

**Minutes of a Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020  
by the Board of Healthwatch (UK) Wiltshire  
via Microsoft Teams Meetings**

Present: Emma Leatherbarrow (EL) (Chair); Julie Brown (JB); Irene Kohler (IK);  
Hazel Dunnett (HD); Joanna Wittels (JW);

Apologies: Andy Mintram (AM)

Minutes: Karon Van Den Bergh (KV)

**Appointment of New Chair**

EL: Informed that she had received two Board resignations, Robert Jefferson from the position of Chairman and Richard Austin as a Board Member. EL: Asked if anyone present was interested in taking on the role of Chair, all declined. EL: Thanked all present for their consideration and their work for Healthwatch Wiltshire, which was highly valued. EL: Assured that there was no pressure for any Board Member to take on this role. It was agreed that an advertisement would be raised with immediate effect for two additional Board Members, with one taking on the responsibilities of Chair. HD: Felt that the job description for the Chair should include past experience as a Board Member of an organisation. JW: Felt that a Mainstream health background would be beneficial. IK: Would like to recruit someone with a strategic outlook.

It was agreed that EL would take the Chair for the current meeting.

**Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting**

IK: Amendment - 2<sup>nd</sup> page third para. Include people with autism and mental health problems. All agreed.

It was agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting dated 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 were considered a true and accurate record and could be published on the Healthwatch Wiltshire Website for public information.

**Action Tracker Update Action Tracker Update**

The Action Tracker was updated.

The Post-Covid spreadsheet was considered, and it was agreed that Item 2 - Link with PCN leads should be moved back to the Current spreadsheet.

**Healthwatch Workplan**

JB: Referred to Paper 1, which had been forwarded to all Board Members prior to the meeting, for their consideration.

JB: Explained that she had considered, in detail, the items on the original Workplan, which was in place prior to Covid and had felt that a lot of the priority areas needed revisiting. The final Report, monitoring the experiences of individuals during Covid, had been completed.

Mental Health – Adults and Children. This piece of work, which included AWP involvement had been considered by Coordinators at the Richmond Fellowship. Virtual engagement meetings and focus groups had taken place. There had been a trial to ascertain people's experiences in relation to how they accessed services during the Covid pandemic. Nine people had attended the first virtual focus group with an AWP, which had been encouraging.

A specific piece of work, in collaboration with CCG may be commissioned (and paid for). Healthwatch Wiltshire had been asked for costings, for which JB was waiting for a response. The work around the transformation had disappeared in Covid. A newly appointed, fixed-term, part time (18.5 hours), Project Office, Guy Patterson, would commence service next week and had indicated that he would be happy to take on some extra hours to be involved in this area.

IK: Voiced concerns that the charity, Mind, who were in receipt of various grants to do community work, had a very small presence in Wiltshire compared to other authorities. Statutory providers tend to work with people who are in crisis with the lower level cases not supported in this area. IK: Requested that the lack of Mind support in Wiltshire be raised during JB's work. JB: Felt that this was something which could be incorporated into focus groups, at least to ascertain what support people received in their communities outside the remit of statutory providers. EL: Felt that provision could be a funding/postcode lottery and questioned whether the Citizen's Advice Bureau would have information in this area.

Young People's Mystery Shopping. JW/ had attended the weekly meeting with approximately six young volunteers. The mystery shopping will start within the next couple of weeks, asking the volunteers to use different scenarios to go online and see how easy it is to find information, and consider whether it is written in a way which is accessible. Towards the end of the month a mystery shop with a questionnaire will be completed by the volunteers. JB: Was pleased to report that the commissioners at Wiltshire Council were very keen to use the information. Barnados Charity had also expressed an interest in the work. JB: Thanked JW for her support in this area.

Learning Disabilities and Autism. Healthwatch Wiltshire would be working in partnership with WSUN and the Autism Commissioner to develop a Project based around Case Studies of people who had been diagnosed later in life, or have yet to be given a diagnosis. The Report would focus on which points in their life intervention would have been, or would be, useful. It was encouraging that a dedicated Commissioner had now been appointed who would be doing some specialist work on this subject following a period of little specialist support in Wiltshire. JB: Was keen to commence this piece of work as soon as possible so that it could be fed back at an early stage.

Primary Care. JB: Was working on a Project Proposal looking at people's experiences of all appointments, focusing on a few surgeries, including all the different ways patients have accessed GP Services. Also planned is a volunteer-led project had focused on mystery shopping through various GP websites and automated services and early feedback indicated a great deal of inconsistencies among providers.

Hot Topics – Inclusion. JB: When working on the revised Workplan, it was important to think about how all areas of the Wiltshire community are included in our projects. We need to build up links with those difficult to reach people, with the multi-faith forums.

PCN – BSW. There had been some positive meetings with engagement leads who were keen to work with Wiltshire. JB: Had learnt that Swindon were already running CCG engagement forums and had joined one to gain knowledge of how they work.

Young Healthwatch. Unchanged. Continuing to engage young people.

Communications. Dedicated Covid information pages were now available.

Volunteering. It was important to consider the ways in which volunteers could engage at this difficult time, particularly virtually.

EL: Questioned the Revised Workplan Paper, asking why there were projects listed without either a member of staff or a volunteer assigned to work on them. EL: Warned that these areas could slip through the net. JB: Assured that focus would not be lost in these areas and, potentially, Guy Patterson, the Newly appointed Project Officer would cover these areas.

EL: Confirmed that she would take responsibility for the Quality Framework area.

JB: Reminded all present, that if anyone was keen to be involved in any of the projects discussed to let her know.

### **Anti-Racism and The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Community**

JB: Felt that it was important to complete more monitoring of demographics and target proactively if it became obviously that Healthwatch Wiltshire were not hearing from certain areas of the community. JB: The team had developed contacts via the West Wilts Multi Faith Forum, also links with travellers and the boating community were beginning to be established. A personal email was sent to these contacts to encourage their members to take part in our projects. This was proving successful. IK: Felt that Healthwatch Wiltshire had an opportunity, now recruiting two board members, to seek volunteers in this area. EL: Agreed, confirming that Healthwatch Wiltshire will proactively look for more diversity for the Board but warned that it was important to manage expectations as this could be hard to achieve. It was of utmost importance, in the first instance to ensure that our demographic information is up-to-date. A Community Cash fund to invest as a virtual activity would be a way forward. All agreed. JB: Would add this to the work plan. IK: Questioned whether there had been a survey in terms of ethnicity of under-represented groups. JB: Would find out and let IK know.

### **Healthwatch Update (Paper 2)**

JB: Had received a lot of feedback - 164 comments, 161 related to Covid. Many were related to GP and pharmacy services. There were positive comments as well as negative. Dentists had arisen as an issue across Wiltshire, with unclear information on what dentistry treatment was currently available on the NHS.

Volunteer Activities. Healthwatch Wiltshire were keeping up with regular catch up sessions on Zoom. Volunteers, led by HD, had put together a video on "How to be a Good Volunteer". HD reported frustration from some of the volunteers who wanted to be trained and get on with the job in hand, which was difficult with the current social distancing rules. HD: Felt that it was important not to train people to do work that they were unable to physically do, as this was demotivating.

JB: Together, with a volunteer, had led a Zoom interview at a Care Home to find out how they had kept their residents connected during the pandemic.

**Projects:**

Covid – Completed; 240 Survey responses.

Covid Report - Collated a summary across BSW.

This was shared at the Sponsoring Board Meeting as part of the Citizen’s Panel and was very well received.

Military Families – Report almost completed.

Dementia Engagement Model – Completed.

Autism and GP Projects - Progressing.

Dentists were now on the watch list. The issues included: charges for PPE; No fixed agreed fees; Confusion on what was payable through the NHS; High charges for private work. EL: Would consider making a collective call for information.

**AOB**

**Covid Report Press Release**

All agreed that the draft Press Release JB had circulated prior to this meeting should be used.

EL: Suggested that a line was added “we want to hear your stories” to encourage people to report back.

**Elizabeth Disney**

JB/HD had met with Elizabeth Disney who was keen to collaborate with Healthwatch Wiltshire.

**Thank you**

The Board would like to take this opportunity to thank Robert Jefferson for his hard work and commitment as Chairman of Healthwatch Wiltshire.

Regards and appreciation also go to Richard Austin for his work as Board Member for the Charity.

The work of both Members was outstanding and their considered and thoughtful approach to the topics was valued highly during a difficult period for Healthwatch Wiltshire.

**Date of Next Meetings 15<sup>th</sup> September at 2.00pm**

**13<sup>th</sup> October at 2.00pm**

**17<sup>th</sup> November at 2.00pm**