**Committee minutes - Public**

31st October 2023 - 11am to 1pm

Hybrid at MEA House in person and via Zoom

**Committee members present.**

Michael Brown (MB) Chair (in-person)

Lyn Boyle (LB) (in-person)

Shamshad Shah (SS) (via zoom)

Mairi Cox (MC) (via zoom)

**In attendance**

Yvonne Probert (YP) CEO (in-person)

Michelle Brannigan (MAB) Business Services Manager (via zoom)

1. **Welcome and introductions**.

MB welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Semande Ayihongbe gave apologies.

1. **Minutes of previous meeting/matters arising**
   1. The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true record.
   2. YP gave an update on staffing changes that had been made in this quarter. Healthwatch Gateshead now has a dedicated Gateshead team, and a new position of Lead Officer has been created, a candidate has been recruited who will hopefully start on 27th November. We are waiting on HR documents to be finalised before onboarding.
2. **Healthwatch England Conference**
   1. YP gave an update on the Healthwatch England conference which was held in London and attended by YP as the CEO and MB as the chair of Healthwatch Gateshead. The CEO of Healthwatch England shared plans and discussed the shared culture and behaviours model. Also she talked about commissioning and the reforms needed to create a better-funded Healthwatch model; that would bridge the inequality between local authorities funding local Healthwatch. Healthwatch England discussed building stronger links nationally with the CQC and carrying out risk-based assessments in collaboration.
   2. The campaigns in 2023/24 for Healthwatch England are women’s health, primary care, and social care. Dentistry and access to GPs is still being monitored too.
   3. There will be a follow-up online session to the conference in the new year and all members of the committee will be invited to attend.

Action: Circulate an invite, once received, for the online Healthwatch England conference to all Healthwatch Gateshead committee members

1. **Priorities for Healthwatch Gateshead 2023 - 2024**
   1. The themes that were highlighted through public feedback at outreach events, the annual survey, and discussions that took place at the joint annual meeting were considered in detail.
   2. The priorities for Healthwatch Gateshead for 2023 – 2024 were agreed as:
      * Accessible information Standards – currently in scoping phase from last year.
      * Hospital discharge – this is a possible joint project with Healthwatch but due to different care pathways has the potential to become a separate project for Healthwatch Gateshead.
      * Further work with children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), especially those children who are transitioning into adulthood - carried over from 2022/23 and a follow up project is in the scoping phase.
      * Youthwatch
      * Mental Health (particularly young people and women)
      * Social care
   3. There are cross-cutting themes which are also to be monitored:
      * Health literacy
      * Communication and collaboration
      * Social prescribing
   4. We will also be watching dentistry, and access to GPs, and Pharmacy closures/shortened hours from Healthwatch England, which could be a joint project with other local Healthwatch.
   5. Targeted communities for engagement in 2023/24 were agreed as:
      * Young people
      * Women
      * Refuge and Asylum seekers
      * Jewish community
2. **CEO Update**
   1. YP informed members that the governance review was now complete, and the papers were available for any potential committee members.
   2. It was agreed that the committee would meet every 2 months and that the Healthwatch Gateshead Lead Officer and Tell Us North CIC Research and Engagement Manager would attend the next committee meeting and be in regular attendance from there on in.
   3. YP updated members on the bid for a Gateshead women's health hub which Healthwatch Gateshead had given their support to.
3. **Healthwatch Gateshead Q1 Report**
   1. The report which was previously circulated by email was discussed. It was agreed that the report format was a useful tool for committee members to monitor progress. Unfortunately, there was a delay in the quarter 2 report due to issues with data capture and the Power BI system.
4. **ICS verbal update**
   1. YP gave an update on the Integrated Care Strategy (ICS) and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) which meet monthly.
   2. YP noted that the ICB (local place committee) was now formed and was meeting regularly. We are well represented at the committee by the Chair and CEO. We have given a presentation on the work of Healthwatch Gateshead. We have regional representation through Healthwatch Hartlepool, and we feed into their communications.
5. **Finance Update Q2**
   1. MAB gave a finance update for quarter 2. There had been an underspend for the quarter, but costs will increase next quarter due to office relocation, locality working, and new staff onboarding.
6. **Standing Items**
   1. There have been no safeguarding incidents to report in the last quarter.
   2. There have been no Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion notices.
   3. There have been no Health and Safety issues reported. MAB updated members that we had now moved to a new supplier, Peninsula, and we have systems in place to be able to allow staff to work alone safely as well as risk assess the areas, they are working in, which is important when they are working in the locality.
7. **Any other business**
   1. YP updated members on the office relocation, this is to be the last day at MEA House. Our new office at Floor E, Suite E11, Milburn House, Dean Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1LE will be set up by the end of the week so there is very little disruption to work.
8. **Date and time of next meeting**
   1. SS noted that one of the benefits of the AJM was meeting everyone in person, it was agreed to hold the next meeting in January as a hybrid model, for those who want to attend either in person or online.
   2. YP mentioned that we had our annual Christmas event on December 13th at 5:30 pm. All committee members will be invited to attend along with staff, volunteers, and the Tell Us North Directors.
   3. The date and time of the next meeting is to be confirmed by email.