

**MINUTES**  
**of a meeting of the Governance Board**  
**15 July 2025**  
**(13:30-16:00)**  
**At Queen's Court**

**Present:**

**Anne-Marie Dean, Chairman**

**Ian Buckmaster, Company Secretary**

**Ron Wright, Non-Executive Director (for part of the meeting)**

**Carole Howard, Office Administrator**

**Jenny Douglass, Community Support Assistant**

**Di Old, Member**

**1 Welcome and apologies**

Apologies were received for the absence of Carol Dennis, Jenny Gregory, Dawn Ladbrook and Val Perry

**2 Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations.

**3 Minutes of meeting held 17 June 2025**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2025 were agreed as a correct record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

There were no matters arising.

**4 Finance Report**

(a) Finance Report for June

The report was presented.

Expenditure for the month had been £10,152, a little above the expected average monthly spend for the year.

The bank balances at the end of the month were noted

Interest of £40 had received into Reserves at the beginning of June.

(b) Annual Accounts

The Annual Accounts had been approved by members at the AGM on 26 June and would be submitted to Companies House and HMRC shortly.

(c) Employment Allowance

It has recently been learned that HMRC had applied the refund of previous years' EA as a credit to the company's tax account in April. In consequence, no further payment would be due to HMRC until around the end of 2025, although staff would continue to receive their net pay.

## **5 Healthwatch office - relocation**

The partition walls for the new office were now in place, and electrical wiring and IT cabling are in hand. The office space would be slightly larger than the current space. Staff were currently reviewing furniture needs and what records could be disposed of in order to ensure that only the actual requirements were moved to the new office.

A kitchen area will be available for use (shared with other users of the building) and a meeting room would be available for hire.

The rent would increase from £1,512 to £1,680 per month. There was no current indication of when the move was likely to take place.

## **6 Future of Healthwatch Havering**

It he Government has announced its intention to abolish Healthwatch England and dismantle the local Healthwatch network. The Dash Report, and the NHS 10 Year Plan that was based in part upon that Report, both indicated an intention to transfer local Healthwatch functions to the relevant NHS ICB for health activities and the local council for social care activities; Healthwatch England would be abolished and its functions dealt with within the Department of Health and Social Care.

These changes – as much of the proposals in the 10 Year Plan – would require legislation in order to come into effect, which would take some time to arrange. Although the Plan said the new arrangements would be “the norm across the NHS by 2026”, that was a vague target date and it was unlikely to be before the later part of that year (if then).

The Board noted that Havering Council had now indicated that, rather than award a five-year contract from 1 April 2026 following expiry of the current contract, they intended to award the new contract on a one-year renewable, rolling basis for up to five years.

The Board also noted that a number of local Healthwatch organisations were arranging a letter to the Secretary of State, seeking a ministerial meeting to emphasise the importance of the independence of Healthwatch in promoting the views of the public and their confidence in health and social care. A petition to Parliament was also being considered.

**The Board AGREED:**

**(a) To reiterate interest in bidding for the new contract, on the revised basis proposed by the Council; and**

**(b) To authorise the Company Secretary to signify support for the proposed letter to the Secretary of State.**

**7 Havering Place-based Partnership (HPbP)**

No report was submitted.

**8 NHS North East London/North East London Health and Care Partnership**

No report was submitted.

**9 Safeguarding and Quality - update**

Ms Old reported that the intention to carry out an Enter & View at a home about which concerns had previously been raised had been welcomed; the Quality Assurance Team were keen to learn what the visit found.

**10 Engagement projects - update**

- **Long COVID**
  - A further meeting of the steering group for this project was imminent.
- **Enter & View visits**
  - The reports on visits to the St George's Hub and the associated GP practice had been published.

- Visits to Maylands GP practice and Spa Medica Eye Clinic had taken place and the reports were being drafted. The unannounced visit to Glebe House had also taken place.
- Follow up visits to the Greenwood GP practice, A&E at Queen's, Harold Wood Polyclinic were also in hand.
- **Defibrillators in Havering**
  - The report was being drafted.
- **Survey of Same Day Access Hubs (GP Hubs) users**
  - The survey had closed on the day of the meeting. A total of 121 useable responses had been received and would be analysed for the report.
- **Superloop bus route SL12 – proposed alternative route**
  - There had been no indication yet of TfL's decision on the proposal.
- **End of Life Care in Havering**
  - This project, possibly in conjunction with St Francis Hospice, has not yet been scoped.
- **Safer Surgeries**
  - Safe Surgeries was a national initiative, supported by NHSNEL, aiming to improve the safety of surgeries for patients who are homeless or from minority backgrounds. Many practices across North East London (including in Havering) were known to be failing to comply with NHS contract requirements relating to the registration of patients, including continuing to demand proof of address before taking a patient on, contrary to NHS expectations. Only 11 Havering practices appeared to be compliant.
  - It was proposed to carry out a "mystery shopping" exercise in late 2025 or early 2026 across North East London to identify which surgeries were compliant.
- **Men's Health**
  - It was proposed to arrange a pilot survey about Men's Health at Havering Indoor Bowls Club during the forthcoming Awayday. If that pilot succeeded, it would then be expanded to other places where men were likely to be approachable, including the Council's network of barber shops involved in raising mental health issues.

## 12 Next meeting

The next meeting would be on 16 September 2025, at the office.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman