

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Board Meeting

Date: 26th June 2025
 Time: 17:00-20:00pm
 Venue: The John Godber Centre, Ogle Street, Hucknall, Nottingham, NG15 7FQ

Attendees: Sarah Collis (Chair), Deborah Wilson, Dave Brennan, Karla Capstick, Sabrina Taylor, Fiona Dawson, Kinsi Clarke, Kerry Pickaver (minutes).

Apologies: Obai Kurd Ali

Agenda item	Discussion/decisions	Action
1. Introductions and welcome		
2. Apologies and minutes of last meeting)	Apologies received from Obai Kurd Ali. The March 2025 minutes were agreed as a true record. Outstanding actions: 24/25 Budget to be sent to the Board by ST.	A: ST to send 24/25 Budget to the Board
3. Board Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ST noted highlights from the Board report: CEO report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External environment - ICB model blueprint - facing 50% cuts to the their running costs and are drawing new lines for areas that they cover. There are plans to merge with Derby & Derbyshire and Lincolnshire. May be opportunities for HWNN to become involved with patient voice within the ICS. 6 ICB's across the midlands will be reduced to 2. There are concerns about how this new structure will be able to represent all communities. - Reform - ST reported that we aim to establish relationships with the reform councillors to aid them to understand the Healthwatch function. - NHS: Financial pressures and budget cuts; NHSE is also being decommissioned. Local government reorganisation is happening. The Dash Review into patient safety bodies includes a review of Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch. It is believed that the funding model for local Healthwatch will change and that funding for local Healthwatch will come directly from 	

	<p>Healthwatch England rather than via local government. The funding formula will be based on the size of local population and possibly the population need. Geographical boundaries are changing and this may affect us in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NHS 10 year plan: This is still awaiting publication. Alongside the national inquiries into Maternity Care, a special review, ordered by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, is underway into Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, prompted by concerns about the safety and quality of mental health services, particularly in relation to the care of Valdo Calocane. We have received a Rule 9 request; Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 outlines the process for requesting evidence from individuals and organizations during a public inquiry. Sabrina and the team have been working on this. The Ockenden Review now has a national scope. - Internal - We have been working on our Business Plan & Strategy. New Database ('HIVE') has been helping to support the tracking of our impact. Filtering for information is fast and easy. Some aspects have been automated which saves staff time and effort. We are also exploring the use of AI with a new AI policy in development and a presentation to Healthwatch England in the pipeline. We have used AI to turn some of our reports into podcasts, we're exploring how it could also be used in this way for newsletters and our annual reports. These are 100% our intellectual property, they can be translated and are good for those who may experience issues with reading. - Staff recruitment and retention - This is stable. One staff member on maternity leave with maternity cover in place. Our Comms reach dipped temporarily during the transition period. - Stakeholder event: We held a successful stakeholder event where we shared our Hot Topic report on Community Pharmacy. We will do more of these in the future. - Volunteers: We have a good number of volunteers. We are working on the Volunteer Strategy and looking to increase volunteer numbers across the Board and Enter & View functions. <p>DB asked if we might consider using different methods to attract and retain volunteers from more rural areas as the approach to this is more complex. This is not detailed in the volunteer strategy. SC added that condensing and clarity of roles is good. The approach from the Engagement Team is important around connecting with community leaders for rural areas. SC feels that our Comms function has a crucial role in attracting volunteers from rural areas. DW added that we use the term</p>	<p>A: Our annual report to be sent to local MP's (ST)</p> <p>A: FD to send the podcasts to the Board members.</p> <p>A: FD to explore using</p>
--	---	---

	<p>'Community Connectors' as one of our volunteer roles, and that this could be confusing as public health in the City also uses this terminology. KC added that Community Connectors could be involved in an Advisory Group and a Board member could attend this forum. This group would help the Board to sense-check policy and direction, have a feedback loop and ongoing relationship with the Connectors. DW added that they might be called 'Insight Partners' as an alternative. SC added that the Volunteer Strategy & the Governance Strategy need to dove-tail.</p>	<p>different terminology.</p>
<p>4. Finance update</p>	<p>4.1 Draft Budget: ST updated that the draft Budget sets out our expected income and expenditure. There are new income-based funding streams. The projected increase on our earned income has gone from £30K to £85K. Our grant-funded projection has doubled, from £10K to £20K - we are intending to be pro-active in applying for grants. We have also used a consultant to support us to find grant funding opportunities. ST would like to continue with this. ST noted that we have also earned £10K in interest across our different investments and accounts. Expenditure has increased to £476K from £449K and this is due to uplifts in salaries and on-costs, provision for pensions, NI and minimum wage. Staff costs have risen from £311,000 to £371,000. Other costs include staff support, PR & Marketing and Business Development. Events & Activities is £19K. This includes our Showcase, microgrants and community engagement activities. Overall, it is a sustainable budget. Some budget codes have also been adjusted. DB added that we conducted an evaluation of our Community Roadshow model and it has been agreed that we will continue to invest in this. ST added that £5K of the budget is for staff training and development, with the plan to apportion an amount for each member of staff. Staff team also looking at options for alternative (potentially co-working) office space. SC asked SLT to turn the Draft Budget into an operational budget. SC noted the reduction in deficit, with our reserves being used. Ambition to reduce this by winning income. Our healthy free-reserves are less healthy, but the Board does not have current concerns around this. The Finance Sub-Group proposed the Draft Budget be adopted, all present were in favour.</p> <p>4.2 Pay Scale Revaluation: This has had the biggest impact on the Draft Budget. It aligns with the principles of our Pay Policy; with an annual review based on fairness and affordability. % increases have been standardised on the pay scale, with the lowest paid receiving the higher %</p>	<p>A: SLT to reformat Draft Budget to an Operational Budget.</p>

	<p>increase. Staff will remain on their current banding and the % increase will apply for eligible staff. We are also proposing to becoming a Real Living Wage employer. KaC noted that staff retention may be affected by minimal progression for staff, due to HWNN being a small organisation. SC noted that the Pay Scale Revaluation and becoming a Real Living Wage Employer is approved in principle, with staff remaining on their current banding.</p>	<p>A: ST to amend and update the Pay Policy with approved amendments.</p>
<p>5. HWNN Strategy and Business Plan</p>	<p>5.1 Strategy & 5.2 Business Plan - ST mentioned that KPI's are deliberately missing from the Plan. It is high-level to indicate the direction of travel. SC added that as this is a 3-year plan, we need a cycle of annual review. DB proposed the title '3-year Strategic Plan'. Exact figures are not needed for performance monitoring. The other strategies we have (Volunteer Strategy, Implementation Plan) will be appended to the Business Plan. DW added that we need a EDI roadmap and would be happy to support on the development of this. A link to this roadmap should be inserted to the document. EDI Roadmap should be changed to EDI Strategy. The Strategy & Business Plan are approved with the minor changes as suggested.</p> <p>5.3 Role Proposal This proposal was recently presented at HR Sub-Group. SLT are proposing a mini-restructure involving the deletion of the Data and Insights Officer role and the implementation of two new roles - Data Lead, and Data Assistant. The Data Lead role will be a senior role, leading on data and impact and tasked with project and data management. It will sit under the Head of Community Engagement and Projects, with a review of the line management after 6 months. The Data Lead would manage the Data Assistant role.</p> <p>Considerations are: One current member of staff at risk of redundancy; an open expression of interest is invited from the wider team; the HR Sub-Group agreed we could start the process of sponsorship for the affected employee but stop if the employee does not want to proceed; the cost of sponsorship is tied to a specific role for 3 years. If not approved by the Home Office, the individual is still at risk of redundancy.</p> <p>SC noted that there is need for added capacity and proposed approval of this structure with a review in 6 months' time. This was approved and all present were in favour.</p> <p>FD added that the organisation has applied for a Certificate of approval for Sponsorship, which is an asset for the organisation.</p>	<p>A: ST to change EDI roadmap to EDI Strategy.</p>

6. Board Recruitment update	<p>SC gave an update about the online Board Recruitment Information Event which was held on 26.06.25. 2 applications had been received already. There were 5 prospective applicants who joined the event. The closing date for receipt of applications is Monday 30th June. Skillsets that the Board would like to attract are in HR, Comms and Finance. ST asked the Board to share their feedback on their induction to the Board with her.</p> <p>We are also promoting our Strategic Volunteer roles.</p>	<p>A: Board members to share feedback re: induction with ST.</p>
9. AOB	<p>SC will work with KP to arrange date for an earlier date for the September Board meeting (calendar invitation to follow).</p> <p>A date for the AGM will be identified for early November.</p> <p>A date for a Board Development Session will be planned before the AGM.</p>	<p>A: KP to amend date of September Board meeting; arrange dates for AGM and Board Dev. Session</p>

Date of next Board meeting: TBC - early September 2025.