

## **AGENDA**

### **HEALTHWATCH HAVERING GOVERNANCE BOARD**

**1.30 PM  
TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2025  
TO BE HELD AT THE OFFICE**

**1 Apologies**

**2 Declarations of interest**

To receive any declarations of interest in the business before the Board (that have not already been declared).

**3 Minutes of meeting held 15 July 2025, and any matters arising**

Attached.

**4 Finance Report**

(a) Finance Report for July

The report is attached.

Expenditure for the month was £8,705, which is below the current monthly average, and brought the average monthly spend this year to £9,378.

Bank balances at the end of the month were:

Current - £20,793

Reserves - £9,488

At the beginning of August, £1,075 was transferred to the Savings account.

(b) Finance Report for August

The report is attached.

Expenditure for the month was £7,303, which is significantly below the current monthly average, and brought the average monthly spend this year to £8,985. Sadly, this was largely a consequence of Carole Howard's passing.

Bank balances at the end of the month were:

Current - £12,415

Reserves - £10,563

At the beginning of September, £2,635 was transferred to the Savings account, and £45 interest was credited to the account.

#### (c) NHSNEL funding

Following receipt of a Purchase Order from NHSNEL, an invoice has been raised for payment of this year's payment of £5,000, which should be received by the end of October.

## **5 Staff restructure**

The unexpected passing of Carole Howard in August left a vacancy for Office Administrator.

The staffing position has been considered by the Directors, who have concluded that, given that only 7 months remain of the current contract, it is unlikely that we would be able recruit a suitable successor for her, on the sort of terms we are able to pay, for such a short period. Moreover, any such recruit would need training before being able to be fully effective, further reducing the time for which they could be beneficially employed (and that would also distract our other staff too).

The Directors have accordingly decided instead to share the essential duties of the Office Administrator post between existing staff, with increased remuneration to reflect that, and easier access to overtime where needed to ensure that the work gets done.

## **6 Healthwatch office - relocation**

The relocation to St James House will take place on 30 September. The Company Secretary will arrange with Companies House for the Registered Office to be transferred to there with effect from 1 October and all relevant parties will be told of the new address as soon as possible.

## **7 Future of Healthwatch**

### **(a) National position**

Following the announcement that the Government intends to abolish Healthwatch England and to reallocate the work of local Healthwatch to the ICBs (for NHS activity) and local authorities (for social care), most local Healthwatch organisations have joined together to form a Network to persuade the government to retain the independence of the patient voice currently provided by Healthwatch (whether or not the name “Healthwatch” is kept).

The principal point being made is that the Government’s proposals suggest that Healthwatch will be replaced by in-house systems within the NHS and local authorities (although there seems to be some thought that the NHS and local authorities may have an option to delegate the responsibility to contractors). Some local Healthwatch have made enquiries of service users that strongly suggest that “in-house” systems would not be seen by users as “independent” and that they would be reluctant to report concerns via the NHS App because of concerns that criticism could be used against them by service providers such as GP practices or hospital clinics.

The Secretary of State is recorded as having made comments that suggest he fundamentally misunderstands what Healthwatch does. The network is seeking a meeting with him to try to explain our role to him in greater depth.

In the meantime, the government has confirmed that existing Healthwatch arrangements will continue to apply until new legislation comes in to force and, most importantly, the funding arrangements are unchanged.

### **(b) Havering contract**

At the time of writing, Havering Council have not yet issued a contract specification or invitation to tender for the new contract. An oral report will be given at the meeting.

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

An oral report will be made at the meeting.

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

An oral report will be made at the meeting.

## **10 Safeguarding and Quality - update**

To receive an oral update from Ms Old.

## 11 Engagement projects - update

- **Long COVID**

- A suggestion that the original Peer Support Group proposal be replaced by enhanced working with the Long COVID Cafes held by Everyone Active (the borough's Leisure Services provider) has been proposed and is being pursued.

- **Enter & View visits**

- The reports on the visits to Maylands GP practice, Spa Medica Eye Clinic, the unannounced visit to Glebe House and the follow-up visits to the Greenwood GP practice and The Farmhouse (ELIFAR) have all been published.

We have had several expressions of thanks for these reports: the Safeguarding Adults Board commented of The Farmhouse that was good to see that staff there had now had training in dealing with residents who have an epileptic episode, and the Manager of that home was happy for the report to be published without any amendment.

- The visit to the Frailty Ward and SDEC at Queen's Hospital and follow up visits to A&E at Queen's and Harold Wood Polyclinic, and the visit to the Billet Lane Medical Practice have been arranged for early October.

- **Defibrillators in Havering**

- The report is being drafted.

- **Survey of Same Day Access Hubs (GP Hubs) users**

- The report of the survey is being drafted. There were 121 useable responses; around one third of responders had never heard of the service and only 49 (41%) had actually used the service.

- **Superloop bus route SL12 – proposed alternative route**

- TfL have announced their decision on the route of the new Bus Route SL12. They have rejected the proposal we put forward for it to be routed via St George's Hub, citing *"the need to maintain express journey times and route reliability, balanced with the additional operational costs associated with these requests"*.

This is clearly disappointing, given the clear need for a better bus service for the Hub. It is suggested that we should urge TfL to look at ways in which the service to the Hub can be improved.

The Board will be pleased to note, however, that our proposal was referenced numerous times in the TfL report, and supported by several key stakeholders, despite being ultimately rejected.

It is suggested that, to build on that, an approach be made to TfL to urge that the suggestions within our original proposal for improving bus links to the Hub be acted on.

- **End of Life Care in Havering**

- This project, possibly in conjunction with St Francis Hospice, has not yet been scoped.

- **Safer Surgeries**

- It is proposed to carry out a “mystery shopping” exercise in late 2025 or early 2026 across North East London to identify which surgeries are compliant with the Safer Surgeries protocol.

- **Wards providing care of the elderly**

- HW Redbridge have proposed a joint project with us, HW B&D and HW Waltham Forest looking at the wards providing care for the Elderly at King George Hospital, Queen's and Whipps Cross Hospital. This will involve volunteers visiting the wards in question to look into concerns raised with HW RB about medication management, access and confusion about reablement services, hospital discharge and continuity of care, confusion over cost and care hours and people not being provided with a full allocation of carer visits/hours. The Whipps Cross Patient Panel had raised this, and HW Rb have heard additionally from relatives. They would like to gather further insight and evidence.

The visit to Queen's (where there are five wards caring for the elderly) would probably be arranged jointly with HW B&D as HW Rb will be concentrating on KGH and Whipps Cross. BHRUT have indicated that they would be happy if the visit can take place during the week beginning 24 November.

The visits will not be Enter & View but concentrating on speaking to patients and hospital staff will not be spoken with.

This project will be separate from but ties in with our forthcoming E&V visit to the Frailty Wards and the follow-up visit to last year's E&V at E&E at Queen's.

- **Maternity Services review**

- The Government has announced a review of Maternity Services at 14 acute hospital trusts, one of which is BHRUT. The review, led by Baroness Amos, “wants to capture experience and learning from a wide range of trusts” and will “look at trusts with a different case mix; at the provision of care to people from diverse backgrounds; and at trusts where previous investigations have taken place.”

Healthwatch is not directly involved in this but, given our previous work on Maternity Care, we will be observing the progress of the review.

**12 Any other business**

Other matters (if any)

**13 Next meeting**

The next meeting is on 14 October 2025, at the office.