



GRESFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

CYNGOR CYMUNED GRESFORD

Betsi Cadwallader University Health Board
Wrexham GP services
Preswylfa,
Hendy Road,
Mold, Flintshire CH7 1PZ

30th April 2018

Dear Sir/ Madam

Re: Proposed Closure of Gresford Health Centre.

I write on behalf of Gresford Community Council. The Council recently held a special meeting to discuss the decision of Alyn Family Doctors to rationalise their contract with you for health provision in the area, by their proposal to close the Gresford Health Centre.

The Council wish to make you aware of their concerns about the impact this will have on the communities of Gresford, Marford and Hoseley, in particular the people within those communities without transport, who live alone and are isolated, or who are elderly or have a disability or life limiting illness.

The main concerns for such patients, are the particular difficulties associated with accessing the surgeries at Llay and at Rossett from Gresford and Marford. Many elderly or disabled people will have difficulty accessing transport and it will lead to additional costs of transport to all patients. There is a lack of public transport to and from the surgeries at Llay, necessitating a patient to have their own transport in order to attend, or reliance on other persons. It is also considered that it is difficult for people with mobility issues to get to Rossett on public transport. To access both surgeries from Gresford and Marford will be particularly acute in the winter months; there is a long walk down Station Road at Rossett from the bus stop, while in winter the road to Llay can be iced over and dangerous.

There are also concerns in terms of patient capacity at the surgeries, particularly at Rossett. The surgery at Rossett is small with limited seating, and there is no waiting provision for children at Rossett as there is at Gresford.

On this basis, the Council wish to challenge the proposal to close the Gresford Health Centre. It would seem somewhat at odds to withdraw provision from the largest population centre of the three villages. The number of persons residing in Gresford, and Marford and Hosely is 5010 compared with 4814 at Llay and 3231 at Rossett. We appreciate these figures are indicative and patient lists may be more widespread, nevertheless it is reflective of the size of population at Gresford and Marford in comparison to the other villages. In addition, we know that nearly 50% of the population is aged over 50 within Gresford and Marford, and of those a significant proportion live alone and have a disability or life limiting illness. This compares with 40.2% of the population being over 50 at Rossett and 46.5% at Llay. Whilst the Gresford Community Council would wish to see the best outcome of these proposals for all residents concerned in

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the three village areas, nevertheless for these reasons would ask you, as Health Commissioner to Alyn Family Doctors Service contract, to challenge Alyn Family Doctors to reconsider their proposal to close the Health Centre at Gresford on the basis of this clear demographic fact.

In addition, the Community Council would respectfully ask you as Health Commissioners for GP services for the area, for a response to the following concerns:

1. It is understood that GP recruitment is sometimes lengthy and problematic. Have Alyn Family Doctors raised with you an issue of recruitment difficulties and if so, can you please explain what has been done to address this issue.
2. It is noted that two thirds of the doctors within Alyn Family Doctors appear to work on a part- time or locum basis. Please could you provide a comment on whether you consider this unusual, or to be an issue contributing to management difficulties across the three surgeries leading to this decision.
3. Could the Community Council also ask, by way of a Freedom of information request, whether Alyn Family Doctors own the Gresford Health Centre or whether it is owned by BCUHB?
4. We understand that Alyn Family Doctors propose, if the closure of the GP Practice went ahead, to continue to use the building for nurse appointments and health visitor appointments. Is there a guarantee that this would continue, and for how long?
5. We understand that levels of RADON have been identified at Gresford Health Centre, can you please advise if anything has been done to protect staff and patients using the facility?
6. Maintenance issues around sewage type smells in the consulting rooms seem to be an issue. Is BCUHB aware of this and what has been done to resolve this issue?
7. It has been stated that the current appointments offered at Gresford will be 'ring fenced' following the changes. Please could you clarify what this means and how it can be achieved?

The Council would request BCUHB to provide a representative to the public meeting which has been organised by the County Councillors on Thursday May 10th at 7.30pm at Gresford Trust Memorial Hall. It is felt that if this will give an opportunity to allay some of the concerns, fears and rumours that you will be aware are circulating at the present time.

We would be grateful for your response to the issues and concerns we raise in consideration of the proposal to close the Health Centre.

Yours sincerely

S. Baxter
Clerk to Gresford Community Council