

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee**                      **Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date of Committee**                      **27<sup>th</sup> July, 2005**

**Report Title**                                **Lighthorne Heath Branch Surgery**

**Summary**                                    The Committee to note a proposal by the South Warwickshire Primary Care Trust to support the closure of the Lighthorne Heath Branch Surgery. Details set out in the attached letter to patients. Also attached is a copy of a letter from Councillor David Booth.

**For further information please contact:**                      Alwin McGibbon  
Health Scrutiny Officer,  
Tel: 01926 412075  
alwinmcgibbon@warwickshire.gov.uk

**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?**                      No.

**Background papers**                      None

7 June 2005

Dear Patient

### **Lighthorne Heath Branch Surgery**

It is a priority for South Warwickshire Primary Care Trust to ensure that local health services meet local need using the resources we have available. We do this by working with all sections of the community to hear their views and involve them in developing future services.

We also involve the community in decisions about necessary changes to existing services. In this instance we are proposing a change to the provision of general practice in Lighthorne Heath.

#### **What are you asking us about?**

Dr Woodward and Dr Melton have their main surgery in Kineton, and also see patients in a small branch surgery in Lighthorne Heath.

The practice have applied to close the branch surgery in Lighthorne Heath with services to people in Lighthorne Heath being provided from the main surgery in Kineton with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005.

#### **Why have the practice applied to close the branch surgery?**

The property used as a surgery in Lighthorne Heath is no longer suitable for this use in that it fails to meet a number of Department of Health requirements:

- It does not have a treatment room or facilities for a practice nurse
- There is no access for wheelchair users or facilities for people with other disabilities
- Access (including emergency) is via a steep, narrow staircase
- Consultation room allows conversations to be overheard

Discussions have been held with South Warwickshire Housing Association, Stratford District Council, the Parish Council and the PCT over a number of years to agree a replacement facility in Lighthorne Heath. To date there are no agreed plans to provide alternative accommodation. In view of the concerns over the current premises, the practice have applied to close the branch surgery and the PCT supports the application. The proposal is to close the premises with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005

If suitable alternative accommodation can be provided in Lighthorne Heath in the future, the practice would wish to reinstate the branch surgery.

The practice have asked for the Primary Care Trust's support for the closure and, in view of the unsuitability of the premises, the Primary Care Trust has agreed to support the closure.

### **Are they allowed to close?**

Yes, there are 2 ways that a practice can be closed. The practice can apply to close a branch surgery and ask for support from the Primary Care Trust. They can notify the Primary Care Trust that they are giving notice and close after that notice period.

### **What is the purpose of the consultation?**

The aim of this consultation is:

- to ensure that we can identify all the implications for patients
- to share how we would continue to meet patients needs when the surgery closes
- to listen to the views of the patients giving them the opportunity to help in developing suitable alternative provision
- to provide feedback to the decision making committee ensuring that the final recommendation has considered and reflects the views of the patients and local population that could be affected by this change

We will try to ensure that the consultation is carried out in a way that allows as many people as possible to be involved and make their views heard.

The ways in which we will consult are:

- A public meeting to be held in June in Lighthorne Heath where information will be available, practice staff and members of the Primary Care Trust will be there to discuss plans and answer questions
- We will write to all the patients registered at the surgery
- Views can be put to the PCT in writing
- We will inform and involve the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Public & Patient Involvement forum
- Any staff who could be affected by changes such as community staff who may work from the surgery will be offered the opportunity to comment.

The deadline for comments is July 29<sup>th</sup> with a final decision being made on 10<sup>th</sup> August.

A summary of the views received, and of how the decision has been influenced by the consultation will be available in September 2005

The results of consultation will be reported to:

- all recipients who responded directly
- the public, on request and through the surgery
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Public & Patient Involvement forum

### **How do I make my views known?**

Either attend the next meeting of the Lighthorne Heath Community Forum on 28 June 2005 at 7.45 pm at Lighthorne Heath School

or write to:

Sue Morgan, Stratford Locality Manager at the above address.

Yours sincerely

Sue Morgan  
Stratford Locality Manager

From David Booth County Councillor for Kineton Division

Tel 01926 640728  
davidbooth@warwickshire.gov.uk

8 Stonebridge Road  
Lighthorne Heath  
Leamington Spa  
Warwickshire  
CV33 9TX

28<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Stratford Locality Manager  
Community Health Offices  
Alcester Road  
STRATFORD-upon-AVON  
Warwickshire  
CV 37 6PW

## **PROPOSED CLOSURE OF LIGHTHORNE HEATH SURGERY**

Dear Sue Morgan,

I have had sight of your letter of 7 June 2005, which, while having Lighthorne Heath PC in the address, was sent to the clerk of the neighbouring parish of Lighthorne. I also attended the meeting held in Lighthorne Heath Primary School on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2005.

In this letter I will deal with issues of communicating with the correct people, the consultation process, immediate problems caused by the proposed closure, the provision of a new surgery in Lighthorne Heath and then other issues.

### **Communicating with the Correct People**

It is vital that you keep the local elected representatives informed of the proposed closure, the measures you propose to put in place to mitigate the effects of the closure and the results of the consultation process. I for one and I suspect others have not had direct communication from you. The following are the elected people and organisations that represent Lighthorne Heath:

Lighthorne Heath Parish Council  
c/o Suezanne Baker (Clerk)  
6 Mallory Road  
Lighthorne Heath  
Leamington Spa  
CV33 9TX

01926 640127  
suezannebaker@hotmail.com

Stratford District Councillors

Louise Giblin                                      also Chairman of the Parish Council  
2 Gifford Road  
Lighthorne Heath  
Leamington Spa  
CV33 9TT

01926 641749  
louise.giblin@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Clive Higgs  
Aigen  
Banbury Street  
Kineton  
Warwick  
CV35 0JU

01926 640453  
clive.higgs@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Warwickshire County Councillor

David Booth  
8 Stonebridge Road  
Lighthorne Heath  
Leamington Spa  
CV33 9TX

01926 640728  
davidbooth@warwickshire.gov.uk

## **The Consultation Process**

I note from the meeting of 28 June 05 that:

You are undertaking a formal consultation process.

You do not accept that the closure of Lighthorne Heath Surgery amounts to a “Substantial Variation in Service”. I disagree. I believe that the closure of Lighthorne Heath Surgery does amount to a “Substantial Variation in Service” as it will have a high degree of impact on the patients who use the surgery many of whom can be classed as “disadvantaged”. Please change your consultation process to one appropriate to a “Substantial Variation in Service”.

You agreed with me that there were a substantial number of disadvantaged groups in Lighthorne Heath.

In your letter of 7 June 2005 you said that you would be writing to all the patients registered at the surgery. My wife and I believe that we are registered at the surgery but we have not received a letter. This indicates a failure of the consultation process, as does the incorrectly addressed letter to

the Parish Council. Could it be that many people living in Lighthorne Heath are registered at the Kineton surgery so deflating the official patient numbers? Please will you check your consultation list and engage with the correct people. Will you also send letters to all people registered with the Melton and Woodward GP practice who live in Lighthorne Heath in addition to those registered there?

Please will you inform me and the other local elected representatives of the views of the Patient and Public Involvement Forum on this issue and let us have their contact details so that we can write to them if we wish.

Looking at WCC's Health Overview and Scrutiny in Warwickshire - Good Practice Guidelines On Service Variations and Developments I would expect you to take the Local Issue Substantial Variation in Service procedure outlined in Appendix 5.

At the beginning of the meeting on 28 June 2005 I pressed you hard, a number of times, with the question have you organised this meeting. On each occasion you said that you had not organised the meeting. Given that WCC's Health Overview and Scrutiny in Warwickshire - Good Practice Guidelines On Service Variations and Developments says that the PCT is responsible for consultation you may have missed one of the consultation requirements. I would not wish you to hold another meeting just for the sake of process but if there is a demand for an additional meeting I hope you will arrange one.

Given that there have been problems with the consultation process I suggest that it would be fairer to everyone if you go back to the beginning, start the clock again, this time ensuring that your consultation reaches all the appropriate people.

### **Immediate Problems Caused By The Proposed Closure**

At the 28 June 2005 meeting the main immediate issues raised were:

How those who do not have access to private transport can visit a doctor.

How the combined public transport journey / consultation times can be limited to an acceptably short period of time – say 2 hours.

How can repeat prescriptions be collected by those without private transport without protracted journeys on public transport.

Could a system of a dedicated bus (private or public) from Lighthorne Heath to Kineton be provided, say twice a week, to get patients to the surgery. The bus could be linked to a time slot where Lighthorne Heath patients have priority in seeing the doctor or nurse.

Could a prescription pick up point be provided in Lighthorne Heath.

Could medicines be delivered to those who cannot get to the Kineton surgery.

I did not see a mechanism being put in place to resolve these issues apart from an offer by the gentleman listed below to talk to the GP Practice and PCT.

Howard Wyton  
35 Edgehill Road  
Lighthorne Heath  
Leamington Spa  
CV33 9TR

Please can Mr Wyton's offer be taken up and in addition can the Community Forum and the Parish Council be involved.

I note from at WCC's Health Overview and Scrutiny in Warwickshire - Good Practice Guidelines On Service Variations and Developments that developing options for change should be made **with** people, not **for** them. Failure to engage in a meaningful way with the community will negate this requirement.

### **The Provision Of A New Surgery In Lighthorne Heath**

During the meeting of 28 June 2005 the following was said:

The chairman of the parish council said that there was agreement in principle for land leased to the Parish Council by Stratford District Council to be made available to build a doctors surgery. However there was at this time no capital sum available to pay for the building.

You said in response that the PCT had no immediate capital sums available but bids could be made for future years.

You said that you had had recent talks with South Warwickshire Housing Association (SWHA) about the provision of a new doctor's surgery and that you were hopeful of a successful outcome. It was pointed out by a number of members of the public that fair words from SWHA had come to naught in the past.

Please will you follow up these leads in parallel?

Can you use your NHS contacts to explore the possibility of grant funding for rural partnership projects with the NHS.

You offered to send copies of the specification for a small surgery to the parish council. It would be extremely helpful if these included specimen architects drawings or similar.

### **Other Issues**

After the meeting I said to you that:

I agreed that the current surgery is not fit for purpose as measured by the current legislative requirements.

I accept that the past attempts to provide a new surgery have failed.

If funding, design, planning permission and legal agreements were in place today (which they are not) a new doctor's surgery most likely could not be build in the next 12 months.

I am sure that the PCT, the GP practice, SDC, WCC, Parish Council and the local community want and will strive to provide a new surgery in Lighthorne Heath. It is vital that we work together. I

will do my best to help in this process and hope you will not hesitate to indicate areas in which I can make a difference.

David Booth

Copy to:

John Maples MP

Clive Higgs Cllr SDC

Louise Giblin Cllr SDC

Lighthorne Heath Parish Council

Dr Woodward

James Holloway MP's representative at the meeting

WCC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Alwin McGibbon)

Howard Wyton