

Policies and procedures

Freedom of Information

Reviewed:	May 2022
Originally approved by:	Governance Committee, 9/4/19
Updated by:	Governance Board, 10/5/22
Next review due:	May 2026



The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) gives rights of public access to recorded information held by public authorities. The FOIA is intended to promote a culture of openness and accountability among public sector bodies, and therefore facilitate a better understanding of how public authorities carry out their duties; make decisions and spend public money.

Healthwatch Havering Healthwatch is subject to the FOI Act as a public authority and has a duty to comply.

Anyone has a right to request information from a public authority. Healthwatch Havering has two separate duties when responding to these requests:

- to tell the applicant whether we hold any information falling within the scope of their request; and
- to provide that information

Healthwatch Havering uses its website www.healthwatchhavering.co.uk – as the principal means of disseminating information about itself and its activities. In most cases this information can be located using the ‘search’ facility.

We routinely publish information:

1. Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

2. What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit.

Financial statements:

We publish annual financial statements in our Annual Reports and a monthly summary report is published on our website.

Corporate plans and business plan

3. List of policies and procedures

4. How we make decisions

Decision making processes and records of decisions. Minutes of meetings, (including reports and papers)

Minutes, reports and papers for all public Healthwatch Havering board

We publish information about

- Public consultations
- Enter and View Reports

5. Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities

6 List of Registers

A list of members authorised to carry out Enter & View visits as representatives of Healthwatch is available on our website.

Information that we will not generally make available

- Information in draft form
- Information which would be impractical or resource intensive to prepare for routine release

- Information which is no longer readily available because it is archived or its retrieval would be difficult, impractical or resource intensive to prepare for routine release
- Information whose release is prohibited by law or which is exempt under the FOIA or is otherwise considered to be protected from disclosure (for example, personal data relating to any individual).

If the information you need is not on our website, you can also contact us to request information under the Freedom of Information Act.

Healthwatch Havering works to 20-working days to respond to a request. If we are unable to achieve the 20 working days response time, we will advise the applicant as soon as possible and seek a reasonable extension to the 20-working day timeline.

If you are unhappy with the response you received from us relating to your FOIA request please let us know, giving your reasons. We will respond to you in writing.

If you remain dissatisfied following your appeal, you can contact the Information Commissioner at the address below:

The Information Commissioner

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire SK9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545 745

Please email your requests to: enquiries@healthwatchhavering.co.uk

Duties related to Healthwatch Havering (Provider) to the London Borough of Havering (Authority)

Relating to the contract with the London Borough of Havering

Healthwatch Havering (Provider) and the London Borough of Havering (Authority) acknowledge their respective duties under the FOIA and must give all reasonable assistance to each other where appropriate or necessary to comply with such duties in relation to information held by Healthwatch Havering that has been provided by the Authority in connection with its statutory duties.

- that the Contract and any other recorded information held by the Provider on the Authority's behalf for the purposes of the Contract are subject to the obligations and commitments of the Authority under the FOIA;
- that the decision on whether any exemption to the general obligations of public access to information applies to any request for information received under the FOIA is a decision solely for the Authority;
- that if the Provider receives a request for information under the FOIA, it will not respond
- that the Authority, acting in accordance with the codes of practice issued and revised from time to time under both section 45 of the FOIA, and regulation 16 of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, may disclose information concerning the Provider and the Contract either without consulting with the Provider, or following consultation with the Provider and having taken its views into account; and

- to assist the Authority in responding to a request for information, by processing information or environmental information (as the same are defined in the FOIA) in accordance with a records management system that complies with all applicable records management recommendations and codes of conduct issued under section 46 of the FOIA, and providing copies of all information requested by a Authority within 5 Business Days of such request and without charge.
- that the Contract and any other recorded information held by the Provider on the Authority's behalf for the purposes of the Contract are subject to the obligations and commitments of the Authority under the FOIA

What is Healthwatch Havering?

Healthwatch Havering is the local consumer champion for both health and social care in the London Borough of Havering. Our aim is to give local citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided for all individuals locally.

We are an independent organisation, established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and employ our own staff and involve lay people/volunteers so that we can become the influential and effective voice of the public.

Healthwatch Havering is a Community Interest Company Limited by Guarantee, managed by three part-time directors, including the Chairman and the Company Secretary, supported by two part-time staff, and by volunteers, both from professional health and social care backgrounds and lay people who have an interest in health or social care issues.

Why is this important to you and your family and friends?

Following the public inquiry into the failings at Mid-Staffordshire Hospital, the Francis report reinforced the importance of the voices of patients and their relatives within the health and social care system.

Healthwatch England is the national organisation which enables the collective views of the people who use NHS and social services to influence national policy, advice and guidance.

Healthwatch Havering is your local organisation, enabling you on behalf of yourself, your family and your friends to ensure views and concerns about the local health and social services are understood.

Your contribution is vital in helping to build a picture of where services are doing well and where they need to be improved. This will help and support the Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS Services and contractors, and the Local Authority to make sure their services really are designed to meet citizens' needs.

***'You make a living by what you get,
but you make a life by what you give.'***
Winston Churchill

Joining Healthwatch Havering

Local people who have time to spare are welcome to join us as volunteers. We need both people who work in health or social care services, and those who are simply interested in getting the best possible health and social care services for the people of Havering.

Our aim is to develop wide, comprehensive and inclusive involvement in Healthwatch Havering, to allow every individual and organisation of the Havering Community to have a role and a voice at a level they feel appropriate to their personal circumstances.

We are looking for:

Members

This is the key working role. For some, this role will provide an opportunity to help improve an area of health and social care where they, their families or friends have experienced problems or difficulties. Very often a life experience has encouraged people to think about giving something back to the local community or simply personal circumstances now allow individuals to have time to develop themselves. This role will enable people to extend their networks, and can help prepare for college, university or a change in the working life. There is no need for any prior experience in health or social care for this role.

The role provides the face to face contact with the community, listening, helping, signposting, providing advice. It also is part of ensuring the most isolated people within our community have a voice.

Some Members may wish to become **Specialists**, developing and using expertise in a particular area of social care or health services.

Supporters

Participation as a Supporter is open to every citizen and organisation that lives or operates within the London Borough of Havering. Supporters ensure that Healthwatch is rooted in the community and acts with a view to ensure that Healthwatch Havering represents and promotes community involvement in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of health and social services.

Interested? Want to know more?



*Healthwatch Havering is the operating name of
Havering Healthwatch C.I.C.
A community interest company limited by guarantee
Registered in England and Wales
No. 08416383*

*Registered Office:
Queen's Court, 9-17 Eastern Road, Romford RM1 3NH
Telephone: 01708 303300*



Call us on **01708 303 300**

email **enquiries@healthwatchhavering.co.uk**

Find us on Twitter at **[@HWHavering](https://twitter.com/HWHavering)**