

Minutes of a meeting of
HEACHAM GROUP PRACTICE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP
Held on Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 6.30 p.m.

Present: Avril Almey, Christine Blake, Martin Chomistek, Jilly Cookson, Debbie Crown, Glennis Dann, Anne Davis, Jane Floodgate, Eric Langford, Steve Lloyd, Eric Rhodes, Jean Skeen, Margaret Thorne and Michelle Welham

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies
- 2 PPG Committee Structure
- 3 Minutes of last meeting
- 4 Finance
- 5 Public meeting
- 6 Communication
- 7 Newsletter
- 8 Practice News
- 9 Any other business
- 10 Date of next meeting

Eric Rhodes opened the meeting and welcomed everybody, explaining that Bob Carrick had resigned as chair of the PPG. An important item on the evening's agenda was therefore to replace him and to clearly define the structure of the PPG Committee.

- 1 Apologies were received from Dr Terry.
- 2 Having previously offered to act as vice-chair, Jilly Cookson was proposed as chair by Eric Rhodes and this proposal seconded by Eric Langford. All present signified agreement and Jilly took the chair. All present agreed that the thanks should be sent to Bob Carrick for his enthusiasm and hard work in establishing the re-formed PPG.

As the agenda had been formulated without consultation to cover the main areas for discussion and, to a degree, some changes to the status quo, there was understandably some 'crossover' between items.

There was considerable discussion on what constituted the PPG committee as there had clearly been some confusion in the past. There were some designated roles, a number of interested, regular attendees who represented different areas of expertise and the patient population and the 'Friends' who had displayed an interest by attending public meetings. Eric Langford quoted guidance that suggested a PPG committee should consist of between 6/8 and 20 participants. He felt that a degree of formality in the definition of the committee and its role was necessary. It was agreed that those present at the meeting, with there being no apologies for absence, would constitute the PPG committee. A quorum will be fifty percent of that number and it would be assumed that non-attendance without notification would signify a member had left the committee.

It was considered by some that, as a general forum and 'sounding board' between Practice and patients, a more informal, circular seating arrangement would be beneficial with contributions from all members representing different aspects of the community.

Glennis Dann explained that she was a newcomer to the meetings, considering participation and Christine Blake explained that as she was now employed at the Practice as a nurse and could no longer be a patient but would be pleased to remain as a link between Practice and patients.

Later in the meeting, Jilly proposed Jean Skeen as vice-chair and this proposal was seconded and accepted by all.

There was general agreement with Jilly as the new chair that the PPG should remain an important stakeholder but that there was a need to review the meeting structures. The current arrangements have been labour intensive for the Practice and PPG with all parties agreeing that a more efficient model would be beneficial.

Jilly and others felt that regular meetings had been of value whilst the Practice was deemed to be in special measures but there was a danger that such a pattern could be over demanding of time and finances. The majority felt that monthly meetings were not necessary and it was also decided that the public meetings arranged for April and July would not be held.

- 3/8 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be a true record of that meeting and had been posted on the Practice website. It was agreed that future minutes would be checked by the Chair and Senior Manager before being posted on the website by the Manager as draft minutes. They would be formally agreed at the following committee meeting.

Steve Lloyd informed those present that, after more than sixteen years as Practice Manager, Lucy Woodall had left the Practice. Members of the Practice were most grateful to her for her service during that time. Although there would be some internal reorganisation of roles, he was taking over as Senior Manager. This will be in addition to responsibilities elsewhere and would be on a basis of two days a week at the Practice.

- 4 The need for funding will be lessened by the hire charges for public meeting venues being lessened/unnecessary. Eric Langford advised the committee that the Heacham Group Practice Amenity Fund had agreed to settle the financial commitments relating to venue hire to date and Jilly said that any personal expenses incurred to date by Bob Carrick would be covered.

Steve Lloyd confirmed that a bank account for the PPG had been completed. Eric Rhodes had been advised by the Borough Councillor for the Heacham Ward that there was still money remaining within a community grant at his disposal but via the Borough Council. The deadline for application was, however, imminent. Eric proposed to apply in an attempt to repay the Amenity Fund but will require account details.

- 5 It had been decided not to hold the planned public meetings although the venues had been booked and the Hunstanton and Heacham monthly newsletters had been sent advisory posters for publication earlier in the month to meet deadlines for copy. The secretary agreed to attempt to cancel publication.

Practice would like to review PPG content for newsletters or the website in order to ensure consistent communication to patients.

Rather than a personal email being established for communication with the PPG, it was believed that it would be possible to have one similar to the current *nhs.net* site accessible by the PPG chair with template responses, if necessary. All should be aware that 'blanket' email communications could reveal email addresses of Practice staff or those who did not wish for them to be in the public domain. Those of the committee should be grouped separately. The 'Friends' list is to be transferred by Bob.

The Practice provided an update on producing a board identifying staff. It has proved more difficult than first anticipated but remains a valuable addition for patients.

The group noted that a Facebook page originally identifying as a PPG page has been rebranded. The content of the rebranded page contains useful health promotion information.

7 The reasons for the decision to cancel the proposed public meeting also applied to the production of a newsletter. Margaret Thorne stressed the fact that there were elderly patients who preferred the written word or had no access to the internet. Steve considered that the vast majority of patients had access to the internet but newsletters could be made available at the surgeries. It was thought that they could be produced more cheaply than earlier editions, if necessary.

A PPG News column could be regularly included in village newsletters or on the PPG section of the Practice website.

8 The main news from the Practice had been covered earlier.

9 Martin Chomistek asked for an update on the telephone system, noting that the current recorded message was, in a number of ways, out of date. The Manager responded, saying that engineers were on site, there would be a training period and it would then be 'live'. With an increased number of receptionists, it is hoped that the response time will be improved. He was unsure how the present message could be changed but will investigate.

Jean Skeen and some others were anticipating an imminent NHS Digital Access focus group meeting but Steve Lloyd was unaware of it and others had not heard more than an initial mention. Jean will check with the organiser. *(The following day it was confirmed that it would not be going ahead but an online contribution was possible).*

10 The date of the next committee meeting is to be Tuesday 23 May at 6.30 p.m.