

**Minutes of the VSG PPG Meeting held on
Wednesday 12th November 2025 at 6.30pm on Zoom.**

Present: David Williams (Chair), Esther Sadler-Williams (Vice Chair), Janet Foster (Secretary), Sharon Roe, Trevor Ferrigno, Hilary Wells,

1. Welcome and Apologies

David welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies received from: Peter Overmeer, Ian Waddington, Edward Rigby.

2. Approval of Minutes of 8th October 2025 and Matters Arising:

The Minutes of 8th October 2025 meeting were approved.

Matters arising: None

3. Updates/News from the Practice – Trevor & Edward

VSG Updates:

- Dr Gillies retires in December after 30 years at the Practice, a celebration with the staff is arranged. The PPG wished to record their thanks to Dr Gillies, and wish her a long and happy retirement, she will be missed. Kate and Edward are currently jointly recruiting for a replacement to cover the VSG vacancy and also session vacancies for Laurel Bank.
- The Village Surgeries Group is recruiting a Clinical Coder to work at both practices to provide document coding, workflow, and summarising activities.
- Trevor reported that the number of online bookable appointments has been increased, these are being used with the next appointment currently available online for two weeks' time.
- David queried the issue of a weight management programme to start at VSG which had been discussed at the recent PPG Chair's meeting; they were informed that the NHS had put limits on the number of patients per practice that were eligible for prescribed injections and support. More will be eligible in the future for the NHS option. David agreed to clarify with Trevor what was minuted in the PPG Chair's meeting minutes.
Trevor explained that approx. 200 VSG patients are currently paying privately for weight loss injections and the NHS criteria would mean that approximately 6 VSG patients would be eligible for it to be prescribed on the NHS. It would seem the ICB have failed to manage the organising and contracting for this efficiently. It has now been agreed that an VSG ANP will provide the injections for patients meeting the criteria. This will include patients across the PCN.
- Trevor reported that the merger was progressing well and VSG are happy with how this is going. The staff appear to be OK with what is happening. A landlord issue had arisen with Farndon in relation to dilapidation costs, which had been a slight stumbling block, however the new lease is currently being finalised, the term is not yet clear.

Discussion about financial projections have been taking place, they are awaiting a valuation for Tattenhall. Following this the Deed of Merger will hopefully be agreed and signed over the next couple of weeks.

Merger Update: David summarised an update report provided by Edward on the progress of the merger:

- The merger continues to go well and most of the business governance arrangements are in place. These are being finalised shortly.
- There is still a lot of work being done to create a proposal for the development of the Tattenhall Surgery site. This requires significant capital investment just to get the project off the ground they are currently seeking funding for this. He remains positive that this scheme of work can go forward soon.
- Edward Rigby met with the local MP, Aphra Brandreth, and Local Councillors, Mike Jones and Adrian Waddelove to garner political support. The Councillors are going to look at the funding streams available in the Local Authority and Aphra Brandreth MP is going to contact the ICB Senior Executives to ask for their support with the project. This is excellent news, and we hope to have some results from this soon.
- Over the next 4 to 6 weeks, they will be looking at the workforce plan; who will work where, when, etc. Staff meetings continue, especially with the clinical workforce, to help them understand the differences between the two practices and what the forward view of work will look like.
- Both practices will be working together again this winter, in December and January, to provide Winter Pressures GP Sessions available to patients of both practices. This was successful last year. A simple thing, but it helps patients get used to travelling to different sites.
- A phlebotomist is now working in both practices, they are a member of the VSG team, but provide support on Thursday mornings to Laurel Bank Surgery. This is working well.
- The Malpas PPG have voted in the majority to merge the PPGs. Therefore, Edward has asked if the PPGs could come together for a first shared meeting in December? VSG already has a date set which could be used.
- More broadly in Cheshire West the recent Healthwatch Report has been made available. Laurel Bank Surgery has received excellent feedback within the subset of data, which they are very pleased with. Once they have analysed it, areas for improvement will be identified, and this is something that they will be able to share with both PPGs.

4. Merger of VSG & Laurel Bank PPG:

- David invited the thoughts of the group on the PPG merger and inviting Laurel Bank PPG members to our December meeting.
- The group are happy for the Laurel Bank PPG members to join the planned meeting in December, which is due to take place at Farndon Memorial Hall. It is unclear how many this would involve but David agreed he will chair the meeting and he will extend an invitation to all the Laurel Bank PPG members and ask for agenda items in advance.
- A long discussion took place about how best to agenda the December meeting and focus on the best way forward. It was felt that there may need to be some flexibility in future meetings to accommodate clinical representation, possibly afternoons, Zoom and evenings can be considered? It was suggested that we carry on with a mix & match approach and possibly 1 in 3 meetings would take place in an afternoon.
- Issues associated with how we understand whether there are any VSG patient concerns in relation to the merger were raised and also how we understand the Laurel Bank patients' issues, which may be very different.
- The meeting agreed that a strong message that nothing will change initially needs to be promoted. Change in the future will be slow as systems merge etc.
- It was suggested that a short questionnaire could be a useful way of canvassing views. This would be a forced choice format with no free text, due to the complexities of analysing the data. VSG has a programme that could analyse the information, this has worked previously. If this was agreed the questionnaire could be sent out to both practices' patients in January/February.

5. Newsletter – (David & Sharon)

- The last Newsletter did not go out as there wasn't a lot of PPG content. Currently Clare is off work so she will not be able to assist with production.
- It was felt that the Newsletter will be an important way of getting information to patients about the merger. The content of future Newsletters was discussed and the following suggestions were made:
 - An interview with Edward to highlight what's happening and promote the positive aspects of the merger. Possibly a podcast!
 - A FAQ section to address queries we are aware of
 - Invitation to new PPG members
 - Thank you to the patients for attending the Flu jab clinics (a statement from the practice can be included)
- It was agreed that David and Sharon will arrange to meet with Edward to discuss future Newsletter content.

6. AOB

- Janet apologised for mistakenly sending out last year's invite to the December meeting following a calendar malfunction! Clearly the invites always come from David so please disregard her email.
- Esther and Peter are arranging a date to visit the PPG notice boards soon.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**Wednesday 10th December 2025 at 6.30pm,
Farndon Memorial Hall, Church Lane, Farndon.**

