

Healthwatch Hertfordshire Board Meeting
10am on Tuesday 23rd May 2023,
Virtually via Zoom

Please note: It will be assumed that reports will have been read prior to the meeting

Board Members: Alan Bellinger, Alex Booth, Brenda Davies, Ramone Nurse, Jan Taylor, Neil Tester (Chair)
Executive Team: Geoff Brown (Chief Executive), Fiona Corcoran (Deputy Chief Executive), Nuray Ercan (Deputy Chief Executive Interim),
Visitors/others: Susan Ebanyat (HCC Commissioner), Joy Hale, (Integrated Care Board)
Apologies: Eve Atkins, Steve Palmer

1. Welcome, apologies and register of interests

Neil welcomed everyone present and communicated apologies, as above. Neil explained that Steve is unwell and will be standing in as Chair over the next few months as per the Standing Instructions guidance. No members had any Interests to declare in relation to the agenda.

2. Minutes of 21st February 2023 and outstanding actions

- It was noted to clarify within the minutes that agenda item 5 refers to 'delegated commissioning'.
- Geoff updated that Wendy Wills will now be a speaker at our AGM rather than at a future Board meeting as discussed under agenda item 9 of the last Board meeting.
- Geoff updated the Board on the outstanding actions within the tracker. Neil and Geoff met with Paul Burstow and Jane Halpin last week. They are reviewing the groups and we will wait on the broad outcome of their review. Joy Hale gave a little more detail about how this is progressing.

The minutes were approved as an accurate record pending the clarification as above.

3. Chair/Chief Executive's update including monitoring

Neil reflected on the challenging but interesting times we are working in. He talked about:

- The media and waiting lists reflecting on East and North Herts Hospital's Trusts challenges in this area
- Continuing industrial action in the background, with more dates being announced for junior doctors
- The Integrated Care System and ICB is still evolving and now responsible for further delegated chunks of commissioning
- Between now and next year all of the issues we look at will become increasingly politically sensitive
- The ICB are in the process of putting together their longer term forward plan. The Integrated Care Partnership is also putting together a delivery plan to deliver on the strategy (we fed into this). Neil attended a half day workshop where people from across

the system looked at the priority areas and action plans from the various working groups. He is looking forward to their draft plan being sent to their Board in June.

- He continues to represent HwH at the Primary Care Board . The next one is later this week and the three newly recruited patient voice reps will be there for the first time.
- It is annual report time. The draft will be sent to Board in mid-June for feedback and sign off. It was noted that there will be a tight turnaround on this.

Geoff added the following updates:

- Tomorrow is the first System Partners conference of the Integrated Care System. Patricia Hewitt will be speaker following her review of ICSs/ICBs.
- He attended the Regional Hw Network meeting last week. HwE discussed the sustainability and consistency of the Hw model going forward either with the continuance of the current government or a different national government in place. HwE has offered to come and talk to us about the model.
- Patient experience scrutiny will be taking place in July. This year they are looking to hold to account the following organisations: East and North Herts NHS Trust, West Herts Teaching Hospital Trust and the Integrated Care Board. Geoff asked for expressions of interest for involvement when the information is circulated next month.
- **Voice Contract including monitoring return and compliments**

Geoff updated that, again, it has been a busy time. Fiona and Jo are heading up the preparation of our annual report which highlights lots of impact we've had over the past year, and links into a workshop the team took part in delivered by HwE.

Research that has been completed in the quarter includes:

- People with learning disabilities experience of accessing GP services and understanding people's knowledge of cardiovascular diseases generally
- Carers and community pharmacy report will also be published shortly.

The new PIR monitoring is now under part 2 because it contains data that has been anonymised but could still potentially be identifiable. Geoff noted that from our point of view the new reporting template is working well. Susan, our commissioner thanked us for our involvement in developing the new template. She highlighted that alongside others, our submission will enable HCC to identify gaps and trends in services.

The Voice Contract monitoring document is no longer required by the commissioners and has now become redundant. It has been provided for the last time at the Board Meeting.

There has been lots of activity over the past quarter as can be seen by the projects and activities document with lots of research, meetings holding the system to account and compliments across all the services we provide.

Board congratulated the team on all the work that has been achieved.

Geoff responded to a query about our involvement with CQC highlighting that they sometimes ask us if we have any feedback about a specific service if they are doing a check on a service.

Likewise they will also ask us for information before they do a formal inspection. Conversely if we have information about a service we tell them independently so that this can inform their inspection process.

Geoff responded to a query about support required for the team around wellbeing over the next year especially since the team is now working remotely. Also whether Board should be mindful of anything when discussing business planning. He updated that the Exec team have met with an HR organisation to explore stress and burnout. As part of this there will be a questionnaire and an in-person day with them dealing with issues such as stress, challenges, burnout etc. There is a balance between doing all we can and saying no. Board will need to challenge us to ensure that we are not focussing so much on volume that we lose the quality of work. We need to also build in time for reflection and reviewing which is currently really challenging to do.

Report sign off – N/A

4. Finance – Management Accounts as at March 2023

Alan gave an overview of the Management accounts as at March 2023. He explained that:

- The year-end is very positive
- We have had a significant saving on staff costs over the past year
- We had an increase in funding from HCC (one off)
- We have exceeded our income generation target

We ended the year with £374k in reserves. The year end means that we are in a much more resilient position in terms of the future.

Board's positive reflections on the system's attitude to us as an organisation that can be trusted to do good quality work has meant that we have been able to exceed the income generation target was noted.

5. Board Advisory Committee (BAC)

Alan updated that the committee focussed on leadership and operational sustainability as well as the structure of the business plan. Additionally the BAC heard an update on signposting and holding to account.

6. Any other business including questions from the public – NA

10. Part 2 – Closed

Next formal meeting of the Board: 22nd August 2023