



Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

7th May 2020

Mr M Saccoccio
Leighton-Linslade Town Council
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Dear Mr Saccoccio

Re: Health Services in Leighton-Linslade

Thank you for your letter dated 3rd April, which has been forwarded to me as the lead Associate Director for Estates and Primary Care in Central Bedfordshire.

We would be happy to attend a future meeting of the Town Council's task and finish group, along with our Primary Care Network colleagues, to provide an update around the Central Bedfordshire Integrated Health and Care Hub Programme, which is overseen by the Central Bedfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board. I would suggest that most of your questions could be best answered as part of that discussion, and it would be useful to discuss how the Town Council would like to be involved in our wider efforts to improve health and wellbeing for Leighton-Linslade residents.

As you've noted, the CCG's efforts have had to be temporarily refocused around supporting the Covid19 emergency, so we will need to agree an appropriate date for attendance over the next few months.

In the meantime however, please find below some information in response to your questions:

1) The original health hub proposal/plan which it was understood had been presented to the Central Bedfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board

All reports shared with the Central Bedfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board are available on the Council website: https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/31/meetings/223/health_and_wellbeing_board_-_meetings_and_agendas/2

2) The latest progress/implementation report on the county-wide health hub project

The most recent update provided to the Health & Wellbeing Board is attached. The timescales in the report have unfortunately been impacted by the Covid19 emergency, and the CCG and Council will need to review the programme plan and reassess the planned timescales accordingly.

3) Clarification on proposed funding arrangements for health hubs

Central Bedfordshire Council have set aside capital funding in their Medium Term Financial Plan towards the delivery of the proposed Hubs in Dunstable and Biggleswade. This funding will be subject to approval of the detailed Business Cases, and will be based on assurance around a suitable rental return from tenants of the building. Given that many of the tenants will be healthcare providers, and relocation into the Hub will result in increased estates costs for the local healthcare system, the final go-ahead for these schemes will also be dependent on approval of the Business Cases by the CCG, as the commissioner of local healthcare services. For Dunstable, this is all being worked through between organisations as part of the development of the Outline Business Case, and will hopefully provide a helpful model to draw upon for the other Hubs.

Funding arrangements for the further three proposed Hub facilities in West Mid Bedfordshire, Houghton Regis and Leighton Buzzard are not yet confirmed. CCGs do not hold capital budgets which can be used for developing schemes like these, but there are a number of other funding options. These include:

- trying to access national NHS capital funding which is periodically available for local health systems to bid for
- third party capital investment in lieu of a guaranteed rental income (this could come from a public organisation such as the Council or through NHS-backed schemes to access alternative investment)
- contributions from housing developers.

4) The specification and intended services to be provided at the Dunstable and Biggleswade health hubs

A detailed service model has been developed with local health and social care providers for the proposed Hub in Dunstable. It is anticipated that the services to operate out of the Hub will include:

- 3 of the town centre GP practices, and a range of services to be shared between the six GP practices in the Chiltern Hills Primary Care Network (e.g. social prescribing link workers, Clinical Pharmacists)
- Adult and children's social services
- A range of adult community nursing and therapy services, including phlebotomy (blood testing)
- A range of community healthcare and mental health services for children and young people
- A range of mental health services for adults and older people
- Some specialist community services, such as Musculoskeletal Services, specialist nurses for heart failure and other long term conditions
- Possibly a community pharmacy - subject to interest from local providers
- A café open to the wider community, and space which can be utilised by prevention services and local community organisations to support the wider health and wellbeing of the local community (e.g. support groups/ leisure and arts activities).

It may be helpful to note that a similar range of services are already available to the residents of Leighton-Linslade in the local community. The concept behind the proposed Hubs is around helping these services to come together to deliver a strengthened and integrated offer to local people, and to provide additional capacity where this is needed, including in line with housing growth. It is expected that local health and care teams can continue to work towards achieving these benefits in advance of the delivery of the Hubs, and we would really value the Town Council's ongoing involvement in wider initiatives around preventing ill health, and improving the health and wellbeing of local people.

The NHS has undergone a huge digital transformation as part of the response to the Covid19 emergency; it is estimated nationally that in response to Covid19, general practice has moved from carrying out c.90% of consultations with patients as face-to-face appointments to managing more than 85% of consultations remotely. If this trend continues, as is expected, we will need to review our Hub plans in light of this significant change in practice. The GP practices in Leighton Buzzard have greater capacity in their surgery premises than in many other parts of Central Bedfordshire, and a sustained reduction in face-to-face consultations will further improve this position. Therefore there is plenty of scope to look at how services can work together more closely and even more effectively from within the buildings they already occupy in the meantime.

It may be worth noting that there are no current plans to relocate hospital-based outpatient services or complex diagnostics (e.g. X-ray, MRI, CT) into the Dunstable Hub, though it is hoped that an enhanced and expanded primary care service may help to prevent some referrals needing to be made to hospital services. Outpatient services have also experienced a major change in their delivery over the last few months, so it is very likely that far lower numbers of people will need to travel to hospital for face-to-face appointments in future.

5) The space/location requirements for the Dunstable and Biggleswade health hubs

The current specification for the proposed Dunstable Hub is just under 7,000m². This will vary significantly for each Hub, and we currently estimate that the Hubs in Central Bedfordshire may range in size from 2,000-7,000m² depending on the number of staff to be based in the building and the primary care space requirement. This will be worked through in detail as part of the development of the Outline Business Cases for each Hub.



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We hope that this provides some helpful information in the meantime, and look forward to discussing further with you in due course. As this relates to a joint initiative with Central Bedfordshire Council, I have shared a copy of your letter and this response with the Council for their information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'N. Barnes'.

Nikki Barnes
Associate Director for Transformation & Integration
Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group / BLMK Commissioning Collaborative

Cc. Dr John Henderson, GP and Clinical Director of Leighton Buzzard Primary Care Network



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