



# South Woodham Ferrers Health & Social Care Group

## Annual Report May 2019 – April 2020

### OH WHAT A YEAR!

**July 2019: AGM, Presentations & Discussions about “Today’s NHS & Tomorrow’s”**

**November 2019: Opening of Crouch Vale Medical Centre**

**February 2020: First steps to obtaining a Town Nurse**

**March 2020: COVID-19 Lockdown**

### **1. Background**

South Woodham Ferrers (SWF) Healthcare 2000 Group was formed as a Millennium project in 1999. South Woodham Ferrers Town Council (SWFTC) ran quarterly Care Lunches for many years. The increasing close combination of health and social care by the relevant authorities and organisations was recognised. As a result, as described in the next section, this hereditary joint organisation was established to enable SWF to mirror that development.

SWF Healthcare 2000 Group had an excellent reputation and ability to engage with all NHS and social care authorities and organisations at the highest, as well as operational, levels. The new SWF Health & Social Care Group (‘the Group’) inherited that and built upon it. This continues to give the Group access to, and have the confidence of, the highest-level officials including Councillors holding Cabinet portfolios, Chairs, Non-Executive Directors, Chief Executives and Executive Directors of all relevant health and social care authorities and organisations.

As a result, the Group is able to bring top level speakers and information to SWF. One important reason for this is that we are told attendances at our meetings in SWF attract consistently larger audiences than similar meetings held in Chelmsford and elsewhere. The Group is flexible, adapts to requests from the authorities to fit in with their planning and developmental schedules, holds effective meetings which are purposeful and not held for the sake of meeting. As said later, we have recognised that meetings are no longer as popular nor as well attended as in the past and so have moved to other ways to inform and represent the patients, service users and public of SWF in the full range of health, social care and wellbeing issues.

## **2. Formation & Governance**

Proposals for the establishment of the South Woodham Ferrers Health and Social Care Group were considered as Agenda Item 106 by SWF Town Council (SWFTC) and the agreement to this was Minuted as Item 106 in the Minutes of SWFTC's Meeting held on 19 April 2016.

The Inaugural Public General Meeting of SWF Health & Social Care Group ("the Group") was held on 28 June 2016. That meeting adopted the Group's Governance, which has been slightly updated at the 2017 and 2018 AGMs

- Appendix 1 is the present Governance document of the Group
- Appendix 2 is the Role Descriptions for the Group's Officers
- Appendix 3 is the Role Description for the Group's Administrator
- Appendix 4 is the Group's financial report for the last year

### **Our Organisation**

South Woodham Ferrers Health & Social Care Group (SWF H&SCG) was established to look after the health and social care interests of the people of South Woodham Ferrers, recognising the roles of health and social care related professionals, volunteers and the Patient Participation Groups.

SWF H&SCG incorporates a Task Force, which convenes when consultation or representation is required to consider major health and social care issues affecting the Town.

SWF H&SCG is open to anyone who lives, works, has a local need to access health and social care, or is involved in health and social care in SWF.

It has been clear from the work carried out in preparation for the Crouch Vale Medical Centre, that a closer relationship between the Group and the Patient Participation Groups has many benefits. Working together enabled a number of significant improvements to the original plan. As the demarcation lines between General Practice and other Primary Care Services become increasingly blurred, it is important that our close collaboration is maintained. Additionally, the COVID-19 Pandemic has emphasised the need for Social Care to be integrated with traditional Primary Care and this gives rise to challenges for both groups.

### **3. Report**

On Thursday 11th July 2019 the Group held its 2019 Annual General Meeting which was followed by a Public Meeting about the “Future of Healthcare”.

This included presentations about:

- Our 2018-19 Annual Report and activities; this was received
  - “Today’s NHS & Tomorrow’s” by Caroline Russell, Accountable Officer, Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (MECCG)
  - “The Livewell Linkwell Partnership” – social prescribing, by James Taylor, North & Mid Essex Team Lead, Essex Lifestyle Service
  - Crouch Vale Medical Centre – progress report, by Robert Evans, Head of Operational Primary Care, Mid Essex CCG
- Minutes and all Presentations are at: <https://swfhealthsocial.co.uk/2019/07/28/future-of-healthcare-agm/>

#### **In September 2019 we reported that:**

- The Group had held our AGM and Public Meeting, as detailed above;
- At that time we were still without an Administrator as our previous one had moved away and we’d been unable to recruit a new one on a voluntary basis with an honorarium;
- We were pleased to announce that we had recently engaged Emma Wardall to undertake various administrative duties. This is a contractual agreement not involving salary.
- It had recently been announced that the Dengie will be merged with SWF to form a Primary Care Network. We had been given to understand by those responsible for the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) that SWF would be a Network in its own right. The MECCG supported us but they were overruled by NHS England who insisted that the Network must support a population of 30,000 plus. MECCG are supporting our assertion that SWF should be a Network area by paying for some of the benefits which accrue out of their own funds.
- Our main efforts continued to be about the move of all the Town’s three GP Practices to Crouch Vale Medical Centre (CVMC). The Group had been trying, with the PPGs (Patient Participation Groups), to ensure that communications about CVMC have been detailed and accurate. This had been no small task as the many individual contributors to the project had sometimes been unable or unwilling to address public concerns. The Group’s Chairman had contributed a number of articles to SW Focus and on Social Networks in response to public criticism and questions. These communications had contained the facts as we knew them but had themselves been the subject of criticisms from people trying to lay blame. As was stated, it was no use shooting the messenger. Behind the scenes, the Group had constantly been probing and cajoling the various players to keep residents informed with varying degrees of success. It would continue with those efforts until CVMC was operating successfully and thereafter would assess the delivery of the service that has been promised. The Group had also been instrumental in pressing for information about the delay with the roadworks at the Burnham Road/Hullbridge Road junction and were most grateful to Cllr Massey for his efforts about this.

### **In November 2019 we reported that:**

- The time and efforts of the Group had continued mainly to have been concentrated in trying to get the best service for residents from the Crouch Vale Medical Centre (CVMC). After protracted delays CVMC had finally opened, housing all three SWF GP Practices, the services previously delivered at the Merchant Street Health Clinic and becoming the base for our Community Nurses.
- We had continued to bombard the NHS, the MECCG and Essex Highways to try and get various problems resolved. One of the major issues had been getting any sort of communications to residents about what has been going on. The most recent newsletter had been more informative and some progress was being made.
- The Group had worked closely with the PPGs to ensure all the services were transferred to the Medical Centre. Initial reaction from the PPG greeters was that the internal workings of the Centre worked well for a totally new building and working practices. There were some teething problems but these were soon overcome.
- External workings were disastrous with a total lack of parking spaces for patients. This was caused by a combination of contractors still working in the Centre and taking up parking and a lockdown at Sainsbury's because the site was being handed over to Sainsburys by the contractors. We continued to lobby for adequate spaces and an assurance that patients would be able to use the Sainsbury's car park before their opening on 20th November.
- There remained extremely serious concerns that the surrounding highways work had not been finished causing dangers to pedestrians.
- We had also been working behind the scenes to try and establish a community and social prescribing presence in the Town Centre.
- We were pleased to report that our new Administrator was making great progress improving our communications capacity both through the website and on social media platforms.

## **In January 2020 we reported that:**

- Crouch Vale Medical Centre: When CVMC opened in November 2019 the Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) had provided two weeks of meet and greet which were gratefully received by both staff and patients. Understandably not everything had gone smoothly but the feedback from most patients had been positive. Now that things had settled down the Group had been promised that it would shortly be involved in a debrief with the various organisations involved in the move. This would give a qualitative view of how the Centre was performing. HSCG was considering working with others to make a quantitative assessment of performance in order to inform the need for improvements.
- Communications. Our new Administrator had now developed a comprehensive new website for the Group and streamlined our Social Media capability. This work came at a cost but was vital in enabling us to reach residents about Health and Social Care matters. These developments delivered the updated operating strategy presented to and agreed at our 2019 AGM. This internet communications strategy plus items published in Focus is the way forward to best inform residents.
- Town Centre Community Provision. The Group had taken on board the call for some sort of Town Centre provision of community and welfare resources. It was abundantly clear that NHS England and the Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (MECCG) will not be providing health services in the Town Centre despite much clamouring from various groups in the Town. However, we had been in discussion with the Social Prescribing Service about having some provision in the Town Centre. Additionally, we were in advanced discussion about the provision of a Parish/Town Nurse situated centrally.
- Presentations. Whilst we see that there needs to be a move away from formal presentations at meetings, there will still be times when these are appropriate. There were some major changes coming up resulting from the NHS plan which involves the merging of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in Mid & South Essex. Although this will create a larger Commissioning Group, paradoxically it will provide a greater commissioning flexibility locally as Primary Care Networks will be able to decide on the services that they want. SWF GP Practices have been combined with those in the Dengie to form our local network. MECCG had expected the Dengie and SWF to be separate networks but NHS England intervened and insisted that the two must be combined in order to achieve the requisite population catchment size. Mid Essex CCG is supporting the two areas by financing separate Clinical Directors and Social Prescribers for each, although they are receiving remuneration for only one. Although not a consultation exercise it will be important to advise residents about the implications of these changes in their health and social care.
- Hospital care: There was also the amalgamation of the three acute hospitals in Mid & South Essex (Basildon, Broomfield and Southend) which was due to take place in April 2020 and their transformation plan to improve services.
- Defibrillators. At their request the Group had started working with the SWF Community Safety Forum about the registration, coverage and the effective working of community access public defibrillators in the Town.

### **In March 2020 we reported that:**

- The Group had been working closely with the local churches to progress the appointment of a Town (Parish) Nurse in SWF. There had been two meetings with a facilitator from Parish Nursing Ministries UK the national organisation that oversees the training of the nurses and gives support to localities setting up the service. The proposal is to employ a nurse, or more likely, two part-time nurses and locate them in premises in the Town Centre. We were in discussion with a number of organisations who want to set up community support activities in the Town Centre with a view to sharing premises. In the meantime, progress was being made towards developing a service specification. Discussions were starting to explore funding for the proposal. Thereafter a process of recruitment would take place and it was hoped that the service might be able to commence in November. The timing would rely on sorting out the funding and finding suitable candidates. More information about the work of these nurses can be found on the Parish Nursing Ministries UK website.
- The Group had to report that its current administrator was having to give up the work as she was needed for other county-wide projects. In response to recent advertisements some people had applied and it was hoped to appoint one of them shortly.
- The Group had been lobbying the Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group to run a debrief on the things to be learnt from the move to Crouch Vale Medical Centre. We had been told this would be carried out in conjunction with the formal opening. Rumour had it that The Rt Honn Priti Patel and John Whittingdale would both be in attendance. Meanwhile we were keeping a close watching brief on the operation of the Centre.
- The Group was due to have its AGM in June/July. It was likely that this would be combined with presentations about the new Primary Care Network in which SWF is conjoined with the Dengie. Additionally, there would be updates on the merger of the five Mid & South Essex CCGs and the merger of the three Mid & South Essex acute hospitals and their transformation programme.

### **At the end of April 2020 we reported that:**

- For the last two months the Group's activities had been dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic and conducted in lockdown.
- Fortunately SWF's GPs and independent Pharmacists recognised the oncoming situation. On Friday 20 March the GPs at CVMC approached SWF Health & Social Care Group and asked us to work with them and the pharmacists to deliver the necessary health & social care support to shielding and isolating patients and people in SWF without local support networks of their own. This was expected mainly to involve delivery of medications as demand for that was expected to increase a lot in excess of the normal capabilities. It is a great honour to have been trusted with this.
- By Monday 23 March 2020 we had agreed an appropriate system for this which avoided unnecessary bureaucracy and fully respected patient confidentiality. Between 23 March and 5 May 2020 a total of 352 activations have been delivered in SWF and its surrounds for patients of CVMC Practices and SWF's pharmacies. [This has increased dramatically and at the end of 3 June 2020 we had delivered 1017 tasks.]

- Demand since Sunday 26 April (when 200 activations had been delivered) had increased substantially and as a result the Group recruited a group of a dozen accredited volunteers to help with this on a rota basis.
- The vast majority of activations (say 90%) are to deliver prescription medications in and around SWF. Other referrals have included: supporting people with non-COVID-19 life threatening and other situations such as strokes, heart attacks, traumas; people from elsewhere in Essex who found out about us and had been unable to speak to others; providing initial assessments of residents disturbed by lockdown; providing end of life support; arranging packages of health & welfare support; checking on the well-being of seriously ill people; supporting and arranging support packages for bereaved people; supporting and liaising with the SWF Foodbank and other welfare organisations in the Town.
- Understandably the national and county systems for referrals and use of volunteers have taken time to get into action and were still not fully efficient. It is a huge credit to our GPs and pharmacists that our Town's system was established immediately and our Townsfolk have received timely full support from the onset. The Chelmsford Community Hub has been excellent throughout and SWF's Town Clerk and SWF's churches have also been great.
- This arrangement will continue as long as necessary.
- Sombre News: On Saturday 2 May the Office for National Statistics published provisional data for Deaths Involving COVID-19 in small areas within England and Wales. Initially this showed two deaths in the whole of SWF involving COVID-19 between 1 March – 17 April 2020 inclusive. Since then the ONS was able to make adjustments and now reports separately for SWF North and SWF South (as in the Chelmsford CC electoral areas). We understand that deaths registered outside our area were transferred back to the area of the deceased's home. The ONS now reports for the same time period three deaths in SWF North and three deaths in SWF South involving COVID-19, a total of six deaths of Town residents. This increasingly awful news confirmed our experience that our Town had suffered lots of people with relatively mild COVID-19 symptoms, some taken seriously ill, some hospitalised, some taken into ICU and some suffering loss of life.

The ONS caveats which must be taken into account with this data are:

*Source: Office for National Statistics - Deaths involving COVID-19*

Notes:

1. Points on the map are placed at the centre of the local area they represent and do not show the actual location of deaths. The size of the circle is proportional to the number of deaths
2. To protect confidentiality, a small number of deaths have been reallocated between neighbouring areas.
3. Deaths occurring between 1 March 2020 and 17 April 2020 and registered by 18 April 2020.
4. Figures exclude death of non-residents and are based on February 2020 boundaries.
5. Coronavirus (COVID-19) was the underlying cause or was mentioned on the death certificate as a contributory factor (ICD-10 codes U07.1 and U07.2).
6. Locally adopted MSOA names are provided by House of Commons Library. While these names are not officially supported for National Statistics they are provided here to help local users.

We hope this dreadful sombre news will convince absolutely everyone in SWF of the need to follow completely the Government's lockdown instructions and stay indoors, protect our NHS and Save Lives.

## **Other things:**

- Thanks to our excellent Administrator Emma Wardall, who left us at the end of April 2020, our new website, social media and communications capabilities had been fully developed and had been invaluable in advising, informing and guiding, utilising all the selected and edited information we gathered from national, international, regional and local relevant sources; our website and social media have been fully used to keep everyone informed.
- Emma moved on to concentrate on Essex health and social care projects, ever more vital now, and we thanked her profusely for the invaluable professional developments she delivered for us.
- We welcomed our new Administrator Nikki Boreham who has great enthusiasm for our Town and the work of our Group.
- We are most grateful to Essex Community Foundation's Essex Coronavirus Response & Recovery Programme for a grant of £1800.00 to help fund our increased activity for six months in connection with COVID-19. We are also most grateful to Mister Gees Foundation for funding the development of our new website, social media and communications capabilities. And we are also grateful to SWF Methodist Church for some funding towards the Parish/Town Nurse project. We continue to be incredibly grateful for SWF Town Council's support and funding too.
- The Town Nurse project is suspended due to lockdown etc but planning work for it continues so this can be re-started as soon as possible.
- Mid and South Essex Hospitals (Broomfield, Basildon and Southend) did merge on 1 April 2020 but their transformation development has been suspended at the moment due to COVID-19.
- The consultations and process towards the amalgamation of the five Clinical Commissioning Groups (PPGs) for Mid & South Essex continues within the constraints of COVID-19.
- CVMC is working incredibly well within the COVID-19 situation and when possible we will return our attention to the debrief and aftermath of the move of all health services for the Town to CVMC.
- Two other important issues on our horizon are:
  - the impact the recently adopted Chelmsford City Council Local Plan, with its overall proposal for 20,000+ new houses to be built during the life of the Plan and the 1000+ of them in SWF, will have on Hospitals, Primary Care and Social Care; and
  - the possible development of Bradwell B nuclear power station.
- We have decided, like so many others, to hold a virtual AGM and Public Meeting as best COVID-19 allows and we can in July 2020 and will suspend for a year any constitutional changes and elections.

## **Health, Social Care & Wellbeing**

Our local GP services are of huge significance but there are also very many other health and social care services much used and needed by SWF people. In no particular order in the last year this Group has engaged in and with:

- Chelmsford CVS (Council for Voluntary Service)
- Mid Essex CCG
- Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust and allied hospitals at Basildon & Southend and their Joint Working Board
- Mid & South Essex Sustainable Transformation Partnership
- Essex Healthwatch
- Essex County Council Public Health
- Essex County Council Social Services
- Essex Cares

Group representatives have attended, engaged with, been involved with and/or contributed to:

- Reviews of local Acute Hospital Services
- The Essex Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- EPUT (Essex Partnership University Trust) about some of the mental health services it provides for all of Essex
- SWF pharmaceutical matters
- SWF dental matters
- SWF ophthalmology services including opticians
- East of England Ambulance which serves SWF
- MECCG's local community and primary health care strategy and that of NHS England
- Local NHS funding
- Carers' services including with Carers First and Action for Family Carers
- Chetwood Healthy Family Delivery Site, part of Chelmsford Central Family Hub
- Some Accessibility & Disabled People's services
- Bereavement and Death Matters
- SWF Foodbank
- SWF Chatty Bus
- Social Prescribing
- CQC (Care Quality Commission) re various health and social care regulatory issues and their voluntary & community involvement
- ARU (Anglia Ruskin University) mental health awareness week annual day and its Patient Partnership supporting training of medical students
- MECCG complaints delays
- UK, Eastern Region and Essex Acquired Brain Injury Fora.

In response to requests from the local media, ie newspapers, radio and regional tv stations, officers have made personal contributions to reports, discussions and items about various health & social care issues. We are extremely grateful to SW Focus who publish our informative articles.

By invitation, the Chair is the Patient & Public representative on the East of England Major Trauma Scheme & Network. In that capacity he has, inter alia, promoted the provision of support for families and friends of major trauma patients; is promoting the review of, maintenance of and increase in rehabilitation resources; is working with regional rehabilitation coordinators, rehabilitation service providers, social care providers, public health authorities, planning authorities, NHS & Department of Health and university researchers.

In particular:

- He organised workshops for key decision-makers and opinion formers in Essex. As a result the first high level complex needs rehabilitation 25 bed unit in Essex was in the process of being procured to launch in 2020. This £6mpa+ service will mean major trauma and other adult patients requiring complex and lengthy rehabilitation won't have to go to beds elsewhere around the country; he is a member of the procurement team; inevitably this has been suspended due to COVID-19 and is expected to recommence as soon as possible
- As invited, he is providing patient & public input to key national major trauma research projects mainly to do with pre-hospital care and treatment

The Group's Chair represents SWF on the Livewell Chelmsford Group. Livewell Chelmsford has multi-agency and organisation membership and is linked to Mid Essex CCG, Essex Public Health and to the Essex Health & Wellbeing Board.

Its main roles are to:

- Be a decision-making body in respect of setting and delivering small projects including the funding of such
- Be a locality group to inform the CCG and ECC of local health and wellbeing issues, and translate Mid-Essex and countywide initiatives into local action, and
- Be a forum for disseminating and discussing information relevant to partners.

As required and requested, the Group liaises with local health service providers, our MP and SWF's local authority Councillors about individual and generic issues of concern/interest to them.

The Group attended and exhibited at the SWF Annual Town Public Meeting on 3 March 2020.

#### **4. Our Organisation & Future Activities**

At our 2019 AGM we put forward recommendations about changes to the way we should operate. They were prescient. Our new website, social media presence and capability to undertake virtual activities are already enabling us to adapt to the COVID-19 circumstances and restrictions. This also enables us to move from holding physical meetings which are less popular nowadays to ways preferred today to be informed.

We will continue, when allowed and able, to hold meetings when necessary, such as consultative ones and our AGMs. We are developing virtual interviews and presentations which we plan to launch shortly as soon as COVID-19 pressures and regulations permit.

We believe that the Group is well served by our new Administrator and our recruited band of volunteers.

We will adapt as best we can as lockdown and COVID-19 regulations are loosened and we hope there is no second spike. However, if there is a second spike of COVID-19 we stand ready to continue to play our part.

In the present circumstances it is difficult to plan and develop. We welcome comments and suggestions now and in the coming months about our activities as they are and as people would like them to be.

#### **5. Officers & contact details**

Chair:	Peter Blackman
Task Force Chair:	David Birch
Minutes Secretary:	Jackie Birch
Administrator:	Emma Wardall (September 2019 – April 2020) Nikki Boreham (April 2020 onwards)

Contact details:

Email: [swfhealthsocial@outlook.com](mailto:swfhealthsocial@outlook.com)  
Website: <https://swfhealthsocial.co.uk/>  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/swfhealthsocial](http://www.facebook.com/swfhealthsocial)  
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SWFhealthsocial>

#### **6. Recommendations & Request**

We commend the work of the Group and this Report to SWF Town Council (SWFTC) and the people of South Woodham Ferrers.

We request that SWFTC considers and accepts this Report. It will then be presented to our virtual AGM in July 2020 for adoption.

As far as possible, the Group has delivered value for money. The remaining funding will enable the Group to deliver an integrated approach to all levels and types of health and social care as they affect and apply to the patients and population of SWF.

The Group requests continuation of SWFTC's support and in due course further funding towards its future administration. We will continue to consult and keep everyone advised of developments, progress and future arrangements.