

## Suffolk Coastal Disability Forum

**Minutes of the Meeting held via Zoom on Tuesday, 12th October, 2021,  
at 2 pm.**

### **Present:**

Linda Hoggarth	Disability Forum for Suffolk (Chair)
Sara Burton	St Nic's Community Connectors Team
Peter Coleman	Resident & Governor, Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust
Simon Daws	Resident / Suffolk Guide Dog Association
Tracey Evans	Later Life Community ENGAGE Co-ordinator, BSEVC
Bryan Frost	Trimley St Mary Parish Council
Jan Gregory	Dementia Together, Sue Ryder
Steve Hodgkiss	Disability Forum for Suffolk / Suffolk Sight
Paul Kelly	Resident
Ali McWilliam	Terence Higgins Trust
Geoff Manning	Resident
Gill Manning	Resident
Margaret Morris	Resident (Secretary)
Joss Mullett	Communities & Health Projects Officer, East Suffolk Council
Kerry Overton	Community Development Officer, Healthwatch Suffolk
Cllr Edward Thompson	East Suffolk Council

### **Guests:**

Gemma Wixley	Engagement Lead, Mental Health Transformation across Suffolk, West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group
Brandon Lightning	Community Outreach Worker, Wellbeing Suffolk, Norfolk & Suffolk Foundation Trust
Hana Richardson	Observer, Forest Heath Disability Forum

### **Apologies:**

Nigel Crisp	Staff Manager – Ipswich, First Group
Deborah Darby	Melton Parish Council
Jane Drummond	Resident & Martlesham Parish Council
Janice Edwards	Resident
Stella Frangleton	Diverse Communities Advisor, Suffolk Police
Becki Gaunt	Flagship Housing
Trevor Garrod	East Suffolk Travellers Association (ESTA)

Sylvia Izzard	Resident
Simon King	Co-ordinator, Suffolk Voluntary and Statutory Partnership
Linda Layton	Resident
Sue Medley	Resident
Cllr Caroline Page	Resident / Suffolk County Council
Katie Sargeant	Deputy Head, Patient & Public Involvement & Experience, Ipswich & East Suffolk & West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups
Yvonne Smart	Trimley St Martin Parish Council
Lisa Tyte	DIScoverABILITY
Graham Walker	Kirton Parish Council

## **1. Welcome & Introductions**

Linda welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

## **2. Apologies**

The above apologies were received and noted.

## **3. Improving Services and Regaining Normality**

3.1 Linda welcomed Gemma Wixley, the Engagement Lead for Mental Health Transformation across Suffolk, West Suffolk Commissioning Group to the meeting. Gemma was attending in place of Katie Sargeant, Deputy Head, Patient & Public Involvement & Public Involvement & Experience, Ipswich and East Suffolk, West Suffolk and North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Groups who was unwell.

3.2 Gemma explained that she would be taking notes and reporting on issues raised by members in order to pass these to Katie for more detailed responses. Linda said that this was an opportunity for members to raise issues concerning their health and well-being and to discuss how life can return to normality.

3.3 Members raised the following issues, concerns and questions and made comments as follows:

- Steve thanked all staff involved in organising and sorting appointments for vaccinations at Framfield House Surgery in Woodbridge where the system in place was very good. This was echoed by Simon and Paul in respect of their GP surgeries. However, Paul noted that people remain unable to access face-to-face appointments.

- Kerry added that feedback received by Healthwatch Suffolk shows that people are either very happy or very annoyed with services provided by GP surgeries. Healthwatch Suffolk has reported that GP surgeries are coping with 3 times the need before Covid.
- Telephone consultations are showing up more problems than before the pandemic and there is now significant unhappiness with having a diagnosis made by telephone. Surgeries are not open as they were before, and communication with patients needs to improve.
- Some staff are unwell or leaving because of abuse from patients who are frustrated with the difficulties in accessing services.
- Some patients do need to be seen face-to-face. It was noted that some people with disabilities find it more difficult to communicate by telephone.
- Concerns were expressed at long waits for routine surgery and for referrals to specialist consultants. How is Suffolk moving forward?
- Bryan commented that The Grove (Felixstowe) was well organised for appointments for vaccinations, but the Surgery is not easily accessible by bus.
- Good communication is needed throughout to emphasise that surgeries are not as open as they were before the pandemic and to explain to people why that is so. If people understand the issues, they are less likely to be abusive.
- There is nowhere in Woodbridge for people to receive vaccinations and there are no buses on the routes to vaccination centres. Cllr Edward Thompson reported that he is also a Parish Councillor for Martlesham, and the bus companies have cut out the route through Martlesham and go straight through to the Park and Ride. They have tried to solve this – but to no effect. Forum members have also discussed this issue with First Group but no progress has been made.
- Kerry noted that who provided the venues for vaccination clinics was based on who applies, not on accessibility by bus. It was noted that Framfield Surgery, Woodbridge, had applied but were not accepted.
- How many people in Suffolk have Long Covid?  
How many of these are unpaid carers as this has a knock on effect for their support to the people they care for?  
What is being done to assist people with Long Covid to assist them to regain their health and well-being?  
Kerry said that she was aware of singing groups to improve breathing – they are 6 week courses. Simon noted that starting some groups online to help people with Long Covid was a good idea as some people with disabilities have transport issues. It was noted that a diagnosis of Long Covid was only made after other possibilities for a person's condition have been eliminated.

- What is being done to alleviate the effects on the mental health of people with disabilities who are isolated at home?

3.4 These are questions that require a specific response from the Clinical Commissioning Groups.

3.5 Parking for Blue Badge Holders at the Ipswich Hospital:

3.5.1 At the last Forum meeting, members raised some concerns regarding the new payment system for parking at the Ipswich Hospital for blue badge holders. The information on the website has been updated so blue badge holders should be clear that they only have to register their blue badge once when visiting the hospital and can register this at Outpatients reception as well as the General Office. The link is <https://www.esneft.nhs.uk/parking/ipswich-hospital-parking/>.

3.5.2 Members also queried the wording on the signs and Kerry would check with the Ipswich Hospital that the signage has been reviewed.

**Action: Kerry Overton**

3.5.3 Given that the number of parking spaces for blue badge holders is currently restricted by the use of these for mobile units, members asked if they had to park in a marked bay in order to be exempt from parking charges.

**Post Meeting Note:** The Ipswich Hospital has confirmed that once the blue badge is registered, the holder can park in either marked spaces or ordinary parking spaces.

3.5.4 If members have further questions about parking at the hospital, they can email: [travel.plan@esneft.nhs.uk](mailto:travel.plan@esneft.nhs.uk)

3.6 Gemma was thanked for taking notes on this session. There are questions detailed in 3.3 which require a response from the Clinical Commissioning Groups and she will ensure these are reported to Katie Sargeant.

**Action: Gemma Wixley**

## 4. Wellbeing Suffolk

4.1 Linda welcomed Brandon Lightning to the meeting and asked him to talk about his work with Wellbeing Suffolk, Norfolk & Suffolk Foundation Trust.

4.2 Brandon explained that his role is as a Community Outreach Worker, working to improve access to Psychological Therapies for Wellbeing Suffolk.

4.3 The service is free and available to people over the age of 16 who are struggling with problems such as low mood, anxiety or stress.

4.4 The pathway to access the service is by referral which can be either self-referral (on line or by telephone) or via a professional. There is a response within 3 days, usually by text to arrange an initial appointment to check a person's needs and how they can best be supported.

4.5 A person can be offered one to one support or attendance at a variety of group workshops. A range of services can be offered for a more in-depth conversation. Workshops need to be booked 24 hours in advance and there are a variety on offer. A video is available on the Wellbeing Suffolk website to explain what people can expect.

4.6 The range of webinars and online courses available can be seen at <https://www.wellbeingnands.co.uk/suffolk/get-support/courses/>.

4.7 Assessments are usually made by telephone to discuss what support may be best.

4.8 The Community Team offers:

- Peer Advisors who have had similar experiences
- Employment Advisors – (but not like a job centre) giving support with a variety of opportunities and workshops
- Wellbeing Engagement workers
- Support with 'Living Life to the Full'
- Identifying five ways to wellbeing.

4.9 Contact details are as follows:

Telephone: 0300 123 1503

Website: <https://www.wellbeingnands.co.uk/suffolk/>

E-mail: [wellbeing.suffolk@nsft.nhs.uk](mailto:wellbeing.suffolk@nsft.nhs.uk)

4.10 A member recommended the work of Wellbeing Suffolk, noting how well they support people.

4.11 Brandon was thanked for sharing the information with members and asked to provide a copy of his presentation slides.

## **5. Minutes from the Meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2021**

The Minutes were agreed as a correct record.

## **6. Matters Arising**

**6.1 Item 6.1 Car parking Issues:** Linda said there had been a meeting with Lewis Boudville, Transport, Infrastructure and Parking Manager, East Suffolk Council, and members of the Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Disability Forum Planning Groups. Lewis's presentation slides will be distributed with the minutes. A number of questions were raised relating to issues experienced by disabled people and Lewis's responses to those will also be attached. A considerable amount of information can be found at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/parking](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/parking).

**6.2 Item 6.1.1 Issues with The Thoroughfare, Woodbridge:** It had been hoped that Cllr Caroline Page would be present to give an update on the issues regarding The Thoroughfare in Woodbridge and the experimental Traffic Regulation Order. The Planning Group will aim to include a response at the next Forum meeting. Members noted that people with some mobility difficulties are disadvantaged by the restrictions to the Thoroughfare but that, overall, the Thoroughfare is safer for all pedestrians. The parking bays used to restrict access to the shops in the Thoroughfare. Cameron Findlay has advised that the Council had no plans to increase parking for blue badge holders in the nearby car parks. Members are able to report any concerns directly to Woodbridge Town Clerk: [townclerk@woodbridge-suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@woodbridge-suffolk.gov.uk)

**Action: Cllr Caroline Page**

**6.3. Item 6.1.3 Hamblin Road Car Park, Woodbridge:** Access from the car parks to the Town Centre will be checked again by Margaret following remedial work by the Council.

**Action: Margaret Morris**

**6.3 Item 7.3 Swimming for People with Disabilities:** Geoff reported that one hour sessions of swimming for people with disabilities had been reinstated at Felixstowe Leisure Centre. Simon will check whether sessions have been reinstated at the Deben Swimming Pool.

**Action: Simon Daws**

**6.4 Item 7.4 Location of Seating:** At the last meeting, members discussed the possibility of local towns providing information on seating

in town centres to help people with limited mobility. This was to be raised at Woodbridge and Felixstowe Town Councils but there is no progress to report. Margaret will raise this again in Felixstowe where such information could be included in the Guide to Felixstowe.

**Action: Cllr Sue Bale / Margaret Morris**

## **7. Issues, Concerns and News from Members**

**7.1 Ibuprofen:** A member had raised an issue over the packaging of ibuprofen tablets, stating that this was confusing and could easily be mistaken for paracetamol. It was not known if the tablets had been prescribed by a pharmacy or purchased over the counter. Margaret would check.

**Action: Margaret Morris**

**7.2 High Street Car Park, Leiston:** It was reported that the Car Park in the High Street, Leiston has been refurbished by East Suffolk Council and, as a result, the number of parking spaces have been reduced in order to accommodate wider vehicles. There does not appear to have been any consultation prior to this being done. It was not known whether the number of spaces for Blue Badge holders had been reduced. The Planning Group would check.

**Action: Planning Group**

**7.3 Terence Higgins Trust:** Ali provided an update on services available from the Terence Higgins Trust which gives positive information on many sexual health issues such as chlamydia, free condoms and HIV.

Information for people under the age of 25 could be found at

<https://youngandfree.org.uk/>

Information on a range of services can be found at

<https://www.icash.nhs.uk/>

Further information can be obtained at <https://www.tht.org.uk/> or from [alison.mcwilliam@tht.org.uk](mailto:alison.mcwilliam@tht.org.uk)

**7.4 Shielding:** A member had received a letter saying they no longer had to shield but needed to continue to take precautions as restrictions are still in place. However, it was not clear what people should do who have been shielding and want to get back into the community? This will be passed to Katie Sargeant.

## 8. Terms of Reference

8.1 Linda explained that there had been a further meeting with the Planning Groups of Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Disability Forum to discuss the amendments to the first draft.

8.2 Joss said that the draft document had also been the subject of discussion with Anita Humphrey, Communities Manager, East Suffolk Council.

8.3 It was anticipated that a further updated draft will now be completed and be ready for the meeting of the Forum in January.

## 9. Views on Health and Social Care Issues with Healthwatch Suffolk

9.1 Kerry had contributed many of her updates to the discussions in Item 3.

9.2 She said that access to dental services remains a problem in Suffolk. There have been changes to the Community Dental Service but people should be able to access any dentist. Further information can be found at <https://healthwatchesuffolk.co.uk/news/dental-care-what-should-you-expect/>. Members were encouraged to report any issues they experienced to Healthwatch Suffolk.

## 10. Information Round / Any Other Business

**10.1 Future Meetings:** After some discussion, members felt that it was better to remain cautious and continue to hold virtual meetings using Zoom for the time being. Members agreed that quarterly meetings, held on Tuesday afternoons, in January, April, July and October should continue.

**10.2 Topics for Future Meetings:** Linda reminded Forum members that they could e-mail either Margaret or herself to suggest speakers or items for the agenda.

**10.3 Support for People with Long Covid:** This was suggested as a possible topic and the Planning Group would consider this as a possibility.

**Action: Planning Group**



## **11. Meetings in 2022**

11.1 The Planning Group has agreed that the dates for Forum meetings in 2022 will be as follows:

**Tuesday, 11th January, 2022, at 2pm.**

**Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2022, at 2pm.**

**Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2022, at 2pm.**

**Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2022, at 2pm.**

11.2 Currently, all meetings are to be arranged via Zoom pending improvements in the situation regarding Covid 19 and any changes in members' wishes

**Action: All to note**