Healthwatch North Tyneside – Minutes of Board Meeting

Date: Monday 20th January 2025
Venue: Bede Room, The Linskill Centre, North Shields, NE30 2AY

Present: Carol Nevison (CN) (Chair), Jackie Doughty (JD), Paula McCormack (PM), David Slater (DS), Paul Greenway (PG), Bea Goves (BG)

In attendance: Paul Jones (PJ), Matthew Hunter (MH), Tracey Hindmarch (TH), Ali Jane (AJ), Maxine Houston (MHo), Paul McKelvie (PMc), Ronnie Ramsey (RR)

Apologies: Peter Berrie (PB)

	Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Required
1.	Welcome, introductions and apologies	CN Welcomed all in attendance to the meeting. PB sent apologies.	
2.	Declarations of interest	No new interests were declared. For each item, the Board considered any equalities, Health and Safety and safeguarding issues arising and considered these as part of their decision-making.	
3.	Minutes From the Previous Meeting	The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a true record and actions are either completed or discussed later in the agenda. In attendance at this meeting were Mho and PMC, 2 of the 4 potential new trustees.	
4.	Chair and Director Updates	CN provided the update that Theresa Culpin has made the decision to resign	TH to remove Theresa

		from the board for personal reasons. CN, on behalf of the board, thanked Theresa for her dedication as a trustee. CN also relayed comments sent to her from MH thanking the team for their brilliant support on his return from sick leave. CN will go through the specific comments with PJ. PJ explained that Lead Officers and Chairs from across the North East and North Cumbria Healthwatch Network recently attended a meeting with Gavin Macgregor and Delana Lawson from Healthwatch England (HWE). HWE are still awaiting the outcome of the Penny Dash report, and how this will impact future local Healthwatch remit, funding and commissioning. Gavin reassured everyone that any changes recommended by the Dash report would take time to implement, especially if necessary to change primary legislation. CN notes that Gavin highlighted it may be a positive change for the role of Healthwatch. PJ advised that a region wide Healthwatch North East and North Cumbria event will be taking place at the Royal Station Hotel in Newcastle on March 31st. Each local Healthwatch will have approx. 7 or 8 places at this event. The event will be focused on impact. A key element of this will be a presentation from HWE Chief Executive Louise Ansari.	from the Chairty Commission and HWNT website

		Louise is expected to talk about the outcome of the Dash report, which should be published by then. CN feels, once published, trustees should get together to discuss the dash review. Other updates from PJ include that Chief Executive Paul Hanson has left North Tyneside Council and there will be a new elected mayor in May. The CQC review of North Tyneside Council Adult Social Care is also approaching. PJ has already participated by speaking to the CQC. It is also almost time when Quality Accounts are published. PJ attended a meeting to discuss the Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust Quality Accounts.	
5.	Standing items: • GDPR • Safeguarding • Health & Safety	PJ shared that a Safeguarding Adults review has recently taken place. More details can be found in the Board Papers. With Theresa Culpin departing the board, a new trustee Safeguarding lead will need to be appointed, however this will take place after role responsibilities are reviewed.	
6.	Workplan updates: 1) Age Friendly North Tyneside (AJ) 2) Care home visit updates (TH) 3) Other workplan updates & new activity (PJ)	**<u>Age Friendly – Update from AJ</u>** AJ explained the background to this work, that there is an aspiration for North Tyneside to become an Age Friendly borough, based upon the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition for Age Friendly, where age is not a barrier to living well. An online and paper survey was carried out, based upon the different domains which the WHO considers are part of age friendly communities. This was done working alongside Age UK North Tyneside.	

The survey received a good spread of responses, although AJ notes this was carried out before the Winter Fuel Allowance cut, which may have impacted results. AJ also noted that people who are housebound, or who do not get involved in community activities, may have missed out on participating. Despite challenges, response rates and spread across demographics were good.

In addition to the survey, some events were also carried out face to face. At these events, issues of anti social behaviour were raised.

Issues from the survey include:

- Loneliness and Isolation is a big problem – Various factors, eg availability of transport, combine to create this issue.
- Older people have a desire to stay fit and active, and therefore activities such as lunch clubs are not always appropriate.
- There are issues accessing up to date information, particularly for those who are not online. This was noted as an ongoing challenge, as information must not just be published once, but constantly kept up to date.
- Services are not joined up.
- People feel invisible / forgotten, still want to be part of a community into old age.

AJ will finish the report within the next 3 weeks, and next steps are to work with those people who will be impacted in future to make changes.

PM asks whether this work is just being carried out in North Tyneside, and if so notes this would create implementation challenges, in comparison to if the entire

		region was considering this issue. PJ notes only North Tyneside are considering things in this way. There has been some work elsewhere, but not in all parts of the region, and research was carried out differently. PM feels this will be challenging, and it is not just North Tyneside which is experiencing an ageing population. DS asks what was identified as the key priorities from the survey. AJ feels that the way the survey was set up did not really allow for priorities to be identified, but these would become more clear when discussing the survey results at events with the public. AJ feels that there are multiple barriers, and that this is a multi faceted issue. PJ adds that one common challenge experienced across the board is not having access to information. People are able to find information if they know exactly what they want to find out, but general information which may be of interest is difficult to come across. CN asks about next steps – A residents forum has not yet been established, but Age UK will have a role in this. DS will be the board project sponsor for Age Friendly. **<u>Care Homes</u>** TH provided the update, that whilst it had been a slow process to get visits organised (due to factors such as admin, volunteer recruitment and training), most visits were now in the diary for January and February, with the remainder being carried out in March. A number of visits have already taken place also. The visits are conducted in pairs, with a mixture of volunteers and staff (so a pair	

		could be 2 volunteers, 2 staff members, or one of each). The attached report in the Board papers was fully produced by a volunteer. All volunteers who are involved are highly skilled, and both TH and AJ praised the volunteer contribution. Staff resource is only necessary due to the short time frame in which visits must occur. Majority of homes have been very welcoming and supportive. CN asked about the emerging results, have they been positive? TH advised that this was largely the case, with one home being mixed. PJ advised the board of a concern surrounding the visit at one home, where issues such as the visit being 'stage managed' (very different to the daily reality) were noted, and one family member raised some serious concerns which PJ had to raise with the CQC and North Tyneside Council. Even this home had some good elements however. PJ feels this project will now occur annually, although it is not in the Healthwatch core contract. PJ feels discussions with North Tyneside Council surrounding continuing this work will occur. If happening annually, with a wider time frame where visits can take place, this may be able to be entirely carried out by volunteers. PJ adds, and linked to Age Friendly, that even residents who experience high quality care may still face issues surrounding loneliness and isolation.	

		Mho expressed an interest in being project sponsor for this work, once she joins the board of trustees. **<u>Other Projects</u>** Overall numbers of people who have engaged with us are ahead of last year, although there has been less requests for information. TH feels one reason for this could be a reduction in the people contacting us in error, as we have made some changes to our website pages to clarify who we are, and to highlight the contact details of some of the key organisations which we were mistaken for. Amanda Graydon is carrying out a number of engagements for the annual survey. Numbers are now looking positive, around the 550 mark. PJ explained that numbers were initially lower as the survey was launched much later in November than in previous years, and it was felt that December was a difficult time to engage. PJ explained that upcoming projects included the NHS 10 Year Plan consultations, for which we have received money to carry out from the ICB's project funds for the North East and North Cumbria Healthwatch network. Also upcoming is work on the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA), understanding the new triage process used at NSECH, where people at triaged at the front door of A&E (when staff availability allows this to happen) and 2 interviews which Healthwatch England have paid us to carry out. More details are included in the Board Papers. PM will be the board sponsor for the upcoming PNA work.	

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<tr><td></td><td></td><td>JD will be the board sponsor for the NSECH Triage work.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>7.</td><td>New Workplan Monitoring Report</td><td>PJ asked the board for comments on this workplan monitoring document, to be reported to North Tyneside Council.

The council have confirmed they are happy with this document.

PM is happy with this document, and notes all data is being collected already for other purposes, so it should be straightforward to fill out.

PM also suggests adding whether projects are on time and budget and risks of what would happen if not delivering project.

DS suggests linking this to risk register with the RAG ratings.
PG suggests expanding the line on complaints, noting what has happened to the complaint.

CN is happy with this document, but asks that the board receive this before being passed to the Council, PJ is happy with this.

This document will be used from the 2025/26 financial year.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>8.</td><td>Strategic Plan Review Discussion</td><td>PJ advised that it is now time to review the strategic plan for beyond 2025, considering:
The Core Healthwatch Service
The Charity as a whole
There will be conversations with stakeholders, and internal planning to run simultaneously.

The board have agreed a half day session with PJ to focus on the strategic plan. This will take place on Monday 3rd March from 9am to 1pm, venue to be confirmed.</td><td></td></tr>
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9.	Trustee Handbook and Supporting New Trustees	The trustee handbook has been revised, and the only further change brought up at this meeting concerned updating the names of trustees on page 5. CN and PJ will review the trustee role responsibilities, once all new trustees have been recruited. New trustees can then comment on this.	PJ to update the trustee handbook with the new list of trustees. CN and PJ to review trustee roles.
10.	Finance Position Update	Treasurer JD is currently happy with everything financial. There are some invoices to resolve. For the Northern Cancer Alliance, PJ advises that they are currently looking to see if any more money is available, and a project plan will be developed around June. PJ advises that the North East and North Cumbria Healthwatch network will be receiving approximately £250,000 to participate in the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) project surrounding workforce challenges. This project will involve a number of different organisations across the north east, and also parts of London. BG is happy to read the report surrounding the proposal for how this NIHR project will be carried out. PJ will send this to BG	PJ to send NIHR project proposal report to BG
11	AOB	The following future dates for board meetings have been set: • Board Business Development Group – 24th February 5pm at Jackie's house. • Full Board Meeting 10th March 6pm – 8pm, venue TBC. CN sends apologies for this date, and JD will step in as Chair for this meeting.	MH to consider and set further board meeting dates for 2025.