

Minutes of meeting 2nd January 2014
Venue Burnley Gen. Hospital, Mackenzie Centre, 2 – 4pm

There were 20 people present, including Gordon & Kathleen Birtwistle (Burnley's M.P. & wife). Apologies were received from Colin S., Michael & Barbara from Blackburn & Don W.

Dave (Chairman) opened the meeting by reading the Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, 5th December 2013 & matters arising. He informed the meeting that the Raffle at the previous meeting had raised £37 with a £5 donation from Jimmy and that a good bottle of wine was auctioned and this raised £10.

Following on from his meeting in Birmingham, Dave spoke about the fact that he had had an e-mail from a person in Norfolk which he read out. It was about the operation of their Support Group and that they are also having problems with lack of volunteers. Their thoughts were that people who had had problems and then treatments no longer needed to attend a Support Group. He thought that some people may have trouble getting to meetings in the afternoon if they are working – he thought we could perhaps check out some events for evenings.

If a new member comes to the Support Group we need to find out exactly what is wrong with him and then suggest to him that he sits with someone who can answer his questions. It was suggested that new members could be taken down to the library where they could talk quietly with someone who knew what they were going through. Eddie said that some of the leaflets which had been given out to new members had proved very helpful. John & Hazel talked about the Support Group mobile phone which they have and that quite a few people who ring can stop on over half an hour getting advice from both John & Hazel and then they mention the Support Group if they need further support & help.

Dave asked the meeting what they thought about arranging a public PSA test and it was agreed that we would ask the two Specialists nurses about the feasibility of this. Stuart said that he had had some contact with a Support Group in the south of England who had an open day and charged £1 per person to have a PSA test. If you go along to your doctors for a PSA test not all doctors are willing to give this as it is a cost to the practice of £40 per person. However, Gordon Birtwistle insisted that every man over the age of 50 is entitled to a PSA test and 45 if there is a history in the family. He said that if you get your loved ones and friends to go for a PSA test and they are refused by a Doctor in Burnley then we can inform him and he will write to the Doctor to say that they are entitled to one.

Following on from this Gordon Birtwistle said that the Movember campaign by Prostate Cancer UK had raised £36,000,000 and he asked them if they could donate some money to the Prostate Scanner Appeal, perhaps £10,000, but they said no.

He wanted to give an up to date account of the progression of the Scanner Appeal. He said that the new Scanner would cost £50,000 with £25,000 for the portable one which can be taken round to various hospitals in the East Lancs area and Burnley Hospital would be able to see what was going on through WIFI. The Sports Quiz raised £368, bag pack at Sainsburys raised £900, the cake bake at Barclays Bank raised £350 and green tokens at Asda raised £650.

Kathleen Birtwistle asked if we could have some male volunteers to be at the bag pack at Marks & Spencer as men would like to see other men present as Prostate Cancer is specifically a man's complaint. They went on to explain about the big fund raising event to be held at Burnley Football Club at the Sheffield Wednesday match on Saturday, 18th January 2014 when Barry Kilby former Chairman of Burnley Football Club – himself a sufferer of Prostate Cancer – would match the money made by the bucket collection on the day. Further information about the money made on this day would be given at the next meeting in February.

Terry E who lives in Canada then spoke about his battle with Prostate Cancer and particularly his incontinence problem. He attends our meetings when he comes over here as they do not have support groups in Canada and Stuart sat him with Dave M. who has had the same problems

At the next meeting there will be a talk by Collective Legal Solutions giving financial advice and encouraging people to “put their house in order”. This is the second time that this company has given a talk to the Group and it is a very informative and interesting talk. This will be at the February meeting.

At this point the meeting finished with one of Dave's famous Prostate Jokes to send us home with a smile on our faces.

Next meeting: 6th February, Mackenzie Medical Centre, Burnley General Hospital, 2 – 4pm