**COMMUNICARE**

(Wansford & Kings Cliffe Surgery Patient Participation Group – PPG)

**Minutes of 41st AGM held at Wansford Surgery – Wednesday 29th March 2023**

**PRESENT** – Rev D.Parkes (Chairman), Mr D.Hellard (Vice-Chair), Mrs L.Freeman (Treasurer)

Mrs W.Spencer (Secretary), Mrs C.Wagstaffe, Mr P.Philipp, Dr R. Nally, Ms A.Johnson (Deputy Practice Manager), Mr S.Fairhall, Mrs V Thorley, Mrs J. Smith (Healthwatch Rep), Mr & Mrs R Pitcher, Mrs S. Strowbridge, Mrs L Hellard

**APOLOGIES:** Mrs H.Gough, Dr H.Eastwood, Mrs K.Lawes (Practice Manager), Mr P.Wright, Mr & Mrs Peterson, Sandra Claughton, Barbara Jones

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 41st AGM

**1) MINUTES OF LAST AGM MEETING – 21st October 2021**

As there had been a long time lapse between the last AGM and this meeting it was agreed that the minutes from 2021 would be considered as a true record – no matters arising were proposed.

**2) Chairman’s Report**

The full report was circulated to attendees. Rev Parkes expressed his thanks to all other officials and also to the practice staff with whom there was good two-way communication on all matters. The PPG acted as critical friends and were happy to be involved in the many challenges which the practice needed to resolve. The question was raised as to whether the PPG acted as spokesperson for patients or dealt directly with issues – DP replied that they adopted a direct approach and were happy that discussions were always forthcoming with the practice partners.

DP welcomed new patients to the meeting but reiterated the fact that the PPG only dealt with general issues, not individual queries. He also acknowledged the presence of Mrs Jo Smith as a representative of the local Healthwatch Group, who have become a vital source of information and liaison with the healthcare providers.

Mrs Wagstaffe queried whether the name ‘Communicare’ had been discontinued – this was not the case in respect of the W&KC practice, but outside of that arena, the group was known as the PPG for W&KC.

**3) Treasurer’s Report**

The year end accounts were circulated round the meeting – LF pointed out that there was currently no fund raising activities – income was only generated from donations and interest on investment. CW explained to other patients present the history of the culture of Communicare pre-pandemic when monthly coffee mornings were held as well as day trips and short holidays. Unfortunately due to the age profile and other social advancements, the need for these activities had ceased. A follow on to this change has meant a decrease in donations being made in memory of passed patients.

There was some discussion about needs of some village residents, in particular transport, which had been provided by Communicare, but ceased some years ago. This was taken over by Volunteer Action in Oundle and it was felt that contact with them could perhaps provide a service throughout the practice area.

**4) Re-election of Officials**

Mrs Wendy Spencer and Mrs Heather Gough had officially presented their resignations – the other six officials indicated their willingness to continue in office.

It was acknowledged that there was a need for younger people to come forward – the advent of zoom meetings might be attractive to some thus avoiding the necessity to attend face to face meetings. This matter will be addressed in several ways over the coming months not least by the use of social media.

**(2)**

Mrs Pauline Pitcher indicated her willingness to become involved with the PPG – she will be sent all relevant papers and invited to attend the next meeting.

Although it was acknowledged that there no longer is a legal requirement for each surgery to have a PPG, Dr Nally was adamant about the benefits such a group provided, not least being a powerful voice behind some of the practice’s aims and future plans.

CW will contact NAPP to seek their confirmation on the legal position and their advice.

**5) Practice Update**

Dr Nally confirmed that the patient list had increased by 20-30% over the last two years – however consultations were also up by 15% per capita since the pandemic. The patient numbers had increased from 4,900 to over 10,000 since she joined the practice. The practice catchment area covered 120 square miles and included over 30 villages. In the past patients had been accepted from outside this catchment area, with the proviso that they would not be eligible for home visits.

Over the last few months the patient list has been closed for anyone living outside the area, but with ever increasing problems with staffing, accommodation, etc. it has now been decided to seek permission from the ICB to close the list for all new patients, in or outside the catchment area. This was obviously a very unfortunate step, but was necessary and also seen as a way in which to highlight the problems of space and need to obtain funding for expansion, both at Wansford and Kings Cliffe. Permission has just been granted for the refurbishment of the surgery at KC– this work will be undertaken as quickly as possible and will include the addition of a proper reception area and an additional consulting room. However, permission has not been granted for the use of the first floor space. Although welcome, this upgrade of the KC premises was not a long term solution, especially from the parking aspect.

There was an ongoing application to NHS Estates for permission and funding to expand the Wansford surgery, utilising the large area of open land adjacent to the current premises – it was acknowledged that even with the go-ahead, this work could take up to a couple of years to complete. However the Estates department is carrying out a nationwide audit of premises and therefore not accepting or considering any applications at the present time.

The Chairman confirmed that the matter of total list closure had been discussed at the last officials’ meeting – reluctantly and regretfully they had agreed to support the practice in their decision.

There was a suggestion from the floor about the use of temporary buildings – ie portacabins – but Dr Nally did not believe this to be an acceptable solution.

The current workload was being adequately managed despite the shortage of space, with a large amount of consultations being carried out remotely by phone – this seemed to suit many working patients. It was acknowledged that many doctors coming into general practice only wanted to work part-time to provide a better work-life balance – turnover of staff was relatively high but recruiting clinicians did not seem to be a problem; two new doctors and other clinical staff have joined the Practice recently. Early retirement of doctors was also a drain on resources.

**(3)**

Discussion took place around the need for a clear strategy from the Practice giving a long-term project plan with objectives, ~~of~~ associated requirements and staged future action for submission to the Integrated Care Board and which could be fully supported by the PPG – other local organisations, such as the parish councils, could also be canvassed for their support.

**6) Spring Covid Booster**

Confirmed that this will be available for certain groups between April and June – all those eligible will be contacted by the NHS and invited to make an appointment. With specific exceptions, these vaccinations will not be carried out by GP Practices in Peterborough.

**7) AOB**

**Kings Cliffe Garden Project**

Mr Simon Fairhall informed the meeting that the project would be gaining momentum again as the weather improved, with the planting of the raised beds. There were around 20 volunteers available and a regular rota would be devised. The project had used most of the £10K grant received from the Peoples Postcode Trust and another Trust and now envisaged using a portion of the ring fenced monies being held by the PPG – it was not thought that the total of £4K would be needed so other suitable areas for spending this money should be considered by the PPG. There was a suggestion of providing some wooden benches around the site for visitors use.

The café and pavilion are proving popular and therapeutic and are being fairly well used by local groups.

**Routine Appointments**

A patient had queried the length of time being quoted for routine appointments – approx 3 weeks – Dr Nally confirmed that this was the case but it was hoped that reduction in this period could be achieved in the coming months.

**Wansford Reception Area TV Screen**

This was due to be installed shortly – the PPG could make use of this facility to advertise themselves and their work and aims.

**Good Neighbours Scheme in rural Peterborough**

Dr Nally had discussed this scheme with two local parish councils – Wansford and Nassington – who had decided to support it and levy the required charge of £2 per household. The scheme is a registered charity with a board of trustees and utilizes local volunteers to provide the services they offer – however there was a problem of DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks in some cases. Some other councils had discussed the scheme but decided not to become involved.

**Blood Pressure Monitors**

Dr Nally presented a small portable machine which patients could use on a regular basis and the results were then remotely transferred via their phones to the practice computer base – although beneficial it was acknowleged that not all patients had the correct technology. A quote for the cost of these machines will be passed to the PPG.

**Healthwatch**

The Chairman reported that he regularly attended their meetings and would ensure that all relevant information was passed back to the PPG and the practice for inclusion on the website if appropriate.

**(4)**

**Tree Planting**

Dr Nally informed the meeting that there would be a ‘tree planting’ event on the Wansford boundary field – this was to mark the 70th Anniversary of the Royal College of General Practitioners and would be carried out by local celebrity – Craig Revel Horwood.

It was noted that National Patient Participation Awareness week runs from the 31st May to the 6th June.

**8) Future Meetings**

No decisions were made on future dates – it will depend on what has happened in the meantime and any information will be circulated as soon as it becomes available.

**The Chairman thanked all those present for attending and the Practice Staff for their contributions (after a very long day for them) - the meeting concluded at 8pm**