

Kintbury & Woolton Hill Patient Participation Group

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20th May 2025

7.00pm at Woolton Hill Surgery

Welcome – Peter Mason welcome to all members.

Present – Peter Mason (chair), Heather Howells, Gavin Smith, Sarah Garland, Rosemary Cahill, Elaine Brichard, Betty Taylor, Alan Cox, Tony Garland and Fiona Worby (guest speaker – Lead officer Healthwatch West Berkshire).

Apologies – Avril Cole, Anne and Alan Budd, Gillian Guy, Mike Stapley, John Willmott, Lorraine Cladingboel (PPG Secretary) and Simon Shaw (guest – Healthwatch West Berkshire).

1. Minutes - of meeting held at Kintbury Surgery on Tuesday 4th February 2025 (circulated).

2. Matters arising – No matters raised by members.

3. Healthwatch Presentation followed by Q&A – Fiona Worby Lead Officer Healthwatch West Berkshire –

PM welcomed **FW** and thanked her for attending. **FW** delivered an informative presentation outlining the role of Healthwatch and also her duties as lead officer for Healthwatch West Berkshire. Healthwatch act as an independent champion for people who use health and social care services. They are there to ensure that those running these services put people at the heart of care. Their main purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people that use Health and Social Care services and to speak out on their behalf.

Healthwatch have been approached by the horse racing community in Lambourn to look into the care needs of people working in the racing industry.

They have also recently undertaken an investigation focussing on the healthcare challenges faced by the Bargee community in West Berkshire. The Bargee community are classed as seldom heard and this is mainly because this community have a completely different lifestyle to the majority of the population. They can often lack access to common amenities and information sharing platforms and do not access information in the same way as the general population. **FW** went on to explain that they had engaged with the Bargee community across 4 key areas along the canal: Theale, Pangbourne, Newbury and Hungerford. In total they heard from 23 individuals living on barges across West Berkshire. The findings from their investigation have been sent to local healthcare providers along with their conclusions and recommendations. **GS** raised a number of concerns about

this report and in particular the way that the report has been worded and the lack of context. **GS** felt that whilst it was very important to hear and learn from the concerns/issues facing this community, several of the concerns raised were not specific to the Bargee community. In addition, some comments were about issues involving secondary care and about the non-availability of alternative medications and treatment that are in fact not prescribable by Primary care. **EB** was concerned that when the final report is published the press are likely to pick up on the headline percentage figures in the report. Given that the results are based on just 23 members of the community, the percentage figures could make the situation look a lot worse than perhaps it is. **PM** raised concerns over the wording and lack of context, suggesting that perhaps a clinician should have been asked to look at and comment on the findings before the draft report was issued. **FW** acknowledged the concerns raised and agreed that the wording could be better, explaining that due to staff shortages the report had been rushed through without perhaps considering the impact that the wording would have. **FW** had received very similar feedback from another local surgery the previous day. **FW** explained that Practices should send feedback to Healthwatch, and they will then consider all comments before final publication.

4. **Staffing Updates – GS** updated the meeting on staffing changes. Arron Willis, (Health Care Assistant) has started and has settled in very well. Shelly Hambrecht has joined the Practice as a Receptionist and is currently completing her training. Kim Cressdee has joined the Admin team. Rebecca Rowlands (Mental Health specialist) has returned from maternity leave. Two experienced dispensers, Jared and Maddie have both left to take up new positions. The Practice is looking to recruit a second clinical Pharmacist. An applicant was engaged for a trial period; however, it was decided not to take the applicant on. Further interviews are expected to take place over the coming weeks. There is also ongoing staff recruitment for dispensary and reception staff.
5. **Covid update – GS & HH** Provided an update on the Spring Covid booster vaccination programme. Two main vaccination sessions were held at Woolton Hill on Saturday 26th April and Saturday 10th May. Additional sessions have also been provided at Kintbury surgery for patients unable to travel to Woolton Hill. In total, the Practice vaccinated over 530 patients at the surgery plus 56 care home residents and 26 housebound residents. Patients were also able to obtain Covid boosters at a number of NHS national sites. In total 70% of eligible over 75's had the Covid booster. Take up for immunosuppressed patients under 75 years of age was much lower at 42%. **HH** advised members that take up amongst younger patients has always been much lower than for over 75's. Perhaps explained by patients feeling that the risk of Covid was just something that they were going to have to live with. **HH** explained that the Practice was unable to meet requests for a particular Covid vaccinations and that any patient wanting a specific

manufacturers vaccine would need to contact the NHS Covid booking line to see if was available elsewhere.

6. **GP Collective Action** – HH advised the group that GPs have now agreed changes to the 2025/26 GP contract. The Government has committed to work with GPs to secure a new substantive contract. The GPC is still recommending that GPs should continue to apply safe working policies.
7. **Housing/Planning** – No new news on the Watermill development at Wash Water. **AG** reported that Burghclere Council have finally ‘won’ their long running case against an application for 25 houses in the village. There is a new outline planning application for another development on the edge of Burghclere. PM reported that a planning application in Ball hill has been turned down.
8. **Members reports** – **SG** asked for an update regarding the Women’s Health Hub. **HH** explained that there are still issues with the pilot scheme and that ICB funding for the pilot will not be continuing. **FW** reported that Healthwatch are pushing the ICB over this and are fighting for the appropriate funding to be put in place.
RC advised the group that a new Priest will be joining Woolton Hill and will help deliver Communion in the local care homes.
RC explained that due to family commitments she would be standing down from the PPG. **PM** thanked **RC** for all work to support the PPG over the years and in particular **RCs** work as Secretary. **HH** thanked **RC** on behalf of the Practice for her immense contributions to the Practice.
GS & HH highlighted potential IT issues for local GP Practices. Due to ICB funding issues, Practices are being asked to hand back a percentage of their laptops and/or desk top PCs. Limits are being placed on the number of scanners and printers provided for Practices. These cuts are likely to impact on patients as there will be no back up equipment on site and there are concerns regarding patient safety. **FW** offered to take this up with the ICB given the potential impact on patients..

Date of next meeting - Tuesday 19th August 2025 at 7.00pm at Kintbury Surgery. Car sharing encouraged.

PPG Chairman signature:

Date: