

Healthwatch Wakefield Trustee Board Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustee Board held on 6 February 2025

The Plex, Wakefield

Present

Trustees

Roger Grasby (RG) Chair

Richard Harwood (RH)

Iain Wilkinson (IW)

Rachel Hanna (RH_a)

Berni O'Brien (BOB)

Mary Roche (MR)

Melvyn Ingleson (MI)

Andrew Kent (AK)

In Attendance

Aaron Bannister (AB) Business Support Officer (Secretary)

Lewis Smith-Connell (LSC) Chief Officer

Suzy Jubb (SJ) Operations and Impact Manager

1/25 Welcome and Introduction

RG welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2/25 Staff Showcase – Stood down

This session was due to be on the work of our Mental Health Panel, however, this was postponed due to staff transitions, including Ellie's departure and Katherine's recent joining of the team.

3/25 Governance

(i) Minutes of the Trustee Board meeting held on 19 December

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 December were approved.

(ii) Matters Arising/Action Log.

LSC went through the Action Log as follows:

59/24 – Unspent money from MHA. SJ suggested Peri-Mental Health as a project but this was not taken forward. MHA to take this to their next meeting. RG stated that the finance report stated the money would be returned. LSC and SJ confirmed that this was an error and the money would be carried over.

98/24 – Chadwick Lawrence reviewing policies – Very close to completed.

111/24 – Not able to get 3 month rate will pay for 12 months at fixed rate.

114/24 – BOB had confirmation that this was sent.

115/24 – Completed.

115/24 – Update Company Secretary – Completed.

(iii) Board Work Plan

RG led a discussion on Trustee recruitment. Due to the work involved in the Tender, Trustee recruitment to be put back. Co-opting potential candidates could be an option. Trustees to consider anyone who they think would be appropriate for this particularly with a view to increasing diversity of the Board.

ACTION: Postpone Trustee recruitment

4/25 Executive Reports

(i) Executive Update

LSC went through the Executive Report, in particular meetings that had been attended with local organisations, key partners, Trustees and staff, as well as a summary of work within the organisation. LSC spoke about his work involved in the Health Inequalities Oversight Group, National Patient Safety Strategy Programme Board and Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust CEO recruitment. LSC then went through the Team update and the ongoing work of 'fixing the roof while the sun is shining'. LSC then spoke about communications, in particular the decrease in activity due to the work involved in producing a self-help pack for service users, which has been a major piece of work. Volunteering is quiet due to long term sickness of staff. LSC went through the issues faced regarding the lack of update from Adult Social Care Panel and issues regarding the Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership recommissioning. LSC also gave an update on the work with West Yorkshire Healthwatch, which Healthwatch Wakefield will engage with.

(ii) Risk Register

LSC went through the changes to the Risk Register as follows:

Risk 6: Increased – Loss of a Mobile Phone. No way to access anything on it and locked out of all systems as precaution.

Risk 12: Reduced – Lower number of cases, self-help pack and marketing available on social media to bring numbers back up.

Risk 16: Closed

Risk 18: New Risk – Confusion of restricted and unrestricted nature of CORE Grant. LSC investigated and rated 6. Communication on going with commissioners.

Risk 19: New Risk – Long term sickness absence of critical role.

Risk 14: Mitigation – Treasurer and LSC to have access to accounts. Finance Sub Group to have it in their Financial Procedures policy which is being updated.

05/25 Finance Reports

(i) Finance Update January 2025

IW updated the Board to the discussion from the latest Finance sub-group meeting. Healthwatch Wakefield has a healthy balance in the bank. More surplus than planned on payroll. End of year predictions are to have a modest surplus.

(ii) Action notes of Finance sub-group

Action notes from meetings will be presented to the Board. Finance sub-group recommend BK Plus to carry out Independent Examination after completion of a competitive process.

DECISION – Board accept sub-groups recommendation.

(iii) Treasurer recommendations on VAT position

IW recommends that we accept the offer from HMRC to pay for VAT which was outstanding to close the matter.

DECISION – Board accept sub-groups recommendation.

(iv) Bank Signatories update

IW confirmed that three signatures are required to sign off payments. There was a discussion if this was necessary. It was recommended that only two signatures would be required, however, it must be by one Trustee and one Member of Staff. Accountant would only have access to input invoices and have no authority to sign off payment. A further discussion was had on Finance Procedure which would clarify and establish a clear protocol.

ACTION: Revise policy and procedure for next Board meeting.

06/25 Core contract recommissioning project plan

LSC delivered an update on the Core Contract. Preparing to tender with survey in progress. April to June will focus on preparing TUPE and commencing delivery. A discussion took place around the process being one contract and not split between Core Healthwatch and NHS Advocacy.

07/25 Any Other Business

Wakefield Council have an advert for adults and health job vacancy. The Board discussed their potential roles and responsibilities in supporting this.

End of Public Meeting