

Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset Executive Board

Wednesday 11 March 2020
Saltford Hall

Present:

Ann Harding	Healthwatch B&NES – Link volunteer Virgin Care
Susan Thompson	The Advocacy People Independent Health Complaints Advocate
Diana Hall Hall	Healthwatch B&NES – Link volunteer Royal United Hospitals (RUH)
Thomas Harvey	Healthwatch B&NES new volunteer (observing)
Alex Francis	Healthwatch B&NES Manager, The Care Forum
Pat Foster	Healthwatch B&NES Volunteer Support Officer, The Care Forum
Amit Desai	Kings College London (observing)

Apologies:

Melanie Hilton	Healthwatch B&NES – Volunteer Lead - Children and Young People
Roger Tippings	Healthwatch B&NES Volunteer lead – Quality and Enter and View
Joanna Parker	Healthwatch B&NES Volunteer

1) Welcome, introductions and apologies

Ann Harding chaired the meeting and welcomed Amit Desai.

Alex Francis explained that she would be leaving The Care Forum at the end of March. Ann asked that it is minuted that the Executive Board wish to thank Alex and are very sorry to see her move on but fully understand her decision. Alex said her replacement will be decided through an internal recruitment process and should be in place by mid-April. The volunteers will be informed of this as soon as possible.

2) Agree and review minutes of last meeting

The minutes of 5 December 2019 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Community pot:

A final project report has been received from Bath Carers' Centre. Alex confirmed that all four projects have now been completed and second payments paid or being arranged. Sadly Fosse House did not return a report; despite best efforts from staff, and support from Roger Tippings and Pat, the project was not completed. Alex explained that no money had been given to Fosse House. Bath Area Play Project and Off the Record B&NES gave an update of their reports at the meeting of the Children and Young People's Network on 21 January 2020.

Alex explained that the Local Reform and Community Voices grant for 2019-20 has finally been received and the Community Pot is now live on the website with a closing date of 31 March 2020. Based on Board feedback from last year, funded projects must provide a verbal update to the Executive Board half-way through their projects, which must be completed by Friday 30 October. A grant panel will have to be convened in early April to

discuss applications – this may need to be virtual due to Covid-19. Alex to confirm nearer the time.

[NOTE: Due to escalation in the Covid-19 crisis, a decision was taken after the Executive Board meeting to extend the Community Pot deadline to 30 April 2020. The Care Forum are monitoring Covid-19 closely and will review the viability of Community Pot projects being delivered (in conjunction with B&NES Council) as the situation develops. Alex Francis, Healthwatch Manager 27/03/2020]

Virgin Care:

Alex met Virgin's Communications Business Partner last week and it was agreed that the Healthwatch/ Virgin Care event planned for April 2020 will be postponed due to Covid-19. Virgin Care staff attended the Healthwatch Volunteer Support meeting on 6 February and provided an update on the Independent Care Record. Ann said she had attended a very open and positive discussion about Virgin Care's Citizen's Panel in January 2020. However there has been no word since. **ACTION: Alex to contact Mike Plows for an update.**

NHS Long Term Plan:

Alex explained that the Clinical Commissioning Group's public facing document, capturing their five year response to the NHS Long Term Plan, is due to be published shortly.

ACTION: Pat to share when it becomes available.

Executive Board review:

In accordance with the Executive Board's Terms of Reference, a Board member review took place between January and March 2020. All but the Children and Young People's lead (as this post was only agreed last August) stood down and all Healthwatch B&NES volunteers were invited to nominate themselves for a role. Alex thanked Pat and the volunteers for taking part in this process.

Executive Board membership for 2020-21:

Roger Tippings	Lead – Quality and Enter and View
Melanie Hilton	Lead – Children and Young People
Ann Harding	Link volunteer Virgin Care
Diana Hall Hall	Link volunteer Royal United Hospitals (RUH)

Pat has yet to hear from Nick Ramsey who had been Link volunteer for Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP), Pat has emailed and phoned Nick with no reply. The role will be re-advertised if Nick Ramsey stands down.

Alex explained that B&NES Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) is still in a process of reviewing its priorities, whilst this process is ongoing Alex proposed that a member of staff continues to attend as HWBB representative (a formal Executive Board role). Once the Board's priorities are agreed, it may be appropriate for this role to be taken up by a volunteer again. Alex will share this in her handover notes for the new manager.

3) Monitoring our progress

Feedback during Quarter 4:

Most of the feedback Healthwatch has heard this quarter has been from patients trying to access NHS dentists – especially in Keynsham. One patient explained that the dentist

would not accept children unless their parents were signed up as NHS patients, however this was not possible at their practice. Pat has contacted NHS England about this and is awaiting a reply. Tom Harvey says that he has had a similar experience with dentists in Twerton.

Decide next steps and action required:

- Follow up again with NHS England
- Inform the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) that this is coming through as a theme (Alex informed the Board that Healthwatch colleagues from Swindon and Wiltshire have been hearing this too)
- Check whether there is still an NHS 111 emergency dentist in Bath

Feedback from the stakeholder survey:

Alex circulated the results of the 360 degree Healthwatch stakeholder survey prior to the meeting. This was sent to 35-40 people across the Council, elected members, CCG and voluntary sector partners. Unfortunately we only received 12 replies, however the feedback was generally positive. The main area for improvement identified was marketing the service more widely in order to raise its profile. Alex explained that she intends to speak to B&NES Council about redirecting some budget to help boost this aspect of the service. She hopes to get this agreed before she leaves, and will make sure the new manager is informed.

ACTION: Alex

Respondents suggested project ideas for Healthwatch, including working more closely with the voluntary sector to help raise its profile. Susan notes that NHS services are not signposting members of the public to advocacy services so she and her colleagues are going to be visiting services and Carers' Centre coffee shops to raise awareness. Susan offered to take Healthwatch literature along too. Alex thanked Susan for her kind offer of help.

Healthwatch England Quality Framework:

Alex explained that Healthwatch B&NES was an early adopter for Healthwatch England's Quality Framework. Alex completed a self-assessment covering the breadth of the Healthwatch service. Alex and Pat had a really positive meeting with the Healthwatch England assessor in February. There are a couple of areas where we can do better, such as public engagement and increasing our public profile. Alex also explained the need for the Executive Board to consider how we ensure transparency with the public about the actions we have taken, e.g. our letter to Virgin Care, whilst also maintaining relationships with providers and commissioners – the challenge of being a 'critical friend'. Alex will be putting together an action plan and will include this in her handover to the new manager. **ACTION:**

Alex

4) Work Planning 2020/21

The Board discussed potential areas of work as follows – these were agreed in principle, with more information required around mental health. Alex explained that she had spoken to Roger before the meeting and he had also agreed to these work areas in principle.

Engagement and raising the profile of Healthwatch B&NES

Based on feedback from the stakeholder survey and Healthwatch England quality framework, this is a clear area of focus on next year. Alex reviewed the mixed success we had experienced through our quarterly public meetings – these are not providing the depth of feedback that we had hoped in order to establish priority areas throughout the year. It is felt that a change of emphasis is required. Alex proposed that the volunteers (with Pat's

support) could help to raise awareness through attendance at community groups and events. Board members agreed this as a potential way forward. Once the Covid-19 situation is resolved, Pat will support volunteers to visit groups and gather feedback from the public. This can be a rolling programme of work across the year.

Mental Health

We are awaiting information from B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG on this as there may be scope for Healthwatch to support some engagement work. This was also a suggested area of focus from the Healthwatch stakeholder survey.

Rural Transport and access

Continuation and follow-up from last year's work, including the Community Pot project carried out by the West of England Rural Network.

Delivery of the Community Pot

Supporting next steps from last year's projects and setting up/ monitoring the new community pot projects for 2020-21.

Pat asked about frailty and Alex explained that we would need see where we could add value on the NHS Long Term Plan around ageing well and Learning disabilities and Autism.

Alex noted that B&NES Council has mentioned that there was a lot of general feedback and questions about social care receiving during the recent social care charging policy consultation process, particularly from voluntary sector colleagues. Alex discussed the option of running an information session for colleagues to help them understand social care in more detail. The Board liked this idea and agreed in principle to exploring this once the Covid-19 situation has subsided.

Alex also pointed out that the postponed Virgin Care sessions may need to be delivered this year if possible.

Enter and View:

Roger chaired the enter and view planning meeting on 4 February where it was agreed to undertake an enter and view to Bath Mind's supported living unit on 1 April and a joint enter and view with Healthwatch Wiltshire to The Priory in Radstock on 9 April. Alex explained that she had spoken to Roger prior to this meeting and he felt that in light of Covid-19 all enter and view activity should be postponed. The Executive Board discussed this and agreed that the enter and view programme be postponed until further notice.

ACTION: Pat to inform Bath Mind and Healthwatch Wiltshire of our decision.

Pat has arranged a meeting with Swallow to see if they would be interested in supporting people with learning disabilities to become enter and view volunteers. This came up at the Quality Account meeting with the RUH, during which the Trust said they would like to explore how their services could become more accessible for people with learning disabilities. Pat explained that The Care Forum has experience of carrying out similar work in South Gloucestershire.

Quality Improvement:

Pat explained that NHS Quality Account review meetings have taking place with local NHS Trusts, six months or so after receiving the initial formal Quality Account response from Healthwatch. We have met with Virgin Care, AWP, South West Ambulance Service and the RUH to get feedback on their progress against quality priorities. All meetings have been positive.

AWP explained more about action being taken regarding their estates that are deemed 'not fit for purpose'; South West Ambulance have made great in-roads into combatting the racial harassment that Healthwatch picked up on in their 2018/19 Quality Account; and the RUH Director of Nursing has welcomed enter and view visits particularly with a view to looking at services through the eyes of people with learning disabilities.

5) Executive Board updates:

New representation opportunities:

None at this present time.

Feedback related to Board roles:

Alex Francis

Diana asked about progress with the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB). Alex explained that the Board has been going through a review and a sub-group (including Healthwatch) has been looking at the Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy and how the board could be more responsive to the general public. An HWBB development session is scheduled for next week during which members will discuss the sub-group's proposals. Alex will write this up and feedback to volunteers **ACTION: Alex**

[**NOTE:** Following the Executive Board meeting, a decision was taken by B&NES Council to cancel the HWBB development session and meeting due to Covid-19. Alex Francis, Healthwatch Manager 27/03/2020]

Alex explained that she receives the agenda for the Overview and Scrutiny meetings and Healthwatch are invited to attend if there is something we wish to present to the committee. She urged the Board to bear this in mind for work carried out during 2020-21.

Diana Hall Hall

Diana explained that the RUH Dignity and Respect meeting has been cancelled twice, although there should be a meeting next week. The RUH wishes to develop a Patient Participation Group, but Diana is not sure if this is to replace the Patient Experience Group. James Scott, CEO at the RUH is retiring at the end of March and will be succeeded by Cara Charles-Barks (currently at Salisbury Foundation Trust) and Alyson Ryan is the Chair. Diana asked how the coronavirus will affect Healthwatch staff and volunteers, Alex suggested that the new manager will keep this conversation going and it may be that staff and volunteers have to socially distance themselves, working from home and carrying out conversations with external partners via telephone, email and video conferencing. If this is to happen, The Care Forum will be in touch.

Susan Thompson – The Advocacy People

Susan provided an update on several cases that had been signposted to The Advocacy People by Healthwatch. It was good to receive this feedback and hear the positive steps that had been taken by NHS providers as a result.

Ann Harding

Ann asked about the information Alex had circulated regarding Sirona giving notice on five Extra Care Homes and three community resources centres - will these services be recommissioned or picked up by Virgin Care? Alex does not know what will happen next, but confirmed that Sirona had given notice to B&NES Council who will consider how to proceed.

6) Dates of future meetings:

No dates were agreed for future Executive Board meetings due to Covid-19 and the imminent recruitment of the new Healthwatch Manager – these will be forwarded later. Ann asked if there could be consultation on the dates offered. Alex agreed.

In the interim, Pat will continue to keep volunteers updated through the Volunteer Weekly email.