

MINUTES
of a meeting of the Governance Board
11 November 2025
(13:30-15:25)
At St James House

Present:

Anne-Marie Dean, Chairman
Ian Buckmaster, Company Secretary
Ron Wright, Non-Executive Director
Jenny Douglass, Community Support Officer

Carol Dennis, Jenny Gregory, Dawn Ladbrook and Di Old, Members

1 Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received for the absence of Val Perry

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations.

3 Minutes of meeting held 14 October 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2025 were agreed as a correct record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

4 Finance Report

Expenditure for the month had been £10,861, which was higher than the current monthly average, and brought the average monthly spend this year to £8,876.

The higher expenditure was the result of the inadvertent pre-payment of rent for the office and pension contributions, and for support commissioned for the submission of the bid for the new Healthwatch contract (see minute 6(b) following).

Bank balances at the end of the month were noted.

Owing to the additional spending in October, there had been no transfer to reserves that month.

5 Healthwatch office - relocation

Carole Howard's family had been told of the naming of the new office as "The Carole Howard Room". Her son had responded:

Thank you for a very thoughtful memorial idea for Mum. I've shared the gesture with Zoe and family and we all approve!

It's such a shame she couldn't be there for the move, and to transition into your new office. She would have loved the tasks and activity and to help set up a nice working environment for everyone.

6 Future of Healthwatch

(a) National position

The current indications were that the Parliamentary Bill for the legislation required to implement the government's proposed changes in Healthwatch services was unlikely to be available before the beginning of 2026 at the earliest. It would be a (small) part of a Bill for the reorganisation of the NHS.

In the meantime, the majority of the Healthwatch network was continuing to press for changes to ensure that an independent voice for patients and service users could be retained.

It was noted that the government had given assurances about the continued funding of Healthwatch until the new legislation was in place.

(b) Havering contract

The bid for the new Healthwatch contract had been submitted before the closing date, and the outcome was due to be announced on 12 December. The consultant whose employment had been authorised at the last meeting had provided useful advice in relation to preparation of the bid.

The Board was advised that some differences had been identified between the funding provisions of the new contract and those currently in place that would require attention should the contract be awarded to the company.

In the meantime, the programme of Enter and View visits and Community Engagement projects would continue as usual.

7 Havering Place-based Partnership (HPbP)

The HBpB Board had recently discussed the proposed division of the borough into Neighbourhoods for the purpose of delivery of Primary Care health and social care services. The government's aim was work:

- With and for local communities
- In a proactive, preventative way to address rising need
- Delivering integrated accessible care
- To support service sustainability

In Havering, the Neighbourhoods would be based on the five existing Primary Care Networks. NHSNEL had already begun working towards the development of Neighbourhoods, intending in 2026 to commission existing providers to work towards the new system, with new contracting models and payment mechanisms being introduced in future years as the 10 Year Plan for the NHS gathers momentum.

In anticipation of these changes, some PCNS were already re-aligning – the St Edwards Medical Centre had already agreed to transfer from Crest PCN to Marshalls PCN in January 2026, which was more in line with the location of the Medical Centre.

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

No report was submitted.

It was noted, however, that a presentation had been given to the Outer North East London about the new telephone and appointments systems at Maylands Medical Centre (about which comments were made in the report of the recent Enter and View visit there), which had greatly improved the running of that practice and led to much improved levels of patient satisfaction.

It was also noted that the long-awaited introduction of electronic patient records (EPRS) had now taken place at BHRUT's services.

9 Safeguarding and Quality - update

Ms Old reported that the leadership of the LQSG meeting would be changing following the departure of the current chair to another appointment.

A provider of home care and residential care operating mainly in Redbridge but with some facilities in Havering was experiencing some financial difficulties, which was causing concern to social care staff.

It was noted that NELFT had been fined some £0.5million, and a staff member given a suspended custodial sentence, following the death of patient in Goodmayes Hospital for breaches of Health & Safety requirements.

10 CQC – proposed changes to inspection regime

The Board noted that the CQC had announced proposals for change in the way in which they inspect, report on and rate health and social care facilities with the intention of developing an approach that improves their regulatory work in all areas, delivering effective regulation and driving up quality and improvements for people who use health and care services.

Details of the proposals had been circulated to all Board members, who were invited to suggest responses to the various queries posed by the CQC in their document, so that a formal response could be provided to them in the light of members' experiences of Enter & View visits and other interactions with health and social care services and facilities.

11 Engagement projects - update

- **Long COVID**

- Following a presentation to the Long COVID Café meeting in September, details of a revised proposal for peer support had been approved by the Havering Adult Delivery Board on 27 October.

The revised proposal is that, rather than set up separate peer support groups (PSGs), the Long COVID Café sessions should be developed in to a less formal form of PSG, with the session being held in a separate room (rather than, as currently, in the public café area), with support for arranging the sessions and speakers attending to give relevant information to participants.

Havering Council's Live Well team were becoming involved in the project.

- **Enter & View visits**

- 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 visits to the Billet Lane Medical Practice and Barleycroft Care Home had all taken place and the respective reports were in hand.
- A follow up visit to Harold Wood Polyclinic UTC and visits to Eastwood Surgery (formerly Rush Green Medical Centre) and Romford Nursing Home were in hand.

- **Defibrillators in Havering**

- The report was being finalised.

It was suggested that, as a next stage, the possibility of encouraging people to undergo training in CPR and use of defibrillators through working with sports clubs should be considered.

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

- The report of the survey had been published.

- **Public transport services to St George's Health and Wellbeing Hub**

An approach to Transport for London about improving public transport links to the St George's Hub was in hand following the rejection of the proposal for an alternative route for Superloop Bus service SL12.

- **Safer Surgeries**

- No news was available of the proposal to carry out a "mystery shopping" exercise in late 2025 or early 2026 across North East London to identify surgeries compliant with the Safer Surgeries protocol.

- **Wards providing care of the elderly**
 - The arrangements for this project were currently paused.
- **Maternity Services review**
 - There had so far been no news of the Government's review of Maternity Services.

12 Next meeting

The next meeting would be on 20 January 2026, at the office.

_____ Chairman