

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS HUB WORKING GROUP
VIA TEAMS**

3 MAY 2022

PRESENT

Councillors Bernie Bentick, Rosemary Dartnall, Kate Halliday, Chris Lemon, Pam Moseley, David Vasmer and Alex Wagner

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk) and Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk)

01/21 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Twin hatted Councillors declared an interest in matters affecting Shropshire Council and the Town Council combines.

02/21 CHAIR OF THE WORKING GROUP

Two nominations were put forward for the Chair of the group. By a vote, Councillor Halliday was agreed as Chair.

03/21 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair proposed that the group agreed the terms of reference for the Working Group as the first item. Following a discussion it was agreed in principle that these should be along the following lines:

- To request that the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) making the proposal for a Health and Wellbeing Hub for Shrewsbury explain their rationale and reasoning to the public.
- To feedback to the CCG that the consultation with the public should take place via a number of mechanisms to allow as many people to participate as possible. This included the opportunity for face-to-face discussions.
- To request that the CCG ensure that any new provision of facilities isn't a downgrading of services for the residents of the town.
- To request that the CCG ensure that the process for consultation with the public is both proper and appropriate and includes an impact assessment.
- To request that a specific exercise regarding travel and access to any new location be undertaken. This should include a clear intention and measures to encourage active travel.

The group agreed that the Terms of Reference should be constructed along these lines.

04/21 CONCERNS REGARDING THE PROPOSED HEALTH AND WELLBEING HUB

There then ensued a discussion regarding the concerns of the group about a proposed Health and Wellbeing Hub for the town. Councillor Bentick expressed a strong concern that the second 'listening exercise' was exactly the same as the first one, which was clearly flawed. The only difference was that the period was down from six weeks to five days. There had been discussions that focus groups

would be set up for members of the public but so far no dates had been confirmed. He had raised his concerns already with Rachel Robinson, Director of Public Health at Shropshire Council.

Councillor Dartnall added that any proposals in the latest published consultation document appeared to rely on the faulty 'listening exercise' in Autumn 2021. In the Full Council meeting on 21 January 2022, attended by Claire Parker, Director of Partnership at the NHS Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin CCG, and Steve Ellis, Associate Director of Primary Care, they had said that proposals for the Shrewsbury Health and Wellbeing Hub were at a very early stage and nothing would be decided without engagement with the public. Extensive engagement exercises were planned and these would be central to the progression of plans. They had also said that the only firm commitment was to relocate two surgeries in the south of the town as the current locations were not fit for purpose. Councillor Vasmer said that they needed full details of what was being proposed before any meaningful public consultation could take place.

Councillor Bentick stated that he had been the consultation documents published on the website in detail and was deeply concerned about a number of key decisions which appeared to be hidden in the FAQs (available at <https://www.shropshiretelfordandwrekinccg.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/UPDATED-Shrewsbury-Health-and-Wellbeing-Hub-FAQs-19.4.2022-1.pdf>). For example, it was stated that:

'Six practices have chosen to move fully into the Health and Wellbeing Hub and others have chosen only to move certain services into the hub.

The practices that continue their involvement in the Shrewsbury Health and Wellbeing Hub project are:

- The Beeches Medical Practice
- Belvidere Medical Practice
- Claremont Bank Surgery
- Marden Medical Practice
- Marysville Medical Practice
- South Hermitage Surgery

Mytton Oak Surgery and Radbrook Green Surgery remain involved in the project and may wish to deliver some of their services from the hub.'

He added that this clearly showed some predetermination of decisions before the consultation had taken place and was contrary to what councillors believed they were told at the Full Council meeting on 21 January.

He also explained that the FAQs made a clear statement over the location for the hub: 'Our exploratory work is focused in the Meole Brace area of Shrewsbury at present'.

(Councillor Wagner joined the meeting at this time).

Councillor Bentick went on to say that such a radical change to healthcare provision for the town should include an exercise to write to all patients and give them adequate measures to respond in the same way that any other large supplier such as a utilities provider would have to do.

Councillor Vasmer stated that there were lessons learned when proposals were made for surgeries to move the new Severn Fields Surgery and that if proper procedures for consultation were not followed there may be a case to request a judicial review.

Councillor Moseley asked if the Town Council were able to commit funds to any legal process and Helen Ball responded that they could but that they would have to prove that we would have suffered a financial loss to do so.

(Councillor Lemon left the meeting at this time).

The Chair stated that the group needed to agree their preferred course of action. She proposed that the CCG be invited to a closed meeting of the group so that they could raise the questions discussed today. They could also be asked to provide clarification of which stage in the process they were currently at.

This was AGREED by the group.

Councillor Bentick added that they should also ask Rachel Robinson, Director of Public Health at Shropshire Council, to meet with them to get her view. He also suggested that Steve Charmley be invited but it was felt that that wasn't appropriate at this stage,

It was AGREED that the Chair and Councillor Bentick only would meet with Rachel Robinson rather than involving the whole group.

After these two meetings took place it was AGREED that the issue should go back to Full Council with recommendations from the Working Group.

The group then discussed whether they should meet with Shropshire Council and it was AGREED that they should ask to meet with Simon Jones, the portfolio holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health) once the meeting with the CCG had taken place.

The Chair reminded the group that the Town Council had no right to demand that any of these parties meet with them but the requests would be made.

Councillor Vasmer asked if an all-party letter could be sent to the CCG on the Town Council's behalf. Helen Ball clarified that they can put this in their recommendations to Full Council but a decision can only be made at that stage.

The Chair then asked the group about whether or not they should make their intentions known publicly at this stage. It was generally felt that the discussions with the CCG and other parties needed to be sensitively managed at this stage given they had no obligation to meet and it is important for the group to be neutral in order to encourage their engagement and it was **therefore AGREED that their discussions remain confidential for the time being.**

04/21 NEXT MEETING

To be decided once the other meetings had been set up. It was preferred that these take place on either a Monday or Thursday towards the end of the working day.