

Health Action Group - Progress Report to Saltash Town Council

The Group met in the Council Chamber on 27 September to receive a report back from the ICB's Tryphaena Doyle, the new local Director for North & East Cornwall. She definitely appears to be acting on our behalf, and her progress seemed encouraging. We will be meeting her again on November 27 to receive what we hope will be some concrete proposals.

A few days later on October 2, the Group met again with representatives from Derriford Hospital (UHP) - their Head of Strategy, Laura Langsford, and their Primary Care Lead, Dr Jonathan Cope. They gave a detailed update on their "Care Closer to Home" strategy which again was very encouraging to us. It heralds more local clinics and services for Saltash, which are at the heart of the Action Group's vision. We have been promised clear proposals when we meet again on January 15.

Our main concern is that other towns in the UHP catchment (Torpoint, Liskeard, Launceston) already have excellent facilities which could host outposted clinics more easily than Saltash. The risk for us here was forcefully presented by members of the Action Group, who urged better facilities at St Barnabas, and also pressing Peninsula House into use. This concern was acknowledged and understood by the Derriford representatives, and we hope to see the right proposals in January!

Are these the first green shoots of recovery from the closure of St Barnabas as a hospital in 2016? Local patient groups are totally appreciative of both the support being given by the Council and the leadership of the mayor in this endeavour.

Finally, a reminder about the AGM of the League of Friends of St Barnabas Hospital on Monday November 18 at 2.30pm. The outcome being sought is a transformation of the current charity into a wider healthcare charity for the town. It would be good to have as many councillors there as possible to help kick-start the initiative.

Peter Thistlethwaite
Chair, Port View Patient Group