

Minutes of Q4 Board Meeting held on 12 May 2021

Context

Due to the Government restrictions and need to social distance, this meeting took place virtually over the ZOOM platform. Board members were asked to read all the papers and submit any questions on these in advance of the meeting.

As this is a public meeting, ZOOM is used as it does not need a license and can be accessed for free. The public were made aware of the meeting via our Events Page and social media posts. Spaces to attend the meeting were limited, but the meeting was open to the public to observe.

Present

Board Directors: Steve Cooper (Chair), Mark Sharman (Help & Care Member Director), Emma Leatherbarrow (Help & Care Member Director), Non-Executive Independent Directors: Jeremy Gardner (Vice Chair), Linda Cairney, and Martin Phillips, Renee Fickling and Nigel Foulkes (Independent Board Directors)

In attendance: Sally Dartnell, Katrina Broadhill, Seth Gottesman - WSCC Commissioner.

Public Observer: Ali Khan

Apologies: Independent Board directors Helen Goodman and Alan Pickering, Amanda Jupp - (West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care and Chair of the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board), Alison Challenger, WSCC Director of Public Health, Alison Nuttall - Commissioning Lead.

1. Welcome and declarations of interest

SC welcomed all to the meeting.

Formally noted that JG was elected as a District Councillor at the May local elections.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

Approved although SC asked that it be noted that the Chair and Vice Chair roles are for an initial 12 month period from 1 April 2021/22

Action 18 - flagging FIT testing - Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) communication lead has picked this up and is arranging a follow up with Rob Szymanski of University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (UHSussex). Closed

3. Impact and Performance

The Impact and performance report shows 6 times the number of experiences being shared from members of the public, their families and carers and through community organisation partners, since the same time last year. It also highlights 4 times the level of contact for information and signposting to the helpdesk and 3 times the level of Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCAS) cases and enquiries. KB asked the Board to note that we had been under-reporting in the last year, having identified that the figures for Tier 1 advocacy by the Helpdesk Team have not been included but from Q1 in 2021-22 this will be rectified.

April and May of Q1 2021 have seen a continued high level of enquires and KB confirmed it is not only the demand that remains so high but also the complexity of the queries, which take a long time to address and can often require multiple call backs and investigations to ensure the individuals are supported.

Team have primarily been engaging through various virtual formats and social media as well as through numerous community partner groups and this has proved successful. Face to face engagement will resume when safe.

KB summarised the [Impact and Performance report](#):

- Health inequalities in people with **autism and learning disabilities** - we are leading on this work across Sussex aiming to resolve the autism gap identified. We will report soon on the issue of long waits for autism assessments for adults. Martin Phillips recently represented us on a CCG led Task and Finish group for this work.
- Care Home work has been instrumental in achieving greater connectivity with all stakeholders, and gave rise to some meaningful discussions with family carers and providers.
- Healthwatch has provided considerable support to the vaccine programme in many ways, and continue to do so. We are championing the need to learn from this and embed the learning across health and care.
- Our investment in the West Sussex Clinical Harm Review (a first in the country for a CCG to undertake) will demonstrate the importance of having a nonclinical/patient perspective voice in such reviews, when the report is published (due in June.)
- A record total of insight this quarter 6555 compared to 950 this time last year.

Supporting WSCC re survey re **sensory needs assessment**.

Dentistry remains a high priority with some traumatic experiences being shared. We continue to work with stakeholders across the local system to ensure concerns are escalated and solutions shared back to the public and understood.

Care Home webinars follow up

Communications - working with the system around more effective patient comms to be better understood and “Confusing comms”

Children First ... NF asked how we ensure that this work continues and in particular the focus on Mental Health needs ...

IHCAS - number and complexity of cases has been escalated on our risk register.

Serious Clinical Harm review has concluded and letters have been sent to all families.

Insight in relation to the impact of changes to Financial Assessment process continues to grow and will be monitored and escalated to WSCC.

SC thanked the team for their sustained work to ensure local people’s voices are heard and able to influence the appropriate parts of the system to make a difference. LC added her thanks for the quality of work and informing the board.

4.2 Financial & Performance Sub Committee Report

SD - Reported that the financial and risk reports had been examined and discussed at a meeting on 4 May. Sub committee had discussed at length the increased demand and complexity of public Information, advice and signposting and how to resource this. Agreed an action to discuss significant and ongoing change in circumstances since the contract was tendered with the new Director of Public Health (DPH) as a contract change.

NF asked about resourcing statutory responsibilities and identified priorities. MS reminded the board that Healthwatch Surrey serve a similar size population with a budget of £650K+ compared to the £320K of West Sussex. ACTION 19

At the time of the sub-committee meeting, no response had been received from WSCC in relation to the 4 March letter requesting the indexation uplift set out in the contract to be applied. SD reported that since the meeting a response was received on 6 May confirming a 1.75% uplift in contract value.

SC - mentioned the Risk and Issues Log which again highlighted concern over increase in demand and complexity of IHCAS cases. The log also increased the risk in relation to engagement with WSCC stakeholders. Action to raise this when a new DPH meeting is scheduled. ACTION 20

Independent audited accounts for 2019/20 were lodged with Companies House in March.

5. Independent Director and Staff Feedback

5.1 Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB)

SD updated that the HWB has not met since the last board meeting. Next HWB scheduled for 24 June and will include a presentation from Healthwatch on our annual report.

5.2 Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC)

- KB updated that the impact of our previous activities to support and challenge the proposal for reconfiguring mental health inpatient beds was shown in the February Health and Social Care Committee meeting. The new business case shows the Trust has listened and responded. We were also able to influence further important actions to support patients and their families.

5.3 Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB)

MP reported concern that the number of cases continues to rise significantly. There is concern that there are still very low numbers relating to care homes and fears that as relatives are now able to visit more readily the number of concerns relating to care homes will rise resulting in even greater case numbers. 40% of concerns reported are not found to be safeguarding cases but no clear pathway to pick up these issues.

MP - has been delivering virtual talks with over 45+ organisations across West Sussex to ensure that people know how to report a concern and know of the general advice help line.

5.4 CCG Communication and Engagement

KB updated that we sit on numerous strands of system programmes: Vaccinations, Cancer communications monthly, CCG fortnightly, weekly with CCG communications team.

Have agreed we will run the #ConfusingComms campaign throughout the year starting with NHS letters with a view to acting quickly to make improvements and clarify any misunderstandings people might have when receiving letters from NHS organisations.

5.5 Stroke Task & Finish Group

JG - Some progress and pre-Consultation documentation ready to go later in May.

5.6 Cancer Board

SD - Joint CCG/Local Healthwatch proposal for a new board/forum to bring together key stakeholders from providers, primary care and local authority to work in partnership with Local Healthwatch patient insight was accepted at May Board. Next steps to be agreed with CCG. ACTION 21

SD will also represent local Healthwatch at the first Surrey and Sussex Cancer Alliance meeting in May and then take a view on continued representation depending on resources.

5.7 Local Outbreak Engagement Board

SD spoke positively about the data and information being made public through Jacqueline Clay and the WSCC Public Health Team. Meetings have been scheduled through to the end of 2021 at this point.

5.8 Regional insight

EL& MS summarised the issues and concerns they are seeing elsewhere across the south of the country and in particular in the 8 other local Healthwatch that Help & Care operate. Primary Care and Dentistry are both key issues in both. Cancer backlogs are also cause for concern. MS flagged the white paper and growing social care issues.

6. Vaccinations

Team working to support vaccine confidence.

7. Policies and procedures update

Board email policy being revisited at the current time. All to continue to use board@healthwatchwestsussex.com email address for any public facing email communications required by board members in relation to Healthwatch representation.

8. AOB

Ali Khan (applicant for NED role) was asked to introduce himself. Chair to consider appointing Ali to the board as an independent board director for the future to bring additional expertise. ACTION 22.

9 Questions

AK asked about vaccine confidence in Crawley and offered support.

Meeting closed at 11.55am

10 Future Board meeting dates:

Board Meeting dates
Q2 - Wed 18 August 2021
Q3 - Wed 10 November 2021
Q4 - Wed 9 February 2022

Action Plan

Item Number	Action required	By Whom	Notes/ Completed
19	Discuss significant and ongoing change in circumstances since the contract was tendered with the new DPH as a contract change	SC/SD	
20	Raise WSCC stakeholder RAIL risk with DPH	SC/SD	
21	Agree next steps for single improvement forum/board for Cancer and planned care	SD/CCG	
22	Consider appointing Ali Khan to bring additional expertise to the board	SC/EL	