

**Healthwatch Hertfordshire Board Meeting**  
**10am on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021,**  
**Virtually via Zoom**

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

<b>Board Members:</b> Eve Atkins, Alan Bellinger, Meg Carter, Brian Gunson, Sundera Kumara-Moorthy, Steve Palmer (Chair), Jayne Taylor, Michael Taylor
<b>Executive Team:</b> Geoff Brown (Chief Executive), Nuray Ercan (Head of Governance and Operations), Priya Vaithilingam (Head of Governance and Operations)
<b>Visitors/others:</b> Ted Maddex (HCC Commissioner), Joy Hale (ENH CCG)
<b>Apologies:</b> Leslie Billy (Viewpoint)

### 1. Welcome, apologies and register of interests

Steve welcomed everyone present.  
 Apologies as above.

Steve reminded everyone that it is important to declare any personal and/or professional interests.

It was noted that Brian requested that the following two directorships be removed from the register:

- Shareholder and Director, M&F Health Communications Ltd.
- Shareholder, Exclaim Communications Ltd.

### 2. Minutes of 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and outstanding actions

The minutes were approved as an accurate record and the outstanding actions tracker was reviewed.

### 3. Chair's update

Nuray updated on the trustee recruitment. Closing date for applications was 23<sup>rd</sup> August with five applications received. These will be shortlisted and successful applicants will be interviewed in mid-September.

Steve updated that from his understanding a booster vaccine for Covid has not been formally agreed as yet but it is likely. This raises question on whether it can be administered at the same time as the flu vaccine and concerns about the risk of a flu epidemic.

HwH had meetings with Scrutiny and the Health and Wellbeing Board recently. There will be a scrutiny of GP services and the covid situation. Healthwatch has been asked to give evidence. We will base this evidence on signposting information, GP data from vaccination research and information from holding to account. We will also ask the CCGs if they have any information from PPGs. HwH also raised issues with access to dental care with Scrutiny.

The ICS has set up a transition Board to overlook the period between the new and old system.

Steve recommended that Board read the Health Foundation report, looking at Covid and inequality issues.

### 4. Chief Executives update

Geoff introduced the various documents which report up to the end of June 2021. From holding to account meetings and directors of nurses meetings it is evident that the system is struggling.

It has been a busy quarter with lots of opportunities to be involved in additional workstreams such as the ICS, ICP and new equalities groups and we will need to assess where we can add most value so that our efforts are focussed.

Geoff updated that targets are nearly all green and where they not it is due to exceptional circumstances. The amount of activity, research, engagement, holding to account meetings and signposting reflects how busy the team have been and the breadth of our focus and associated pressure.

Board asked Joy if she could liaise with HVCCG and feed in GP service feedback issues for inclusion for the GP scrutiny. Joy confirmed that she would do this and highlighted that Patient Network Quality meetings are the vehicle for the CCG to hear feedback about these services. Additionally Joy said that she would check if they had any up to date information on the covid booster vaccination.
<b>5. Policy sign off - none at this time</b>
<b>6. Report Sign Off - none at this time</b>
<p><b>7. Finance</b></p> <p>Alan gave an overview of the budget and confirmed that the financial position looks good. The figures shows the accounts over the first quarter, April-June. It shows a 5k saving on salaries and 25k saving on non staff costs. Overall, to date there is a 7% saving on the forecasted budget. We budgeted to have a 14k deficit at year and we are below this.</p> <p>A query was raised about the communications budget being underspent and whether we should invest more in this area. Priya together with Michelle and Jo are looking at how we exploit communications effectively and having systematic approaches. Geoff added that longer term we do not expect that we would engage through attending fairs and stalls as there are more impactful ways of using our resource in this area.</p> <p>In response to a query about engaging the digitally excluded and the use of other mediums Priya highlighted that engaging with seldom heard groups is being explored through research and engagement rather than communications. We have pulled together literature on best practice for engagement with seldom heard groups particularly throughout this challenging time. In addition, we have various training webinar sessions to learn from other organisations and are also speaking to other Healthwatch to understand what they are doing in this area. We will bring a paper to board on this shortly.</p>
<p><b>8. Board Advisory Committee</b></p> <p>Alan updated that the committee focussed on discussing its purpose and responsibility of holding to account. The committee also heard about the tremendous performance of the research, enagement and comms activity.</p>
<b>9. Any other business including questions from the public - none</b>
<b>10. Part 2 items - closed meeting</b>

**Next formal meeting of the Board: Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021, 10am -1pm**