

Briefing to Council from the Patient Participation Group (PPG) Meeting on 10th January. (Approved by NHS ICB representatives and the Burnham Surgery)

Cllr Munford attended a useful PPG meeting with Burnham Surgery, and representatives of the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board (Local NHS) Kate Butcher and Michelle Phillips.

The main points were:

The Save our Surgery (SOS) campaign group representatives have been invited to meet with the ICB at the end of January. Cllr Stanbury is attending too as a representative of the Council's Health and Well-being Working Group.

HealthWatch is continuing its public consultation on the future of Burnham Surgery which includes conversations with patient groups and individuals as well as the analysis of the questionnaire responses. The consultation remains open until the 1st February 2024. Residents of Burnham are encouraged to take the time to give their feedback to Healthwatch before the closing date. They can do this in all sorts of ways, by emailing, phoning, writing to HealthWatch, as well as answering the questionnaire.

It will take HealthWatch a few weeks to analyse the data and put together a final report including all the feedback received. Healthwatch and the surgery are keen to consult with a wide range of groups e.g. young mums, to understand their views.

The ICB team encourage that engagement takes place with as many people as possible, although note that this is a practice led piece of work and the ICB are not involved in the delivery (it lies within the practice's remit to lead public engagement on their estate and services). The ICB are happy to receive future invitations to meet with Town Councillors, although, note that at the current time the position has not changed since the recent meeting. The PPG Chair, Ben Wilson would be pleased to meet with Councillors too.

Comments

On 8 January 2024, the SoS group wrote to the chair of local ICB expressing their concerns over how the surgery situation has been/is being handled



Burnham Save Our Surgery Complaint Let

Members of SoS met with Healthwatch on 21 December 2023. They followed this up with a letter on 5 January 2024:



3 Burnham Save Our Surgery Letter to Heal

A survey as badly designed and biased as this could not provide data suitable for analysis.

Why are 'young mums' being given priority?

The practice have not in any way met their 'remit to lead public engagement'. On 21 May 2019 there was a post on the Burnham-on-Crouch Facebook Group which said 'last night at the BTC planning meeting Jamie Mocock said that he was in talks with Sharon from our Doctors surgery about building a new surgery in the Carbunkle site'. I can't find any official minutes of that meeting but, assuming that this post is correct, it seems that discussions have been going on since at least then. The first that the public knew about these discussions was when they saw the leaked email on 18 July 2023.

Patients have challenged the validity of the survey but the surgery Business Manager, Sharon Stubbs, explained that the reason questions were set out in a certain way was to try to help patients understand that the lack of space in the existing surgery means that nonGMS contract services (i.e. non-core GP services) such as phlebotomy, physio, midwifery services may not be able to run from the existing surgery due to lack of suitable consulting rooms.

The current GP surgery is 466m². For the current population size of the surgery (approx. 9661 patients) the surgery needs to be 663m² (a 33.6% increase).

To meet future population growth, it's anticipated that a surgery of approximately 775m² is needed, a 66.3% increase.

A new surgery needs to accommodate at least 2 more GPs to reduce waiting times to see a doctor.

Plus, the GPs would like to provide more physio, telemedicine, retinal screening, ultrasound, and secondary care consultations by video link to save people having to attend hospital clinics miles away in Broomfield, Basildon or Southend.

The current surgery doesn't even have a sluice room (clean and dirty utility), which is non compliant with current standards.

With regard to Burnham Waters specifically, the ICB confirm having previously met the developer to explain NHS processes. There have been no subsequent meetings and no formal proposal submitted since this time. Once a surgery submits an estates proposal to the ICB,

The questions did not 'help patients' understand' anything about services which may be cut were the surgery to continue at its present site, nor did it help to indicate which extra services would be wanted were it to move. Non medically trained members of the public are not qualified to comment and all will have different current and future needs. Also, it is not clear why the examples given here (phlebotomy, physio and midwifery) need to be cut if the surgery were to stay at its present site?.

Why does size matter – it's what you do with it that counts. According to the latest patient survey, 74% of respondents said that they had good overall experience of the practice, so it appears to be coping with the current population.

It is unclear why there will be 'future population growth' in Burnham. All the strategic development sites in the LDP are now built (plus others which weren't in the plan) and no further development should be approved unless it is sustainable.

The recent patient survey did not indicate that there was an issue with waiting times and, even if the surgery was to be expanded to accommodate at least two more GPs, what is the likelihood of being able to recruit them?

What additional facilities would these additional services require and what is the likelihood of recruiting appropriate staff?

How does this impact on services at the moment and why is it not possible to install one in the current premises?

So the ICB **have** met the Burnham Waters developers, despite there being 'no formal proposal'. When was this and where are the records?

this must be approved through ICB governance routes and NHS England. There is no formal proposal submitted to the ICB from Burnham Surgery.

The ICB are working with the surgery to consider all options and are liaising with Maldon District Council (MDC) and with Essex County Council (ECC) but there don't seem to be any other realistic options available in terms of new development sites

The ICB are not averse to the idea of Burnham Surgery having a branch site elsewhere in the area; many surgeries adopt this approach Obviously one of those options that could be explored by the surgery for a surgery 'branch' site is Burnham Waters.

The NHS doesn't have capital to build a GP surgery, the NHS relies on developers to build surgeries and lease them back to the NHS. Neither does the NHS have the capital funding to knock down an old building and rebuild a surgery e.g. knock down and rebuild on the Burnham Clinic site or the existing surgery site (even if the foundations allowed it). So, funding the build is always the issue.

Who could fund such a solution?

A question. Are there any rich benefactors around in Burnham who want to build a surgery or a satellite? Should our community set up a 'Go fund me page'?

The NHS constantly has to balance the value for money (VFM) vs longevity of buildings. A

It is clear that all options have **not** been properly assessed. For instance, an application by McLaren Senior Living to build an assisted living facility at the former Petticrows boatyard site was refused planning permission by MDC. in August 2020 (ref 20/00097). Has this not been considered? (By the way, McLaren Senior Living objected to the initial application for Burnham Waters to contradict the planning officer's report that 'there are no other proposals before the council to this specialist shortfall.'

Why haven't branch sites such as the much underused Burnham Clinic been fully assessed? This used to be an integral part of healthcare in Burnham.

No evidence has been provided that a new GP surgery is needed or that any of the problems listed in the position statement are impossible to solve.

Over the past decade, whenever there has been an application for a major development, the NHS have said that the surgery would not be able to cope with the increase in patients and have required a Section 106 payment to improve the service. What has happened to this money?

This sarcastic comment seems to be suggesting that we should revert to the pre-NHS situation where healthcare facilities were provided by benefactors and charities.

building usually need to have at least 20 years use in them to be viable.

Endeavour Way site (David Wilson development) has been suggested by members of the public as a possible site. There has not been any discussion with the developer regarding including a Health centre in the development and no planning Approval for the development to our knowledge. At this stage nothing is being pursued with regard to either site.

The Burnham Surgery lease with their current landlords has ended. The landlords may not agree to invest much in improving the building as no lease is in place and the future of the building uncertain.

Meanwhile, the landlords have appointed a caretaker to do minor repairs to help keep things going.

The general feeling from all sides at the moment is of being 'stuck'.

The ICB are unable to move anything forward until there is a formal proposal received from the Surgery but the Surgery are unable to consider this until after their public engagement work, Burnham Waters appear to be not progressing to phase 2 of their developments until the Surgery position is clear, and the campaign group meeting with the ICB is also in the pipeline.

The Surgery's Position Statement has been called scaremongering. However, it is setting out the facts about what health services will be lost if larger premises aren't available to accommodate more GPs and the different professionals, support staff, technology, cabling and equipment required to run a modern GP

The November 2022 option appraisal (draft 0.6) concluded that the Endeavour Way site was the 'preferred way forward'!. (Apparently the options appraisal was funded by Section 106 money).

The landlords 'may not agree'. Have they been asked?

The feeling on all sides of being 'stuck' 'is of their own making due to lack of consultation with patients, failure to maintain the current building and putting all their eggs in one basket regarding the Burnham Waters proposal.

The surgery has failed to fulfil their 'public engagement work' since discussions with Burnham Waters began (in 2019?). It wasn't until the public meeting on 18 August 2023 that any public engagement took place.

The statement that 'Burnham Waters appear to be not progressing to phase 2 of of their developments until the Surgery position is clear' is incorrect. The developers can't continue as they are unable to fulfil the requirements of the planning permission for phase 1.

The position statement has been called scaremongering because it is **not** based on facts, it has been based on what the authors want its patients to believe. There is no evidence that health services will be lost, that more GPs or other professionals can be recruited, that 'technology, cabling and

practice and provide good primary care to Burnham's expanding population

equipment can't be provided at the current site, or that Burnham's population will continue to expand.

Bus services would only be reinstated both ways along the Maldon Rd, they would not feed down Endeavour Way.

What is the relevance of the comment about bus services?

Sharon Stubbs, Business Manager for the practice clarified a few figures that were being banded around on social media: - A new build would cost an estimated £1.3m - Upgrade 1.1m - Upgrade of Burnham Clinic 1.4m - Starting afresh, buying a piece of land, building a surgery, plus all the infrastructure would cost circa £5m . The NHS (ICB) would pay the annual lease and the Burnham surgery would be responsible for putting in place all the surgery equipment which the surgery estimates as costing c. £200k.

I take the expression 'figures banded around social media' as an insulting way of suggesting that the figures are incorrect. However, all the figures quoted on social media are taken from documents released (reluctantly) by the Surgery. Without social media, it is unlikely that any of these figures would have been released.

For noting, if in the event a new surgery in Burnham Waters was the agreed way forward, this would not be ready for 3 to 5 years, so a lot of 'making do' would be required for a long time.

The surgery has clearly been 'making do' for some time already. The original position statement referred to an NHS Estates commissioned survey undertaken in July 2022 which declared the premises to be 'in need of major work within the next five years' – ie by 2027. None of the problems listed seem insurmountable (replace taps, replace doors, add compliant ventilation, replace window glazing, repair boundary wall etc).

It was noted that an application for planning permission for a new Southminster surgery has been approved by MDC. It will only accommodate Southminster surgery and perhaps a part of the Dengie Partnership practice. There is no room for the Burnham Surgery as well.

If the new Southminster surgery can accommodate patients who are not part of the Burnham catchment, surely this will free up space at Burnham. If the two practices were to work together they may be able to come up with innovative solutions to the 'problems' at Burnham.

In conclusion, this document (or indeed any of the documents recently provided by the surgery) would not stand up to the sort of scrutiny that I had to go through when I worked for a public body – (no named author, no stated purpose, no reliable data, no references etc).

Frances Franklin

20 January 2024