

Board meeting minutes

Monday 17th April 2023

11.00am –4.00pm

Galtres Centre, Easingwold

Present:

Lee Adams (LA)	Chairperson, Trustee
Pat Southgate (PS)	Vice Chairperson, Trustee
Linda Wolstenholme (LW)	Treasurer, Trustee
John Cunningham (JC)	Trustee
Robert Peacock (RP)	Trustee
Ashley Green (AG)	CEO
Alicia Rose	Staff
Lada Cuiu	Staff
Craig Derrick	Staff
Helen Littler	Staff
Lily Smith	Staff

Members of public 13

Apologies:

Judith Bromfield (JB)	Trustee
Graham Brown (GB)	Trustee

Public meeting

Welcome & apologies.

LA welcomed everyone including the public to the meeting and gave apologies from Graham (GB) and Judith (JB).

Robert (RP) stepped down as trustee and LA offered grateful thanks to him for his time over seeing Healthwatch. LA confirmed that JB would also be stepping down as a trustee and acknowledged her work and commitment to Healthwatch, along with RP, and thanked her for all her work.

Confidential matters & declaration of interest

LA said that there were no confidential matters arising.

LA declared her role on the board of Healthwatch England.

Minutes & action log – 16th January board meeting

LA and all those present agreed with and accepted the minutes from the Board meeting in January.

LA said that the proposal for a new engagement role to focus on younger people and support the development of 'Young Healthwatch' had been put on hold for the time being due to budget constraints but that we would re-look at this once we knew about our future funding post 2024.

LA confirmed that the Healthwatch team had moved into new office premises in Harrogate.

AG confirmed that the action log had all been completed.

Q4 board report (Jan – March 2023)

AG gave a short presentation and highlighted the work that had been undertaken over the last quarter, including our Being Healthy: Ideas & reflections from Selby report that was launched in March. Here we heard from 135 people by survey, who shared their understanding and experiences of good health and their interactions with health services.

AG said that they had completed a Pulse survey exploring peoples experiences of receiving NHS care and treatment. This was set against the backdrop of winter pressures, workforce shortages, NHS staff strikes and ongoing negative media coverage. AG said that a briefing would be published in April.

In the presentation AG highlighted that the mental health engagement across North Yorkshire had been completed and we had heard from 360 adults. The draft report and recommendations had been shared with the NY & York mental

health alliance for comment, with the report due for publication in June, with a joint launch to include an online event.

AG said that the engagement work for the continence project across North Yorkshire had been completed and we had heard from 146 people through surveys and conversations with the public and healthcare professionals. Our report and recommendations will be launched in May.

Agree Governance paper & revised CIO.

LA asked trustees to agree changes to Governance paper and revised CIO, of which everyone present accepted.

LW commented on the Constitution and asked that a commitment to training and development of volunteers and wider community should be retained - which was agreed. LW also highlighted that the papers had differing minimum ages for people able to be a trustee, which LA agreed to check against the Charity Commission and amend accordingly.

Volunteer satisfaction survey - discussion

LC said the survey provided feedback about opportunities and volunteer roles and the areas they would like to be involved with. In summary the volunteers expressed an interest in more engagement work, flexible opportunities, and more face-to-face roles. LC also confirmed that there were 85 volunteers.

AG confirmed that the volunteers were highly valued and an integral part of our Healthwatch work, bringing a host of different skills and experience which the volunteer audit demonstrated.

PS commented that the knowledge volunteers bring to our work is as important as the physical roles. LA provided comments from GB, who had said that we should ensure that our volunteer network is as diverse and inclusive as possible to reflect our different communities.

LA suggested that we get feedback on our draft strategy from the volunteer network and organise a meeting to discuss this with the volunteers.

LW acknowledges the project updates to volunteers and weekly emails about what is happening on health and social care which she found very useful.

Finance Report, April 2022 – March 2023

LA gave thanks to Judith (JB) for her finance role as she steps down as trustee.

LA also gave thanks to Linda (LW) and Helen (HL) on the finance retrospectively and going forward.

LW confirmed that the financial year April 2022/23 had changed to the financial systems, for the last quarter with a full move over to the new Quick Books system due to take effect from April.

LW summarised the financial report and outlined variations from the budget including extra income generation due to the mental health engagement work, and additional expenditure due to more board meetings, holding a volunteer event, and a new post (Business Support & Projects Officer) who started in October.

LW said that many trustees do not always claim expenses so the amount on this budget is lower than anticipated as well as staff training and development because of the use of free resources.

LA pointed out that we [Healthwatch North Yorkshire] were underfunded in comparison to neighbouring Healthwatch in similar population sizes. And, that Healthwatch England have been in discussions with the Department of Health to review the funding for local Healthwatch.

LA asked that all trustee's agree the financial report, all agreed and LA thanked Linda (LW) for her work.

Feedback or update from trustees on work

LA said-on behalf of GB that he has been involved with Harrogate Trust Equalities Group.

PS confirmed her work with Scarborough Hospital Trust quality group which involved the CQC and she said that she had been involved in supporting the recruitment of volunteers for this area of work.

RP raised the issue of the York & Scarborough travel and transport group that he was a member of and highlighted his concerns that

the public/patients travelling to York Hospital by car, and particularly those from outside of York, were unable to park due to insufficient parking provision and extremely congested roads around the hospital. RP said that York Council was looking to establish car-free areas, but that this didn't take account of people travelling outside of the area, such as the Scarborough district, whose only means of transport was by car. LA confirmed the matter has been raised with the Director of Adult Social Care at NYC. LA asked AG to follow this issue up with NYC and speak with Healthwatch York to see if they had received any concerns.

LW confirmed her involvement with the cancer alliance and people's lived experience and the need for overnight stay when having treatment every day.

LA said that she had met with the Chairs of West Yorkshire Healthwatch regarding acting collectively to influence West Yorkshire ICS.

LA thanked Pat and Craig for organising the board meeting in Easingwold.

Questions from the public on any matters arising

Those people attending the Board meeting were given the opportunity to ask any questions or provide any feedback. This feedback included:

- A need for Healthwatch to increase its profile and reach amongst the public. Possible opportunity could be to get involved in local 'park runs', for example the Millfield Park run in Easingwold.

- Explore how Healthwatch could work more collaboratively with local GP practices and their PPGs
- A question was asked what impact Healthwatch had made in Easingwold and surrounding area?
- There were comments on how good the care was at St Monica's hospital in Easingwold, and similar praise for the GP practice (Millfield Surgery)

Private meeting

New trustees

LA informed those present that herself, AG and PS had interviewed for new trustees and recommended that the Board appoint new trustees Derek Bodell and Laura Parker as trustees. The Board agreed unanimously. LA confirmed that further interviews would be taking place at the end of April for additional trustees, and the board agreed to approve any new recommended trustees by email.

Discuss & agree strategy plans for 2023+

LA asked board members for comments on the new strategy and if they agreed with the priorities and topic areas identified. Those people present were all in agreement with the new draft strategy.

LA commented that we should ensure that we include the overview and scrutiny committees as part of our influencing and partnership work and be more explicit on how we work with the ICS.

JC said we should include examples of our impact and be aspirational. LA said the document should be more public facing, and for example include pictures of people.

AG said the strategy will go out to public consultation for 5 weeks, and an annual work plan will be developed from this. LA said that the volunteer network should be consulted on this and be invited to a meeting to discuss.

LA said that the final strategy, following the consultation, should be sent to the Board for any comments prior to the July Board meeting.

Agree 2 projects – GP website check-up review & Postnatal care at home and in the community.

AG discussed the two decision making papers on the 1) the GP website checkup review and 2) the postnatal care proposal.

All trustees present agreed to proceed with the two projects and LA confirmed that GB was also in agreement.

LW commented that it would be useful to understand what IT systems GP practices were using, as well as what apps they were promoting (NHS app?). RP asked if we should be reviewing what patient-based sites GP practices were linked to, such as 'Patient knows best'.

It was discussed that these projects may need their own budget, which AG agreed to look into and discuss with the team.

PS and LA offered their support to help with the postnatal care project.

Update & progress on policy reviews

LW suggested a review date on all the policy documents and those people present agreed 2 years.

AG said that all the policies and procedures (based around organisational law, HR, health & safety etc.) had been reviewed and agreed by Peninsula, our external HR providers.

Paper 8.1 Board agreed.

Paper 8.2 LW comment behaviours of HW should mention representatives rather than participants.

Paper 8.3 Board agreed.

Paper 8.4 LW said the monitoring staff part should include volunteers.

Paper 8.5 RP mentioned equal ops policy should mention public sector duty as in equality and diversity.

Paper 8.6 JC said to remove 'ensure' word and LW added in to change wording to community concerns rather than individual concerns [AG to re-look at the wording].

LA provided comment from GB that the escalation policy should be renamed to include failing health and social care services [AG agreed to re-look over].

Paper 8.7 LA said that we should add a target timescale for whistleblowing – which the Board agreed to a 5 working days turnaround.

LA said that the remaining policies for review should be brought to the July and October Board meetings. AG & PS agreed to look over these and work with the respective trustees to complete this.

Discussion on 2023-2024 budget (excluding salaries)

LW discussed budget forecast based on 11 months due to NYC contract ending in February 2024 which gave a variation of £10k more than 12-month budget and the assumption of no uplift for salaries. The overall forecast currently reflects a potential deficit in 2023/24 of £40,326 representing an increase of £13,136 when compared to 22/23 level. Within our current financial procedures policy, our reserves should consider retaining 3 months of the running costs.

LW said that our projected increase in expenditure is predominantly due to an additional staff member appointed during 2022/23. And other factors included the decision to move to a new office, recruitment of trustees, and an increased cost for HR & wellbeing support contract.

LW suggested a mid-term budget review which was agreed as a good idea, which was agreed by all present.

LA provided comments from GB around how we would achieve our income target and AG said it would be through proactive means such as working with other organisations, research funding, potential ICS funding and looking into external fundraising opportunities.

LA said that trustees could help with putting together funding applications.

LW said there was nothing in the budget for training and development of trustees. JC questioned why the budget on engagement had been halved and suggested that the marketing

budget should be increased substantially to meet our priorities around raising our profile and reach.

LA asked JC and AG (along with Craig) to review our marketing and coms plan and put together a new budget to share with trustees ahead of the July Board meeting.

LW said we should review the trustee training and development budget and confirmed that staff home working reimbursement would be reduced as hybrid office working was in place from April.

AG said that he also wanted to review the volunteer budget.

It was agreed that a revised budget would be formally agreed at the July Board meeting.

Meetings attended by HWNY team

AG confirmed that he would review the meetings that he and the team attended, and that he wanted the wider team, and not just Lily (Community Engagement Officer) to attend more of the external meetings. Whilst there was a high volume of meetings to attend, AG acknowledged that it wasn't always easy to decide which to attend / not attend – as many were useful for purely networking and raising your profile, alongside those that we actively participated in.

However, AG agreed to re-look over the current meetings attended, and see where volunteers and/or trustees could attend instead of staff.

Discuss location for next board meeting (July)

The following locations were agreed where we should hold our future public board meetings:

July 2023 – Richmond/Catterick

Oct 2023 – Scarborough

Jan 2024 – Skipton

April 2024 – Bedale/Nidderdale

Trustee meeting only

Salary 2023/24 discussions

LA and all those board members present agreed to a staff salary uplift of 5 percent.

Feedback from trustee appraisals

The board members agreed to have a time out to consider the roles of staff and trustees, along with how we work together plus some social sessions to get to know each other better.

Close.

Next Board meeting includes public invitation. Date: Monday 10th July 2023 & Venue: TBC