

HwH Board Meetings Schedule

1. Purpose of the paper and what the board is asked to consider

This paper asks members of the board to agree an approach to setting meetings for 25/26.

2. Context

It is important that members of the board are able to engage with all of the key strategic and governance activities that enable Healthwatch to be a successful organisation. The meetings over the next few months, as we approach the start of the new financial year and annual business cycle planning period, are crucial in ensuring board's insights, experience and expertise help shape and inform HwH priorities.

Therefore, we are currently undergoing a process to finalise meeting timings so that trustees are able to make plans that enable attendance. Where meetings may present a clash with other commitments, it is important that members of the board are still able to contribute to discussions and decisions made.

As agreed in October we sent a poll to Trustees to gain an understanding of their availability for HwH meetings in the coming 18 months. We used established baseline principles to pull together initial options, and trustees were asked to select all options that worked with their availability.

During this process we were able to identify a number of preferred options based on the majority of trustee responses. However, a small number of trustees did not select the same options that suited the majority, and this paper proposes an approach to resolve this.

3. Decision for sign off

- a. Board are asked to **agree the next three meeting dates**, to enable planning and logistical arrangements to happen in good time.

These will be:

Board Advisory Committee Thursday 6th February (1pm-4pm)

Three of eleven trustees did not vote for this option.

Public Board Meeting Thursday 27th March (10am-1pm)

Three of eleven trustees did not vote for this option.

Board Advisory Committee Tuesday 29th April (1pm – 4pm)

Two of eleven trustees did not vote for this option.

- b. If members of the board are unable to attend these meetings, we ask for their commitment to
 - i. Reviewing the papers of the meetings and offering any suggestions, reflections or questions to the Chair ahead of time, so their views can be represented
 - ii. Where possible, taking up the offer of meeting with the Chief Executive to discuss crucial items on the board agenda (we will endeavour to work within your availability as indicated in the poll).

- 4. **Recommendation: approach to setting meetings post April 2025**
 - a. Board are asked to consider and agree an approach to setting meetings going forward.
 - b. The recommended approach is as follows
 - i. HwH team will revisit the poll to see if alternative meeting times could be arranged, to accommodate as many trustees as possible
 - ii. For those instances where we have clashes of availability to resolve, **board are asked to respond to team requests** to revisit particular instances and double check their flexibility for the date. We are happy to do this via email or via quick call. **This will need to happen by mid-January and we ask your support with this.**
 - iii. We will finalise the meetings calendar by the first meeting of 2025, on 6th of February, and thereafter hold those dates in your diaries.
 - iv. Please note for meetings later in the year, there will still be a small chance of changes as it depends on broader system meeting timings that may mean some trustees or staff are unavailable.