

Healthwatch Hertfordshire Board Meeting
11:15 a.m on Monday 19th October 2015, at
Douglas Tilbe House, Hall Grove, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 4PH

Present: Michael Downing (Chair), Geoff Brown (Chief Executive), Jean Brown, Meg Carter, Brian Gunson, Virginia Kirri-Songhurst, Steven Palmer, Sue Reeve, Michael Taylor, Mel Wood

Others: Doreen Bratby (public/HwH member), David Brewer (Head of Engagement at E&N Herts NHS Trust), Monika Brzozowska-Neroth (HwH Officer presenting on Finance), Paul Regan (HwH Officer, presenting on Stakeholder Panel Update), Keith Shephard (presenting on Strategy), Kristy Thakur (Deputy Head, Community Wellbeing Team) Priya Vaithilingam (HwH Officer, minute taker)

Apologies: Sundera Kumara-Moorthy, Marion Birch, Caro Hart (Stakeholder Panel Chair)

1. Welcome, apologies and register of interests

Michael welcomed everyone. Apologies as above. Michael noted that the original agenda would be reworked for this meeting in response to more time needing to be spent on Strategy as a priority. Therefore the Strategy item (5b) was moved to above the CEO update (3), with the rest of the items following in order. Due to time restraints, Michael recommended that for items which were listed as for 'information' or 'update' Board submit questions via email after the meeting.

2. Minutes of 17th August 2015

The minutes were approved as an accurate record. No outstanding actions.

3. Chief Executive's update

The report was circulated prior to the meeting. Questions and areas needing clarification to be sent to Geoff via email for a response.

4. Chair's update

- **Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board:** Michael represents HwH on the Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board. Michael will circulate his report on the last meeting held 9.10.15.
Action: Michael to circulate his report on the Health and Wellbeing Board Meeting.

5 Sub-groups and committees

a. MHLD SWG - the report was circulated prior to the meeting.

b. Enter and View (QISC)

- The main update has been detailed in the Chief Executive's update paper. The Enter and View follow up visit report in relation to Heath Lodge has been circulated for sign off. **The Board approved the report.**
- Steven noted that he recently attended the HwH E&V training and found this and it's reporting very good. However, when looking at other local Healthwatch E&V Reports he found the high level of standard was not consistent. Steven would like it noted by Board that this could be a threat to our organisation's reputation and requested information on what, if anything could be done about this. Geoff will raise this at the next Healthwatch Regional Meeting which he Chairs.
Action: Geoff to put on agenda and raise at the next Healthwatch Regional Meeting 18 December 2015
- Jean noted the usefulness of E&V and PLACE reports, and encouraged Board Members to use them.

c. Transport - the report was circulated prior to the meeting.

d. Representation sub-committee - Board was asked to approve the following recommendations:

1. Neurological services co-production project - **Virginia Kirri-Songhurst**
2. West Herts Hospital Trust Oversight Group - **Geoff Brown**
3. Nursing and Midwifery Council Patient and Public engagement forum - **Virginia Kirri-Songhurst**
4. Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust Governors - **Jean Brown**

Board approved the above recommendations.

e. Strategy sub-committee - Brian Gunson, as Chair of the Strategy Sub-Committee, introduced the report of the Sub-Committee and commended it for discussion by the Board, handing over to Keith Shephard to take Board through the paper and associated appendices.

In APPROVING the Strategy (Appendix 1 of the paper) for adoption, subject to a brief period of stakeholder consultation, and Strategy Sub-Committee consideration of feedback received, the Board made the following observations:-

Policy, Research and Intelligence

Underpinning the strategy is the drive to build a stronger policy, research and intelligence capability to help bring evidence to decision makers. This will take time to develop, and will include a read across to the Human Resources Committee in respect of recruitment and training, recognising that there are current strengths to build on.

Financial Sustainability

Whilst funding from central government, via Hertfordshire County Council (as commissioning Authority) will remain the main source of core funding, our financial sustainability is subject to a difficult financial climate, being clear on added value, and developing a more commercial approach that may generate additional income.

External Environment

Nationally, regionally and locally there are areas of significant change in relation to models of delivery, and in respect of democracy, governance, resources and accountability (Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill) HwH will want to be a voice at an early stage of any partner discussions in Hertfordshire in respect of potential structural change.

Responding to unplanned challenges

In developing the operational plan it is critical to allow sufficient capacity to enable HwH to respond to emerging issues that require attention. (An example for 2015/16 would be WHHT 'special measures' and related actions.)

Volunteering

HwH has a highly valued pool of volunteers, with ambitions to grow it.

Board recognise that sustaining and growing that pool has resource demands on HwH in respect of leadership, co-ordination and training for example. Managing that, and any growing demands (on QJSC for example), will be necessary.

Communications and language

The Strategy itself is essentially for the Board, the executive team, and for stakeholders / partner organisations within the health and social care system, and therefore drafted in that context.

Prior to the 'introduction' section in the draft strategy (appendix 1) we should say this, along with a sentence on HwH remit.

For wider use we will also have a two side paper which explains the key points of strategy - with a focus on role and aims explained simply.

More generally, our language used on projects, at events, when signposting, networking, use of social media and so on, will always be based on audience and purpose. This will be part of developing our communications strategy.

Gathering and using valuable feedback

We could pursue a more systematic way of obtaining feedback on how we are doing as well as feeding back what we do. This would be at various levels, from statutory bodies, through to individuals accessing HwH advice or support. It was noted that the Chair and Chief Executive have structured conversations, with Trust leads, for example, that look at feedback.

Resource Planning

It was suggested, and agreed, that the Operational Plan framework (appendix 2) should include a resources column.

When planning core activities and projects costings should be set out, to align with budget planning.

Business Cycle

A draft Business Cycle was tabled later in the meeting. This will be developed to show, and sequence, how things fit together operationally.

Proportionate Bureaucracy

Getting process and systems in place for strategy, operational planning and related matters is essential. However, the Board also recognise that the overall weight of bureaucracy should be proportionate to the size of the organisation.

The Board formally approved the report.

Action: The points above will be taken forward by the Strategy Sub-Committee as necessary.
Action: Once approved the Strategy Report will be disseminated to Stakeholders and Partners for comments.

f. Stakeholder Panel (SP) - The last SP meeting was held on the 9th October next meeting is 4th December. It was noted that membership has increased since last year.

Jane attended as a guest and provided a dementia update, which was well received.

An important issue was raised about the importance of using and taking medication correctly. Soft intelligence from the group raised concerns around the dangers of mistakes on patients. The group will be aiming to gather harder evidence through their channels and organisations. It is anticipated that Caro will update Board on these findings at the April Board meeting.

Action: Update on Medication Project will be shared with Board at the April meeting.

g. Finance update

- It was noted that the name agreed for this Committee is the Resources Committee.

- The Terms of Reference from the Resources Committee was circulated for sign off. **The Board formally approved the ToR.**
- Steven highlighted the difficulties the Committee has been facing with the current Bank. At present the Committee is awaiting responses from the bank on numerous issues. If they remain unsatisfied with the response the Committee may recommend to the Board a change in Bank.
- Board was asked to approve the removal of the following previous Trustees from the signatory list:
 1. Sarah Jane Wren
 2. Joan Manning
 3. Martyn Macphee

The Board Formally approved the removal of the above names.

- Michael thanked Steven for the way he has taken on the role of Treasurer, as well as Kumar for stepping into the interim role of Treasurer. This was noted by the Board as a whole.

6. Governance update

Sue, working with Nuray and Sharon, has produced a framework for the Board's business cycle so that through the year the Board will have a programme for knowing what essential business is required and that it is known in advance. The first draft was presented to the Board for comments.

Action: Sue to email Board with electronic copy for input from Sub-committee Chairs.

7. AOB incl. questions from the public

Kirsty Thakur updated the Board on her role as contract manager. Kirsty explained her position as Deputy Head of the Community Wellbeing Team and that she has resumed her role as commissioner of Healthwatch from Matthew Peirce. It will now be either Kirsty or Ruth Harrington (Head of Community Wellbeing) who will be attending meetings and liaising with Geoff and Board. Kirsty and Geoff are scheduled to meet to discuss how the commissioner will be monitoring and evidencing HwH outcomes. Geoff will update Board as necessary.

Next meeting: Monday 14th December, 10 a.m at Douglas Tilbe House.