

**SPEECH TO TOWN MEETING FOR 3/12**

- Firstly on behalf of the Town Council and the Hospital Action Group I would like to thank you for coming tonight - for those of you who were here on 21st October then I apologise for reiterating some of what I have sent before .
- This has become a complex subject and we did ask the County Council to attend this meeting to enable more communication of the issues to the public particularly those from the villages but it seems that OCC are only represented by our County Councillor Hillary Hibbert-Biles who has been unbending and loyal in her support for us however the essence of this meeting is: *'do we want to keep 14 hospital beds staffed by the Order of St John instead of the NHS or do we want to lose them completely?'*
- I believe that I am a fairly straightforward sensible guy and, until I recently got involved in the Hospital Action Group, I thought that Chippy (and the surrounding area) are really lucky - we have a virtually new Community Hospital which has some care beds for the elderly, well-managed by Order of St John (OSJ) who also own the building, and that there was a long term deal in place for the NHS to run some 14 'medical beds' using NHS staff and that the deal was between OSJ and the NHS and linked together with all that is a maternity unit, an X-ray unit and various other areas used for various clinics. In addition to that I thought that the NHS and the local doctors had been very sensible and had agreed that the best place for the new Doctors surgery was next to the hospital so that patients could use the facilities that can be provided locally and that, basically for the typical man in the street, there were three main organisations involved in our local health namely OSJ/NHS and the Doctors - PERFECT .....

But NO that is not what happens - in our Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital we do indeed have OSJ and the NHS involved - Plus Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford Health (NHS) Foundation Trust and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Healthwatch (funded by OCC) and Social Services (OCC employed personnel) and probably Uncle Tom Cobley as well .... and until recently the Primary Care Trust (PCT) was also involved and we also have the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) which is made up of county and district councillors and three other co-opted members.

There is now a dispute about whether we should have care beds for the elderly (only) or keep the 14 beds as either Sub-acute intermediate care beds or whether they should be Intermediate care beds - staffed in all cases by OSJ staff instead of the NHS - what is the difference between them all - in simple terms the quality and training of the staff i.e. money.

I shall now digress a little - a few weeks ago on the Jeremy Vine show on BBC radio 2 (the subject was local hospitals) there was an interview with a Mr Graham Kinsey who lives in Bicester who had to have a leg amputated at the JR in Oxford where he said the care was good (and so was the food)! He was then transferred for his final Post op recovery to the Bicester Community Hospital where he said the 24 hour care was FANTASTIC but the food wasn't great. The best economic facts here is that he had been moved from an acute main hospital bed back to a sub-acute bed nearer to home therefore removing an expensive bed blocking situation in the JR that we hear so much about in the press - it is that sort of care that we thought had been agreed with the PCT/NHS etc several years ago and that is what we still want to have.

This town and surrounding area will expand between now and 2031 by about 1800 houses (as per current plans) and this town is already expanding with 228 houses being built off

the A361 / Premier Inn has started building and I am sure that within a few years Tank Farm area will be built over with about 600 houses - there are extra care beds being built on the Penhurst site together with retirement homes - some of these facilities for older people will, no doubt, be occupied by some people 'retiring' to the Cotswolds - and what do older people need - more medical attention than young people BUT not necessarily long term care as given by OSJ - but short term non acute care (ie not Horton or JR type hospital either ) but the sort of beds we have now! The statement that not many Chippy residents are cared for there at the moment is crass and idiotic - no they aren't there but they are bed blocking in Oxford and Banbury or being cared for in community hospitals elsewhere in Oxfordshire.

We are now in a situation where because of cuts being forced on us all by OCC (who fund some of the cost) we are being given the straight option of either the 14 beds being only only intermediate care beds staffed by the OSJ (i.e. probably less highly trained than the current excellent nursing staff) or loosing the beds back to OSJ where they will become care beds for the elderly ..... we have not been given a third option of any compromise it is either Yes or NO. If the beds go then the alternative will be home nursing rather than 24 hour care that is currently provided at our community hospital and at others like the Bicester Community Hospital. We do not think that this alternative of home nursing is a practical nor economic solution - we want what we have now ... as a minimum.

Chippy is also 'geographically challenged' - it is the highest/coldest/windiest and if snow falls, probably the place with the deepest snow in Oxfordshire - good hospital facilities have to be available locally in all weather conditions - and I know for a fact, that a blue light trip to the JR does not just take a few minutes - I guess in perfect conditions a 30 minute trip might be possible - and the home care solution being offered will not work in the middle of a dire winter.

You have heard that HAG have distributed leaflets around the OX7 area and John will report on the results of that survey once I have finished BUT if HAG can do this sort of survey why cant OCC - I suspect they feel that we are not really interested in OUR Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital - but we are - aren't we ??

There is also planned to be Countywide review on Community Hospitals being held in 2016 from which we are concerned that the Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital might be excluded - we at HAG would find this both extraordinary and unacceptable.

BUT While we object to being steamrollered, none of us here tonight wants to go down in history as the HAG who lost the NHS beds in Chippy, so we, at the October meeting, suggested to all parties that HAG would continue to gather information as mentioned, provided that OCC and all other parties involved will affirm publicly and concretely that they will maintain the current level of service as specified in 2011 until such time as the Countywide review on Community Hospitals reports by the end of 2016- which never happened!

They should also have had to give us a public and cast iron guarantee (as was promised at an earlier meeting in front of both the Prime Minister and representative of Healthwatch), that the Intermediate Care beds in Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital will be included the countywide review. No guarantees have been given therefore one object of this meeting will be to decided what action we take NOW.