**PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG) MEETING**

**25th March 2022**

Dr Tharma explained how the surgery had worked through covid. How we had managed to keep covid out of the building and ensured that at no stage we had to close down.

Dr Tharma said that we are now giving patients the choice. Our doors are open, and the patients can opt for a F2F or telephone appointment and we were one of the first GP surgeries in the area to fully open up.

Ms B asked why the surgery opted for phone calls for so long because patients could come in and see a nurse if they wanted for bloods/BP etc but still couldn’t see a GP. She suggested that we should have opened up in the new year. She said that Nazeing if quite an old community and not everybody knows how to use zoom etc.

Dr Tharma explained that January would have been too soon as there was a spike in cases around that time and we could not risk having to close the surgery down. He also explained that hospitals were still only doing phone calls at that stage also. He also explained that it is assumed that patients would not come to see the nurse if they were feeling unwell but most of the patients seen by GPs either have sore throats, coughs, or temperature so we had to be careful.

Mr B also asked about opening up the surgery to other services, ie physio, podiatry, weightwatchers in the space on the first floor.

We had to explain that we do not own or lease the first floor so do not use it.

Both patients said that they had to wait some morning for the phone to be answered but not too long compared to other surgeries. Dr Tharma said that the surgery was investing in a new phone system which would have more lines coming in and would also have call recording to try and stop a small minority of patients abusing the staff

Both patients were very complimentary about the staff and the way the surgery was now being dealt with and felt confident that they would be listened to and helped when needed.

For the next meeting it was suggested that posters be put up on the local community notice boards and pharmacies so try and encourage more participants.

It was agreed that we would try to hold these meetings quarterly.