

Health in Dacorum Report for 2020/21

The Covid-19 pandemic has been in the forefront of the Health in Dacorum Committee's minds. On 11th March 2020, the Committee was addressed by Jim McManus the Hertfordshire Director of Public Health and C/Cllr Tim Hutchings, Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC's) Executive Member for Public Health. They warned that restrictions would be coming. Then less than two weeks later the country went into lockdown.

The June 2020 meeting was cancelled but Health in Dacorum meetings recommenced in September 2020 on Microsoft Teams. Prof. McManus, sometimes with C/Cllr Hutchings has attended the virtual meetings to give updates on Covid-19 and the national and county responses to it. These have been very helpful in supplying members with accurate, factual information.

Herts. Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group (HVCCG) presented to the Committee about GP services during the pandemic.

The Committee looked at the proposed development of West Herts. Hospitals Trust (WHHT) estate and received presentations on it from WHHT. The Committee challenged WHHT at every meeting on why the option of a new hospital on a greenfield site had been discounted.

At its meeting on March 10th 2021, the Committee was displeased that the HCC Health Scrutiny Committee Topic Group which met on 8th February 2021 did not consider the redevelopment plans with the acute hospital rebuilt on the Watford site to be a substantial change to services and therefore did not call them in to the Secretary of State. At the direction of the Committee I wrote to Owen Mapley the Chief Executive and Quentin Baker the Chief Legal Officer of HCC about the Topic Group process. The Committee unanimously passed a motion about the redevelopment of the estate.

At the meeting on 10th March 2021, WHHT wanted to talk about services rather than estate redevelopment so the Committee asked what specific services will be coming to Hemel Hempstead.

I would like to thank the Vice Chairman and all members of the Committee for their hard work, diligence and enthusiasm in challenging proposals and decisions about local healthcare provision.

Cllr Fiona Guest
Chairman, Health in Dacorum Committee