

Committee minutes – approved

14 October 2020 – 1.30pm - 3.30pm

Online via Zoom

Committee members present

Michael Brown (MB)	Independent (Chair)
Michael Peacock (MP)	Independent
Mairi Cox (MC)	Independent
Shamshad Shah (SS)	Independent

Apologies

Kim Newton (KN)	Project Manager, HWG
Beth Nichol (BN)	Volunteer and Outreach Co-ordinator, HWG
Kate Beattie (KB)	Finance and Administration Officer

In attendance

Cynthia Atkin (CA)	Interim Operations Manager, HWN and HWG
Lyndsay Yarde (LY)	Associate, HWN
Rachel Wilkins (RW)	Project Manager, HWN

1. Welcome and introductions

1.1. MB led the welcome and introductions.

2. Apologies for absence

2.1 Apologies were noted for Kim Newton (KN), Beth Nichol (BN) and Kate Beattie (KB).

3. Minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

3.1 The minutes for the meeting were agreed as a true record.

3.2 No actions.

3.3 MB told the Committee that Alexandros is no longer the Chair of Healthwatch Newcastle due to health reasons. Terry Bearpack is currently undertaking this role. The Committee thanked and acknowledged everything Alexandros has done for Healthwatch Newcastle.

4. Updates

4.1 Operational Manager update.

CA led this update. CA told the Committee that we aren't returning to the office this month (October) due to the Government guidelines. CA and BN have conducted a risk assessment and we've received one from MEA House, too. CA and BN are continuing to review this alongside the new guidelines. CA has

started putting together a plan for returning to work and BN is keeping a check on what will be needed in the office when staff return. The team are keeping in contact with each other at team meetings and via the WhatsApp chat daily. CA will undertake 1-2-1 sessions before Siobhan O'Neil comes in to post so that she can conduct a detailed handover e.g. she will need to look at each member of staff job description. The priorities are still taking place and CA is updating the Chairs fortnightly via Zoom. We are currently undergoing recruitment for both Committees, as well as recruiting a new Chair for Tell Us North. CA and MB can both access the credit card for banking purposes. CA is still attending regular meetings and promoting our engagement. CA will be leaving Healthwatch at the end of November due to the new CEO starting this month. BN is carrying on as Office Manager. BN and Jacqui Thompson (JT, HWN) have been supporting the volunteers throughout the pandemic and are still inviting them to be involved in as much engagement remotely as they can. CA told the Committee that we are still carrying on with our befriending calls. CA informed the Committee that we are still working with on communication and engagement plan and our action log plan. MB thanked CA for everything she has done for Healthwatch since joining as Interim Operations Manager in April.

4.2 Participation in practice update.

LY led this update. LY updated the Committee on the GP patients survey that she conducted in the summer. The survey went out to all patients in Gateshead and we received 204 responses to it. LY wrote the report and shared it with all Gateshead practices. LY has not received much feedback from this, but she will keep pushing for some feedback from the Gateshead practices when she meets up with them to discuss the participation in practice meeting. A practice in Newcastle have received and completed their award, LY told the Committee that publicity for this award has taken place. A practice in Gateshead has recently submitted all their paperwork but it is not completed yet. LY informed the Committee that 8 practices are still involved in the pilot and that we lost 3 practices. The deadline for the award is now December. LY went to each practice in September to see where they are at with the award and if they need any extra support. LY identified two risks that she is worried about. 1. COVID-19 and the approach to winter as more illnesses will arise which could lead to practices dropping out due to current pressures. 2. The amount of time it is taking for the award to be completed. The Committee acknowledged that it is great how many practices are still involved due to the current circumstances. LY will continue to keep the Committee informed on the progress practices are making. MC asked if the practices have sent out instructions to the patients on joining Zoom meetings and engaging online; she will check if she has any copies of the guidance that she can send to the Committee and LY.

Action: MC to send the Committee and LY guidance on how people can join meetings and interact remotely.

4.3 Social media.

CA led this update. CA went through the social media analytics with the Committee. CA told the Committee that we have increased our social media on all platforms. CA outlined that we have really worked hard on promoting Healthwatch on our platforms to increase our engagement levels.

MP suggested that we could promote that we are recruiting for Committees and Chairs on our social media platforms, CA will revisit this and make sure we fulfil this to invite more people to join us. CA told the Committee that once Siobhan is in post, the TUN Board have agreed to look into recruiting a social media reviewer again to boost our platforms even more and to take pressure off the team.

The Committee thanked Deborah Hall (DH) on doing a fantastic job using our social media platforms to promote our work during the pandemic.

4.4 Project Manager update.

CA led this update as KN was not in attendance. CA explained that Because We All Care (BWAC) is a branding that Healthwatch England uses and works alongside with. It is set to go onto March 2021. CA informed the Committee that we are going to explore themes that we have picked from the BWAC data so far at the next team meeting. The team conducted a large mailout for September, so we expect to receive a large amount of responses for this. KN has produced data to show feedback we have received so far and if there were any suggestions. CA went through the data collected from July 2020 and explained that the numbers have improved, and that Newcastle and Gateshead have collected a lot of data over the month of July.

There was a discussion about Healthwatch promoting research into dentistry using mystery shopping.

Action: The Committee suggested that we undergo more work and research in dentistry services.

4.5 Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator update.

CA led this update as BN was not in attendance. CA outlined that BN has been doing lots of work with Children North East and has promoted this on our social media platforms. BN asked in her report if any of the Committee would be able to attend the next Champions meeting on Wednesday 28 October so that the volunteers feel connected to the Committee; MB can attend and will let BN know.

Action: MB will attend the next Champions meeting on Wednesday 28 October.

The Committee thanked and acknowledged all the work BN has done recently and during the pandemic.

4.6 Eight ways to make a difference update.

RW led this update and reminded the Committee on what this report was about. RW told the Committee that this was last year's project, focusing mainly

on the children and young people's single point of access and a service called Kooth. RW gathered people's experiences and opinions on how these services are working for them and if people are aware of them if they have used them. The report has now been published and it was sent out to the main stakeholders in March. RW explained that we delayed the full launch until September on social media. Since 21 September, RW has been conducting a 9-week social media campaign promoting the report. However, there were some issues with this so RW has agreed with Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW) to push week 4 - 9 back so it gives CNTW more time to think about what they want to publish on their own social media platforms.

Shamshad Shah (SS) joined the meeting.

5. Chairs update

5.1 Committee recruitment.

MB led this update and told the Committee and team that so far, he has received interest from 3 people in joining the Committee. Interviews for recruiting for the Committee will take place soon. MB asked the Committee and team to carry on promoting that we are recruiting members for the Healthwatch Gateshead Committee.

6. Any other business

6.1 Action log.

CA and MB went through the action log and stated that all the actions in the log have been completed.

6.2 Newsletter content.

CA asked the Committee if they have anything that they wish to include in the newsletter on work that they have been doing in relation to health and social care and their involvement in the Committee that they share this with DH.

The meeting closed at 3.30pm