

Minutes of the 75th full Healthwatch Warwickshire Board Meeting

Tuesday 14th January 2025

10.30am to 12.30pm

Online: MS Teams Conference Call

Present:

Liz Hancock (EH) – Chair
Robin Verso (RV) – Vice Chair
Kate Morrison (KM)- Vice Chair
Mike Flaxman (MF)- FAG Chair
Jane Bryan (JB)
Jerry Roodhouse (JR)
John Copping (JC)

In attendance

Chris Bain (CB) – Chief Executive (CE), David Alexander (DA),
Authorised Representative, Tanisha Reddall (TR) – minutes.

1) Welcome and Apologies:

Apologies from Leonard Harvey (LH).

2) Declarations of Conflict of Interest

Liz Hancock, Chief Executive, Mary Ann Evans Hospice
Jerry Roodhouse, Councillor, Warwickshire County Council
Mike Flaxman, SWUFT Governor

3) Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes of the Healthwatch Warwickshire (HWW) Board meeting on 05/11/24 were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings and were electronically signed by the Chair.

4) Matters Arising

From the Action list: Formal board 05/11/24

ACTION: EH to send VF and TR Mary Ann Evans Hospice volunteering literature. **CLOSED.**

ACTION: TR to send MF and JB the meeting link for the online HW Regional Meeting on Friday 22nd November, 10:00am-11:30am. **Board directors did not attend, specific item referenced in November's Formal Board meeting was taken off the agenda. EH can attend the next online HW Regional meeting. CLOSED.**

ACTION: EH and RV will feed back to the board following their meeting on 19th November. **Agenda item under Item 5. CLOSED.**

ACTION: CB to follow up regarding Women's Health Hubs. **Awaiting the clinical strategy which should be available from April. CLOSED.**

ACTION: EH to ask the question about Women's Health Hubs at the Warwickshire North Place Executive meeting next week. **EH raised the question regarding Women's Health Hubs, feedback was that this would be**

picked up with the ICB and that the use of the gynaecological pathway was not available in Warwickshire North, however this is part of the clinical strategy. CLOSED.

ACTION: Online training regarding the Employment Rights Act is available. Please email CB for details. **CLOSED.**

From the Action list: Informal board 10/12/24

ACTION: Awaiting the outcome of Dr Penny Dash's review on patient safety. **ONGOING.**

ACTION: Young People's Project. **Agenda item under Item 8. CLOSED.**

ACTION: CE's job description to be brought to the January formal board for ratification. **Final version to be reviewed at the Informal Board meeting, Tuesday 11th February.**

RV requests an update on volunteer recruitment and a report to the board regarding what our volunteer strategy is, how many volunteers we currently have, how many volunteers we need and what our volunteer turnover is. EH discusses action points from the last Operations Committee meeting including SK to contact the volunteer coordinator at GEH to send across HWW volunteer materials and that TR has sent volunteer materials to MF to send to Sharon Elwood, current staff governor in charge of volunteering at SWUFT.

MF comments that he hasn't yet sent the volunteer materials onto Sharon Elwood.

CB comments that VF has responsibility for volunteer recruitment and retention and will be invited to share an update report for the next Operations Committee meeting and to join the next Informal Board meeting if she is available.

ACTION: Volunteer update to become an agenda item at the next Operations Committee meeting and VF to submit an update report. VF to attend the next Informal Board meeting if she can attend.

ACTION: TR to send out all future Operations Committee minutes to all directors.

5) Chair's Report

Meetings EH has attended:

- Warwickshire North Place Executive-EH shared the Veteran's Health Report and asked the question with regards to Women's Health Hubs.
- HWW AGM.
- Healthwatch England's meeting regarding our role within the NHS 10 Year Plan.
- The Health & Wellbeing Board joint development session which was with regards to Children's and Young People's Services.
- HWW Operations Committee meeting.

- HWW Quarterly Review meeting with WCC.
- HWW Volunteer Forum.
- HWW Informal board meeting.
- HWW Director interview.
- HWW Vice Chairs' meeting.

Board Development Day

EH comments that RV and KM have completed work on what a board strategy day could look like. Plans at the moment include a directors' only morning session, utilising feedback from director 1:1 sessions and a group afternoon session with staff and volunteers to look at the annual action plan and priorities.

RV and KM have also completed a proposal on expanding the current induction plan for new board directors to include meetings with the Vice Chairs, Chief Executive, the Chair of the Finance & Audit Group and members of the staff team.

ACTION: TR/CB to look at dates for the Board Development Day with the staff team.

6) CE's report and update on Emerging Strategic Issues

The CE's report was circulated to the Board prior to the meeting:

CB comments that he feels clear that pending the outcome of Dr Penny Dash's review, patient safety will form part of the Healthwatch remit in some form. Staff and board directors need to be kept updated and informed.

MF urges CB to review the board papers from GEH and SWUFT to avoid future duplication as there are copious reports on patient safety and experience within the acute trusts.

JR comments that we still need a better understanding of what the outcome of the Dash review will be before we're able to align our work. Personal stories regarding clinical safety need to be a focus to add value.

JC registers the importance of also thinking about legal liability when looking at health and safety.

EH summaries that we don't currently know what the expected involvement of Healthwatch will be and CB points out that there has been no specified timeline for clarification, but that any additional remits added onto the Healthwatch programme of activities will be expected.

6.1 NHS Elective Reform Plan

The NHS Elective Reform Plan has been published and HWW will be trying to make an assessment regarding how it will work in our system. The plan sets out

how it aims, by 2029, for 92% of patients to have a diagnostic test, outpatient appointment or operation within 18 weeks of a GP referral – a target the NHS has not met for the past 10 years.

CB comments that the plan also specifies the creation of a named patient's experience champion at all major hospitals. HWW would look to identify who that would be in each of the acute settings to foster productive relationships and to give feedback on what we are hearing.

6.2 End of life Champions Group

WCC are developing an end-of-life champions group jointly with the ICS. EH discusses that her team believe it is being led by South Place, with the dementia team also linking in to support discharges across the region, although there isn't certainty that this is the same across all Places yet.

6.3 Partnership for Change

Ten leading health charities have joined forces as the Partnership for Change to call for urgent improvements in how the NHS coordinates care for patients. The Group, which includes AGE UK, Alopecia UK, Blood Cancer UK, Fight Bladder Cancer, Genetic Alliance UK, Kidney Care UK, Meningitis Now, Sickle Cell Society, The Migraine Trust and the Patients Association, has recently submitted its recommendations to the government as part of the consultation on the NHS's new 10-year plan.

CB is disappointed that Healthwatch are not part of the Partnership as we would endorse their key findings and recommendations.

ACTION: CB/TR to bring Partnership for Change's recommendations to a future informal board meeting to reflect on the regional impact.

6.4 Community Recovery Service

We have been approached by WCC to work with them on involving patients and carers in assessing the impact and effectiveness of the CRS.

CB comments that WCC will be retendering the service and therefore want to see whether it needs adjustment according to patient experience. We have agreed to progress the work with a view to coming to some conclusions by the end of 2025 or early 2026.

The challenge that HWW has made is that although the CRS programme is fully funded for a maximum of six weeks, it is unclear what happens after this period.

6.5 Other Matters

6.5.1 Independent Commission on Social Care

The government announced plans to set up an independent commission on adult social care, chaired by Baroness Louise Casey. It will be tasked with developing cross-party consensus on the long-term reforms needed in the

sector. It is due to report interim findings in 2026 and final conclusions two years later.

We applaud the long-term aims of Baroness Casey's commission but remain deeply concerned about what the extended timetable will mean for people who are struggling today. These views are shared by Healthwatch England.

6.5.2 Men's Health Strategy

NHS England are to produce a Men's Health Strategy to tackle the biggest health problems affecting men of all ages. We currently have no intelligence on how and when that is being developed in our ICS.

7) Report from Operations Committee

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 4th February, 10:30am-12:00pm.

- The Operations Committee met on 3rd December. EH comments that attendance has remained poor. Meeting dates are set quarterly at each meeting session, but we may look at planning upcoming dates for the year, so that directors can diary and prioritise these.
- Volunteer recruitment was considered, with discussions around HWW engagement activities, as well as linking with volunteer staff teams in hospitals and other organisations to increase volunteer applications.
- The Chair noted the changes to the risk register from the last Operations Committee meeting with the addition of Internal 2, the new risk based on any future awarded contracts.
- EH and CB are hoping to raise the marketing of HW at the next East & West Midlands Regional meeting.
- Updated job descriptions for the Business Support Officer and the Insight & Communications Lead roles were submitted and to be taken to the Finance & Audit Group for ratification regarding pay awards.

ACTION: TR to send JR a doodle poll of dates for the next Operations Committee meeting in April/May.

ACTION: Risk register to be brought to the February Informal Board meeting for ratification.

ACTION: TR to send out HWE's brand awareness presentation to all directors.

ACTION: CB to arrange a meeting with the Finance & Audit Group before the end of January to discuss pay awards for the Business Support Officer and Insight & Communication Lead job roles.

8) Report from Chair of Finance and Audit Group

The Finance and Audit Group Chair's report was circulated to the Board prior to the meeting.

- Several larger budget headings are currently underspent, mainly pay which reflects earlier vacancy savings to June. The new arrangements for our accommodation in Leamington Spa will now underspend the budget by £183 each month. MF comments that we have reached peak efficiency in our non-pay costs including reductions in travel costs

and non-pay budgets will be reviewed when a draft budget is completed for next year.

- MF has completed a rudimentary forecast for the year end which perpetuates the underspend, except for promotional materials where the assumption is that the budget will be spent in full.
- MF will be recommending a pay award for staff at the government's recommendation of 2.8% for public sector workers.
- MF has also included a draft bid to WCC with his report to ask for an increase to our recurring allocation of £7000, to meet pay award costs and the net costs of the employers NI increase.
- MF met with the E&O team and Lesley Miller on 18th December regarding the Young People's Project proposal which was submitted to the December Operations Committee and Informal Board meetings. MF agreed that a specific number would not be allocated from reserves because there was no confirmed spend profile. Lesley Miller will identify spend on the project separately so that costs can be monitored. MF proposes that the board should approve the YPP proposal and allow the project to continue to move forward. [What are young people saying about health services? | Healthwatch Warwickshire](#)

The Board formally approve the Young People's Project.

The Board noted the position at the end of November 2024 and the forecast for the year end. At the March meeting a more accurate forecast will be available with January Expenditure and a draft budget for 2025/26 will be provided. MF expects to discuss the draft budget at the February informal meeting.

The Board considered the brief bid to WCC for inflation funding with concerns raised by JR and RV regarding the current underspend and reserves position. MF does not currently feel that the budget will be a surplus and hopes that when non-pay budgets are reappraised, the 2025/2026 budget will be much more realistic. MF comments that the new budget will proceed directors reserves strategy considerations in March/April, as they will receive the draft budget in February.

Subject to the comments that have been made, the board approved the bid to WCC.

9) Directors' Reports

Nothing to report.

10) Volunteer Report

- The Volunteer seasonal gathering took place on Wednesday 4th December, all who attended thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon.

- Volunteers are currently being invited to have their 1:1 support and supervision sessions throughout January and February. Volunteers are encouraged to reflect on current training needs, how they engage with HWW activities and to discuss their current circumstances. This should provide a good indication of current volunteering needs and availability.

11) AOB

JC has been asked to help WCC's Social Care Team with their coproduction. Experts by experience are currently contributing to this work. JC has also been invited to become the Expert by Experience for the Mental Health Services across fourteen authorities within the West Midlands.

MF reminds directors about the email that was sent out regarding the ICB's consultation on South Warwickshire Community Rehabilitation Beds and the accompanying survey response link.

13) Dates of next meetings

Online Informal Board catch-up Tuesday 11th February 2025, 10:30am-11:30am.

In-person Formal Board meeting on Tuesday 11th March 2025, 10:30am-12:30pm. (Leamington Spa, venue to be confirmed).

Summary of Actions: (see below)

ACTION: Volunteer update to become an agenda item at the next Operations Committee meeting and VF to submit an update report. VF to attend the next Informal Board meeting if she can attend.

ACTION: TR to send out all future Operations Committee minutes to all directors.

ACTION: TR/CB to look at dates for the Board Development Day with the staff team.

ACTION: CB/TR to bring Partnership for Change's recommendations to a future informal board meeting to reflect on the regional impact.

ACTION: TR to send JR a doodle poll of dates for the next Operations Committee meeting in April/May.

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Board Director Attendance Record

<u>Name</u>	<u>14/01/25</u>	<u>11/03/25</u>	<u>13/05/25</u>	<u>08/07/25</u>	<u>09/09/25</u>	<u>11/11/25</u>
P = Present/ A = Apology/ X = Absent						
John Copping	P					
Mike Flaxman	P					
Liz Hancock	P					
Leonard Harvey	A					
Jerry Roodhouse	P					
Kate Morrison	P					
Robin Verso	P					
Jane Bryan	P					

Minutes approved by:

Signed:

Date: