

Minutes of the Healthwatch Northumberland Board meeting held on 23 March 2021 via Zoom

Present: David Thompson (DT) Chair, Margaret Young (MY) Independent Member, Sue Taylor (ST) Independent Member, Mike Allport (MA) Independent Member, Catherine Lee (CL) Patient Advice and Liaison Service, Kevin Higgins (KH) Northumberland County Council, Liz Prudhoe (LP) Adapt NE, Debra Blakey, Carers Northumberland

In attendance: Derry Nugent (DN) Project Coordinator, Helen Brown (HB) Engagement Officer, Laura Haugh (LH) Communication & Marketing Assistant, Tim Hakim (TH), Engagement and Insight Officer

Apologies: Liz Ions (LI) Northumberland Voluntary Sector Assembly, Hayley Brown, Independent Member (HB)

Minutes recorded by Laura Haugh

<p>1.Introductions, Apologies and Declarations of Interest:</p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He welcomed Tim Hakim who has joined Healthwatch as Engagement and Insight Officer today.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: no members declared interests pertinent to items at this meeting.</p>	<p>Action</p>
<p>2. Minutes of last meeting</p> <p>The minutes of 15 December 2020 were agreed as a true record.</p>	
<p>3. Action points</p> <p>All items were agreed as completed except for:</p> <p>Item 3 – DT and DN currently working on updating the handbook/Board induction pack.</p> <p>Item 7 – DN and FU have met and discussions about methods of developing equality, diversity and inclusion work are ongoing.</p> <p>DT to contact North East Ambulance Service.</p> <p>Item 10 – LP and DN to keep in touch with relevant contacts about contract.</p>	
<p>4. Matters Arising</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the minutes.</p>	
<p>5. Questions from the public</p> <p>Before the meeting members of the public were asked to submit questions, which addressed the agenda. No questions were received.</p>	

<p>6. Engagement Update</p> <p>HB gave a presentation about current and future community engagement projects. This included:</p> <p>Current projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care homes - online forums and a survey • GP online registration • Young people's mental health – well attended Kooth online event and online survey open to 31 March <p>Future projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential and home care • End of Life strategy • GP surgery changes • Programme of online events with guest speakers on topics identified by patient and service user feedback. <p>KH asked about the current mental health survey. HB will send the survey to KH and share the findings with the Board.</p>	<p>HB to share survey with KH and report findings to Board.</p>
<p>7. Operations and Financial Update</p> <p>DN spoke to the circulated report. The following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter & View. Members agreed to remove the Enter & View key performance indicator for the remainder of the current Operational Plan as Enter & View visits will not be possible before June. DN suggested other engagement work could stand in its place. <p>The Board wants an Enter & View performance indicator for the 2021/22 Operational Plan. MY said that it was very important that Enter & View visits are used in the coming year to understand what patients and service users are experiencing because services, especially care homes, have been closed for so long.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. DN has met with FU to progress a policy. The Board agreed a subgroup would come up with a proposal for a public event and report back in June. Volunteers will also be invited to take part. • Strategic Influence. DN reported on the work with Adult Social Care about ongoing projects in care homes and the Clinical Commissioning Group about feedback on the vaccination programme. • Budget. The Board noted the current budget has been affected by reduced travel costs and gaps in staffing. 	<p>Enter & View KPI to be removed and included in next Operational Plan.</p> <p>Members will form an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion event subgroup and report back in June. DN to invite volunteers to take part.</p>

<p>The operational plan update was accepted. Members congratulated the HWN team on their continued success in ensuring the voice of patients and service users was heard.</p>	
<p>8. Presentation: Steps out of the pandemic</p> <p>DN gave a presentation about the principals of operating in 2021 and what face-to-face engagement work might look like once restrictions ease. DN stressed there is still uncertainty around what will be possible and public, staff and volunteer perceptions will be different and important. The Board agreed local Healthwatch 'Hubs' and a blend of online/in-person activity would be beneficial. CL said that a mixture of approaches will be needed, as although digital engagement is not for everyone, it has enabled some people to contact Healthwatch who would not otherwise do so.</p> <p>MY said work must be done to maintain the PPGs.</p>	<p>DN will report back in June on how HW Hubs could work and ideas for the AGM and Annual Survey.</p>
<p>9. Your Voice Fund</p> <p>The Board confirmed the completion of the Youth Service grant. DN will confirm who the mental health leaflet has been sent to.</p> <p>The Board agreed that Northumberland County Blind Association would receive the remainder of the grant when the survey report is received.</p>	<p>DN to confirm that mental health leaflet has been sent out and to who.</p> <p>DN to contact NCBA to arrange completion of the report.</p>
<p>10. Principles and proposals for commissioned work</p> <p>Members agreed to accept the three proposed commissioned projects and the additional budget required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your Voice Fund 2 • The experiences of people receiving home care during the pandemic • Care pathways and support for people with sight loss <p>DN to report on progress in June.</p>	<p>DN to report on progress of commissioning process in June.</p>
<p>11. Board partner organisations update</p> <p>Carers Northumberland</p> <p>DB reported the organisation's current activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main activity has been supporting carers to get Covid vaccinations.. • There has been a significant rise in registrations, especially parent carers. • The Carers into Work project has shown some carers who are currently in work are struggling. The project has been adjusted to support these carers and widened to 16- and 17-year-olds. • An advanced planning project to help people get Enduring Powers of Attorney in place has been well received. 	

<p>Adapt NE LP said the Advocacy service has been very busy as have the Social Prescribers. There has been an increase in demand for transport services. The café is due to reopen on 12 April.</p> <p>PALS CL said the service is now fully staffed and very busy. Main issues being raised are delays in treatments and appointments, visiting and people with mental health issues, autism and learning disabilities struggling to access services.</p>	
<p>12. Quality Framework: Action Plan</p> <p>The Board agreed the Action Plan and DN will send it to the volunteers. DT will send a note of thanks.</p>	<p>DN to send the Quality framework Action Plan to volunteers. DT will send a note of thanks</p>
<p>13. Collaborative working on Health & Care White Paper and Integrated Care System Development</p> <p>DT spoke to the circulated paper. He said that the Healthwatch Chairs in the North East and North Cumbria are meeting on 24 March to discuss greater collaborative working as the Integrated Care System develops. The HWN Board considered the draft Memorandum of Understanding and agreed that it would be happy to sign it.</p>	
<p>14. Strategic Risk Register (standing item)</p> <p>Members agreed to move changing relationships in stakeholder organisations up the Risk Register due to the ICS development.</p> <p>DT suggested adding Integrated Care work in terms of capacity. This was agreed.</p>	<p>DN to move changing relationships up the register and add organisational capacity due to Integrated Care work to the Strategic Risk Register.</p>
<p>15. Dates of meetings for 2020/21</p> <p>The next Board meeting is 22 June, format to be decided.</p>	
<p>16. Any other business</p> <p>One minute's silence was held to reflect on one year since the beginning of the first lockdown.</p> <p>DT said he had attended an Integrated Care System meeting with Professor Sir Liam Donaldson, Chair of the ICS, who highlighted the importance of listening to people, especially minority views and tackling inequalities.</p> <p>There was no further business. DT thanked everyone for attending.</p>	

Date of next meeting 22 June 2021 Venue/format to be confirmed.