

Information Officer's Report for 2024

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This year we reviewed and responded to the BOB Integrated Care Board's Primary Care Strategy, putting in a detailed response and taking part in a not very satisfactory consultation meeting. The changes are starting to work through at GP surgeries with better telephone systems, online triage for surgery appointments and more use of pharmacists.

Francis Brown and I had a couple of meetings with Sarah Wise, commissioner of GP services, and her data analyst over the interpretation of the annual GP patient survey that Francis has pioneered and we were very gratified to see the data analyst taking up that approach and producing a very useful and persuasive summary for use by the ICB organisation. We also met with Hilda Eschieschi on the Reading Borough Health Champions.

Our speakers this year were, Andrew Statham from the Royal Berkshire Hospital talking about the new surgical hub, David Dean of the Thames Valley Pharmaceutical Alliance, Professor John Ashton, the retiring public health consultant for Berkshire West and Tony Jones, ex-councillor and elected governor at the South Central Ambulance Trust. We also had a meeting called a workshop on the primary care strategy, which was mostly devoted to speakers recapping what we had already read. We had two other meetings devoted to the Primary Care Strategy and one in which we reviewed the Public Health director's report. Two of our meetings had no speaker or review tabled. So with our AGM we had 11 meetings of which 4 speaker meetings – under the pressure of responding to the Primary Care strategy.

We also had stands at the Reading Waterfest, at the East Reading Festival and at the Reading Older Persons' Day exhibition.

We have invited the North and West Patient Voice members to join with us and offered to support their continuing meetings, but this has not been accepted.