



**Business Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024**  
**Unit 7, Witney Way, Boldon Business Park**

**Present:**

John Lowther (JL)	Chair	Nafizah Ahmed (NA)	Director
Arthur Mckean (AM)	Director	Carl Buckley (CB)	Director
Angela Fahey (AF)	Director		
Sheila Scott (SS)	Operations Manager		
Bev Cook (BC)	Business Support/Engagement Officer (minute taker)		

Agenda Item		Actions
1	<p><b><u>Welcome and apologies for absence</u></b></p> <p>JL welcomed all to the meeting, apologies were received from Nafizah Ahmed, Tracey Grainger and Barbara Tennet. AF was welcomed to her first Board meeting.</p>	
2	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>No new declarations of interest were declared.</p>	
3	<p><b><u>Minutes of the last meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Matters arising from the minutes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page 2, JL signed a new Board Resolution to remove previous signatories from the TSB account and replace with all board members to match Companies House information.</li> <li>• Page 3, A meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March when two members of ICA, (Independent Complaints Advocacy) will visit the Healthwatch office.</li> <li>• The Falls Working Group which SS recently joined is ongoing.</li> <li>• Page 4, Funding has been received as part of the Dentistry Involvement Activity.</li> <li>• The plan to recruit volunteers in early 2024 will be revisited at a later date following the resignation of HWST Engagement and Insight Officer.</li> </ul>	

4	<p><b><u>Finance Report</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Management Accounts</u></b>  SS circulated the updated management accounts prior to the meeting via email.  SS clarified some of the expenditure which seemed high. The telephone and photocopier costs included a settlement figure with Smart IT. Moving forward these charges will reduce dramatically as HW now have our own telephone system and photocopier.  No word from the SLA Commissioning Team regarding HWST contract. This should be imminent. In previous years there has been a 5.5% increase in grant.</p> <p><b><u>Income and Expenditure</u></b>  £750 received from ICB re Podiatry Engagement Work.  £650 received for local engagement re Dentistry and survey.  No additional expenditure to report.</p>	SS
5	<p><b><u>Items for Discussion</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Staff Cost of Living Increase (financial year 24/25)</u></b>  In consultation with the accountants, Quantum, a proposal of 5% was put forward to the Board by TG. This was agreed by all Board members to be actioned 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.</p> <p><b><u>Annual General Meeting</u></b>  This will be held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July from 10.00 until 12.00 at Hebburn Central. There will be a light lunch afterwards. The AGM will be advertised through our socials and local connections and partners e.g. South Tyneside Council, Board members contacts and direct approaches to local interest groups to reach as many residents as possible.  Guest speakers to be contacted includes Jennifer Owen, Chair of the Northern Region LDC (Local Dental Committee) including Gateshead and South of Tyne. Also, Anna Hargrave, Divisional Director - Division of Community Services, STSFT.</p> <p><b><u>Dentistry Work</u></b>  North East and North Cumbria (NENC) dentistry survey responses. Paul Jones, (Healthwatch North Tyneside), is collating the information and sends out fortnightly information in graph form showing the numbers of surveys received per locality which was shared with Board members.</p> <p>Healthwatch team and volunteers recently collated information received from the general public, targeted groups and dental practice managers to understand the difficulties on both sides.</p>	

	<p><u>Priorities for HWST Operational Plan 2024-2025</u></p> <p>2023-2024 priorities to be completed prior to new priorities being started. GP Access is complete. Dentistry coming to an end. The final project is Care in the Community. Emma Kennington, Service Manager for Regulated and Support Services, STC will be supporting HW with this work. There are 901 people using the long-term HISS service, HWST will contact a percentage of these from the four area zones to complete a survey.</p> <p>Priorities for the coming year, governed by comments received from the public. New priorities agreed for 2024/25 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Mental Health</li> <li>• Youth Mental Health Provision and the impact of Covid on education. Contact to be made with Dan Dobson STC</li> <li>• Pharmacies</li> </ul> <p><u>T Grainger, remove co-opted from her profile</u></p> <p>It was agreed to remove co-opted from her profile as there is no conflict of interest. TG now has voting rights.</p> <p><u>TSB - HWST Bank</u></p> <p>SS having difficulty opening a new bank account with TSB. SS unable to proceed as the account needs to be set up online and with a former signatory's approval. The original account is also unable to be closed. It was agreed to open a separate account at another bank in the interim with all current board members as signatories.</p> <p><u>Staff Recruitment and interim arrangements to replace vacancy</u></p> <p>The vacant post has been advertised with VONNE, Indeed, CV Library, HealthNet, Monster, Reed, Sector 1, and with partners.</p> <p>There is an option to contact previous employees to assist with engagement work temporarily on a self-employed basis.</p> <p>Two applications for the position of Engagement and Insight Officer have been received so far. The closing date is 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024.</p>	<p>SS</p> <p>SS</p> <p>SS</p>
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6	<p><b><u>Items for Information</u></b></p> <p><u>Chairs Update</u></p> <p>JL attended two patient experience meetings at Sunderland Hospital. At the meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024, a lengthy discussion took place around a Human software trial. This would enable patients to give feedback to nurses and hospital staff to increase moral.</p> <p>The Board raised concerns as this system would incur a cost to the Trust, staff would receive feedback on their own personal emails and mobiles having the potential to intrude into the private time of staff. It was felt that this system could create competition between nursing staff. The software would provide patients and their families a mechanism for providing gifts directly to staff who goes against policy.</p> <p>It was discussed that feedback could be gathered through partnering with Healthwatch. JL agreed to put together a short letter to the Trust summarising some of the Boards concerns.</p> <p>Other areas discussed at the patient experience meeting were issues with communication and accessibility. AF asked the question whether issues have been raised around inclusiveness for the hearing impaired. Again, the value of Healthwatch was raised to do this work.</p> <p>JL attended the Healthwatch Chairs meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> January. At the Healthwatch Central Areas meeting which was attended with SS the networks operational protocol was discussed. Both JL and SS were happy with the protocol changes identified.</p> <p>JL also attended the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>JL circulated reports to Board members via email following each meeting.</p> <p><u>Operations Managers Update</u></p> <p>A report was emailed to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Members were asked if they would like to raise any issues. AF asked whether it would be possible to take part in Enter and View training. SS confirmed that she would arrange this for Board members, staff and volunteers.</p> <p>SS mentioned Healthwatch South Tyneside have been approached by South Tyneside Council to carry out an unannounced Enter and View. Further details to follow. Any members wishing to take part must have attended the Enter and View training.</p>	<p>JL</p> <p>SS</p> <p>SS</p>
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	<p><u>Updated Policies to be agreed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Agreement</li> <li>• Code of Conduct</li> </ul> <p>SS confirmed that Margaret Curtis has updated these policies on the Boards behalf. Board members confirmed their agreement so the policies could now be signed off.</p> <p>SS forwarded a list of updated policies to the Board prior to the meeting. She explained that there is only the Wellbeing Policy outstanding, and this has just been received prior to the meeting.</p>	
7	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>SS asked for clarification regarding an email circulated by South Tyneside Council regarding Partners as Corporate Parents event on behalf of TG. It was agreed that Healthwatch would attend as an interested party and to support our priorities. A member of the Board and operational team would attend the meeting. AF agreed to attend on behalf of the Board and feedback. Meeting to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</p>	<p>SS</p> <p>AF</p>
8	<p><u>Date and Time of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024</p>	