

## Report from HCC Health Scrutiny Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016

The health scrutiny meeting was very timely, as it fell the morning after the extra Health in Dacorum meeting where the WHHT laid out their 'preferred' option for the future of hospital care in West Herts. At that meeting, the Leader of the Council clearly stressed that a motion would be put to Dacorum Borough Council to confirm that the people of Dacorum would NOT support a new hospital to be built at Watford. All members at the Health in Dacorum meeting were in agreement.

At HCC Health Scrutiny, The WHHT representatives started the meeting by showing the presentation they had run through with Health in Dacorum the night before, and then a long discussion followed about the options of a new build at a greenfield site v a new build at Watford. I pointed out that for most of the people in West Herts, whether they were in Dacorum, St Albans, Rickmansworth, Chorleywood etc, the journey to the suggested greenfield site near Kings Langley would be easier than getting to Watford.

One of the reasons WHHT suggested that a new build at Watford was preferred, was the new road into the hospital from Bushey Arches, and the Trust members were very keen to point out that this would relieve traffic from the ring-road. I pointed out that Bushey Arches is just as busy as the ring-road and this would not help the majority of the people trying to access the hospital. Interestingly, only one other member agreed with me, and that was the representative from Croxley Green, which is just a mile or so from Watford General Hospital.

The required action on the agenda was for the committee to 'note the report', but the Chair proposed that a letter should be sent to NHS England to support a new build, and it was suggested that the letter should say that HCC would ideally like a new hospital on a greenfield site, but as this was not realistic they would support the 'preferred option' of a rebuild at Watford. I stated very clearly that this was not acceptable to Dacorum, and it should be noted that we do not and will not support any build at the Watford site.

The Chair pointed out that the committee had never had to go to a vote before, but I insisted that we would not agree, so they did indeed vote. Unfortunately the vote went 15:2 but it has been officially recorded that Dacorum does not support the proposal. Please see HCC Health Scrutiny minutes from 08.11.16 for details.

Other items on the agenda were:

- A report from ENHHT regarding an update to the response to the findings of the CQC on acute services at ENHHT. They discussed the shortage of staff and explained their methods of recruitment, which seem to be very successful. The Trust is actively recruiting from overseas, and is working with University of Herts to increase nursing training at the university.
- The committee discussed the proposed format for their annual scrutiny of quality, patient experience and finances for 2017.
- There was a report on Princess Alexandra Hospital Trust (Harlow), which was put into special measures last month. The committee discussed the fact that due to the close proximity with the border of Hertfordshire, many Herts patients use this as their nearest hospital. It was agreed that 2-3 members of HCC would participate in the discussion about the Trust.

Jan Maddern  
November 2016