



Report to South Woodham Ferrers Town Council For Events Community & Leisure Committee Meeting on 11 February 2025

Since our last Report for the meeting held on 5th November 2024 there have been the following significant developments:

We have been particularly active in alerting people to the major winter pressures on the NHS. This has included the data relating to the increased number of flu cases and the high numbers of Covid, RSV and Norovirus. We have described in our newsletters the impact that these winter diseases have been having on hospital admissions and the ambulance service. We have tried to exhort people eligible for the appropriate vaccines to take up the services provided. We have also informed people about the appropriate way to access health services.

As we forewarned you last time the Focus magazine has changed to a monthly issue. We have continued to have a good relationship with the proprietors of the magazine and we have negotiated a regular spot for our summarised newsletter. There remains the problem of getting urgent communications to those members of the public who do not access electronic communications.

On 9th January we had a very informative and encouraging meeting with Tom Abell who is the CEO of the Mid & South Essex Integrated Care Board. This was a small group involving officers of HSCG and a representative from the Dengie patient groups. Mr Abell was able to offer some insights into how he saw health in the area might change in the short and long term. He also offered to speak with us again in the future extending the audience to our Task Force which includes some Councillors.

At the last meeting of the ECLC we advised about the Government's launch of its national consultation **Change NHS: help build a health service fit for the future**. Full details are at [NHS England » Change NHS: help build a health service fit for the future](#). Everyone is encouraged to contribute and there's an online survey. HSCG submitted comments by the deadline of early December for organisations, highlighting problems of accessibility and the aftermath of frontline staff experiences of deaths during the pandemic and suggested potential solutions. Unfortunately the 'workshop in a box' for Mid & South Essex to facilitate our own public engagement event for the Town as part of the consultation's local engagement programme was only provided in January. As a consequence of our Chairman's illness and

preparations for going into hospital, it has not been possible to set up a workshop in SWF in the foreseeable future but maybe later in the year.

We are very pleased to report the success of our **application to Warwick Medical School for a Masters research project to look into accessibility issues** of concern facing the patients and people of the Maldon Central, Dengie & SWF Integrated Neighbourhood Team (INT)'s area in reaching health services. This reflects that accessibility was the most serious concern identified by our previous assessment of the Dengie & SWF Primary Care Network (PCN) and the concerns expressed so strongly in the consultation about the future of community health services and St Peter's Hospital. As a Christmas present we were advised of the success of the application and a student named Emily has been assigned to the new project. She is currently familiarising herself with our 2023 report which is the starting point for her work.

We are constantly in touch with the patient and public leaders with staff of the **Dengie & SWF PCN** exploring a lot of important issues. We will continue to collaborate in steps to improve the involvement of the PPGs for the GP Practices and for the engagement with the PCN as a whole. We have extended the reach of this to include the leaders of the Patient Participation groups of the two Central Maldon GP Practices as they will be integral to the accessibility research project.

Our Chairman continues to be involved in meetings across the NHS which directly impact on our local NHS. His involvement will be severely restricted over the next couple of months as he recovers from his planned surgery. However it is his intention to continue to be involved electronically after his operation and the newsletters will be produced with the minimum of interruption.

You may have heard that there were problems at the Village Pharmacy at the beginning of the New Year when prescriptions were unable to be fulfilled. This was an administrative problem which we are pleased to report has been successfully resolved and normal service has been resumed.

HSCG has also just been successful in gaining a small grant to fund development of resources for the use of our film 'The Impact of Covid on Dying, Death & Bereavement' and promote its use as a cultural asset to make differences in health and wellbeing.

A similar small grant has been awarded to SWF Community Hub to encourage new cultural activities which will deliver health benefits.