

## MORETONHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

### Moretonhampstead Hospital

#### Introduction

This paper provides an update on Moretonhampstead's Hospital, and seeks decisions from the parish council on next steps.

#### Update

The Hospital Working Group, Cllrs Fileman-Wright and Evans; Alex Austin (Moretonhampstead Health Centre); Richard Foxwell (MDT Wellmoor) and John Willis (NED Care) met on 15th September.

There has been no contact from the NHS to any members of the working group since 23rd July meeting hosted by the NHS ICB and Property Services.

There are no services in the hospital. The building is closed off including the footpath which has provided a shortcut for patients to the health centre. The NHS may have carried out some repairs to the roof.

The latest estimate from NHS Property Services (NHS PS) for the cost to restore the hospital for clinical use based on information given by Matt Chetwynd to the public meeting is £2m. The working group noted this was double the cost estimates NHS PS gave to the initial meeting with Mel Stride in January 2024.

There has been no further communications from the NHS to the working group about the plans for the sale of the hospital. From the NHS meeting in July, the working group understands that the next steps for the sale of the hospital are:

- NHS PS will put the hospital up for sale via limited advert for government departments, local authorities, organisations and community groups. Community groups must be a registered charity / CIC.
- the initial advert will be for a period of 3 months in which time any interested party must submit a viable business plan
- any interested party will then have a further 3 months to demonstrate the financial viability of their plan
- if no bidders during this period, the hospital will be placed on the open market.
- Once the sale has gone through, 50% of the moneys received will go back to Devon ICB to be reinvested in local healthcare. *It is vital that the community investment to be made to improve health services in the Moretonhampstead health centre catchment.*

NHS PS has not confirmed when the sale process will start or what the asking price for the building will be. Richard Foxwell had contacted the NHS to ask when NHS PS will start advertising the sale. At time of writing this paper, no reply has been received.

The working group is not aware of any local organisations in a position to purchase the hospital. Neither the Parish Council, MDT Board of Trustees nor NED Care would have the funding or expertise to purchase and manage the hospital building.

The Health Centre has also looked at the possibility of purchasing the hospital as a replacement for the current health centre. It does not appear to be financially viable for the practice. This is because the NHS would designate the hospital as a new-build GP practice meaning it would have to be refurbished to modern clinical standards at an estimated cost of £1m, on top of any purchase price.

It was noted that it is important for residents in neighbouring parishes to be updated about the hospital as the Health Centre serves a wider catchment than just Moretonhampstead Parish.

It was noted that it still hasn't been possible to complete the independent survey of the hospital as NHS PS need to provide access to the roof space.

### **Next steps and actions**

The Moretonhampstead Health Centre has requested that the parish council arrange a public meeting to be joint hosted by Moretonhampstead Health Centre and the parish council. The aim is to update residents on what we know and seek their views.

A provisional date for the public meeting is Wednesday 5th November, 7pm, in the Parish Hall. Dr Tom Waterfall has confirmed that he doesn't feel it would be appropriate for him to chair the meeting.

Cllr Fileman-Wright and Cllr Walden discussed the next steps. Cllr Walden advised that we should update Mel Stride MP, and invite him to attend and chair the public meeting.

The NHS PS and ICB, DNPA, Cllr Richard Keeling would also be invited to attend the meeting.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Moretonhampstead Parish Council:

1. Notes the update on the hospital
2. Decides whether to host a public meeting with Moretonhampstead Health Centre
3. Decides whether to invite Mel Stride MP to attend and chair the public meeting and advises on any other attendees, and
4. Delegates the drafting of the invitation letter and notice of the public meeting to the Clerk, Chair and Vice-chair.

### **Paper by Cllr Catherine Fileman-Wright**