



Press Release – 16th March 2017

Holsworthy Town Council support community campaign against NHS proposals – Patients do not want medical care in their homes.

A meeting of some 500 local residents attending Holsworthy Memorial Hall on Wednesday night, is clear evidence of the opposition to North Devon Healthcare Trust's plan to remove beds from the Holsworthy Community Hospital. It took nearly an hour for the Memorial Hall to fill to capacity and residents were in the mood to have their say. No satisfactory answers were given by Alison Diamond, CEO at North Devon Healthcare Trust to questions from the floor of the meeting - How long will the ward closure last? - What conditions need to be met to allow re-opening? - Why don't you show leadership and overturn the decision? Her main response was to blame the decision on the shortage of nurses and low bed occupancy.

Ian Crawford, a campaigner from Save Our Hospital Services (SOHS) said "We congratulate Mayor Jon Hutchings and the Town Council for their support of the campaign to oppose the removal of beds from their local community hospital

Cllr. Barry Parsons made a compassionate plea "Why should we be the ones to suffer?" He emphasised the sense of community and said "I'm terribly disappointed at this decision."

A local GP told Alison Diamond that as a doctor he needed beds for his patients and for convalescence on return from treatment at the main hospital.

Contrary to the NHS England view constantly espoused by Alison Diamond that the plan is to provide medical care in the familiar surroundings of home, previous patients confirmed their preference to receive medical care from professional staff in the safe environment of their local hospital.

These closures of hospitals, removal of beds and plans to provide medical care in the home rather than a hospital are all part of NHS Englands strategy to slim the NHS down for privatisation with the use of agencies on lower wages with little union representation- this is the view of of SOHS campaigners.

Ian Crawford

*Media Liaison – SOHS
07917 123 435*