



AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL MATTERS MONDAY 23rd NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7PM – HELD REMOTELY USING ZOOM

MEETING LINK: <https://zoom.us/j/99653467657> Meeting ID: 996 5346 7657

You are hereby SUMMONED to attend the **Council Matters Committee**, which is to be held using remote meeting service Zoom on **Monday 23rd November 2020 at 7pm** for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Committee Members: Councillors E Price (Chair), M Adams (Deputy Chair), J Hodgson, P Paine, C Luker, B Piper, C Allford, V Trow.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Committee.

2. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Verbal update Town Clerk.

3. TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO MINOR INJURY UNIT CLOSURES

Document enclosed.

*The Committee will be asked to **RESOLVE** to exclude the press and public “by reason of the confidential nature of the business” to be discussed and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. (CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)*

4. STAFFING UPDATE

To consider an update on the staffing restructure and consider recommendations to Full Council.
Document to follow.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Council Matters Committee – Monday 14th December at 7pm (please note the meeting time changes to 5.30pm from January 2021).

Catherine Marlton
Town Clerk

USE OF SOUND RECORDINGS AT COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The open proceedings of this Meeting will be audio and video recorded. If members of the public make a representation, they will be deemed to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber or Zoom meeting, attendees are also consenting to being recorded.

Televised, vision and sound recordings or live broadcastings by members of the press or public at Council or Committee debates are permitted and anyone wishing to do so is asked to inform the Chairman of the respective Committee of their intention to record proceedings.

To: Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust and Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
Cc NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group

We draw your attention to the fact that Minor Injury Units (MIUs) at Totnes, Dawlish and Ilfracombe (Tyrell) hospitals have been closed since March, and there is restricted opening of the MIU at Lydford. Bideford's MIU has recently reopened after pressure from campaigners. These closures cause difficulty and distress to patients across rural Devon. Poor public transport intensifies the problem for communities in coastal areas and on Dartmoor. For some, reaching treatment ten or twenty miles away is simply impossible.

There is strong support for the use of our remaining community hospitals to provide nursing care at this time of public health crisis. It shows how desperately community beds are needed to relieve pressure on our acute hospitals and the care sector. Patients also understand the need to carefully assess the safety of sites where COVID-19 patients are being treated, and to place NHS staff where they can meet the most urgent needs.

However, there is a lack of trust that the CCG will reopen these services as promised when it is safe to do so. MIU closure has historically been the precursor to more radical cuts in services and even hospital closures, as was the case at Torrington and Teignmouth. Beyond the immediate impact, there is great anxiety that this situation may be allowed to continue once the crisis is over.

MIUs are particularly important when GP surgeries are closed. Currently, the only out-of-hours service available to patients is run by Devon Doctors, which has actually cut its GPs on call, clinicians and call centre staff. This means that patients are more likely to call SW Ambulance Service (calls up 25% at the start of the closure period) and more likely to end up at an emergency department. Other patients will delay getting the help they need or be deterred from seeking treatment at all.

The Secretary of State for Health has reiterated his support for community hospitals during the COVID-19 crisis. Where towns still have a community hospital, it has provided critical coordination for primary, community and voluntary care services. Post-acute COVID-19 patients have many ongoing health challenges that are placing even more demands on the community care sector. This is why community hospitals are being reopened in other parts of the country, and why the government has promised to build new hospitals just over the border in Dorset.

The case for community hospitals has never been so strong. We ask you to provide a public guarantee that MIU services will be restored, along with all other suspended community hospital services and clinics, as soon as the crisis begins to ease.