

COUNCIL - 20th SEPTEMBER 2021

UPDATE AND INFORMATION

Councillor updates, conferences and events

Beacon Medical Group Patient Participation Group – Cllr T Rea

19/10/2021 - This meeting was the first held face to face for some time (actually, it was blended with two members attending by Zoom link).

Three items dominated the discussion.

1 Complaints. The number of complaints lodged remain stable compared to last year and the themes remain the same: ie length of wait time on the telephone dominates complaints (Beacon are moving to a 'cloud based system' which is intended to reduce wait times).

2 Representation on the PPG. At the moment, the PPG comprises Beacon patients aged 60+ and is not representative of the town's demographic composition. Children and women of childbearing age are also major users of the Health Centres but are underrepresented. I suggested efforts could be made to recruit parents to the PPG by advertising it in toddler groups and primary schools in town. There is an AGM in November.

3 Responses to the Government's recent drive towards more face to face GP consultations. The Beacon GPs' response to this was negative – they feel it is pursuing the wrong target.

PPG discussion focussed on two main issues.

The first is covered in point [1 above].

The second is a reluctance amongst a sizable group of users to accept Triage as a part of the NHS's model of primary care. Beacon is much more than a GP service. The Beacon practice comprises GPs, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists and other well qualified medical practitioners. Directing patients to the most appropriate professional in a timely manner is the work of Triage. Triage can be done on line, via E-Consult, or on the telephone – either way, the same questions will be asked. It was felt that much work needs to be done to educate the Ivybridge population about how the Triaging system works. Some people do not wish to voice their medical circumstances to a 'receptionist', failing to recognise the important Triage role of Beacon's patient advisors.

We also discussed wait times to get a face to face appointment with a GP if deemed necessary. It is between 3 and 5 days for non-urgent cases; and whether the Ivybridge medical centres (Station Road and Highlands) are the best places to

seek help with urgent medical issues. It was felt the NHS 111, or 999 in an emergency, is the place to go with urgent needs. Again, this is a case where education maybe needed to help people make the best decision about urgency and where to seek help.

I will be happy to answer any questions members may have at the next Council meeting.

DALC Conference and AGM 2021 – Cllr Spencer and Cllr Dredge

Cllr Spencer and I attended the DALC AGM and exhibition which was held over the three days from October 5th to 7th. The event was undertaken on a remote basis but its form will be reviewed next year.

We both attended the Welcome Address, DALC Induction and the AGM and in addition, between us, covered the undermentioned sessions:

Improving Community Engagement for Local Councils (both)

Panel: Young People (both)

Panel: Well-being

Managing Difficult People and Conversations

How Your Council can get involved in the Queen's Jubilee (both)

Current and Future Priorities for Devon County Council

Evolution of Neighbourhood Planning

Cyber Protection Workshop

S106, CIL and Asset Transfers

Climate/ecological Emergency

Final Conference Remarks

Should anyone wish for more information on any of the above, I believe that slides or videos are available.

GWR Annual Stakeholders Conference – Cllr Dredge

GWR held their annual conference at Cardiff on Monday 18th October 2021. The conference was attended by around 90 people with another 145 attending it as a remote event. The remote element was undertaken by 'Hopin'. I chose to be a 'remote' attendee.

The conference ran seamlessly with both types of attendee being able to raise questions either in person or on chatbox and of course there were no travel, meals and accommodation expenses for 145 attendees and no time spent away from home.

The meeting covered the recent history of the GWR and the gradual revenue recovery following the pandemic. I attended a session on the future of stations

whereby they could become community hubs rather than just somewhere to catch a train.

Should anyone require further information there are supporting slides and a film available.

Harford Parish Meeting – Cllr Munro

Harford are experiencing similar issues to Ivybridge in regard to it's waste collections by FCC, they have the additional problem of vermin eating the brown bins.

I reminded the council to continue to report issues with Beacon Medical to the PPG and CCG.

Key point from the meeting which we need to action/think about:

Harford Moor Gate remains closed for the foreseeable future, Harford Parish Council have asked us to reach out to our residents to remind them that the moor gate is still closed and access to the moor should be from the path from Stowford Bridge (Parking at the train station) or Cantrel moor gate. Harford village residents are currently experiencing access issues to their properties due to visitors walking to the moor from the village, they are planning to meet with DCC to discuss solutions and potential parking restrictions.

We need to consider impact on Cole Lane residents if Harford Moor Gate is closed long term.

If any Councillors wish to update Council on activities that they have undertaken on behalf of the Town Council, then these please submit these in advance.

Forthcoming training/conferences/representation

IDALC AGM and Ordinary Meeting – 2 November – Cllr Dredge

General Information

SHDC Christmas Campaign

South Hams District Council are launching a shop local campaign again this Christmas, encouraging residents to use the towns for shopping and hospitality in the lead up to the festive season. There will be a social media campaign and they will support towns by sharing their calendar of events and make use of social media hashtags to share the message. For Ivybridge the tag is #MyIvybridgeAtChristmas

Jonathan Parsons
Town Clerk