

**Minutes of the Healthwatch Northumberland Board meeting held on 25 June 2019 at Bellingham Town Hall, Bellingham**

**Present:**

David Thompson (DT) Chair, Liz Prudhoe (LP) Adapt North East, Margaret Young (MY), Independent Member, Kelvin Rushworth (KR), Independent Member, Harry Wilson (HW) Independent Member, Debra Blakey (DB) Carers Northumberland, (HB), Anne Lyall (AL), Northumberland VS Assembly, Catherine Lee (CL), PALS

**In attendance:** Derry Nugent (DN), Project Coordinator, Emma Grimwood, (EG) Volunteer Officer

**Apologies:** Hayley Brown, Kevin Higgins

**Minutes recorded by:** Derry Nugent

Before the meeting 2 members of the public and local organisations came and shared their views and experiences of health and social care services with members of the Healthwatch Northumberland (HWN) Board. Issues discussed included communication and coordination of services.

| <b>1.Introductions, Apologies and Declarations of Interest:</b>  | <b>Action</b>  |
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| <p>The Chair opened the meeting and said although attendance was small the information shared was useful and adds to Healthwatch Northumberland’s overall knowledge.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: no members declared interests pertinent to items at this meeting</p>   |  |
| <p><b>2. Minutes of last meeting</b></p> <p>AL said she represented the Voluntary Sector Forum on the HWN Board.</p> <p>The minutes with this correction were agreed as a true record.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>3. Action points</b></p> <p>DN reported the case study template is outstanding.</p>  | <p>DN to carry this action forward</p>   |
| <p><b>4. Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>Health &amp; Wellbeing Board Communications and Engagement subgroup:</b> reported the Health &amp; Wellbeing Board is reviewing this and meetings are currently on hold.</p> <p><b>Home Care Report:</b> Members welcomed the report. It was agreed to summarise the learning into 3 learning points and suggestions and DN would discuss the report with Adult Social Services commissioners in July.</p> <p>DN was asked to request a formal response to the report including an indication of how it will be used to commission and monitor services. This</p> | <p>DN to discuss report with Adult Social Care commissioners</p> <p>DN to request formal response to the report by</p> |

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| <p>will be shared with the people who participated in the research.</p> <p>The Board stressed the need for HWN to ensure timely formal responses are received from commissioners and service providers to issues it highlights.</p> <p>There were no further matters arising which were not covered by substantive agenda items.</p>   | <p>September</p> <p>HWN to give commissioners and providers timescales for responding to issues raised by HWN</p> |
| <p><b>5. Volunteering Update</b></p> <p>EG made a presentation about the progress on introducing a volunteer function to HWN. 13 people have registered an interest, two have been interviewed. She explained the ‘task’ base approach and encouraged members to distribute promotional materials in their areas and networks.</p> <p>Members welcomed the progress made and noting the way in which volunteers would be supported by all HWN team members.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>6. Operations and Financial Final Report 2018/2019</b></p> <p>DN spoke to the circulated report. Members noted the operational and financial outturns for the year.</p> <p>DN gave updates on the following issues:</p> <p>Quality Statements – DN thanked to HW and KR for their work on the responses to the Foundation Trusts’ Quality Statements.</p> <p>Staffing - the full-time Engagement and Insight Officer post has been offered subject to references. Expected start date of 17 July. Priorities for induction period will include completing analysis of annual survey and quarterly reports.</p> <p>NHS Long Term Plan - the draft report had been circulated. Low response to surveys but the focus groups were very good and provided valuable feedback and relationships for future work on mental health and dementia.</p> <p>The full report covering the ‘North’ Integrated Care System (ICS) area will be promoted with the ICS and the local plan with Northumberland commissioners and providers.</p> <p>Annual Survey – the initial analysis was presented to Overview and Scrutiny committee in April and was reported in The Chronicle Online.</p> <p>Members noted the importance of gathering experiences from across the county and the impact of staffing changes and recruitment on performance</p> |   |
| <p><b>7. Operational Plan 2019/2020</b></p> <p>DN spoke to the circulated report noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the draft Operational Plan incorporates the Board’s revisions to the</li> </ul>  |   |

Strategic Priorities and Key Objectives agreed at the Planning Day in January.

- Engagement, Communications and Volunteering are overarching activities and have their own sub plans.

**Key Objectives for 2019/20**

The activities under each Key objective have been discussed at a staff planning day in May and have been developed from engagement and feedback work in 2018/19, priorities identified via the annual survey and from requests from commissioners and providers for HWN input to work they are doing.

Building on learning from the last year, the plan has greater focus. Most of the detail will be contained within the plans for engagement, volunteering and communications. These will be reported to each Board meeting.

At the last meeting the Board asked for specific activities about Social Care. Two projects are planned; gathering the experience of people with complex needs and an Enter and View visit to a care home.

The top three priorities identified by respondents to the Annual Survey were mental health, GP services and access to services. The Operational Plan seeks to address these by:

**Mental Health**

The NHS Long Term Plan engagement highlights the issue of Crisis Care and alternatives to traditional crisis services. We plan to carry out engagement to understand what matters to people with mental health conditions in terms of crisis care. We also plan to carry out targeted engagement with parents in Blyth and Hexham as part of the Mental Health Support Teams in Schools Trailblazer.

**GPs and appointments**

Following on work last year we will carry out focussed engagement with Patient Participation Groups and build out relationships with this key stakeholder group.

**Access to Services**

Access to services – mostly about transport, but also about the administration of appointments was a recurring theme. Our proposal is to embed issues of access into all our engagement and reporting.

**Dementia**

We held a focus group with carers of people with dementia for the NHS Long Term Plan. The main issue to emerge was the lack of information and support available to people with dementia, but especially carers at the point of diagnosis. The proposal is to build on this work and the network of contacts we have established to understand what is working and what

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| <p>suggestions people have to improve the support.</p> <p><b>Seldom Heard Groups</b></p> <p>The groups we hear from less frequently:</p> <p>People with learning disabilities<br/> People from the LGBTQ+ communities<br/> Young people<br/> Black and minority ethnic communities<br/> People dispersed to Northumberland through asylum or refugee programmes.</p> <p>We also hear less often from communities in the far west and south east of the county.</p> <p>Engagement with these groups and networks will be built into our engagement plans.</p> <p>Members raised the following points in discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To include a specific objective about how Primary Care Networks will include patient voice and experience</li> <li>• DN to consider the priorities and scope for HWN to potentially commission work with seldom heard groups, national policy priority areas such as young people and gambling, NHS complaints, cross border services and hospital acquired infections.</li> <li>• DN to send Enter &amp; View Policy and Procedure to all members again.</li> </ul> <p>The Board welcomed the Operational Plan and agreed it provided a firm and correct direction of travel for Healthwatch Northumberland’s activities for the year.</p> | <p>DN to add Key Objective about Primary Care Networks</p> <p>DN to scope and prioritise work to be commissioned by HWN for September</p> <p>DN to send Enter &amp; View Policy and Procedure</p> |
| <p><b>8. Strategic Risk Register</b></p> <p>DN spoke to the circulated report. Members agreed the recommendations to amend the Strategic Risk Register and to do a Board effectiveness review.</p>  |   |

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| <p><b>9. Board partner organisations update</b></p> <p><b>Patient Advice and Liaison Service</b><br/>CL said that the PALs is experiencing an upturn in issues being raised through them. Communication remains the main concern.</p> <p><b>Carers Northumberland (CN)</b><br/>DB reported that Northumberland County Council has submitted a business case to North of Tyne Combined Authority for a “returnship” programme (range of routeways into work) with a focus on carers. It will be a mechanism to reach more carers (with current caring responsibilities, or where their caring responsibilities are coming to an end) to help them into work, manage care-work balance, and also work with employers to develop supportive work arrangement for carers. The aim is to start in September.</p> <p>The next Carers Rights Day is 21 November in Ponteland.</p> <p><b>Adapt North East</b><br/>LP said that the Independent Advocacy Northumberland Service for NHS Complaints remains steady and shows communications as an issue.</p> <p><b>Voluntary Sector Forum</b><br/>AL reported that Northumberland CVA has been re-commissioned to provide infrastructure support until March 2021. The focus is to maintain the continued development of the county’s voluntary sector with regard to the opportunities through the North of Tyne Combined Authority Inclusive Growth ambitions, and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (successor to ESF).</p> <p>Work is planned on the development of the Northumberland Social Prescribing Network.</p> |  |
| <p><b>10. Dates of meetings for 2019/20</b><br/>Tuesday 24 September, Tuesday 17 December, Tuesday 24 March<br/>All venues to be confirmed</p>   |  |
| <p><b>11. Any other business</b><br/>DT invited members who wished to attend with the Health &amp; Wellbeing Board or the Primary Care Committee to contact him. He will circulate dates.</p> <p>DN asked members to let her know if they wished to attend the Healthwatch England Conference on 1-2 October in Birmingham</p>   |  |

**Date of next meeting**  
**24 September 2019**