



## **TAKE CARE – BE CORONAVIRUS AWARE**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

**PRESS RELEASE: For immediate publication**

**November 19 2020**

- Friends of the Yeatman Hospital first virtual AGM was a solid success
- Although income was down in the year – the Friends’ finances remain stable
- New Constitution adopted to allow broader community support
- Future of the Yeatman and the return of the Minor Injuries Unit were main focus of public questions
- Mental Health challenges in the community are growing concerns; the FOYH is considering its options to support related projects.
- New Trustees appointed

The 2020 Friends of Yeatman Hospital AGM “was a success”, said Chairman David Hayes.... “Normally we have between 30-40 attendees. This year we peaked at 35 on line registered attendees including Friends and members of the public. As it was our first online AGM for all of us we have to be pleased with the results”

In addressing the agenda, the main points of interest were the Financial Report from Treasurer John Thompson, who confirmed that despite the impact of COVID on the charity’s traditional fundraising activities, the Friends benefited from a number of bequests which saw income remain positive and positioned the Friends to be able respond to the needs of the Hospital when asked. He also noted that due to COVID capital projects at the hospital are on hold.

John Thompson reported that, following extensive contact with the Charity Commission, the Commission had agreed to proposed changes to the Constitution. The meeting members voted to adopt the new constitution which bring the charity’s management processes up to modern standards.

This is in line with Friends’ existing policy to follow the Hospital’s healthcare programmes by supporting projects and initiatives across the Sherborne Community,

While the comments by both the Chairman and Matron focused on the long-term future of the Yeatman, they were unable to confirm when the Minor Injuries Unit would reopen.

Mr Hayes commented;

“ I and my fellow Trustees have been engaged in a broad range of discussions with the Chief Executive of Dorset Healthcare Trust, our constituency MP, Chris Loder, Lead of N Dorset Local Primary Care Network, Dr Rob Childs, elected members and officers of Sherborne Town Council and representatives of the town’s Patient Groups. It is our proposal to formulate a coordinated and concerted action to ensure the MIU is reopened.

“The MIU cannot become a convenient COVID Casualty – it is an important service, not only to Sherborne but to all surrounding villages.”

On behalf of the Friends the Chairman thanked longstanding Trustee Mrs Celia Harvey, who retired at the AGM and introduced two new Trustees for election.; Mrs Fiona Hartley and Rebecca Tillin. “Fiona Hartley will bring a wealth of executive level experience to our deliberations, while Rebecca Tillin also joins us as our new Friendship Secretary in succession to Celia. We therefore bid farewell to Celia and thank her for her exceptional dedication and the contribution that she has made towards developing our Friendship portfolio.”

Members of the public were able to send in questions addressed by the Executive Committee. One asked about the Friends’ position on mental health challenges in the community:

***Mental health provision in insufficient in the Sherborne area. Could we not support that in some way?***

There is no single solution or simple answer to this question.

The impact of mental health illness across our society is of growing concern as it touches all ages and social groups in our community. This results in increasing emotional distress to those affected, including both patients and family members. It also places increased demands on a wide range of resources including social and public services, education sectors, clinical care and home care.

The Friends have already demonstrated their willingness to provide support for specific mental health projects in our community and will continue to do so subject to availability of funds and need.

In conclusion Mr Hayes thanked those who had attended the meeting, hoping that they and their families remained well and COVID free, and the forthcoming Christmas season was good for them.

END

**Further information: Friends of The Yeatman Hospital: Tony Meehan 07768 850 855**

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

Copies of the reports presented at the AGM are available online at <https://friendsoftheyeatman.org.uk>

The Friends of The Yeatman Hospital is a registered charity whose main aims are

- To provide funds to support additional facilities and equipment to contribute to the efficient running of the hospital;
- To work for the comfort and dignity of the patients;
- To encourage and foster public support of the hospital.

The Friends of The Yeatman Hospital – Registered Charity Number 1031326