

Minutes of the 48th full Healthwatch Warwickshire Board Meeting
Tuesday 14th July 2020
10.00am to 12.00pm
MS Teams Conference Call

Present:

Liz Hancock (EH) - Chair
Mike Flaxman (MF) - Chair FAG
Jerry Roodhouse (JR)

Gita Patel (GP)
John Copping (JC)

In Attendance:

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

1) Welcome and Apologies

Apologies received from Leonard Harvey and Paul Tolley (although PT was present from Item 12 onwards).

2) Declarations of conflict of interest

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

3) Minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the Healthwatch Warwickshire (HWW) Board meeting on 12th May 2020 were agreed to be an accurate record of proceedings.

4) Matters Arising

Previous Item 6.1: The 4-year plan/ Engagement Strategy, which includes strategic objectives - the document has been approved by the Board. The Work Plan is to be progressed over the summer.

Prev. Item 6.2: TW has sent the Chair Recruitment pack; EH will forward it on to the rest of the board.

Prev. Item 4, Performance against contract: see item 8 in agenda. Thanks to people who suggested changes to the agenda - CB and EH will review.

Prev. Item 6.2, new Board members: there have been some suggestions of organisations to approach, and a potential candidate. To be discussed under Item 5: Chair's Report.

5) Chair's Report

Meetings and conferences attended since last meeting:

- A performance meeting with Public Health, which was very positive.
- The CE attended a Regional Healthwatch meeting. He reported that there is a new regional manager in place, Chris Gorman. The next regional meeting is to be held on 31st July at 10am; which the Chair is unable to attend. An invitation was extended for another Board member to attend in her place - potentially JR, tbc; ACTION: CB to forward details. The meeting discussions will include upcoming campaigns that HWE will be running.
- The Chair and CE attended the first Warwickshire County Council Covid-19 Member Engagement Board meeting. CB is going to represent HWW on the board going forward.
- The Chair attended the majority of George Eliot Hospital's AGM, where they issued a positive report and discussed the impact of Covid-19 on services and praised their staff.

As they move forward to restoring services, it was highlighted that there will be a 'new normal' for the organisation of services. Many of the innovations made in reaction to the pandemic made will remain in place, helping them to plan positively for the future and work more closely with Health and Care Partners.

- The Chair and CE also attended a meeting with the Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership Trust (CWPT) with HW Coventry also in attendance. The CWPT Chief Executive talked about how services have adapted and been evaluated; future developments; and noted concerns that the next 6 months will be challenging, with additional Mental Health challenges for people.
- On 15th July there is a joint meeting with the Coventry & Warwickshire Place Forum and Health & Care Partnership Board; and on 29th July there will be a Zoom meeting with the CE of University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire.

5.1 Draft 4-year strategy

It was noted that the strategy has been difficult to design in the current climate.

The Engagement Strategy was sent out 15th July, and highlights good internal guidelines in how HWW works, day-to-day. The Chair noted that this document, coupled with HWW's increasing profile and work streams, outlines more naturally our ongoing strategy requirements. The Chair and CE will finish the document and distribute as a draft (ACTION CB/EH) -any comments welcomed.

A board member commented that a skills gap has been identified amongst staff/board members in the area of marketing - this can hopefully be addressed by a new board member.

It was noted that the changes and adaptations to hospital services have been impressive, and it is likely that there will be more flexible management thinking for years to come, but Social care has fallen behind Health care for decades. This maps on to HWW's activities: for us to be a thought innovator would be an invaluable strategic asset, and good for our reputation, which has improved locally and nationally - something to be built upon.

Carers UK (Heart of England branch) was suggested as a point of contact for potential nominees for a new director. ACTION - EH to contact.

5.2 Director Recruitment

There has been positive interest from a doctor/early career fellow at Warwick Medical School. Her research examines clinical communication with a focus on investigating and improving written discharge communications. HWW has worked with her on a couple of projects, so she already knows us, and has been seen to be cooperative and articulate. She is available for a virtual interview, which Board members are invited to attend - possible dates - 21 July (not EH), or 23 July - preferred.

ACTION: CB to forward her CV and find out her clinical discipline. ACTION: EH will send out an email to arrange the interview.

ACTION: EH will contact Carers UK about potential directors.

5.3 CE Annual Appraisal

Chris's annual appraisal has been conducted. The Chair passed on thanks for his and the staff team's work and the way HWW has developed. It was a positive meeting and targets for next year have been set.

6) Chief Executive's (CE) Report

See attached CE report.

6.1 The Board was in unanimous agreement with Chris's recommendation that the Board secretary remain in Board meetings where there is a confidential item, to ensure that minutes are taken - with exceptions when appropriate.

It was highlighted there is not currently a vice-chair on the Board. Members of the board were asked to contact the Chair if they were interested in the position of vice-chair.

6.2 There were discussions on how HWW and Healthwatch Coventry could work better together going forward.

Each LHW completes an Annual return to HWE by 31 July. More information on how local HW are set up and run may be available after these are completed, in addition to the annual reports.

There was a discussion about the possibility of district councils merging or reorganising.

6.4 ACTION:CB to send members list and notes from Midlands Adult Critical Care Executive Reference Group to MF.

6.5 The CE was congratulated on securing the Discharge project interviews - a great opportunity for HWW. The CE will distribute the questions when they are finalised. (ACTION CB)

6.6 CB presenting in a HW England seminar, about the approach taken in early stages to influence local government and the NHS. GP would like to attend - CB to send details.

6.7 Discussion on the JSNA list of priorities, and whether they are the right ones, and where the gaps are. JR raised that Mental Health needs to be narrowed down, he is hearing lots about anxiety specifically. CB may raise the issue of mental illness in care homes. If anyone else has any suggestions to advise CB.

6.8 HWE Annual Conference still being designed on the basis that it will now take place over a whole week - HWW have indicated that we would like to be involved. Good chance to get HWW 'on the map'. The Chair offered to get involved if needed; anyone else interested was invited to advise CB, as it is felt there is generally a lack of involvement from Directors at these events. There was a suggestion to hold our AGM during that week - to be explored further (ACTION CB/EH).

7) Head of Operations Report

See attached report.

7.1 Building/premises

We have been working with WCAVA closely throughout lockdown. We have been sent a comprehensive document about the office space. WCAVA are working towards people going back into the office, they have done a risk assessment, which HWW would have to work within if we were to return to the office. We are currently going into the office once a week to pick up post.

7.2 Update on Lockdown Task Group meeting

Discussed staff/ volunteer welfare. Daily catch up meetings are held amongst the staff; a virtual meeting was held with the volunteers which went very well.

The Lockdown task group discussed staff appraisals - it was decided to delay them for 6 months, it was felt more appropriate to hold discussions face-to-face. Staff training: decision taken not to put too much pressure on, but to give opportunity for training - lots available

online at the moment. Staff have been encouraged to take annual leave as it cannot be carried over to the next year.

Audit could have been postponed but is going ahead now and is in progress.

Staff home assessments have been carried out. There have been some additional costs, due to the new ways of working: equipment, advertising costs. A letter was written to the staff to say that working from home arrangements will continue until September - to be reviewed at the next task group meeting on 24 August.

7.3 The Annual Report has been completed and sent out ahead of schedule and is a good reminder of the work that has been completed over the past year.

7.4 Performance Report Y2Q2

Our Commissioner has noted how well and quickly we had adapted during lockdown and was impressed with the changes to the website and liked our public workplan. There was a discussion on how we can collect more demographic information when appropriate. Weekly calls with the Commissioner have been scaled back to bi-weekly calls.

8) Performance against contract

We are fully functional as a HW and able to fulfil all our contractual obligations apart from face-to-face work and our Enter & View programme which would not be appropriate at this point - to be discussed moving forward. A Recovery and Restoration outline has been completed for WCC, which asked what our Enter & View and face-to-face work would look like over the next 4 months.

9) Priority Project Update

9.1 COVID-19 survey

We are very pleased to have received over 1100 responses, with a good spread of responses across the county. Have provided key stakeholders with bi-weekly briefings throughout the project, to enable actions to be taken quickly if needed. A paper copy produced to reach those who are digitally excluded or shielding - a smaller response but we are grateful to have received them. Report to be completed hopefully by the end of July.

9.2 Discharge project

A different project than mentioned in item 6.5: after discussions with WCC, we will be looking at people's experience of discharge pathways across the county. There is a call with the Commissioner's manager on 15/7/20 to discuss.

9.3 RAP project report to be completed by the end of the month.

Performance report to be distributed to the rest of the board. ACTION: CJ

10) Report from Finance and Audit Group

No finance report this month; Audit moving along smoothly.

11) Volunteer update

Su reported that the volunteers were very impressed with the annual report.

There were some questions from volunteers, but most have been addressed in the meeting under previous items. One concern was access to dental support over the Covid period - seems that they are only dealing with emergencies.

There was a query about what kind of communications we have had from the public over the lockdown period.

One of the volunteers has attended a virtual PPG meeting and reported that virtual services are likely to continue.

Further to previous discussions about WCC information leaflets not including info about HWW; another volunteer commented that she had received a page of information about HWW with her pension information - but she had been an employee of WCC, and this is not representative of what the rest of the public is receiving.

CJ confirmed that the council have helped us with distribution of our surveys. Contact from the public is starting to increase, covering issues such as dentistry, Mental Health support, experiences in hospital; but the survey is where we have had the most contact with the public.

Su attended the STP cancer board meeting. All cancer services are working on recovery, restoration and reset, involving GPs more within referral pathways. Skin cancer meeting also attended; they are putting in work to get back to normal. Su reported that most referrals are reaching pre-covid levels now. There is an awareness that outside of Covid, there has been damage to other services, and people's health - with Coronavirus being prioritised over other services.

The Chair asked what the general feeling of the volunteers is with HWW work going forward, depending on personal circumstances. Su commented that some volunteers are either shielding or vulnerable, but those that are able to are very keen to get involved again when possible.

GP noted that she would like to attend the next volunteers meet-up when it is arranged.
(ACTION - LD to inform when arranged)

12) AOB

Summary of Actions:

Item 4 - EH to forward chair recruitment pack to the board.

Item 4 - CB and EH to review/ revise the Board agenda.

Item 5 - CB to forward details of regional HW meeting to JR.

Item 5 - CB and EH to finish the Engagement Strategy document and distribute as a draft for comment.

Item 5 - CB to forward the CV for the potential new director candidate and find out her clinical discipline; EH to send details of the interview arrangements.

Item 5 - EH to contact Carers UK about potential directors.

Item 6 - Any board member willing to take up the position of Vice-chair to contact the Chair.

Item 6 - CB to send members list and notes from Midlands Adult Critical Care Executive Reference Group to MF.

Item 6 - EH and CB to research the setup/running arrangements of other Local Healthwatch.

Item 6 - CB to distribute the HWE discharge project interview questions when they are finalised.

Item 6 - Anyone with suggestions for the JSNA list of priorities to pass them on to CB.

Item 6 - Those interested in involvement with the HWE Annual Conference to advise CB. Date for HWW conference/ AGM to be finalised. CB/EH

Item 9 - CJ to forward performance report to the Board.

Item 11 - LD to inform GP when the next Volunteers' virtual meet up is arranged.

13) Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held digitally, at 10.00am on Tuesday 8th September 2020.

Minutes Approved by:Liz Hancock.....

Signed:

Date: