

# LEAGUE OF FRIENDS OF HALSTEAD HOSPITAL LTD

Charity Number: 1121313

Meeting held at the United Reformed Church, Kings Road, Halstead

Tuesday 23rd May 2023 @ 7.00pm

## 55th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### Present:

#### Members

Dr A J Symington (AS) (Chairman)  
Mrs J A Pell (JP) (Vice Chairman)  
Mr A R G Green (AG)(Treasurer)  
Mrs E S Self (ES) (Secretary)  
  
Mr G Courtauld (President)

#### Committee

Mrs J Anbouche  
Mrs B K Couch  
Mr L Crabb  
Mrs S J Evans  
Mrs R A Gage  
Mr D Holmes

#### Committee

Mrs L M Jackson  
Mrs J Lowrie  
Mrs D Peglar  
Mr W E G Pell  
Mr R J Waters  
Mrs J J Wright

### In Attendance:

Mr Dan Doherty (DD), Alliance Director, Mid & South Essex Integrated Care System (ICS)  
11 members of the public

### 1. Welcome by the Chairman

### Action by:

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 55th Annual General Meeting and requested attendees to complete the Attendance Sheet.

Our Guest Speaker, Mr Dan Doherty, would present his report at the start of the meeting.

### 2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr A H Frost, and Norma & David Huxter of the local Disabled Group.

### 3. Guest Speaker Address - Mr Dan Doherty

Mr Doherty reported on the current local NHS restructuring with a target of saving 35% on running costs, and potential of one in three staff losing their jobs - mainly in managerial, administration and financial areas.

Attention was drawn to Provide organisations, i.e. Colchester General Hospital, where focus would be on how well managed and this will impact the public on clinical services, referrals, Freedom of Information requests, and general clerical roles.

The ICS have been asked to look into providing medical services at the former Wethersfield airbase/Military Police site that National Government has proposed is used as a Prison - although currently Braintree District Council are appealing against another proposal to house Asylum Seekers there.

Dan advised that this will not impact on local GP services, with the ICS requested to

**Action by:**

provide external staff, and the people involved not being registered at the local GP's. However, other services may be affected, i.e. the Ambulance Service (whose layout results with vehicles 'hovering' near population density) and Mental Health provision.

In response to questions, it was noted that the Healthcare cost would be funded by Central Government, and the surplus staff required for Wethersfield would be provided by a Locum Agency workforce where GP's, Consultants and Nurses are always available if you are willing to pay the higher rate.

Dan accentuated that is why the local NHS is in deficit as two thirds are permanent staff, and one third Agency workers.

It is not an 'absolute' decision at the moment and the Chairman will be kept informed.

**DD**

In relation to the 35% savings it was noted staff are currently being consulted, and the impact of the cuts would result with other consultees, i.e. Braintree District Council, Essex County Council, being approached as the significant impact on Dan's team is realised on service delivery. The reduced 'back office' staff will produce less 'communication' function, i.e. advising of flu campaigns, and expectation would be sought with other organisations to work on their behalf i.e. Braintree District Council, Community 360.

The biggest impact was considered to be on the ICS's Finance Teams, with the Basildon area being more prevalent.

The current theory of 'too many admin', would be impounded in Dan's Team with Junior Staff, Admin and Finance workers affected. Reference was also made to other staff, i.e. highly trained Physiotherapists, having more computer work instead of assessing and treating complex patients.

Mr Doherty will keep the Chairman briefed of developments, or return in six months to provide an update.

**DD**

Attention was drawn to the recent planning application at the former X-Ray unit at the older part of Halstead Hospital, for two to three consulting rooms providing additional space to the local Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery. It was noted that S106 monies from local housing developments is being used for the adaption.

Members noted that the 'National Push' is to employ other professionals to provide personalised skills in treating patients, e.g. Physios, Paramedics and Pharmacists. This will alleviate GP time so they can focus on other chronic, complex and multiple problems with patients.

Therefore, surgeries need additional space to accommodate the 'other' professionals. However, Mr Doherty, did emphasise it is up to the local service what the accommodation is used for, as some go for solely a clinical function or an admin function.

Further discussion by the League of Friends (LoF's) with the local surgery may be required.

**AS/JP**

The issue of the older Hospital not being currently used for clinics (by Colchester Hospital) was raised - possibly due to a Legionnaires outbreak there, or workmen being on site. The Chairman clarified NHS Properties own the building, with the LoF's having 'first option' if they wish to sell it.

Sheenagh Evans provided detail to Mr Doherty who agreed to address the issue. **DD**

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Mr Doherty reported on the 'very successful' use of the 20-bed Ward providing 'Care for the Elderly' service and rehabilitation. Patient (and families) experience is positive and the Ward will remain as it is for the 'foreseeable future'. However, a 'caveat' remains on what beds it provides - Care of the Elderly or a Stroke Unit. At the moment all stroke beds are sited at St Peters Hospital in Maldon, and the position remains that their building is not for 'long term use'. As access is required for stroke beds in the North Essex area, geographical travelling distance has to be considered for patients/families. Stroke cases need intense therapy, i.e. speech & language therapy, eating & feeding assistance, physio, psychology and specifically trained nursing staff. Therefore, no need for an acute District Hospital causing bed-blocking, when help is out at smaller designated hospitals - with an overall target of getting patients back to their own home.

The role of Braintree Community Hospital was discussed, and the recent publicity of a new Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) sited there. The centre is due to open in 2024 and will provide a CT scanner, X-ray, blood tests, ultrasound, MRI scans and also heart and lung diagnostic tests. Assessment took place across Essex to provide two Diagnostic Centres - one at Braintree, and another at Pitsea (south Essex). Some of the equipment is very heavy and has high electric power use - that Braintree Community Hospital already has provision for. Therefore, it will remain a surgical Hospital with its two theatres and now two scanners, that will help address the Cancer backlog created during Covid.

The current situation at Brentwood Hospital was raised where, after getting special permission their gyms, admin space etc, was turned into Wards. This additional Ward facility is now being reversed - therefore patient capacity at Brentwood reduced.

Halstead Hospital meets 'best outcomes' in delivery of care for the elderly, with its additional physios and Occupational Therapists. It was noted that dedicated units are required for stroke patients (with specialist staff) and should not be 'blended' with other illnesses. National evidence has been provided to support a 24/7 specialist staff requirement, as people have died when 'untrained' staff assist - in feeding, and then choking occurs - in this dedicated area. Therefore, Halstead residents currently travel to Maldon, and south Essex people come to Halstead for their specific care. The future of these hospitals will be subject to public consultation, followed by a clinical decision.

Members thanked Dan for his 'honesty' and information, and await future updates. Mr Doherty left the meeting at 8.05pm.

## 4. Minutes of the AGM held on 24th May 2022

Mrs Wright drew attention to the phrase 'the Rehab Unit/new Hospital was given to NHS Properties' (top third of Page 3). This was amended to 'the Rehab Unit/new Hospital was built to be used by NHS Properties'. The amended minutes were moved by Mrs S Evans, seconded by Mrs J Wright as a

**Action by:**

true and accurate record. Motion carried and minutes signed by the Chairman.

## **5. Matters Arising**

The Chairman referred to the minutes and the very full informative update by Dan last year, and surmised Halstead is 'lucky' to have these thorough reports.

Further reference was made to Minute 9 - Election of Executive Officers, and a 'Rule Book' for Chairman and Vice Chairman to relinquish their position after a 'three-year term'.

The Chairman reported that the Secretary had thoroughly investigated this 'Rule' and could not find any written evidence to support this, or any update to the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Mrs Self, the Secretary, further reported that reference had been found when Robin Waters asked George Courtauld to become President on a three-year term - with no mention of Chairman or Vice Chairman. Many Members remember a verbal statement sometime - however, with no written Minute or decision forthcoming, this cannot be verified.

## **6. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman read (in full) his report for year-end 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022, attached to the Agenda pack.

The Vice Chairman, Mrs J Pell, thanked the Chairman for the report and his hard work undertaken and changes at the Hospital during the past year.

## **7. To adopt the Accounts for 2022 presented by the Treasurer and to receive the Auditors Report.**

Mr Green presented the 16-page Report, and drew specific attention to Pages 11 & 12. Two large legacies from Monica Stewart and Joyce Spurgeon had contributed to Income of £12,501 during 2022; and Interest Rates rising on Investments to also accrue £5,078.

Members noted less Expenditure - following the quiet period post Covid - with Arrhythmia Detection Devices (Cardiac Monitors) and a donation to Halstead Day Centre (£15,000) being the largest.

Assets and Investments remain 'healthy' and well placed to fund requests from the Hospital and provide larger items when the Ward future is more certain.

The Auditors report gave a 'true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31st December 2022' and has to be 'signed-off' and submitted to Companies House.

The Adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Mrs J Wright, seconded by Mrs R Gage and motion carried.

**Action by:**

## **8. Election of Auditor for 2023**

The Auditor to the LoF's for financial year ending 31st December 2023 was considered, and TC Audit Limited was proposed by Mrs S Evans, seconded by Mrs B Couch, and motion carried.

## **9. To elect the following Executive Officers: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and the appointment of Directors/Trustees**

**Chairman:** Dr A Symington was nominated by Mrs J A Pell, seconded by Mrs S Evans and motion carried.

**Vice Chairman:** Mrs J Pell was nominated by Mrs S Evans, seconded by Mrs R Gage and motion carried.

**Secretary:** Mrs E Self was nominated by Mrs B Couch, seconded by Mrs J Wright and motion carried.

**Treasurer:** Mr A Green was nominated by Mrs S Evans, seconded by Mrs R Gage and motion carried.

The three-year term of five Trustees was complete, and following their agreement to re-stand

Mrs R A Gage, Mr A R G Green, Mrs J A Pell, W E G Pell and Dr A J Symington were nominated by Mrs B K Couch, seconded by Mrs J J Wright. All in favour.

The remaining Trustees, following their agreement to remain, were nominated en-bloc by Mrs S Evans, seconded by Mrs R Gage to be re-elected:-

Mrs J Anbouche, Mrs B K Couch, Mr L Crabb, Mrs S Evans, Mr D Holmes, Mrs L M Jackson, Mrs D Pegler, and Mrs J J Wright.

Mrs J Lowrie and Mr R J Waters remain as Committee Members only.

Dr D Kreis and Ms C McSpadden (Practice Manager at Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery) remain as ex-officio links with the surgery.

## **10. Date of Next Standard Meeting**

The next standard meeting will be on Tuesday 8th August 2023 at 7.00pm in the Reception Area of the Rehabilitation Unit.

A brief discussion ensued including furniture for the patio outside the Day Room, the LoF's garden, the condition of the Hospital grounds (Chairman to contact Sarah Bright), and probable funding requests from Mel Cross, now she has been appointed Ward Manager permanently.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming.

A letter of thanks and a donation to be sent for use of main hall and coffee area at the United Reformed Church.

**ES/AG**

The meeting closed at 8.30pm