

Healthwatch Wakefield Trustee Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 26 August 2025, 10.00 am to 12.00 pm

The Plex, 15 Maragret Street, Wakefield WF1 2DQ

Present

Trustees	Roger Grasby Chair Iain Wilkinson Richard Harwood Melvyn Ingleson Mary Roche Berni O'Brien Andrew Kent
In Attendance	Lewis Smith-Connell, Chief Officer Helen Watkiss, Communications Officer (minute taker)
Apologies	Rachel Hanna, Trustee Suzy Jubb, Operations and Impact Manager

69/25 Welcome, Introduction and Declarations of Interest

RG welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained it would be a four part meeting as follows.

- 1) The Year Ahead / Best Year Yet
- 2) Board business, governance
- 3) A private session with the chief Officer present
- 4) A private session with Trustees only

70/25 Joint session with Staff – Discussion about the decision making process and updating on our selected priorities

LSC introduced the session explaining that staff had been looking at priorities and populating ideas around projects. Today's discussion comes at a good time to give information to trustees and gain their input. He explained that at the end of the whole process we would like to have perhaps four projects to focus on. The team had met and looked at information from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Wakefield District, along with national, local, and Healthwatch intelligence. There were some priorities such as cancers that may still be included in our work, for example communications through the months, but may not be a project as such.

Stacey presented on the information she had researched and collated from the JSNA and other sources. She firstly outlined some of the JSNA priorities. These were: high obesity and smoking prevalence, cardiovascular and respiratory disease burden, mental health, worsening health

inequalities, ageing population and long-term conditions, increasing cancer mortality and decreasing screening uptakes, and health protection.

There was a discussion with trustees on what we wanted to achieve, who we might want to challenge, how to keep volunteers involved and invested, and how to collectively deliver our best for our population.

LSC also mentioned ideas from the staff team including stroke pathways and neurology service, unpaid carers, bereavement services, women's health, Patient Transport Services, care homes, 'Home First', dementia, and digital exclusion. Staff have started to build up the detail and delving into possible methodology.

The process going forward will be to firm up ideas to be discussed as a team and use our Decision Making Priority Matrix to look for projects that can demonstrate impact and positive change. We will use the passion of staff and our existing Panels and Partnerships.

The staff are meeting on 4 September 2025 to go through the matrix, decide on projects and messaging. Some ideas won't become formal projects, but may instead be themes for our communications and engagement activity. We also need to consider capacity and other resources. The final suggestions will come back to the Board for sign off.

71/25 Governance

(i) Minutes of the Trustee Board Meeting held on 29 July / Matters Arising

The minutes of 29 July 2025 were approved subject to amending when the Chief Officer had arrived at the meeting, as this was erroneously carried over in error from previous minutes.

(ii) Action Log

LSC went through the Action Log, stating that a number of the actions have been closed, then provided the update in brief, with several actions being discussed later in the agenda.

(iii) Board Workplan

LSC went through the updated workplan including changes since July which are removing Board Meetings scheduled for October and December 2025; and plans for a staff showcase in September.

RG also reminded trustees that the November meeting was to be aligned with the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Board will meet between 1.30 and 3.30 pm. The AGM will be between 4.00 and 5.30 pm. Trustees are reminded that that meeting will not be at the usual time of 10.00 am. The November meetings together will run between 1.30 and 5.30 pm.

In 2026 plans are to have Board Meetings every other month so January, March, May, and so on.

DECISION: The workplan updates and meeting dates and timings were noted.

72/25 Executive Reports

(i) Chief Officer Update

LSC asked trustees to note the content of his streamlined report. He spoke to the place and system context section. He received useful updates through the West Yorkshire ICB System Oversight and Assurance Group. The Integrated Neighbourhood Health People's Voices Project has met to discuss

the possibility of a VCSE group working with Neighbourhood Health Services to ensure patient voice is embedded into the neighbourhood health operating model.

LSC is also presenting a paper on ensuring patient voice remains central to Wakefield Place at the Wakefield District Health & Care Partnership Committee Meeting on 9 September, which will outline the state of patient involvement currently and our position as an exemplar in the system and nationally.

With regards to statutory reporting, LSC reported one safeguarding incident raised which was immediately passed to the Safeguarding Adults Team and they followed up. No health and safety incidents to report. BO'B asked if in future, for trustees oversight, the report could include whether the safeguarding incidents were witnessed or received through other channels.

ACTION: LSC will update on the Integrated Neighbourhood Health People's Voices Project and our role at the next Board Meeting.

ACTION: Future Chief Officer Reports to include if safeguarding incidents raised were witnessed.

DECISION: The Chief Officer Report was noted.

(ii) Risk Register

LSC explained the changes to the Risk Register:

Risk 1	Loss of funding streams/additional commissioned contracts – Reduced.
Risk 2	Unplanned loss of key staff, volunteers and/or Trustees. – Increased.
Risk 13	Changes in healthcare policy – Reduced.
Risk 20	Closure of website host – Reduced.

The new Risk Register, which will use an updated scoring model, following the format set out in the updated Risk Management Policy, will be presented when the policy is signed off.

DECISION: Changes to the Risk Register were noted.

(iii) Mobilisation, Demobilisation and Making the Most of 12 Months Plan

LSC went through the plan. Headline points included clauses in the new core contract.

LSC reported that the mobilisation plan is on track and will be reviewed and developed. The Implementation Plan has nothing of concern in it and will commence on 1 October 2025. LSC noted to board the need to keep track of certain elements, for example, adding social value in the contract. The commissioners are still open to discussion on the Big Idea.

DECISION: To gain further advice on the contractual changes.

ACTION: Arrange to meet with the council legal team to understand the contract clauses.

DECISION: The Mobilisation, Demobilisation and Making the Most of 12 Months Plan was noted.

73/25 Finance

(i) Finance Update

IW updated the Board on the financial position. A healthy balance in the bank. Ledger checked all on track.

(ii) Notes from the Finance Sub Group 19 August 2025

The notes included the Terms of Reference for the Group, the current Chair is the Treasurer, they will continue to meet monthly and keep minutes.

DECISION: The update was noted.

74/25 Safeguarding Trustee Self Assessments

BO'B received most self assessments and from these could do a simple audit to present findings and recommendations to the Board. Of the four main questions the following was found.

1) Understanding and managing risk

69% of trustees said they felt confident of this but had added comments which suggested a mini factsheet would be helpful. For example, do policies cover both adults and children; are policies accessible. These are questions we can answer to give so trustees can be confident in our approach.

2) Making safeguarding a priority

46% of trustees answered yes to this. There are some gaps in knowledge relating to the Code of Conduct. There is also a need for a Lead Trustee on this.

3) Supporting staff and volunteers

This didn't score as high with 33%. Again, some cross checking of facts should help in relation to background checks and training.

4) Charity Commission Requirements

83% of trustees said they were confident of this. 'I don't know' isn't good enough. If trustees feel there is a gap in their knowledge they should consider training on an individual level. If trustees don't understand there is a responsibility to do that.

Overall BO'B suggested a Frequently Asked Questions document or factsheet to cover all basic knowledge which will help to increase the understanding of all board members.

DECISION: The Board the information and suggestion were noted.

75/25 Any Other Business

None

End of Public Section of the Board Meeting

Next Meeting: Tuesday 30 September 2025