

# League of Friends of Axminster Hospital

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

held on

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022, 6.30 pm in Axminster Guildhall

<b>Opening remarks from the Chair</b>	<p>Dr Phil Taylor welcomed all and thanked everyone for attending. This was the first AGM for 3 years due to Covid.</p> <p>Dr Taylor handed over to the Guest Speaker.</p>
<b>Guest Speaker –</b> <i>Zoe Harris,</i> <i>Divisional Director,</i> <i>Community Services for the RD&amp;E</i>	<p><b>An overview of the Trust – The Royal Devon</b></p> <p>Former RDEFT and NDHT merged on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 following an intensive and complex process and final sign off by NHSE. Suzanne Tracey has been the CEO since 2018 across both Trusts - when the 2 Trusts began working in partnership as part of a collaborative agreement to support NDHT to address some of the challenges they faced in providing acute services from what is the most remote acute hospital in main land England. The merger means that we can combine resources and expertise to improve resilience and sustain healthcare provision across north and east Devon (Exeter, East and Mid). For many years the RDE has provided visiting consultants and specialists to NDDH under service level agreements to ensure that patients in the northern area had access to consultant services and the merger will go some way to addressing some of the health inequalities particularly in the north.</p> <p><b>What does the new Trust provide?</b></p> <p>Acute, Community and Specialist Services across both north and east as well as Specialist Services across the entire peninsula. In addition, as with the RDE, NDHT was an integrated Health and Social Care Trust – working in collaboration with DCC to provide both health and social care across the communities. The new Trust now has 2 acute hospital sites – the RDE at Wonford, also incorporating Heavitree and North Devon District Hospital in Barnstaple. All the hospitals, including the community hospitals, of which there are now 16, will continue to be known by their original names.</p> <p>In addition to the 16 community hospitals the Trust provides services from a further 4 healthcare establishments.</p>

### **Some quick stats**

- Provides healthcare to 1 million people
- Combined Budget of £757 million
- 17,000 staff
- Core services covers 1,700 sq miles
- 150,000 patients into the 2 ED departments over the last year

### **Services Provided at the Hospital:**

#### **Summary of Departments /Services on Site**

- Outpatients
- Community Nurse clinics
- Surgical Day Case Unit
- MSK Physio / gym
- Podiatry
- X-ray
- Ultrasound
- Health and Social Care base

The Day Case Unit provides lists for Ophthalmology.

### **Outpatients**

There is a range of outpatients provided at Axminster in two separate outpatient departments. The majority of which are Royal Devon services but with some services provided by DPT, DCC Child Health and Chime.

Following closure of the Scott Rowe pre-fabricated building, NHS PS undertook extensive refurbishment of the void Morton Ward to create additional, bespoke outpatient clinics which now accommodate the Ophthalmology Hub together with the services transferred from Scott Rowe.

Axminster has 13 OPD clinic rooms with 30 specialties running clinics from the site (all providers). Clinic utilisation fluctuates at 31%. The main specialty is ophthalmology.

### **X-Ray Department**

The department provides plain film x-rays for 6 sessions a week (reduced from 10 during the pandemic) and ultrasounds for 6 sessions a week – the department is located in the main hospital with a separate reception and waiting area. This reduction is

temporary with plans to reopen sessions when staffing allows rather than permanently reducing cover.

### **Services provided from the hospital**

As well as the services provided at the hospital, there are a range of community services provided from the hospital - it is also the base for the Health and Social Care Team (H&SC).

The team is accommodated in different areas on the 1st floor, mainly in one large office unit but with some members of the team based in several disparate and cramped offices in a separate part of the hospital away from the main team. Various options have been considered to improve the accommodation to enable staff to work in an integrated and more efficient way; for example refurbishing the void attic space adjacent to the current 1st floor office which would provide sufficient space for all teams to work together.

Devon Partnership Trust and the Axminster Ambulance Service (SWAST) have buildings co-located on the site.

There is a large staff rest room with kitchen facilities on the first floor which requires redecoration. Orders have been placed for new soft furnishings and white goods. NHS PS is to undertake the redecoration.

### **Our approach to future developments**

- We want to provide a variety of clinics and services at our community sites
- We recognise that helping people to travel less and have more services available in their local area is important
- We want to create opportunities that enable teams and services to work together and improve coordinated services being available to members of the public
- Working in partnership is important. We are really grateful for what LoFs have funded so far and for the support you continue to give to us

### **What have we done?**

- Prior to 2020, the RDE Surgical Division identified Axminster as the preferred site for an offsite Ophthalmology Hub. The decision was made because

	<p>the hospital has a Surgical Day Case Unit and additional outpatient clinics were created following the refurbishment of the void Morton Ward by NHS PS to allow for the disposal of the Scott Rowe building as part of their estate's rationalisation strategy.</p> <p>The previously void main kitchen has recently been leased by NHS PS to a social enterprise organisation, Project Food, which works closely with local community groups.</p> <p>The only void space remaining at Axminster is the 1st floor attic room and decommissioned mortuary and outbuildings.</p> <p><b>What do we intend to do?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore opportunities for our health and social teams to have space that helps them to work together</li> <li>- Make better use of clinic space on site (currently 30 specialities)</li> <li>- Make better use of the day case unit theatres</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Questions from the Floor</u></b></p>	<p>A query was raised regarding the outpatient booking system. It was reported that patients were being sent all over the South West rather than having the choice to go to Axminster Hospital. The LOFs highlighted that they do get regular reports of patients having to go to another hospital rather than Axminster.</p> <p><b><u>ACTION:</u></b> <i>Gill George to provide information to Zoe Harris via Dr Phil Taylor.</i></p> <p>It was reported there was a rumour that Axminster Hospital is being sold.</p> <p><i>Zoe explained that the RD&amp;E doesn't own Axminster Hospital. The property is owned by NHS Property Services and she had definitely not heard this rumour.</i></p> <p>A question was raised regarding the possibility of beds returning to Axminster Hospital as there is an issue with ambulances having to queue. It was felt that if there were more community beds this would free up beds in the RD&amp;E.</p> <p><i>Dr Phil Taylor replied – No. It is better for the patient to have a short stay in hospital and get home to recuperate.</i></p> <p>Dr Phil Taylor thanked Zoe Harris for attending.</p>
<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p>	<p><i>Apologies had been received from:</i> Ian Hall</p>

	<p>Andrew Moulding  Mervyn Symes  Ann Veit  Jo Goff</p>
<b>Minutes of the previous AGM</b>	<p>The minutes of the previous AGM held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019 had been distributed to the Trustees prior to the meeting and approved by Dr Phil Taylor. One copy was signed as a true record of discussions held.</p>
<b>Matters Arising</b>	<p>There were no matters arising</p>
<b>Correspondence</b>	<p>There was no correspondence to report</p>
<p><b>Reports</b>  <u>Chair</u> - Dr Phil Taylor</p>	<p>Our last AGM was on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 and much has changed since then.  Covid will have affected all of us in some way and the trustees were sad when looking through the membership list how many members we have lost. The league was sad to lose trustees, Bill Kerlake and Douglas Hull, who many of you will know well.</p> <p>Bill was a source of quiet wise counsel and always retained a twinkle in his eye.</p> <p>Douglas was an inimitable character experienced in local politics and always willing to contribute and guide the trustees.</p> <p>I am just going to pause for a few seconds to mark our appreciation</p> <p>Ann Veit's health has caused her to decide to retire as Hon Secretary to the trustees and I would like to pay specific tribute to her tireless work on behalf of the League. Organising our communications, organising me and arranging and co-ordinating so much fundraising both in Musbury, the Garden Festival and of course in selling her jam. This year's jam profits will support the League. Ann hopes to continue as a Trustee.</p> <p>The H@H service proved a success enabling those patients who chose to, to pass their last days and hours at home. Unfortunately, Hospicare decided to offer a different model of care from the one we had initially agreed and then found that recruitment difficulties left them initially unable to provide a full service and subsequently to have to close the service.</p>

	<p>Having received good feedback about the model of service which we shared with Seaton LOF in its early phase your trustees are keen to support a new service and I am pleased to report that following discussions with the RDE university Healthcare NHS Trust a replacement “Home Nursing Service” is planned to start in Seaton with the hope of our area being able to join them. I am grateful for the enthusiastic support of Richard Anderson, our local Cluster Manager and Zoe Harris at the RD&amp;E.</p> <p>The Trustees feel that before committing most of our remaining funds to the service we need to revolutionise our fundraising to make the service sustainable and avoid a second closure of the service.</p> <p>We also want to continue to be able to support other health related services at Axminster Hospital and in the community. We would like you, as members of the League, to broadcast our continued existence to friends and family and ensure that people realise that Axminster Hospital is thriving.</p> <p>As I step down as chair of the Trustees I am excited to hear of the plans to modernize and rejuvenate our fundraising which Steve Holt, currently our treasurer, is working on and will outline.</p> <p>Steve is standing as Chair which means that if he is successful we will need a new treasurer as well as a secretary as soon as possible and we are keen to recruit new trustees to the group.</p> <p>Trustee meetings are approximately every 6 weeks and trustees help with fundraising events but the role is not onerous.</p> <p>Steve is also seeking people to join a list of volunteers who are willing to help out at fund raising events without necessarily becoming trustees.</p> <p>And finally, as this is my last AGM as chair, I would like to wish Steve, the trustees and the members the very best for the future.</p>
<p><u>Secretary</u> – Ann Veit</p>	<p>I would like to thank you all for coming tonight and also for all the support you have given over the years I have been Hon. Secretary. I have enjoyed the time being involved with many of the developments at the hospital and meeting so many interesting people. Unfortunately, due to ill health I have now</p>

	<p>retired from the job and would encourage anyone interested to put their name forward for the position.</p> <p>I am sure Phil and Steve have told you all that has been happening, so I will not repeat them but please remember that the hospital is still active providing and growing many services to the community.</p> <p>The League is aware that, especially over the last 2 dreadful years, we are not always aware of the sad passing of members and consequently relatives and friends may still have had a copy of the Newsletter. The League apologises for any distress this may have caused and offer our sincere condolences. There is no way that we are informed of the passing of members unless a member of the bereaved family or a friend lets us know and this is not always something that is uppermost in their mind. So please accept our apologies for a sad loss.</p> <p>I wish the League all success in future endeavours and hope to continue as a Trustee and be able to keep in touch with developments.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
<p><u>Treasurer</u> – Steve Holt</p>	<p>Our stalwart members continue to support us through their regular donations. Over the years we have been able to build up some significant reserves which has enabled us to support the hospital and other community needs. As with all facets of life over the last two years, the pandemic has impacted the League's income significantly. Despite this, we have supported nurse training courses, ophthalmology equipment as well as Hospiscare@home. Across 2020 and 2021 we have supported the community to the tune of £370,000 with income of circa £75,000. In isolation, this doesn't paint a rosy picture but this is why we've built reserves over the years, to allow us the leeway to develop such services such as the end of life home support. We still have reserves in excess of £450,000 but we need to ensure that our income stream is re-energised and boosted so that we can continue to augment the NHS to give the people of Axminster the best possible services.</p> <p>To make a single donation, set up a regular payment and become a member of the League please complete the forms overleaf and return via email to <a href="mailto:axmlf@gmail.com">axmlf@gmail.com</a> or return by post to:</p>

	<p>Axminster Hospital League of Friends  Axminster Hospital  Chard Road, Axminster. EX13 5DU</p> <p>Thank you</p>
<p><u>Hospital Representative</u> –  Teresa Denning</p>	<p>This report was superseded by Zoe Harris' report.  Dr Phil Taylor expressed thanks to Teresa Denning for doing the minutes in previous meetings and for tonight.</p>
<p><b>Election of Officers</b></p>	<p>Steve Holt was duly elected as Chair of the Axminster Hospital League of Friends:  <i>Approved by Karen Hussey</i>  <i>Secunder – Martin Diplock</i>  <i>All raised hands to support Steve as Chair.</i></p> <p>Steve asked the audience if anyone was interested in standing for Secretary or Treasurer to let him know.</p> <p>Steve thanked Dr Phil Taylor for all his work and contributions after spending 15 years in the role as Chair.</p> <p>Steve highlighted the requirement to increase their fund raising going forward and reported that there was an Open Garden event on 24, 25, 26 June in Smallridge. The garden has over 200 varieties of roses, a small orchard, succulents and the cakes that will be on offer are superb! It is £5 entry – every penny going to the Axminster Hospital League of Friends.</p>
<p><b>Questions from the Floor</b></p>	<p>There were none</p>
	<p>Steve closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and asked all to help themselves to refreshments.</p>