

ANDOVER & DISTRICT OLDER PEOPLE'S FORUM MEETING: 18TH JANUARY 2024 AT ANDOVER COMMUNITY CHURCH

Present: Jenny Kay, Brian Kay, Wendy Rayner, Haydn Watkins, Mollie Antrobus, Peter Rayner, Fred North, Wendy North, Wilson Carson, B Skinner, R Skinner, S McNamara, Ivan Perryman, April Pearce, Brenda Nash, M Taylor, J. Taylor J Sacre, Karen Campbell, Joyce Baughen, Marilyn May, Elsa Redpath MBE, Margaret Elsley, Elizabeth Lovell, Ruth Chick, Angela Morris, Brian Cooke, P. Ponting, M Ponting, Kathy Tierney, C. Cushnie

In Attendance: Adelina Hotea NHS Liz Murray Valley Leisure Claire Godding Countess of Brecknock Hospice Trust

1. **Welcome** Chairman Jenny Kay welcomed attendees and said it was good to see so many people
2. **Apologies:** Josie Msonthi, Imogen Colley
3. **Minutes of July Meeting** Agreed as correct. – Proposed Haydn Watkins Seconded Mollie Antrobus
4. **Matters Arising** Wendy Rayner said members attending the Christmas Café held by Balksbury Federation was excellent. This was seconded by Su McNamara who had been an attendee. Mollie Antrobus had written to Balksbury Federations and thanked them. Mollie also told us that Andover Primary Care Network and Unity DIGITAL SKILLS FOR HEALTH were holding further sessions at the Health Hub Chantry Centre. Dates will be made available when known. Mollie also reminded us that the Dementia Care Awards were still open for nominations until 31 March 2024.
5. **Secretary's Report:** Wendy Rayner reported a letter had been received from the Mayor thanking us and saying how much he enjoyed our meeting. Wendy also reported that contact had been made by Health & Independent Living Support who have taken over the Meals on Wheels Service and said they would be willing to visit our meeting to briefly tell us what is available, how it works and answer any questions.
6. **Treasurers Report:** Treasurer Fred North reported that the operating turnover from April 2023 to December 2023 stood at outgoings of £1106 and income £1152 giving surplus for the period of £46.
7. **New Hospital Consultation:** Mollie Antrobus updated us on the Consultation process for the New Hospital. As background Mollie invited Haydn Watkins to remind us of the history and background regarding these consultations. He did so at some length and in some detail outlining concerns regarding the consultation issues surrounding the proposed hospital. Mollie emphasised the fact whatever had happened before we are here now and things are moving again and that whilst we in the AOPF welcomed the new Hospital (long overdue) we were concerned that its presence would cause a lessening of our facilities here in Andover at our Memorial Hospital. That is a reason for the need and the importance of the consultation. Mollie then went on to explain there were on-line meetings and some Speaking meeting with question and answer sessions. Mollie had produced all the available Consultations sessions so far available. All required booking apart from one being held by a Forum similar to ours in Romsey which the Chairman of that forum said we were welcome to attend.

Wendy Rayner then told the meeting that the Executive Committee had decided to try and arrange a Consultation meeting of our own. Test Valley, with Imogen Colley's help, had offered us three dates when we could have a room at Beech Hurst. They were 6th, 9th and 12th February. These dates had been offered to the Consultation organisers and had been acknowledged but there had been no confirmation of any date at the time of meeting. It is hoped we will have information for next Notice Board.

8. **Museum closure and HCC Cuts.** The Chairman, Jenny Kay, introduced the subject. Wendy Rayner explained that a member Karen Campbell brought the possibility of the Iron Age Museum closure to the Committee. Examination of the reasons behind the proposed closure led to the widespread cuts Hampshire County Council is proposing in order to cover the considerable shortfall in their finances. There are 13 areas which will suffer under the proposals many of which will have an adverse effect on everybody but many of particular concern to older people and indeed vulnerable people. Bus services, child road crossing supervision, road surfaces, places of interest (which makes the Iron Age Museum threatened), Recycling facilities and many more; the very essentials of life in the Andover area for older people. Hampshire are conducting a Consultation on the cuts ending March 2024.

HW again reminded the meeting of the similarity of this consultation with the abortive consultations on Hospital in the past.

It was pointed out that older people enjoyed such visits to Museums and local schools had used the Museum as part of their curriculum.

Further discussion took place regarding possible lines of action. Public protest being one, letters to our MP being another. It was agreed further information would be put out to members through the Notice Board. It was stressed there is a need to be active on this matter.

It was queried from the floor as to whether anyone had been consulted regarding the spending of the Levelling Up Grant. It appears no-one had but a video had been made. Wendy Rayner said she would try and put more detail in the Noticeboard insofar as Andover was concerned. There were however similar loss of services across Hampshire generally. She said you can make your comments on-line or there are information packs and Consultation forms at the Library

9. **AOB.** Jenny Kay said she had had a meeting with Liz Murray regarding the initiative, "Live Better Longer". Liz was invited to speak and she briefly explained about the initiative and that she had agreed to be the Live Better Longer Champion for Andover. Jenny Kay said possibly Liz could update us at our AGM.

Mollie Antrobus spoke about the Social Prescribing Day event which this year is being held on Thursday 14 March 2024 at the Health Hub, Chantry Centre. AOPF have been

invited to be part of it and we plan to have a stand there. Mollie appealed for help from the membership and support on the day.

Refreshments served at 3.05pm

Jenny Kay Chairman restarted the meeting and introduced the Guest Speaker Claire Godding, of The Countess of Brecknock Hospice Trust.

Claire gave an enlightening talk. She spoke of the facilities available including the support night and day every day both at home as well as in the Hospice, how the staff after their patients' health and well-being which could include having a party, having their beloved pets in or many of the other varied wishes the patients might have. Claire also extended an invitation to all our members to come and visit, have look around and a cup of tea.

Claire went on to talk about the money needed and the fundraising efforts which saw an extra clinical nurse being employed and the new extension with more en-suite rooms and special beds which convert from Single to double for patients so they can have a cuddle with a loved one. In fact they call them Cuddle-beds.

It was emphasised that none of the funds could have been raised without an army of volunteers who helped in all sorts of ways with events.

Leaflets were available for those interested to find out more and little jars were available for people to save 5p pieces and return should they want to.

At the beginning Claire said some people had dark thoughts about the word "Hospice" but there could be a lot of joy. Judging by the anecdotes and the laughter from her audience the meeting agreed.

Chairman, Jenny Kay expressed her thanks.

10. The date of the next meeting is 18th July 2024.

The next General Meeting to be the AGM is planned for the end of April 2025.

MEETING ENDED 4.05pm