

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF BLUNDELLSANDS SURGERY PPG
HELD ON MONDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2024 AT 3.00PM**

Present : BO, MP, CL, DB, AS, KT, SB, RO, BD, and from 4.00pm Dr G

On commencement of the meeting, it was agreed that BO would continue to assemble and distribute the agenda for each meeting. CL took the chair for the first meeting of her 12 months' tenure, as agreed at the last meeting. SB to take the minutes for this meeting only.

1. **Apologies** - were received from PD.
2. **Minutes of the last meeting** - agreed as a correct record.
- 2(a) **Matters Arising** -
 - (i) CL raised the issue of raised plant beds as part of a Spring 2025 garden project to promote social inclusion. BO suggested the benefits of compiling a business plan covering : costings, sources of funding (AS), availability of volunteers with DIY skills, etc. It was **agreed** that views be submitted to BO and that a separate meeting be organised to advance this project. **Action - All**
 - (ii) Bernie raised his concerns regarding patients struggling with chronic conditions and issues arising, e g mental health. It was **agreed** to further consider this under AOB.
3. **Booking appointments online** - BO reported that the system for online booking of appointments is well used, but explained the need for a control system as some patients were abusing the system. Nonetheless, BO will review the system regarding Flu Vaccine appointments, or similar, blocking the ability to make a contemporaneous appointment with a GP. **Action - BO**
4. **Half-day PLT sessions** - BO reported that good advance notice was given when the surgery was to be closed for the half-day PLT sessions, It was **agreed** she would check that associated advance notice was available on the surgery website. **Action - BO**
5. **Non-urgent GP appointments** - SB raised the issue of a two-working day target for non-urgent GP appointments set out on the surgery website. BO indicated that this must be a typographical error. (Later in the meeting Dr G confirmed the error on the website.)
6. **New Telephone System** - There was general agreement that the new telephone system was an improvement by providing a transparent queuing system and call-back service. There was disappointment that the robotic voice was less appealing than the mellifluous voice that had been replaced. RO and DB raised separate concerns about their inability to book face to face appointments within a two-week period or beyond. BO explained the high demand for appointments with sessions booked up quickly. She further explained the two-week block rolling forward system, but would welcome any suggestions for improvement. CL mentioned her knowledge of arrangements at a practice in Aigburth (admittedly pre-Covid) which included a 'walk-in' service.
7. **X-Ray referrals** - Deferred for consideration when Dr G arrived.

8. Any Other Business -

- (i) Bernie promoted the need for a support system for people with conditions such as cancer and diabetes who may also suffer with associated anxiety and isolation. He referred to initiatives such as 'Heart Circles' which existed elsewhere but not in Sefton. These included help such as 'talking therapy'. BO agreed to share these thoughts and ideas with Dr G. **Action - BO**
- (ii) KT raised the difficulties in accessing services online when you have sight problems and also the obstacle (for security reasons) of the need to receive and see a code via a mobile phone. CL and BO referred to the NHS App, and AS referred to e-Life which may overcome this problem. BO referred to the back-stop of ringing the surgery.

At this point Dr G joined the meeting.

- (iii) DB set out his concerns about being redirected to the Respiratory Hub in Kingsway. CL also raised the issue of accessibility and cost of travelling. Dr G sympathised with DB but explained that the Hub approach was being driven by NHS England. He stated that he tries to maintain 'traditional' services in the practice, providing resources to meet the needs of the 'red, amber and green' groupings of patients. Dr G admitted that GP services are in a perilous position (the recent NI increases are an added blow for partners in GP surgeries). The prospects, nationally, are for a move to neighbourhood health centres to include GP practices in the longer term.
- (iv) With regard to Agenda item 7, SB informed the meeting of the NHS X-ray services available at the clinic in Kenilworth Road, Blundellsands. This service appears to be in peril because not enough GP referrals are being made to this facility. All Crosby/Waterloo GP practices have, apparently, been reminded of the underuse of this service, but to no avail so far. Dr G agreed to look into how his practice was providing patient alerts to the availability of this valuable local service.

Action - Dr G /

BO

- (v) SB highlighted the wide variations nationally in patient / GP ratios with Wirral showing the best figures. Dr G explained this is a complex area and he is trying to understand the disparity in the figures for our area compared with the Wirral.
- (vi) SB raised the issue of repeat prescriptions which always include '...when the prescriber would like to review the treatment with the patient'. Dr G responded that this was more of an aide-memoire for him and not for patient action.
- (vii) KT and others thanked Dr G for using up his valuable time to attend the meeting. KT further thanked CL for chairing the meeting and making it a success.

9. Date of next meeting - Monday 3rd March 2025 at 3.00pm.

Meeting ended at 4.35pm.