

Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin

Joint Chair's Report – Public Board 1st December 2014

The Focus of this report is the meetings we have held and our plans for independence. The Board have considered the considerable amount of work that needs to be carried out to make Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin ready to part with our partners Parkwood Healthcare by **31 March 2015** rather than the original end of December date

Despite the Boards concentration on “Novation” the day to day roles of Healthwatch continue to be the priority for our staff team and to involve Board members. In October Kate and the Chair's attended the West Midlands Networking Meeting at Solihull Fire Station and (despite alarms) we discussed Collaboration and Competition and updates from Healthwatch England (including the recent launch of the Annual & Complaints Reports at the House of Commons) and local Healthwatches including discussion on Enter & View issues and GP Surgeries. A talk on the role of the General Medical Council was postponed to the next meeting that will be in Worcester with John Rouse from the Department of Health.

On the 17 October we held an important Contract monitoring and Novation meeting with Telford Council & Parkwood at Derby House. This meeting noted that Charles Hannon, who is an accountant, would be co-opted on to the Healthwatch Board to help us with budgets and financial planning, We also agreed the establishment of an independent bank account and discussed our plans to improve collection of local views on health & social care through a new super data Feedback Centre being used by other Healthwatches including Birmingham. We also agreed the need to make our case for a good level of funding by improving our monitoring report and adding in evidence of Signposting and our list of engagement events, outline information on Enter & View visits and the key representation meetings we attend e.g. the Health & Wellbeing Board. Scrutiny Committee and the Hospitals Trust etc.

Letters have been exchanged with Parkwood Healthcare to set out the steps and responsibilities as we move to independence and we are meeting regularly with Mark Lambourne (Parkwood) and Directors will meet two weekly at Meeting Point House to take forward the work plan. Carolyn Henniker (who also chairs the Enter and View Committee) is leading on work to establish new IT and communications and also has prepared a detailed breakdown of tasks. Other members of the Board have taken over areas of responsibility.

But the day to day work continues and on the 3rd November we attended a Clinical Commissioning Group workshop on setting the CCG budget for 2015/16. On the 16 November we held our bi monthly meeting with Dr Mile Innis and Directors of the CCG. We provide monitoring information for these meetings and we discussed the very important Care Quality Commission major inspection of the Royal Shrewsbury and Princes Royal Hospital. The draft inspection report will be published in December. Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin had helped with the organisation of Listening Events and will be invited to the Quality Summit in January 2015. We also discussed the GP Access Survey, our Projects (that Kate will outline in her report) and progress on Future Fit and Better Care.

We have also held our regular manager & Chair's meeting with Shropshire Healthwatch and on the 7th November we held the first of our Friday Director's Discussion meetings to look at all the Novation issues and agree formally the resolution to open a bank account. Healthwatch is also talking to

Solicitors about its future company status and we will need to make new provision for IT support, Human Relations and Financial management.

On the 18 November with Shropshire Healthwatch we held our regular meeting of the Hospitals Trust and focussed on issues around the new Mothers and Children's Unit. Healthwatch is visiting the unit regularly and has an information point and is talking regularly to patients, relatives, staff and the Unit management to monitor the transition and the successful establishment of the Unit. We also received more information on the CQC inspection and looked at the ongoing issues of capacity and staffing. Both hospitals are already experiencing high levels of demand even before the main winter pressures. Speedy discharge is a major issue and we must all do what we can to help Social Care meet its task to allow hospital patients to move successfully to home or community care.

Jane has also attended a conference in London on 11th November looking at good practice for Healthwatch organisations to enable us to network and develop good practice, the conference also looked at proposals to develop closer links with the Local Government Association and Healthwatch England and from there to local Healthwatch organisations across England. Included in the presentations we listened to one from our neighbouring Healthwatch Shropshire

On the 20th November Jane attended a meeting of Shropshire and Staffordshire Patient Leaders looking at a range of initiatives including Storytelling, NHS Citizen and "Involvement" together with other information available on the day, run by the local NHS group. Information was also given to the meeting about major changes that are being made to senior management arrangements for the future including the development of a wider base of operation by merging Shropshire and Staffordshire with Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire

On 27th November, Jane attended a conference in London looking at the future development of services for Transgender people across England and to explore a number of areas of concern around access to services and waiting times for operations and the way in which the pathways used.

We have also been talking regularly to Shropshire Radio and the Shropshire Star to raise the profile and public knowledge of Healthwatch so we can be used to collect and channel local community views on health & social care. We have had good coverage on our work at the Maternity unit and on our Survey of GP Surgeries in which Directors have been involved.

We will be meeting Telford Council in January with our new style monitoring report and to bring the Council up to date on Novation & progress. We hope by then to have secured funding for our new Feedback Centre and to have met with Stakeholders to sign them up to receiving our high-grade data reports we hope this will simplify greatly the preferred channel for patient & community views

Lastly we wish to pay tribute to our volunteers without whom we could not conduct our growing programme of enter & view visits to care homes, hospital wards, GP surgeries and others. Nor hold our schedule of engagement events at supermarkets, community days, hospital units nor get help with surveys and office tasks. We need to greatly increase our number of volunteers given the growing range of work we do.

Jane Chaplin
David Bell
Joint Chairs Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin
28th November 2014