

Healthwatch Wakefield Trustee Board Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustee Board held on 27 May 2025

The Plex, Wakefield

Present

Trustees

Roger Grasby (RG) Chair

Rachel Hanna (RHa)

Mary Roche (MR)

Berni O'Brien (BO'B)

Andrew Kent (AK)

Iain Wilkinson (IW)

Melvyn Ingleston (MI) online for the first part of the meeting

Apologies

Richard Harwood

In Attendance

Lewis Smith-Connell (LSC) Chief Officer

Suzy Jubb (SJ) Operations and Impact Manager

Kathryn Waldegrave (KW) Mental Health Community Panel Coordinator

Helen Watkiss (HW) Communications Officer (Minutes)

31/25 Welcome and Introduction

RG welcomed everyone to the meeting.

32/25 Staff Showcase: Mental Health Community Panel

KW presented a showcase on the Mental Health Community Panel.

Trustees thanked KW for her presentation and the work she was doing. KW left the meeting.

33/25 Governance

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

RG noted that there was a reference to the Supreme Court Decision on 'discrimination'. This should read the Supreme Court ruling on the legal definition of a woman.

RHa asked about documents that had been sent recorded under Matters Arising and the Action Log on Conflict of Interest. LSC explained there is the Conflict of Interest Declaration and a duplicate of the page that needs a signature for ease. RG said trustees needed to sign and send back.

The minutes of 29 April 2025 were approved.

ACTION: Trustees to sign the conflict of interest declaration form and send back.

(ii) Action Log

SJ went through the Action Log as follows:

98/24 – Policy update – on the agenda.

03/25 – Postpone trustee recruitment – hold off till results of Tender, added to Board Plan for July.

06/25 – Draft submission of financials. **Completed removed from Log.**

07/25 – Mitigation of budget – on the agenda.

11/25 – Conflict of interest Declaration – discussed under Minutes / Matters Arising.

12/25 – Options for safeguarding training for the Board. SJ has been looking at the information on the Charity Commission website. BO'B will send resources to the Board. The Adult Safeguarding Board have given comments back and directed SJ to model policy, which she will go through. MR reiterated there is a lot of pertinent information on the Charity Commission site.

13/25 – Trustee EDI Board Lead – on the agenda.

15/25 – DBS update service implementation. **Completed removed from Log.**

16/25 – Communications regarding Supreme Court Ruling. **Completed removed from Log.**

17/25 – Sharing of Safeguarding Policy with Safeguarding Boards. Discussed under 12/25 above and ongoing.

ACTION: Update Action Log.

(iii) Board Work Plan

SJ went through the changes and additions to the workplan.

Staff showcases scheduled as follows.

May: Mental Health Community Panel

June: Maternity Voices Partnership

July: Adult Social Care Citizen Panel

In addition, the June meeting will discuss the Weight Management Services Report; June will also discuss the Annual Report; July will discuss trustee recruitment. September will discuss the Accounts needed for the AGM in November.

(iv) EDI Board Lead

RHa and AK both contacted LSC to express their interest in the role of EDI Board Lead. RHa had some concerns about her capacity. It was agreed that both would share the role.

ACTION: AK and RHa to discuss and create a co-role.

DECISION: Co EDI Leads are agreed as AK and RHa.

(v) Board Meetings in Public

RG spoke to the paper on holding Board Meetings in Public and the difference between these and public meetings. The intention is to have the July Board held as a meeting in public at St George's. RG asked for agreement in principle to hold Board Meetings in Public going forward. The agenda may need adjusting and invitations will be sent to various stakeholders. For example, if showcasing the Adult Social Care Panel, Panel Members will be invited. If the contract is awarded meetings will rotate around the district. RG, LSC, SJ, and HW will meet to discuss arrangements and finer details.

ACTION: RG, LSC, SJ, and HW arrange meeting for next week.

DECISION: Agreement in principle for Board Meetings to be held in public.

34/25 Executive Reports

(i) Chief Officer Update

LSC asked trustees to note the content of the report. He informed the Board that he had met with the Service Director for Adult Social Care and also advised that the new Corporate Director would be starting soon. MR asked about the West Yorkshire ICB Power of Communities meeting noted in his report. RG asked for any update on the Integrated Care Board (ICB). LSC talked of the reductions and the idea that smaller ICB's will be asked to merge. This would not include West Yorkshire as a larger ICB but there has been talk of a move towards using provider collaboratives at Place level to take on some of the current role that the ICB fulfils, and West Yorkshire ICB will see cuts and reduction in staffing. The role of the ICB will be primarily what is called 'strategic commissioning' but it is thought delivery will be through the emerging provider collaboratives at Place, currently there are provider collaboratives in West Yorkshire, but these are focused on organisation type, for example; West Yorkshire Association of Acute Trusts, (WYAAT). RG asked about any potential risk to Healthwatch and was advised this is on the Risk Register. RG also mentioned the Dash Review, which may be released in early July, and asked about West Yorkshire Healthwatch work. LSC mentioned a recent communication from Louise Ansari, Chief Officer at Healthwatch England. He also explained that for West Yorkshire funding was tight so instead of it being for a year it would be to April 2026 and will be discussed at the next Chairs and Chief Officers meeting. IW asked about work and impact. SJ talked about the Hospital Discharge Impact Report coming soon, and that the veterans work was also being followed up, for example using College Lane Surgery as an exemplar.

DECISION: Chief Officer Report was received.

(ii) Risk Register

LSC went through changes to the Risk Register as follows:

Risk 3 Ineffective governance of the organisation – increased slightly.

Risk 9 Risks created by employment practices not being correctly implemented – increased slightly.

Risk 13 Changes in healthcare policy / ICB commissioning and Healthwatch England – increased.

Risk 14 Single accountant dependency – decreased.

There are no new risks. The previous Risk 21: Cyber Essentials accreditation is resolved and closed. LSC also spoke about registration with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and the NHS Information Governance Toolkit which is in place and how these met different contracting and tender requirements.

DECISION: Changes to the Risk Register were noted.

35/25 Finance

(i) Finance Report

IW updated the Board on the Finance Report. There is a healthy reserve in the bank. Cash flow is also efficient. New examiners are working with the accountant.

Decision: The update was noted.

(ii) Finance Sub Group action notes

Decision: The Finance report was noted.

36/25 Policy Update

SJ had shared nine policies with trustees for review and comment. Progress is as follows:

- (i) Absence Management (RG) – SJ has received comments.
- (ii) Adoption Leave (AK) – policy to be checked with Chadwick Lawrence.
- (iii) Anti Bribery (MR) – to re send to SJ with comments.
- (iv) Bad Weather (MR) – SJ has received comments.
- (v) Birth Leave – Paternity (BO'B) – comments from BO'B include defining parental responsibility, foster to adopt and changing the wording 'women' to 'parents'.
- (vi) Periods and Menopause (RH) – a lot of feedback; endometriosis, and PCOS (polycystic ovary syndrome) added. RHa also recommended linking to the NHS site and information rather than quoting it. RHa to agreed make amendments.
- (vii) Retirement (RG) – SJ has received comments.
- (viii) Risk Management (IW) – will be sent this week.
- (ix) Shared Parental Leave (BO'B) – review ongoing.

In addition, the Safeguarding Policy mentioned previously in the meeting needs further updating.

SJ asked if there was an agreed time limit in place for the policies. RG suggested two policies per trustee and a time limit of two weeks. The policies shouldn't be agreed by default but reviewed and accepted by the Board. AK said they should all be sent to Chadwick Lawrence for a final check, but LSC said not all of them needed to be sent back as some are not HR policies. BO'B felt some policies were written in legal language so it was important to consider that staff would understand the content. RG felt that trustees could review and also sense check them. SJ explained there were another two sets of policies that would be presented to the next two Board meetings and they would then be sent to Chadwick Lawrence for final checks. RG noted there seemed to be an issue / conflict between two different policies but that the Board were doing their best and policies were having final checks with legal experts to mitigate this risk.

ACTION: RHa to amend the Periods and Menopause Policy as outlined and send back to SJ.

ACTIONL SJ to send make other amendments from comments and send to Chadwick Lawrence.

DECISION: The Board agreed to these policies subject to the process outlined.

37/25 Any Other Business

i) Trustee support for staff members

This was dealt with in a prior discussion.

End of Board Meeting

Next Meeting: Tuesday 24 June 2025