

**Minutes of a Meeting held on 5th May 2020
by the Board of Healthwatch (UK) Wiltshire
via Microsoft Teams Meetings**

Present: Rob Jefferson (RJ) (Chair); Stacey Sims (SS); Julie Brown (JB); Irene Kohler (IK); Hazel Dunnett (HD); Richard Austin (RA); Emma Leatherbarrow (EL); Andy Mintram (AM); Joanna Wittles (JW)

Apologies: None

Minutes: Karon Van Den Bergh (KV)

Welcome and Introductions

All present welcomed KV as the newly appointed Board Coordinator.

Minutes and Action Tracker

It was agreed that the Minutes of the Last Meeting were considered a true and accurate record.

The following typing errors should be amended:

2nd para (Chairman's Note) - out role should be our role.

3rd para (Interim Covid) - out actions should be our actions

4th para (Interim Covid) - well well should be went well.

The LLB Action Tracker was referred to and amended (attached to Minutes). RJ: Confirmed that the Board were working from three trackers: Current Tracker, Post-Covid Tracker (actions on hold); Completed Tracker (no action needed).

Sustainability and Long-term planning during Covid 19

RJ: Questioned whether the financial situation of Healthwatch Wiltshire would continue to be secure over the next couple of months following the Covid-19 lockdown. RJ: Voiced concerns that councils were known to be running low on cash flow and whether this could be risk, particularly if a semi-lockdown situation arises in the next few weeks. RJ: Also asked for confirmation of any change of direction in Healthwatch's mission under the current situation. RJ: Explained further that he had received a useful communication from Healthwatch England, in his role as Chair, with advice to the way forward. RJ: Felt that most of the advice received had already been put into action by Healthwatch Wiltshire but would circulate it with the Minutes to enable the Board to read it and provide any comments to JB/RJ.

EL: Explained that a continuing and ongoing contract was in place with Wiltshire Council, the terms of which gave obligation to them to pay and Healthwatch to deliver. There were no expectations that the current level of finance would change. There could, however, be a delay in receipt of payment, but with 5 months of strong cash flow in the bank to manage the peaks and troughs this was not, currently, considered to be a problem. EL: Went on to say that Help & Care was 95% contract funded from the statutory sector, there was no reliance on donations. No staff had been furloughed, work was ongoing,

staff were busy and all invoices would be paid. There would, however, be some loss of income as, under normal circumstances, 6 fund-raising runners would take part in the London Marathon which had been cancelled, raising approximated £6000 and the charity shop, although not profitable in usual times, would suffer a loss in turnover as it continued to incur rent without income.

There were a few staff working on the charity side who had been furloughed with 100% income having responsibility for the running of a gardening project in Dorset supporting frail elderly people. EL: Saw no reason why this would not start up again once lockdown is released.

EL: Had met with the Trustees last week and the expectation was that contracts will continue. The authorities would have to give a full easement and would be in breach of their statutory duty if they did not have a Healthwatch. The responsibility of capturing and gathering concerns, positive feedback and signposting was considered to be of utmost importance.

EL: Reported that the staff were providing a great deal of information to the public, via social media and the website. They were signposting from the hub, with front line teams manning the telephones. Engagement and research was in full swing. There was currently a survey up and running asking for experiences of accessing health and care services during the pandemic. Staff were trying to reach out to voluntary sector partners. In fact, the teams were as busy as ever, with the only difference being, rather than face to face contact, all meetings were virtual.

SS/JB: Agreed they were also as busy as usual, if not more so.

RJ: Asked whether there was increased demand on the people answering calls for services that were not provided by our organisation, as it was important to ensure that the whole of the community received answers to their queries. IK: Reminded RJ that this point had arisen in the Strategy Meeting. EL: Felt that referral queries were not as high as anticipated and the Hub Team were managing well. The nature of the enquiries seemed to be changing. The Hub Teams had collaborated with an advocate and produced a resource pack which focused on death and dying, as expectations were that requests for information would be received in this area. The IT and up to date links would be available to all Healthwatch teams next week for use in signposting.

SS: Was pleased with the signposting information which Wiltshire Council had provided on their Website. IK: Felt that the website was difficult to navigate and the language could be simpler.

EL: Had received an email from Healthwatch England, the contents of which would advise Chairs of what we should be doing.

HW Wilts Update – Annual Report

SS: Reported that the majority of her time had been spent on Covid related work. The survey had been sent out last week and, so far, 25+ responses had been received. BANES and Swindon would be using the same survey which SS had shared, helping the CCG. SS: Had also been working on pulling together the fortnightly intelligence reports on outcomes on the survey data from volunteers and community sector groups. It appeared that they had been well received. Copies had also been forwarded to all the local Covid Response Groups (400+ emails in total).

RJ: Reported that he would be attending the BSW Sponsoring Board Meeting tomorrow and would report back to the Board. The main item on Agenda was what members were doing at this time.

SS/JB: Would send RJ the intelligence document which she has been working on and is due to send out next week.

IK: Asked if she could be provided with feedback to the Sport England exercise. SS/JB: Would provide this. IK: Asked if, when voluntary and community groups feedback whether it was possible to ascertain which part of the country the feedback originated. SS: Confirmed that it was not possible as the information was lumped together in one return. SS: Did point out that it was, however, possible to source this information from the Surveys as a request for a postcode was included. IK: referred to the Military Families Project, asking whether information had been gleaned as to whether the people have support of an independent advocate as it was their role to access health services. JB: was not aware of any information in the surveys she had seen but, going forward, she would inform the volunteers that this would be useful information to have.

SS: Stressed that the Annual Report needed to be published 30th June so it was important for the Board to decide what was to be included. SS: Referred the Board to Paper 3a (content) and Paper 3b (template). SS: Asked the Board to read the documents, report any missing information and provide comments by Friday, 15th May. The draft paper should be returned to be signed off at the next Board Meeting. JB: Pointed out that the Report contained the fact that 292% more people were spoken to this year than last. RJ: Linda Webb, Communications, would do a draft introduction which RJ would modify if necessary and sign.

RJ: Congratulated the staff team on all the work, the detail and clear presentation was excellent. Thanks was extended from the Board.

AOB

Stacey Sims

RJ: Reminded the Board that this was SS's last meeting before her departure on maternity leave and thanked her for all support she provided to all members and especially, himself. The Board passed on best wishes and good luck for the future.

Forthcoming Meeting Dates

The scheduled dates of the next meetings are:

Tuesday, 2nd June at 10.00am (Microsoft Teams)

Tuesday, 7th July at 2.00pm (Venue to be confirmed)