**Date:** 19 February 2018

**Venue:**  St Georges Medical Practice – staff room

**Attendees**

Liz Stewart (LS) - Chair Grahame Levett (GL) Jane Sinski (JS)

Andy Jones (AJ) - minutes Frank Mills (FM)

**Apologies**

Serena Rana-Rahman (SR) Val Johnston (VJ) Alex Sinski (AS)

**Agenda used**

1. Roll call / apologies
2. Review minutes & any matters from previous meeting – All
3. Updates from the surgery – Liz
4. Patient Participation Awareness (PPA) – All
5. Feedback from Darlington Community Council – Grahame
6. Arrange next PPG meeting & assign actions - All
7. AOB

**Summary**

Liz gave a general update after the move. The new surgery in the temporary building is working well.

There have been some complaints due to the poor quality of the footpath from the nursing home and the main entrance from Yarm Road won’t be finished until Virgin engineers come out and sunk the broadband cabling lower into the ground. Currently it is too close to the surface for the paving or tarmacking to be completed.

Liz advised that the planning for a new permanent location for the surgery is underway but progress is slow. There is a working party comprised of the CCG, Middleton Hall, our practice and NHS Property. One meeting has been held so far and draft plans may be a drawn up by September.

A public engagement as regards the new permanent location for the surgery is required. Currently the only viable option is on the land where the temporary surgery stands at Middleton Hall.

Liz advised that pressure has been bought to bear on Arriva to increase the local bus service which currently stops at the railway bridge on most journeys and that is quarter of a mile short of the surgery.

It was suggested that the Parish Council might help with the public engagement and for bringing pressure on Arriva to improve the no.12 route to include the surgery location.

There are regular Parish Council meetings that are open to the public and the practice could be represented. At present there are no plans to do so.

There have been multiple complaints from patients who now have to travel down from the centre of the village. These complaints relate to the distance, the lack of buses and the cost of getting a taxi. A taxi is expensive as there is no service in the village so they have to be booked from Darlington or elsewhere and the taxi firms apply a charge to come out for a short run within the village.

Grahame raised the point that a local voluntary car service might help fill the gap. Liz advised that the practice would not get involved in running such a service directly. It is possible that the Parish Council might want to help with such a scheme. New volunteer drivers would need to be enlisted. Liz will recirculate a previous car service document based on volunteer drivers.

Grahame gave an update on the CCG. He advised that across the area different PPG groups at surgeries have different levels of focus (or none at all) and that different practices provide different services. This is often due to the setup of the individual practice, it’s size, location and demographic.

He also advised that the purpose of the CCG is not clear, there is no accountability and little is seemingly achieved. He suggested that the meetings may stop due to there being a lack of a point for them.

Grahame discussed the CASPER protocol whereby consultant / hospital referrals are checked and ratified independently. Liz explained that, to date, our practice has had no rejections.

 The CCG meeting also discussed prescription fraud. It is not uncommon across the CCG area for patients to obtain prescriptions so that they can subsequently sell the drugs on. In some instances, this can be quite financially lucrative. Liz advised that our practice is aware and has lists of such medication that is attractive to this sort of fraud, we have processes in place to identify potential abuse of the system.

Grahame explained that PPG’s do not have to be aligned to practices and although he represents St Georges at the CCG this is not a recognised representation. He does so for our benefit. All CCG minutes should be provided to Liz directly but she advised they rarely are.

Another item discussed at CCG was the NHS Appointments system which provides automated reminders to people’s phones. This system appears as ‘withheld number’ on most mobile and home handsets and therefore patients do not always answer the calls. It was also raised that appointments with consultants often get moved with no patient consultation and changes seem, for the patient, to be random and dis-jointed.

Anecdotal local feedback as regards our new temporary surgery building include the reception window being too small and its location meaning some patients feel their conversations with the receptionists are not discrete, the privacy of the toilet which opens onto the seating area, the unfinished entrance, some concerns over appointment administration, the transport to and from the new site, the removal of the telephone repeat prescription service (which is offset by the assistance provided from the chemists) and the unavailability of appointments with Dr Holmes which Liz advised is mostly due to his personal popularity.

Liz advised that patient numbers have remained steady after the move. Any patient losses have been offset by new patient registrations.

The next meeting date was agreed as being at a date 3 months hence. No new actions were agreed.

**Actions (completed)**

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| Number | Description | Action | Owner | Status |
| 1 | Terms of Reference for the PPGare required | ToR example to be circulated  | LS | Complete |
| 2 | Type minutes | Circulate for review | AJ | Complete |
| 3 | The design of the turning circle at the Yarm Rd temporary surgery location is to be reviewed. | Liz to have the plans looked at. | LS | Complete |
| 4 | Surgery move letter to be posted on the community centre notice board. | Alex offered to do this. | AS | Complete |
| 5 | The surgery move letter to be posted on the parish council and community group websites. | Alex offered to help with this. | AS | Complete |
| 6 | Discuss the move with the parish council. | Liz to action at her planned meeting with the parish council | LS | Complete |

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