

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE FUTURE OF THE HEALTH CARE IN SALTASH AND CONSIDER ANY ACTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE

Health Action Group - Progress Report to Saltash Town Council

The group met on May 21 in the Council Chamber, with Councillor Rachel Bullock in the chair for the first time as Mayor. It was very well attended, and made significant progress.

In my last report to you in April, I stated: “securing extended use of the St Barnabas site for local patients is our most urgent task, in my opinion”.

I followed this up with a preliminary discussion with Action Group member Tryphaena Doyle who is the lead Commissioner in North and East Cornwall for the CIOS Integrated Care Board, and David Wilson who is the Area Director of the Cornwall Foundation Trust that runs St Barnabas, and also a Group member. We agreed that the Action Group meeting on May 21 would be focussed on future uses of the St Barnabas building.

To facilitate this, Tryphaena agreed to lead a mini-workshop on the day, and David agreed to circulate floor plans and details of the current uses of the building in advance. It was also clear that there is a combined sum of £170,000 capital funding for renovations - from bequests over a number of years to the hospital and from money raised by the former League of Friends.

The outcome was surprising unanimity of purpose. There was no dissent from the various NHS bodies present, including from the Derriford representative and the two surgeries. The initial focus will be on re-purposing the modern extension at the rear, where there is level access and car parking. Blood testing could even be relocated there ahead of refurbishment, and more modern facilities may generate wider NHS interest in the long term. After two years of the Action Group, we suddenly have leadership from within the NHS to take things forward and to come up with concrete plans.

I advise the Council not to hold its breath, however! From experience, the bureaucracy of NHS Property Services and local NHS Estates is a potential block, and, at the very least, a likely drag on the pace of progress.

Tryphaena and David (plus his colleague Jane Mitchell) will now follow up this promptly. We all agreed to keep in touch, with a more formal check on progress on June 18.

End Of Report

Peter Thistlethwaite
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May 30 2025