

MINUTES OF THE BILLERICAY ANNUAL TOWN MEETING  
HELD IN THE CHANTRY WAY CENTRE, CHANTRY WAY, BILLERICAY  
ON WEDNESDAY 19th APRIL 2017 AT 7.00 P.M.

**In the Chair:** Cllr J Devlin, Town Council Chairman

**In attendance:** Dr Celia Skinner, Medical Director Basildon & Thurrock University Hospital and Mrs D Tonkiss, Town Clerk.

**Present:** Twelve Town Councillors  
Twelve members of the public

**Apologies:** Given by Cllrs Moore and Tomlin

**1/17 Welcome by Town Council Chairman**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the twentieth Billericay Annual Town Meeting. He stated that it was a legal requirement to hold this meeting to enable local residents to ask questions of their Town Councillors. Cllr Devlin said that the custom is also to invite a guest speaker to attend the meeting, and he was pleased to introduce Dr Celia Skinner, Medical Director of Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital.

**2/17 Guest Speaker**

Dr Skinner gave those present an informative overview of the new NHS Success Regime and an update on the potential hospital reconfiguration. In February 2013 she became the Medical Director at Basildon Hospital but has since been seconded to the role of Chief Medical Examiner across the three hospitals, Basildon, Mid-Essex and Southend. The Success Regime came about because Essex had been identified as a failing health regime that wasn't planning effectively and improving the health of the population. Essex is one of 44 areas in the UK which are moving away from hospitals competing with each other to working together. No hospital mergers are happening yet, but healthcare delivery has to change as technology evolves. People being reliant on their local hospital for everything is no longer viable and the care that people require is also becoming more complex. There is not just a larger ageing population but an ageing population with chronic conditions. These rising demands are overstressing the health and care services, plus causing a large rise in A&E attendances. There is a staff shortage with 2,000 vacancies currently in the NHS. For modern standards of healthcare a hospital specialist needs to be available 24/7. It is unrealistic to do this in each hospital therefore the three hospitals will be working as a group. The plan overall has three functions; support to stay well for longer, networks of care in the area (healthcare professionals working together) and the three hospitals working better as a group. The potential to change future hospital services means identifying the challenges and addressing them. With regard to future hospital services there will be no change for the existing centres of excellence - Cancer and Radiotherapy at Southend, Cardiothoracic Centre, Basildon - life saving heart and lung treatments, and Plastic Surgery and Burns Centre at Broomfield, Chelmsford. The services that would be provided at local sites are a walk-in A&E at all three sites and ambulances, surgical assessment, frailty assessment, children's assessment, outpatient clinics, day surgery, midwife-led maternity unit and obstetrician cover, and step down beds for people recovering after surgery or specialist care. Five options were identified and these were narrowed down via evidence examined including feedback from the acute leaders group, patients and public, clinical senate, national evidence and guidance. The narrowed down options are detailed below:

**BASILDON**

Essex Cardiothoracic Centre  
 Specialist Emergency hospital  
 Specialist obstetric centre

**BROOMFIELD**

Plastic and Burns Centre  
 Emergency Centre  
 Elective Surgery  
 Children's Centre

**SOUTHEND**

Cancer Centre  
 Local Emergency Centre  
 Centre for Planned Care

**BASILDON**

Essex Cardiothoracic Centre  
 Specialist Emergency hospital  
 Specialist obstetric centre

**BROOMFIELD**

Plastic and Burns Centre  
 Emergency Centre  
 Elective Surgery  
 Children's Centre

**SOUTHEND**

Cancer Centre  
 Emergency Centre  
 Elective Surgery

These options will go to public consultation. This was due to happen in October but the General Election will push that date back. Dr Skinner then opened the floor to questions.

**Q.** There is confusion about how A&E will work

**A.** A walk in service will be available at all three sites, along with specialist care. As an example a heart attack patient in Southend would be taken by ambulance to Basildon as they would be seen by a specialist consultant far quicker.

**Q.** How do people know which A&E they should go to?

**A.** They are all open 24/7 and people being taken by ambulance will be taken to the relevant centre.

**Q.** Are there going to be more beds available?

**A.** People in hospital beds that don't really need or want to be there will be helped back into the community by working with the appropriate partners.

**Q.** Is Orsett hospital being closed?

**A.** There is currently a consultation with Thurrock CCG about what should happen there.

**Q.** There are various rumours going around - what is the future of Mayflower Hospital?

**A.** This hospital is run by NELFT not the Success Regime, who therefore have no control over what happens.

**Q.** Is there a drive to bring the administrative services together as is being done with the clinical services?

**A.** Yes there is.

**Q.** Will records be available to view across all three sites as this is not currently possible.

**A.** From this summer technology will be in place to enable this. e.g. an x-ray taken at Basildon will be able to be viewed in Southend.

Those present generally felt that the A&E proposals are sensible. However, all people tend to hear is that they are losing certain services in their area. Dr Skinner said they are aware of this and appreciate there is a lot more work to do. She thanked those present for their comments.

A copy of the Powerpoint presentation which accompanied Dr Skinner's talk is available on request from the Town Clerk.

**3/17 Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 28th April 2016**

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 28th April 2016, were taken as read and approved as a correct record. No questions were raised and there were no matters arising.

#### **4/17 Chairman's Report 2016/17**

Cllr Devlin said that this was his second year as Chairman during which he had undertaken many duties on behalf of the Council. It had been a year of great change as eleven councillors out of twenty were lost at the May election. The remaining nine councillors stood for re-election along with two new candidates. The General Power of Competence had been lost due to two thirds of councillors not being elected, so now the Council can only operate under powers specifically given in the Local Government Act 1972 which has restricted some activities. The process of co-option was undertaken and now all twenty seats are filled. This change in the number of councillors meant streamlining operations due to change in the workload specifically with the Chantry Way Centre now under Town Council management. However, this has not stopped the Council delivering on the usual services and events that it has run over many years and because we as a Local Council do not receive money from Central Government we have not had to deal with the budget cuts suffered by the Borough and County Councils. However with their services to the Community failing we have to be aware that we may need to increase services offered by this Council.

A full copy of Cllr Devlin's report will be published in the Annual Report 2016/17 which will be distributed to every household in Billericay at the end of May.

#### **5/17 Reports of Committee Chairmen**

##### **Finance and General Purposes Committee - Cllr Adam Adshead**

The F&GP Committee is one of the three core Council committees. It oversees and scrutinises the financial activities, reviews and agrees budgets, plus sets the precept and supervises the Council's assets. The Precept has again been frozen for the 8th year at £19.80 for a Band D Property. The General Purposes part of the name covers other activities that don't fall within the remit of either Environment or Planning. It also looks after the Youth Town Council who contribute to the life of Billericay and which is run along the same lines as full Town Council. The IT working party has seen through a major upgrade of the website. This past year has seen 36,000 views of pages within the site, most of those being around planning but it spikes with key events such as Christmas Lights. The use of social media has increased the amount of articles received for the Town Crier each quarter and the Council is proud of the High Commended Award received for Best Community Magazine from the Rural Community Council of Essex. Donations have been given to various groups, and the Council have also awarded a donation to Friends of Lake Meadows to go towards the Child in the Park replacement. The Chantry Way Centre is now under Town Council control and the aim is to get more use out of this community resource. Currently the future of the building is being looked at as it will house the council's administrative services as well as being put to commercial and community use. A Feasibility Study is underway and this will help to decide the next step for the building. Cllr Adshead concluded by thanking the councillors that serve on the Committee along with the staff.

A full copy of Cllr Adshead's report will be published in the Annual Report 2016/17 which will be distributed to every household in Billericay at the end of May.

Cllr Devlin thanked Cllr Adshead for his report.

##### **Planning Committee - Cllr Lesley Mitchelmore**

Cllr Mitchelmore said that it had been a busy year for the Committee and along with the planning applications they had also responded to the new and alternative sites consultation. Committee members want to improve the way they work and have had visits from Basildon Borough Council officers to assist with this by finding out how best to respond to both

planning and licensing applications. Although the Town Council is a consultee only and BBC makes the final decision. The Planning Committee's comments are considered as part of that decision making process. The Town Council is passionate about the Conservation Area and preserving it and want people to submit schemes which don't impact on their neighbours and give sufficient parking spaces. The public are encouraged to attend Committee meetings and give their comments on applications. With regard to the ongoing local plan production a working party was formed to respond to the consultation for new and alternative sites. The Committee did not find that any of these sites were suitable. Cllr Mitchelmore thanked the other members of Planning Committee and the staff for their support.

A full copy of Cllr Mitchelmore's report will be published in the Annual Report 2016/17 which will be distributed to every household in Billericay at the end of May.

Cllr Devlin thanked Cllr Mitchelmore for her report.

### **Environment Committee - Cllr Moira Moore**

Cllr Devlin said that unfortunately Cllr Moore could not attend so he gave a brief overview of the work of the Environment Committee. He informed those present that the Environment Committee looks after all the things you see in the town such as Christmas Lights, litter, hanging baskets, Jim Shields and Festival Gardens.

### **6/17 Questions from the Press and Public**

It was asked whether the Citizen of the Year had been decided. Cllr Devlin said they had but the winners had not yet been informed.

Will there be a Town Guide 2018? Cllr Devlin said that a decision had been taken to make it a three year publication and therefore the budget would be looked at for the production of a Town Guide in the next financial year.

Mr Ron Capes thanked those present for the questions to Dr Skinner and said the quality of them had been good and that Dr Skinner had been very impressed. He also said that the hospital is controlled, regulated and supervised by the public and if people would like to get involved then he would be happy to provide further information. Cllr Devlin asked that Mr Capes pass on the Council's thanks to Dr Skinner for attending as the guest speaker.

### **7/17 Closing address**

Cllr Devlin thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting closed at 8.41pm