

## Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Policy (Cover Note)

### FOR SIGN OFF

**Board is asked to approve the DBS Policy, as recommended by Board Advisory Committee.**

#### Overview

The DBS policy was considered at the most recent meeting of the Board Advisory Committee (BAC). As it was due for review, BAC considered and discussed the policy in detail, and is now recommending its approval by Board.

#### Drivers for changes to the policy

As part of the regular schedule for review, there was no particular concern that prompted its review or the changes within. However, a number of changes were proposed, discussed and agreed at BAC because:

- Our work program for the coming year is, more so than ever before, focused on engaging with communities to get their voices heard, in-person as much as possible.
- We have a renewed commitment to attending key meetings and events to make our presence, and value, known.
- We are experiencing a level of staff turnover that is unprecedented, and are recruiting to a number of fixed term posts. This is likely to continue to be a dynamic situation.
- The various insurance covers in place to protect those working or volunteering for Healthwatch, require us to have undertaken a level of reasonable due diligence, which this would support.
- This is advised as a best practice by the Charity Commission. Although not required, should there be an issue identified that puts people's safety at risk, this puts the reputation and/or assets of the charity at risk and the Charity Commission may consider this to be mismanagement or misconduct.

BAC welcomed the introduction of a basic DBS check for all employees and trustees, the impacts of which and considerations about, are now included in the policy. The policy has been updated in line with best practice and we have taken measures for its implementation to ensure it is done with consideration and support of the staff and trustees.