

**MINUTES**  
**of a meeting of the Governance Board**  
**19 September 2023**  
**(13.30-15:30)**  
**At Queen's Court**

**Present:**

**Anne-Marie Dean, Chairman**  
**Ian Buckmaster, Company Secretary**  
**Paul Rose, Non-Executive Director**  
**Ron Wright, Non-Executive Director**

**Bev Markham, Community Support Officer**  
**Carole Howard, Office Administrator**

**Carol Dennis, Jenny Gregory, Di Old and Val Perry, Members**

**1 Welcome and apologies**

All members were welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Dawn Ladbrook.

**2 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations.

**3 Minutes of meeting held 11 July 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2023 were agreed as a correct record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

Arising from minute 9 (The Big Conversation), the Board noted that, despite other priority work having prevented participation in the initiative, people from Havering had provided the second highest level of responses to the accompanying survey.

**4 Finance Report**

The reports for July and August were submitted.

## July

The month's spending was £9,430, bringing the average spend this year to £9,452/month.

At the end of July, the current forecast deficit was £2,978.74 (the difference between the amount paid or to be paid by the Council and the amounts which were currently forecast to be spent up to 31 March next year, disregarding funding for projects carried forward, expected income not yet received and expenditure not yet quantified).

During July, £600 had been received in settlement of the invoice for work on Phase 3 of the Care Home DES phase 3 work.

## August

The month's spending was £10,266, bringing the average spend this year to £9,615/month.

At the end of August, the current forecast deficit was £3,354.

In August, £750 was received for the Long COVID 2023 survey.

The Board noted the Current and Savings account balances, which also included the amount brought forward from 2022/23 in respect of the various projects that the company had been working on.

It was also noted that, from September, the monthly fee for accountancy services had been increased by £9 per month.

## **5 Havering Place-based Partnership (HPbP)**

NHSNEL had decided to appoint Non-Executive Directors of the ICB to each of the local Place-based Partnership Boards in North East London, to enable the NEDs to gain a greater appreciation of local issues. The NED appointed to the HPbP Board was Marie Gabriel, the Chair of the ICB/ICS.

The Board noted that the Chairman and Director had recently met Ms Gabriel, with the Clinical Lead and Director of the HPbP for an introductory chat. The meeting had gone well. Ms Gabriel had also accepted an invitation to the Awayday in October.

During the course of that meeting, the Chairman had mentioned that, unlike other boroughs in North East London, Havering did not have a "drop in café" for people with mental health issues and suggested that one be established. The Director of the HPbP had indicated that he would look into the matter.

## **6 NHS North East London/North East London Health and Care Partnership**

The Board noted that NHSNEL was currently in a state of flux as staffing restructures were implemented across both the head office and the local Place staff. Representatives of Healthwatch in NEL had recently met with the leadership of NHSNE, at which there had been a discussion of improving services for people with mental health issues, including changes in the police role where there was no threat of violence or to life and greater LAS involvement.

## **7 Safeguarding and Quality - update**

Ms Old had no report as the recent meeting had been abandoned as it had been attended only by her and two other people.

## **8 Engagement projects – update**

- **Services for the Deaf**

- The report was being finalised.

The British Sign Language choir at Havering Adult College had produced a short video of their performance of the Heather Small song “Proud”, which would be used to promote the report when published. The Board was given a preview of the video.

- **Autism and Learning Disabilities**

- The report had been finalised and arrangements were being planned for its publication, hopefully as part of the Awayday at the end of October. A small singing group of autistic children had agreed to participate in the event.

- **BHRUT Patients’ Survey**

- This project was finished. The findings would be published once the report had been considered by BHRUT, who commissioned the project.

Although not part of the project, the Board discussed the arrangements for patient care at A&E in Queen’s Hospital, especially the services provided by PELC.

- **Long Covid**

- This project was nearly finished. The survey had recently closed: in all, there were 125 valid responses out of a total of over 312 – the remainder were only partially complete, of which only a few contained

usable data. The data was being processed and the report would be provided to the stakeholders around the end of September.

- **Maternity**

- Following on from the survey projects last year and earlier this year, Dawn Hobson of HW Redbridge had been appointed as Independent Senior Advocate, Maternity and Neonatal Services for NEL (through HW Rb) and was setting up (and would chair) a North East London Maternity service user feedback forum, meeting by video every two months.

The aim was to hear from Maternity providers and organisations who provided advocacy services; she had invited Bev Markham to participate in this forum in view of the wide network of local organisations she had been able to form as part of the project work.

- **NHS Dentistry in NEL**

- Following up a similar survey carried out in 2020, all HW in HEL had agreed to run a survey to ascertain how open to NHS patients are dental practices in NEL.

HW Havering would be co-ordinating this survey on behalf of HW NEL.

## **9 Awayday arrangements**

The Board noted that a member had asked that consideration be given to holding Awaydays other than on the final Thursday of the month, which had been the traditional day for doing so (except in the Christmas period).

It was noted that there was only one Awayday remaining to be held during this financial year, at the end of October, which it was now too late to rearrange. A Christmas event was due in December but, although diarised, its date was not yet firm as the nature and venue for the event had still to be finalised.

It was agreed that, should there be future Awaydays, they should be rotated between being held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

## **10 Website upgrade**

Healthwatch England were upgrading all Healthwatch websites based on the Drupal 7 programme to Drupal 9, including the Company's.

The upgrade was due between 16 October and 29 October. Most of the upgrade work would be done by HWE and their website contractor, Circle. Some checking and verification work would need to be done locally but mainly

after the main work had been finished. It appeared that the work would not be as intense as the previous upgrade. HWE had contributed £979 to the cost of the work.

During the upgrade, the current website would continue to be available to the public.

## **11 The implications of the Lucy Letby case for the wider NHS**

Louise Ansari, CEO of HWE, had written to all Healthwatch:

"... I know that if there is a trust or any other health or care setting where you are worried there is a closed and defensive culture about listening to patients and their families/carers, you will see that as a sign that care may be at risk and you will be raising a red flag with system leaders. I would welcome your thoughts on what more we can do as a movement in this area."

Whilst there is no room for complacency, the Board noted that there was no reason to believe that the culture at either BHRUT or NELFT was "closed and defensive" – neither organisation (nor NHSNEL) had ever declined to co-operate, either in relation to individual issues or broader themes such as Enter & View. A joint project with colleagues from HWs Redbridge and B&D (at the behest of BHRUT) had just been completed for which BHRUT gave unfettered access to several groups of patients and would be taking its findings (many somewhat critical) on board.

The Board noted that the sentiments expressed in the report had been shared with the HPbP, NHSNEL, BHRUT and NELFT.

## **12 Use of HWE Commitment to Quality Logo**

HWE had recently advised that, having completed the HWE Quality Framework some time ago, the Company was now entitled to use the HWE "Commitment to Quality" logo. This logo could be used on reports and other publications, on emails and on letterheads.

The Board agreed that the logo should be used.

## **13 Discharge to Assess (D2A)**

The Board received and noted a paper recently presented the Havering PbP Board about the D2A Programme. The D2A pathway continued to demonstrate positive outcomes with around 30% of patients being able to return home after assessment. Nonetheless, operational challenges had emerged, resulting in

under use of beds and a consequent reduction in the bed base from 20 to 15, and unsustainable costs in nursing placements. Of 72 discharges to residential care, 78% had remained in a residential setting. The scope for direct discharge to home with required support was under examination.

Havering Council and NHSNL were managing the scheme as a single programme to ensure optimum use of resources. In future, monthly reports would be made to the PbP Board.

#### **14 Harold Wood Polyclinic**

The Board were advised that, at a recent HOFF meeting, it had been suggested that the Polyclinic would be reducing its hours and closing at weekends. It was agreed that enquiries should be made to ascertain the position.

[Note: it was subsequently ascertained that no such proposal existed. It was, however, noted that the King's Park surgery, which shared the Polyclinic building but was under separate management, was no longer open on Saturdays and it was possible that there had been confusion between the Polyclinic's hours of operation and those of the GP surgery]

It was agreed that the Engagement Panel should be invited to consider the Polyclinic for an Enter & View visit in the near future.

#### **15 Patient safety at BHRUT**

The Board were advised that, in October, a new system of recording patient safety issues would be implemented. From a Healthwatch perspective, the key point was that complainants would in future be more closely involved in the process, and there would be a focus on learning from the matter complained of in order to avoid future repetition.

#### **16 Next meeting**

The next meeting was due on Tuesday, 10 October 2023 at the office.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman