

**Healthwatch Hertfordshire Board Meeting**  
**10am on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024,**  
**Virtually via Zoom**

<b>Board Members:</b> Alan Bellinger, Alex Booth, Jan Taylor, Neil Tester (Chair)
<b>Executive Team:</b> Geoff Brown (Chief Executive), Fiona Corcoran (Deputy Chief Executive), Nuray Ercan (Deputy Chief Executive Interim), Natalie Stone (Finance and Resources Manager)
<b>Visitors/others:</b> Rozy Contractor, Susan Ebanyat (HCC Commissioner)
<b>Apologies:</b> Eve Atkins, Ramone Samuda, Joy Hale and Stephanie Smith (NHS Herts and West Essex Integrated Care Board)

### 1. Welcome, apologies and register of interests

Neil welcomed everyone present and communicated apologies, as above.

Board undertook a minutes silence in memory of Steve Palmer.

Neil updated that he and Alan are now Directors of the Healthwatch Hertfordshire Trading Company and this will need adding to the register of interests document.

[Action: To update the register of interests document.](#)

### 2. Minutes of 21st November 2023 and outstanding actions

[The minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed off.](#)

Geoff and Neil updated Board on the status of items within the action tracker. It was agreed to defer action 1b. until the July 2024 BAC meeting when there will be more progress/information.

### 3. Chair's update

Neil referred to his report circulated as part of the meeting papers. He highlighted that it was great to see the response to our Trustee role advert. We are interviewing this week and next week.

It was noted that Geoff will be retiring from Healthwatch Hertfordshire in August. Neil gave appreciation to Geoff for giving so much notice to allow for a smooth transition and risk mitigation.

Neil said that he had the privilege of watching Chloe and Fiona present our Cost of Living work at the Healthwatch England award impact showcase online on Monday. Other local Healthwatch praised us for how strategic we had been to use this piece of work to really drive change. Healthwatch England also talked about how this piece of work has been used to inform their national work on the issue. The work was recognised with a commendation.

NHS England and Department of Health and Social Care have written to Acute Trusts to say that those that meet their four hour A&E targets during March will be given money as a reward. It was noted that incentivising this part way through the month has been criticised. We will be highlighting that short term, narrowly drawn incentivisation is not ideal during our upcoming holding to account meetings.

#### **4. Chief Executive's update including: Organisational performance and contract monitoring**

We have circulated the contract monitoring documents for quarter 3, as usual. Geoff highlighted that the Organisational performance RAG (red, amber, green) rated document has been produced for Board to monitor performance. Most areas are showing green indicating that they are on target to be achieved by the end of the year. The one area showing as amber is social media where we can see that fewer people are using Facebook now. Fiona added that we have recruited a Project Manager (Comms) who will coordinate our social media going forward, this is an area of his expertise and he will bring additional capacity.

There is a wide range of projects being worked on in many areas. We are also doing lots of co-production work. In April there will be a review of how co-production works especially in the west of the county and how this links into the model of the enhanced Health and Care Partnership. We have also had a very wide range of compliments in the quarter which totalled just under thirty.

#### **Recruitment update**

Jo Wilkinson will be retiring at the end of March having been with us for 8 years. Geoff and Board's thanks for Jo's long standing contribution to the organisation was noted.

#### **5. Finance – Management accounts as at September 2023**

Alan reminded the meeting of the financial model and gave an overview the Management accounts as at December 2023. He outlined that we:

- Have an overspend on staff costs
- Have made savings in non-staff costs
- Had an increase in funding from HCC which is included
- Anticipated revenue generation is 67k
- Will break even at the end of the financial year and reserves will remain at just under 400k

Alan added that the accounts are looking positive. He also updated that we now have a Trading Arm as a separate Company.

Alan and Board noted their appreciation to Natalie for her efforts in getting the Trading Arm set up. [Board noted the management accounts.](#)

#### **8. Board Advisory Committee (BAC)**

Alan updated that the Board Advisory Committee had a really productive meeting discussing the budget for 2024-25 and the research and engagement projects undertaken for the past quarter. Neil also presented on upcoming trends and the meeting discussed the potential impact of these for the organisation.

#### **7. Any other business including questions from the public – NA**

#### **8. Part 2 – Closed**

**Next formal meeting of the Board: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024**