

Minutes of the 49th full Healthwatch Warwickshire Board Meeting
Tuesday 8th September 2020
10.00am to 12.00pm
MS Teams Conference Call

Present:

Liz Hancock (EH) - Chair	Gita Patel (GP)
Mike Flaxman (MF) - Chair FAG	John Copping (JC)
Jerry Roodhouse (JR)	Leonard Harvey (LH)
Paul Tolley (PT)	Katie Weetman (KW)

In Attendance:

Chris Bain (CB) - Chief Executive (CE), Claire Jackson (CJ) - Head of Operations, Su Jenkins (SJ) - Authorised Representative, Lucy Dean (LD) - minutes.

1) Welcome and Apologies

No apologies received.

2) Appointment of new Board member

All board members agreed to appoint Katie Weetman as a Board member. Introductions were given.

3) Declarations of conflict of interest

Liz Hancock, Chief Executive, Mary Ann Evans Hospice
Jerry Roodhouse, Councillor, Warwickshire County Council

4) Minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the Healthwatch Warwickshire (HWW) Board meeting on 14th July 2020 were agreed to be an accurate record of proceedings and were electronically signed by the Chair.

5) Matters Arising

A chair recruitment pack was circulated to the Board; however, the process has currently been put on hold due to the pandemic.

The suggestions for changes to the agenda have been circulated to the CE and will be reviewed
ACTION - CB/LD.

The CE provided an update to the Engagement strategy document. The staff team have been working to the document, to be reviewed shortly (ACTION - CB) as the current working conditions will continue for the short - medium term. With the changeable landscape it is hard to envisage the long-term plans so the document will be kept flexible.

The Chair researched Carers UK with regards to potential Board members, but it was not clear who the person to contact would have been. Anyone with insight into this is invited to contact the Chair.

CB advised that HWW have been invited to take part in a project with NHS England called 'Mind the gap'; running until March 2021, which is about carers. A steering group will be set up for the project

MF raised that there were no representatives from SWFT, UHB or any of the Warwickshire CCGs at the Midlands Adult Critical Care Executive Reference group meeting. CB will raise this at the next meeting (ACTION CB).

HWE annual conference - a week of virtual events. Information will be cascaded as received (ACTION CB)

The recommendation from the WCC cabinet regarding local government reform was discussed. Warwickshire is going to be one of the early runners in local government reform. The report is going to full council on 22nd September.

Nominations for the position of Vice Chair were invited. Paul Tolley was nominated and elected as Vice Chair of the Board with no objections.

6) Chair's Report

Meetings and conferences attended since last meeting:

- Lockdown task group.
- Volunteer forum attended with GP. Good to see how passionate the volunteers are about the work of HWW.
- The Chair and CE are attending the Health & Wellbeing board next week to present HWW's annual report.

6.1 The Draft 4-year strategy is a work in progress at the moment, due to the current changing health & care landscape.

6.2 Directors' informal catch-up:

There was discussion at the Lockdown task group meeting about how the CE briefings had been very useful, but that it would be good if they could be delivered in person. A video conference has been proposed, in between Board meetings - with staff members in attendance if necessary, to present pieces of work. It was suggested that the informal catch ups could be just after the performance report so that questions can be posed. The sessions could be recorded to update anyone who could not attend, in lieu of notes. The 2nd Tuesdays of the month, in between board meetings were suggested. To be kept informal, no agenda or reports to be prepared so as not to cause any additional work for staff. The catch-ups will keep Board members up to date, and also allow Board meetings to be shorter and more strategy focussed. First session: 13th October.

7) Chief Executive's (CE) Report

See attached CE report.

The HWW AGM will be on the 15th October. of the guidance is that the date must be given 21 days before the event. At the meeting, the auditors will be reappointed: the FAG Chair indicated that he is happy for us to continue to employ Burgis & Bullock as Auditors.

The CE gave the news that HWW's Insights & Communications Officer, Jessica Brooks has given notice of her resignation. Jess has been instrumental in our success during lockdown so this is a really important role. We will look for a candidate that has strong skills in the digital realm. CB and CJ are currently working on the Job Description for the post (ACTION: CB/CJ). The short-term circumstances are different to the long term, which may be a difficulty with the recruitment. PT suggested that a temporary appointment could be considered for the short term, then a permanent recruitment after that. Heart of England Community Foundation suggested as a good contact to speak to.

Questions were invited on the Annual Report to the Health and Wellbeing Board, which has been distributed.

A database of local Healthwatch will be put together soon - a study into Governance structures (ACTION - CB to oversee).

A peer review of South Warwickshire Place is taking place, in which CB has been asked to be a rapporteur.

The Member Engagement Panel set up by the Health and Wellbeing Board is having a public section of its meeting in addition to the private section.

8) Head of Operations Report

8.1 Building/ premises

There have been discussions with WCAVA about the office space. It is clear that WCAVA have adapted the building very well to make it secure for working in Covid conditions.

WCAVA has supported HWW for a long time; in order to maintain the good relationship with WCAVA that HWW currently have, it is desirable to be sensitive and proactive in communications with them.

MF commented that the draft home working policy will be key to moving forward, and volunteered to work on policy as part of a Task and Finish group.

It was raised that it would be useful to keep a physical location, in case a member of the public wanted to speak to someone in person. E.g. Putting a logo up in someone's window, as a drop in place where people can leave details for us to get back to them.. It was noted that members of the public do not come into the office very often, but it is something to be considered.

CJ reiterated that HWW continue to work hard to distribute leaflets to every GP in the county, as well as community hubs, foodbanks etc. It is difficult in current circumstances - some leaflets may have been taken down in the process of cleaning etc.

The leaflets and postcards have been recently redone, they will be redistributed into the communities as much as possible at this time.

PT has forwarded De Montford's working from home policy as an example to look at as a template. ACTION - CJ to draft a HWW Working from home policy.

8.2 Update on Lockdown Task meeting

The Task group looked at the Restoration plan and risk register for the County Council. It was discussed that now is not the time to be making physical visits into care homes for Enter & View purposes; this is to be next reviewed in November.

Two members of staff have attended WCC 'Train the trainer' training on Infection Prevention Control - which will be passed on to staff & volunteers as appropriate (and board members if required).

We have been thinking about ways to reach people whilst faced with current challenges, in particular 'seldom heard' and BAME groups. One idea that has been discussed is to put in calls round to Warwickshire care homes to ask how they are getting on, how well they feel that they have been supported.

Overview of staff welfare survey: Over 6 weeks, a recurring survey was sent around the staff, asking how they felt about working from home, not about practicalities. 80% of people were happy about working from home, 50% of people felt uncomfortable about returning to the office, 72% of staff felt happy about working from home permanently, 92% felt adequately supported.

Volunteer welfare was discussed, looking at ways to support and encourage them, very good to keep in touch at the recent Volunteer Forum and to see that they are still wanting to help, showing interest in various projects we have coming up - Calls to care homes; and the Blue Bed discharge project: 'Blue Beds' were used during the lockdown period for Covid-positive people who were well enough to be discharged from hospital but could not return home because of a shielding relative or if they were a care home resident. 35 patients used these beds at

hospices, and WCC would like to know about their experiences of being discharged twice - from the hospital, and then from the hospice bed.

Next Lockdown task group meeting will be 19th October.

8.3 Performance Report

Feedback from the Performance Report this quarter was focused on the survey conducted at the height of lockdown - over 1100 views were gathered. The amount of meetings attended by staff was high during this time, however we need to ensure that we continue to collect patient feedback. Calls in to the office by members of the public have gone up, but engagement work has gone down - which was to be expected at this time, it has been out of HWW's control. However, going forward this will be looked at in the Engagement Plan - how we proactively seek to engage with the public, and also how we reach 'seldom heard' groups.

To help the public to get in touch with HWW, it was suggested that an Email to Text function, or embedding a widget into the website could be considered as we exit the office premises. There has been talk of dedicated funds for local HW for Covid response - this would be a good use of such funds.

The Commissioner asked us to record more of the demographics information from the people that are contacting us. It is often inappropriate to ask people on the phone for this kind of information, so a survey has been compiled - for people to anonymously fill in if they want to.

The impact of attendance at meetings needs to be demonstrated.

Other items discussed were:

- The discharge process review that was done for Healthwatch England (HWE)
- new leaflets,
- website updates - using national & local information to keep people updated, as a result we have seen a 40% increase in traffic to our website - 92% of whom are new users.

8.4 Restoration plan and risk register - discussed in 8.2

8.5 HWE Discharge review

HWW interviewed various health & care professionals about discharge during lockdown. Six interviews were carried out, with transcripts, outlining any themes emerging. The HWE England report will be published in the autumn.

8.6 HR Proposal

A proposal from The HR Dept to provide HR support has been distributed to the Board. PT commented that New Directions have used the same company and would highly recommend them. It was proposed by the FAG Chair and supported by the rest of the Board that HWW should enter into a contract with them for 12 months.

PT suggested that sharing folders with the HR Consultants rather than sending individual files may be an easier way to review documents.

Another company, NHS Arden & GEM CSU, was considered for HR services, but did not reply to any emails so was disregarded.

9) Performance against contract

As previously discussed, HWW is not currently carrying out face-to-face engagements or Enter and View visits, due to Covid restrictions.

We will continue to monitor the CQC's activities for guidance. The CQC are currently carrying out hybrid inspections, and only 'crossing the thresholds' of care homes when it has been indicated that there is some risk to the quality of care that residents are receiving.

10) Priority Project Update

10.1 COVID-19 survey

The final report is being worked on; hopefully will be available next week. Has taken a long time to compile as we received a vast amount of rich information from people and how Covid has impacted people's lives - with both positive and negative points.

KW will send details of some free software that is available for analysing and coding data, which may be useful for similar pieces of work in the future. (ACTION: KW)

Some board members have expressed concern about the Digital by Default GP services. It is working for some people with LTCs, however does not work for everyone. Some conditions/assessments are inappropriate to be held virtually. CB informed that HWW is planning a survey on Digital by Default.

10.2 Discharge project

Before lockdown, discussions were underway with the Council about a project looking at how people move through the discharge pathways and their experience of that - initially was going to be going into hospitals, now possibly going to be combined with the Blue Beds engagement, so as not to duplicate efforts. Some of the work may be done retrospectively, rather than going into hospitals. Rather than high volumes of numbers, the council are seeking case studies from individuals *across the county*.

HWW is being approached by numerous people at the moment with project proposals, which is a good opportunity for us to show the type of engagement we can do, understand people's lived experiences and share them as a way of influencing how future commissioning is done.

10.3 RAP project report

The final report is being finalised - to be released shortly. We were looking at how to move the project on to people experiencing hearing loss. We had been in discussions with the Deaf Association, the conversation has dried up somewhat during lockdown - possibly due to people on furlough. One of the engagement officers has also been looking at rights to access healthcare for people whose first language is not English.

The Chair commented that there is a lot going on, and it is good to see that the staff team are functioning well in spite of the current challenges.

11) Report from Finance and Audit Group

The draft accounts were received yesterday, minor adjustments are to be made to the Sage Accounts which MF and CJ will work through, in time for a report to be presented at the AGM in October, and for the November Board meeting (ACTION: MF to complete finance and audit report). It has been a difficult time for accounting with current work conditions, and difficulties with the bank.

12) Volunteer update

Su reported that one of the volunteers has been helping with the Discharge project.

Calls to care homes will take place over the next 6 weeks, to touch base as we cannot currently carry out Enter and View visits.

Simon Adams has requested a volunteer for the Cancer Alliance colo-rectal group looking at the recovery and restoration of the endoscopy service.

Covid has reduced what the volunteers can do.

Regular day of volunteer forum meetings is to be reviewed as Su J cannot make Mondays anymore due to other commitments.

13) AOB

None

14) Date of next meeting

The next Meeting will be held online via MS Teams, from 10.00am to 12.00pm on Tuesday 10th November 2020.

Date of informal directors' briefing meeting: 13th October 2020.

Summary of Actions:

Item 5: CB/LD to review suggestions for changes to the Board agenda.

Item 5: CB to review Engagement strategy document.

Item 5: CB to raise the lack of representatives from SWFT, UHB or any of the Warks CCGs with the Midlands Adult Critical Care Executive Reference group.

Item 7: CB/CJ to work on the Job Description for the Insights & Communications Officer role.

Item 7.2: CB to cascade details of HWE annual conference when received.

Item 7.5: CB to oversee/report back on database of local Healthwatch.

Item 8.1: CJ to draft HWW Working from home policy.

Item 10.1: KW to send details of analysing/coding software.

Item 11: MF to complete finance and audit report.

Minutes Approved by:Liz Hancock.....

Signed:

Date: