were paid to take on extra patients and were expected to use that money to make the necessary arrangements to accommodate them. Dr. Muir said that she was happy with the present arrangements, with patients referred to one of a range of healthcare professionals depending on need. She believed that there was the potential to increase capacity further through educating patients to make better use of the present staffing arrangements. Currently there was no GP vacancy at the practice, but this would be reviewed as members of the clinical staff left or retired.

Regarding the possibility of physically expanding the Practice premises, the options were limited. Due in part to the history of the site, but also due to the physical constraints imposed by the surrounding properties.

6. Use/Abuse of the Car Park after Hours

Dr. Muir shared her concerns about the use of the car park after hours and invited input from the PPG. Young people had been using it as a place to gather and to stage 'speed trials' along Combs Lane. This together with their loud music had given rise to complaints from neighbours. The police were unable to act as the car park was open to the public.

Dr. Muir said that she was reluctant to close the car park after hours as it was used by the local community when the Coop car park was closed. It would also not be an easy thing to manage for staff who were working late.

An earlier belief that the attraction was the free WiFi had been discounted as most young people these days had much better access to the Internet through their smart phones. The problem was likely to intensify again with the return of the light evenings. PPG members were asked to discuss it in the community and to forward any suggestions they might have.

7. Availability of Medication after Brexit

Measures to ensure that medications were available after Brexit were being organised at the highest levels in the NHS. The Practice was not taking any special measures of its own but anticipated that it would be able to draw on the combined capacity of SPC if it proved necessary. The Practice already had good working relationships with local pharmacies, including back up for supplies of urgent medications. There had been some brief disruption after the nearby Coop pharmacy came under new ownership, but these problems had now been resolved.

8. SPC Update

The intention had been for SPC to move to a more permanent form of partnership at the beginning of April, but this had been delayed due to some last-minute issues. One practice had decided to leave the partnership, but at least one other in the Ipswich area was expected to join in the near future. The move to full partnership was now expected to take place at the end of May. There would then be approximately 50 GP partners in SPC. One of the consequences of this change would be that the Combs Ford premises would in future be owned by SPC rather than by the Practice. This was a good thing, as the need for GPs to 'buy into' a locally owned partnership when becoming a partner was a disincentive. It was hoped that the move would make it easier to recruit GPs in the future.

Dr. Muir was thanked for her time and for the briefing she had given the PPG on a range of topics. She left the meeting at this point.

9. Other Business

Christine Steward reported that she had recently had cause to self-refer to both the physiotherapy and podiatry services. In both cases she had been impressed with the response and how easy the system was to use.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 23rd July 2019

Signed.....Position.....Date.....