

Minutes of the 51st full Healthwatch Warwickshire Board Meeting
Tuesday 12th January 2021
10.00am to 12.00pm
MS Teams Conference Call

Present:

Liz Hancock (EH) - Chair
John Copping (JC)
Jerry Roodhouse (JR)

Paul Tolley (PT) - Vice-Chair
Gita Patel (GP)
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

Apologies received from Mike Flaxman and Leonard Harvey.

Deborah Key, the new member of staff (Insight & Communications lead) introduced herself.

2) Declarations of conflict of interest

Liz Hancock, Chief Executive, Mary Ann Evans Hospice

Jerry Roodhouse, Councillor, Warwickshire County Council

3) Minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the Healthwatch Warwickshire (HWW) Board meeting on 10th November 2020 were agreed to be an accurate record of proceedings and were electronically signed by the Chair.

Minutes from the AGM on 15th October 2020 were agreed to be an accurate record of proceedings and were electronically signed by the Chair.

4) Matters Arising

All actions from previous meeting were addressed.

5) Chair's Report

The Chair has attended: a meeting with Andy Hardy from University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire (UHCW); the quarterly Performance meeting with Warwickshire County Council (WCC), the Chair feels that the extension of the HWW contract which is covered in the CE's report is a result, in part, of the positive nature of the performance meetings; December Lockdown task group meeting (minutes distributed with board papers); West Midlands Healthwatch network meeting - which works well virtually, and had a number of different speakers including the local research group; Informal Directors meeting; Health & Wellbeing Board (additional meeting in March this year to finalise the Health & Wellbeing Strategy).

Recruitment of Chair: The Chair thanked those who completed the survey on how the recruitment of a new Chair should proceed. Of the responses, 5 were of the view that the replacement Chair should be from within the existing Board, 2 responses said that either from within or outside of the Board would be satisfactory. The Chair has checked the HWW Articles of Association and noted that there is no limiting term of office for the position of Chair. The skills audit completed in 2019 concluded that the skills currently on the Board match the needs of the Organisation. Since then, a new Board member has joined, adding skills and knowledge of research to the Board.

There have been 2 informal approaches from potential Board members. The Chair offered to stay in position as Chair for 1 further year; the 2 people who have approached HWW are to be interviewed and appointed if the interviews are successful - otherwise an advert can be placed to recruit new Board members.

The Chair left the meeting temporarily and handed the meeting over to the Vice chair to discuss to the proposed offer.

All Board members agreed that EH should continue in position as Chair until the AGM 2022. It was agreed that anyone replacing the current Chair should do so with a good strong knowledge of the organisation and workings of the Board. It was agreed to prepare for succession and handover in 18-24 months, subject to the agreement of the Finance & Audit Chair to the financial commitment (HWW make backfill payments to Mary Ann Evans Hospice for EH's time).

The 2nd candidate for Board member has been on the SW CCG board for 3 years and is known to CB to be knowledgeable and effective as a Board member - it is thought he would be a good addition to the HWW Board.

PT volunteered to be on the interview panel for the potential new Board members. The Chair will send out further details when available.

ACTION: EH to forward details of new Board member interviews.

6) Report from Finance and Audit Group

Included in CE report, item 7.

7) CE's Report and Update on Emerging Strategic Issues

The CE report was distributed to the Board in advance of the meeting.

The HWW contract has been extended by a further 2 years, enabling us to plan for the future. The Chair congratulated Chris and the staff team for this vote of confidence from the Commissioner.

The CE thanked HWW volunteer Sue Tulip, who forwarded some comments on the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy which were that were returned with the HWW response.

Amongst other comments, it is felt that concerns about health inequalities in the system are not sufficiently addressed by the draft strategy. The CE suggested that HWW make a written submission setting out our concerns with the strategy.

ACTION: CB to prepare paper setting out HWW concerns with the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and send to EH for comment.

JR has joined the Safeguarding Partnership, representing HWW, and will report back to the Board.

8) Head of Operations Report

Priority project update:

CJ reported that there is currently a project surveying people in the Shipston (South Warks) area, asking their views on a new Health & Wellbeing centre development in the area. There have been 241 online responses so far, and paper copies are being distributed this week. We have faced additional challenges in distributing the paper copies due to Covid-19 restrictions. The wider development is more divisive in the local area, so we are being clear that our involvement is only in the 1st phase of the development.

There have been supportive calls made to Care homes in the last quarter, which have provided us with interesting feedback, (which can be found on our website <https://www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk/news/2020-12-10/support-care-homes>). Calls will resume shortly, with slightly adapted questions to suit the current lockdown situation and additional pressures faced by care homes.

The proposal for a carers project is currently at the development stage. There appears to be support for this work from a lot of people, but similar projects in the past have had a limited uptake so we are ensuring that the project is well defined from the start.

Services such as respite and day care have been put on hold, so there are additional pressures on carers. More people may have recently become carers; and some people are providing care but not recognising themselves as carers.

It is recognised there are many different kinds of carers, and that the project could have more impact if we focused clearly on a minority, specific group of carers, e.g., people who do not identify themselves as carers.

It was noted that the council are putting additional resources into the support for carers of children with Learning Disabilities.

Exception reporting - HWW is not currently undertaking Enter & View visits or face-to-face engagement work due to current lockdown restrictions.

Healthwatch England have asked for a Decision-making Policy to be made available on our website. Some information is already publicly available in our Articles of Association but a summary presented in a shorter, simplified way - using bullet points or a flow chart would be useful, perhaps with links to the Articles of Association where it is appropriate to do so. Identified as a good task for the new staff member to undertake. ACTION: PT will forward an example document.

The Lockdown Task group meeting was very productive, covering HR matters (staff & volunteer welfare), premises update, and a discussion on the future remit of the task group - the group has evolved from its original function (of managing the current situation under Covid-19), to one of forward planning.

ACTION: LD to notify date of next Lockdown Task group meeting.

9) Volunteer report

SJ reported that the volunteers are looking forward to making calls to care homes again, there were some positive outcomes from the last calls - showing support and forming good relationships with the care homes.

The Volunteer Forum took place in December, where time banking was discussed.

Volunteers are also looking forward to getting involved with the Ellen Badger/Shipston HWB hub surveys.

Volunteer work continues to be limited due to covid-19 restrictions.

SJ queried whether the homeless hostels are open at the moment. ACTION: HWW will find out.

Someone on the Cancer board had commented that there are still problems with availability/ access to PPE in secondary care (the problem may be localised). Screening services are resuming.

10) AOB

None

11) Confidential

12) Date of next meeting

The next Board meeting will be held online via MS Teams, from 10.00am to 12.00pm on Tuesday 9th March 2021.

Other upcoming meetings:

Lockdown Task group meeting - 4th February 2021, 1:30pm.

Informal Directors' briefing meeting - 9th February 2021, 10am.

Summary of Actions:

- Item 5: EH to forward details of upcoming interviews for potential new Board members
- Item 7: CB to prepare a paper setting out HWW concerns with the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and send to EH for comment.
- Item 8: PT to forward an example Decision-making Policy document to CJ.
- Item 8: LD to notify date of next Lockdown Task group meeting.
- Item 9: HWW to find out whether local homeless hostels are open at the moment.

Minutes Approved by:

Signed:

Date: