

Report on the proposed closure of Scholes Surgery

Introduction

This Report follows a meeting held on 16th October 2025 with Stella Walsh (Chair PC) and Phil Maude (Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Group) and Joanne Evans and Lisa Kundl from the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board. (ICB)

The Report seeks to summarise the main points made at the meeting and to explain the complicated situation regarding the closure of Scholes surgery and the possibilities regarding the future provision of medical facilities for Scholes.

The West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board is a statutory NHS organisation set up to plan and deliver health services for its local population. The final decision on the merger of Manston Surgery and Ashfield Medical Centre will be taken by the West Yorkshire Board.

2 Key Issues

There are key issues here, namely the merger of the practices and the closure of Scholes surgery.

Merger of Practices – Permission to do this is required from the ICB. In deciding to agree to it the ICB must consider the impact on patients. When completing the survey patients need to consider what the impact will be for them arising from the merger.

Closure of Scholes Surgery – This is non-negotiable as the landlord has given notice to the partnership that they plan to sell the building. GPs operate as a private partnership/company on a commercial basis but primarily funded by the NHS. The premises at Scholes, and primarily the dispensary has been operating at a loss in recent years, and small surgeries are no longer seen as a viable entity in the modern NHS. It is not a financially viable proposition for the partnership to buy and refurbish the existing premises to required standards (and may not even be possible within the current fabric of the building).

Including the site closure in the engagement will enable WY ICB to consider what steps may be necessary to overcome any “gap” in the provision of services. This may range from funding temporary premises (which our local councillors are currently scoping on our behalf) if a significant number of people cannot attend other premises, providing more home visits where criteria is met, or providing a taxi service if only a few people are involved. A decision on what mitigations are appropriate will be taken based on the evidence of the impact of the merger and the results of public consultation including the meetings and the survey.

If the new practice partnership had sought to close Scholes Surgery as opposed to the notice given by the landlord, the ICB could have rejected it if it felt that the service to patients would be unacceptably diminished. If that were the case there would also be a need to engage with patients on this, however because the landlord is terminating the lease this means that the premises will close. In these circumstances it is for the GP practice to propose how it will continue to provide a service for all patients of the practice, working closely with the ICB.

Loss of Dispensary – This is also a non-negotiable loss and would have gone soon anyway even if there was no merger. The ICB note there are 11 pharmacies within a 2-mile radius along with the availability of home deliveries at some of these. Patients must differentiate between the loss of the

surgery which is the subject of the meetings and survey and the loss of the dispensary which is happening anyway.

Manpower Resources

The ICB is satisfied there are sufficient resources at Manston Surgery to support the current level of service, i.e. an additional doctor has been recruited and the current sessions at Scholes will be held at Manston.

The ICB comment that there are sufficient GPs in the marketplace to meet any increased demand from new housing. Patients bring funding so as the number of patients increase so the funding increases. By way of an example, a recent vacancy had 20 applicants for a new GP job.

The level of service patients can now expect is set out in the Patients Charter which was published on 1st October this year. This says that a patient should expect to either walk into a surgery and fix up an appointment or go online between 8am and 6.30pm and their needs should be fulfilled, i.e. they should be given an urgent appointment quickly and non-urgent appointment within 2 weeks or be triaged to see a nurse, professional or directed to other services or support.. Please note that Scholes is a branch site of Manston so whilst the branch site does not operate like this during core hours, patients can walk in during these times to Manston, as the main site, should Scholes be closed.

Future provision of premises for East Leeds Extension

The ICB has identified a need for a new site to cater for additional patients in the East Leeds Extension.

Leeds City Council (LCC) has identified a site at Smeaton Approach for a new medical centre on land owned by LCC. The ICB is seeking Expressions of Interest from existing practices in the area. This may be in the form of a new branch for a practice or moving from an existing estate. It may be that the new medical centre will be able to cater for 2 practices. Once the GP Practice(s) have been selected they will be able to link in with developers on the proposed new site and will be able to negotiate with the Developers for a lease which the ICB will fund in accordance with the District Valuers valuation and the NHS premises cost directions

As Ashfield Medical Centre premises need updating to bring them in line with modern general practice, they may consider putting in an expression of interest for the proposed development at the Smeaton Approach site. The ICB is unlikely to fund a new surgery in Scholes since the village is adequately covered by existing practices. If Manston Surgery was unsuccessful in securing premises at Smeaton Approach and was able to reach agreement with a Developer in Scholes and a proposal could evidence a need for a new surgery in the village then it may be an option as Manston Surgery is an existing practice. However, the ICB cannot say at this stage that a new surgery could be funded in Scholes. The ICB would have to approve any lease of a new medical centre in Scholes even if it provided no funding and the criteria for approval would be need.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The PC has been approached by the Developer of the safeguarded site at Scholes and who has offered to help provide a “new purpose built, centrally located and easily accessible surgery within the village.”

As is clear from this Report whilst a new facility in Scholes cannot be ruled out much will depend upon the outcome of the expressions of interest by GP Practices to operate from the proposed new

medical centre at Smeaton Approach and this facility going ahead. It will also depend on the willingness of the existing partners of Manston Surgery to invest in a new medical centre in Scholes. A replication of a one doctor facility as at present would be expensive and be too far from where the greatest need has been identified due to housing growth.

The PC is advised to note this Report and request that both Manston Surgery and the ICB keep it informed of developments. It is also recommended that this Report is put on the PC website and residents advised of the Report in the next parish newsletter.