

Minutes of the 78th full Healthwatch Warwickshire Board Meeting

Tuesday 8th July

10.30am to 12.30pm

In-person: The Brunswick Hub, (98-100 Shrubland St, Leamington Spa, CV31 3BD)

Present:

Liz Hancock (EH) – Chair
Robin Verso (RV) – Vice Chair
Kate Morrison (KM)- Vice Chair
Mike Flaxman (MF)- FAG Chair
John Copping (JC)

In attendance

Chris Bain (CB) – Chief Executive (CE)
Kerrie Cook (KC) – minutes.

1) Welcome and Apologies:

Apologies from Jerry Roodhouse (JR) and Jane Bryan (JB).

2) Declaration of interest:

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

3) Minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the Healthwatch Warwickshire (HWW) Board meeting on 13/05/25 were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings and were electronically signed by the Chair.

4) Matters Arising

From the Action list: Formal board 13/05/2025

ACTION: HWW Staff team to schedule an annual development day – to be placed on hold – **CLOSED**

ACTION: CB to ask to place NHS Administration as an agenda item at the next ICB meeting on 21st May. CB to raise in AOB if unable to make an addition to the agenda- raised as AOB by CB indicate still a problem- **CLOSED**

ACTION: CB to circulate Karen Leigh Anderson's proposal when updated – Will not be moving forward with proposal – **CLOSED**

ACTION: TR to email out to KM to see if she can attend the contract monitoring meeting with WCC on Friday 23rd May – **CLOSED**

ACTION: TR to email out to arrange a meeting of the Vice Chairs, Chair of the Finance & Audit Group and the CE to discuss succession planning. – cancelled meeting with regards to succession – **CLOSED**

From the Action list: Informal board

ACTION: The discussions with KLA have changed. Board renewal and matters of succession are now a focus of her proposals. KLA has sent in a draft proposal which will be circulated to all directors - **CLOSED**

ACTION: An online meeting is scheduled for 01/07/25 at 4:00pm with CB, KM, RV and MF to discuss succession planning - **CLOSED**

ACTION: The Healthwatch Coventry contract has been awarded to Mid Mercia Citizens Advice at the original funding figure. HWE have been aware of this. The original grant for Healthwatch runs out on 30/06/25. - **CLOSED**

5) Chair's Report

Meetings EH has attended:

EH starts by issuing Thanks to the staff for the work plan and dedication to continuing to work on projects and assure ongoing work to be as comfortable as possible for all involved.

Training - Urging staff to take up any desired training – (more details mentioned below)

EH comments on August Formal meeting to go ahead as planned

6) CE's update on Emerging Strategic Issues

- CB comments on the government announcements and states that no staff were aware prior to the announcement, and there were no warnings following discussions with HWE – the board considers that communication was poor. CB also advised that on the following Monday morning there were HWW staff that were still unaware.
- CB continues, Primary legislation will be needed – CB Discusses DHSC funding being linked to primary legislation. SoS has mentioned transferring the functions of Healthwatch England to the Department of Health and Social Care, Local Healthwatch functions to integrated Care Boards, and local authorities. The board discusses further and concludes that until the change is made it will be **business as usual**.
- **ACTION:** Board to have an ongoing conversation with regards to fulfilling WCC contract. Further discussions are to be held, but no commitment will be made in writing. RV expresses concerns that in time HW will lose good staff – all BMs in agreement that there seems to be indifference in the system as there is so much that is still unknown and so little communication surrounding this.
- The Annual Report was published on Monday morning and pays tribute to the staff at HWW and their hard work.

- **ACTION:** CB to start work on issuing statements to the public and key partners about spreading the message about BAU. CB goes on to express concerns for the public service and plans for an orderly closure – MF expresses ideas with regards to Asset Lock and potentially giving to organizations with similar objectives.
- CB goes on to say we have not yet signed the lease for Clemens Street Office as we are currently unable to commit to another year given the circumstances – is the lease void to be in legislation?
- MF states termination clause within contract with WCC – presuming performance is adequate then unable to void contract while HW are still performing – CB to pursue HR and possible legal advice – final accounts that are audited and agree transfer.
- JC questioned the transfer of new contract to ICB – what the options are to take on and potential transfer of staff to local authority that are able to proceed with service, no framework of legislation makes it very difficult until confirmed.
- CB states current HW staff to be able to move forward and advance their skills for when the time comes, EH concludes there are plenty of training opportunities available to HW staff. KM suggests communicating with current staff regarding staff training and appraisals.
- CB states several kneejerk reactions to the news from other HW. Statutory authorities are very different from each other, and keeping relationships strong is the key
- EH mentions regional meeting 18th July – representation and support HWE to communicate the message.
- As a board, a decision is to be made about the AGM in November – celebration of what's been achieved – CB states a clear indication is needed to enable planning
- HWE template – CB to organize meeting when more is known. EH advises utilizing the board as much as possible
- CB meeting with JR next week to discuss current closure
- KM asks if all upcoming events are going ahead and CB confirms **business as usual** until more information is available.
- EH & CB to meet next week 14/7/25 – CE's appraisal
- JC questions whether there will be continuity with engagement.
- EH concludes by stating she is waiting to hear more information with regard to news and additional updates.

7) Report from Operations Committee

8) Report from Chair of Finance and Audit Group

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

9) Directors' Reports

SWUFT have voided support role for partnership board – CB states the plan seems to be to use Integrated Neighbourhood Teams instead. EH states to increase values of HW and to keep all processes in place going forward.

Chair of SWUFT has asked for a discussion with CB and MF
10-year plan - all foundation trusts will have to reapply for Foundation status – more details to follow
– Chair of SWUFT keen to retain governors

10) Volunteer Report

- CB discusses how volunteers have coped with the recent news – CB states lots of well wishes as the board discusses further issues with regards to communication and the community's voice.

11) AOB

12) Confidential Report from Chair of Finance and Audit Group

13) Dates of next meetings

Online Informal Board catch-up on Tuesday 12th August 2025, 10:30am-11:30am.

In-person Formal Board meeting on Tuesday 9th September, 10:30am-12:30pm location. Brunswick Hub – confirmed

Summary of Actions: (see below)

- **ACTION:** CB to start work on issuing statements to the public and key partners about spreading the message.
- **ACTION:** candid conversation CB & GC regarding joining the board as director
- **ACTION** - CB to circulate Danielle Oum and Phil Johns comments to the board.
- Next informal 12th august confirmed – topics tbc once more is known
- Next formal board 9th September – Brunswick hub booked and confirmed

Board Director Attendance Record- Please see below

<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>
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P = Present/ A = Apology/ X = Absent						
John Copping	P	P	A	P		
Mike Flaxman	P	P	A	P		
Liz Hancock	P	P	P	P		
Leonard Harvey	A	A	A	X		
Jerry Roodhouse	P	P	A	A		
Kate Morrison	P	P	A	P		
Robin Verso	P	P	P	P		
Jane Bryan	P	A	A	A		

Minutes approved by:

Signed:

Date: