

Joint Statement issued by the Townlands Steering Group, Oxford Health, Integrated Care Board, and Oxfordshire County Council.

At a meeting Cllr Ian Reissman Chair of Townlands Steering Group and Cllr Stefan Gawrysiak met the leadership of local health and adult social care services on 5th September. Leaders from Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, the Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) and Oxfordshire County Council expressed strong support for the existing health services provided at Townlands hospital - which the community wish to see these preserved and enhanced in future plans. This includes the same-day urgent care services at the hospital – specifically the Rapid Assessment Care Unit, Minor Injuries Unit and GP Out-of-Hours – that are highly valued by the local community. It also includes the growing number of outpatient clinics being provided by the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.

The community leaders welcomed the engagement of the health leaders, both by meeting and also providing the reassurances regarding these services and are satisfied that these are being retained or enhanced.

There was recognition from all at the meeting that continued speculation about the future of services at Townlands is unhelpful, and does not reflect the commitments that Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Commissioning Board (BOB ICB), and the providers of the services, Royal Berkshire and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trusts, have made to the local community served by the hospital.

Cllr Reissmann and Cllr Gawrysiak, on behalf of the Townlands Steering Group, were pleased to learn that Oxford Health is very keen to see its same-day care services at the hospital being further enhanced, through continuous improvement, innovation and the further development of the clinical workforce. The Trust explained that this may involve occasional internal changes to staffing or ‘back office’ arrangements, when this is required to improve care or deliver better value for patients. An offer of more detail on the provision of care in the area was also welcomed by TSG members.

Oxford Health and the BOB Integrated Care Board reiterated their commitment to continue listening to feedback from patients, carers and local residents about the services in and around Henley – including through discussions with local GPs and community representatives. Should substantive changes to the services provided by Oxford Health at Townlands Hospital be considered at some future point, the Trust and ICB will proactively engage with the public, staff, local GPs, the voluntary sector and all partners to develop options and plans together.

TSG members welcomed this commitment, and a further meeting is to be arranged for October.

Background. TSG invites representatives from 25 parish councils around the Townlands hospital footprint reflecting the wider area of South Oxfordshire that Townlands serves and has been working with NHS bodies since its establishment in 2003 when the old Townlands hospital was threatened with closure.