

Minutes of Q2 Board Meeting held on 19th November 2025

Context

This meeting was hybrid with some people participating in person and others via Teams. 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, TEAMS is used as it does not need a licence and can be accessed for free. The public were made aware of the meeting via our Events Page and social media posts. Invitations were also sent directly to stakeholders and commissioners. Permission to record the meeting, for the purpose of notetaking was agreed verbally. After the production of the draft minutes the recording was deleted.

Present

LLB Members: Steve Cooper (Chair), Non-Executive Independent Directors: Nigel Foulkes; Sue Morton; Patrick Brady,, Mark Sharman (Help & Care Member Director),

Councillors: Contract Officers: Seth Gottesman, Mel Nicholson, Fiona Mackison.

Apologies: Kathryn Loughnan (Help & Care Member Director), Sarah Peters (Help & Care), Jeremy Gardner (Vice Chair), Non-Executive Independent Directors, Jane Collins, Ali Khan. Commissioners: Alan Sinclair, Amanda Jupp, Alison Challenger. Niki Lewis (Lead Commissioner for Prevention and Independence in Public Health), Bob Lanzer (Cabinet member for Public Health and Wellbeing)

In attendance: Jo Tuck (Deputy Manager) Ben Dolley (IHCAS), Ann Brosnan (Minutes) Public Observer: n/a

1. Welcome and declarations of interest

Steve welcomed everyone to the meeting, and noted apologies.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

August minutes approved.

Summary of previous actions:

- Action 01: Jo Check with Hub if there have been any calls re the abolition of HW – Update provided at this meeting.
- Action 02: Jo to discuss with Zoey putting more context in the Impact report when there are significant changes in figures between quarters. – Completed

2.1 Matters Arising – None

3. Impact and Performance Report

Jo mentioned that the Tapestry Day Club engagement received the highest level of engagement with the public recorded by Healthwatch West Sussex.

Steve noted that the topics tend to be consistent across each quarter.

Jo spoke about the challenges of freshers week in terms of staffing levels and that consideration is being given to a workshop rather than a stand at Chichester University. Do not currently engage much with sixth forms and it was suggested that Jo approaches Colliers and this will be explored.

Action: Jo to contact Colliers to increase sixth form engagement

Jo also mentioned the success of the team in terms of working with partners.

Nigel asked if there is a set script for responding to enquiries about the future of Healthwatch and Jo said that there have not been any calls to the Hub on this. If any questions are received by the hub or the team, the focus is to talk in terms of 'Transition'.

Ben confirmed that there were forty-eight new IHCAS cases in Q2 which compares to fifty-one in Q1. Repeat clients have been challenging as some have mental health challenges and so the IHCAS team is now working with

people from MIND and using their expertise to help with the cases which feature mental health challenges. There are often long delays in speaking to people due to lack of response or people changing jobs/leaving due to cutbacks.

Steve expressed appreciation for all the work that the IHCAS team does.

4. Quarterly Stats Comparison

Jo explained that there is a new volunteer who has been working on this with the aim of comparing year on year figures going back to 2022/23. Jo has the raw data and there is evidence of natural peaks and troughs reflected year on year. The challenge is getting the data from the volunteer into a more easily accessible format and Mark mentioned speaking to the new data lead (Becky Lewis) to see if she may be able to offer some support.

5. Feedback from meetings

5.1 Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB)

Jo said the main topic of discussion had been reviewing and reflecting on the joint mental health strategy, which had been developed before the changes in local government were announced.

There is also work going on around public health in relation to obesity, vaping and homelessness.

5.2 Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC)

Next meeting is 21st November. In the meantime, Jo has attended the HASC training and has found this very useful.

5.3 Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB)

Nigel had missed the QA Sub-group meeting but week commencing 17th November is Safeguarding Awareness week. Nigel forwarded information to Ann who sent this on to the board.

Nigel suggested that the team ensured there is information about safeguarding easily available and to publicise the resources available.

The next full board meeting is 11th December.

5.4 Stroke Task & Finish Group

No further update.

5.5 Development of ICS and Place-based partnerships

Jo spoke about the changes taking place with the Sussex ICB joining with Surrey Heathlands ICB and the merger to be completed in April 2026. The staff at these ICBs have been through a MARS period with sixty people leaving and more voluntary redundancies to come. This makes it a challenge to liaise with the ICB at present, however we have a good relationship with our ICB.

5.6 Regional and National Update

Mark mentioned that the Chief Executive of Healthwatch England has stepped down. Waiting to hear about the changes being made in the King's Speech in the Spring. Healthwatch England will reduce in numbers but will remain until the legislation changes. Concern about the future plans for reliance of feedback from the public on digital platforms. There is going to be a further briefing on 28th January 2026.

5.7 Other board member insight

Steve had contacted his MP about the changes to Healthwatch and had shared her response with the board.

6 Deputy Manager's Update

The quarterly meeting with MPs set up by Zoey and Jo has proved very popular with officers attending if MPs are unable to. Healthwatch give an update and then invite them to share feedback. At the most recent meeting Jo took the insight shared to the ICB.

Fresher Fairs

These bear a lot of fruit as it is the best way of engaging with young people and this year the team spoke to around eight hundred students. It would be good to have some private space in future to ensure that the students are

able to talk about more personal matters.

Biggest challenges for young people are mental health, A&E, Ill and UTCs. Primary Care is not as important to them as the general population.

Team Update

Zoey is now on maternity leave and the team wish her all the best.

Jo is covering for Zoey and Sarah Peters from Help & Care is managing the IHCAS team and was key in engaging the help from MIND, mentioned earlier.

Sophie is now working full time and works with the IHCAS team for part of the week.

Jo has been focusing on the wellbeing of the team given the current situation with Healthwatch.

The team has completed the CYP project which was quite challenging, also worked with West Sussex County Council on the Early Start programme.

A GP practice approached the team to ask for support around patient engagement and help with designing a patient survey.

Planning work around farming communities due to the high number of mental health issues in this sector. Has been difficult to engage with them but the MPs offices have offered to help. Mark mentioned that Dorset Mental Health have done some work with farmers. Steve also suggested talking to the local college that does agricultural courses. Plan is to focus on this at the start of next year.

Bi-monthly West Sussex Insight Report

Main areas include feedback re access/eligibility for weight loss support which varies across surgeries and this has been escalate to the ICB.

Have offered to support Fitzsimmons surgery due to the negative feedback they have been receiving; there is a merger taking place on a business level but patients have been confused about how it will affect them.

Contacted by people who are experiencing confusion around eligibility for the COVID jabs as the criteria has changed this year. 'Flu jabs are being offered to the over sixties.

Forward Planning – Annual stakeholder survey and Priorities

The team will be focusing on Insight, Influence and Impact and using the voices of local people to influence at a strategic level.

The stakeholders' survey will be out in the Spring and the team will be asking people to be our 'critical friend'. Jo suggested that, after the February board meeting, volunteers and staff come together to discuss plans for 2026/27 along with board members, if interested.

7. Policies and procedures update

Policies are updated by Help & Care; currently the Equality and Diversity policy is with them for review but the update is delayed while legislation is being changed that will affect this policy. Jo is working with Kathryn to determine which policies need to be on the website now the board is no longer a CIC and will pass this to the board for comment.

Action: Jo to share policy details for website with board once agreed.

8. Escalation and Insight Tracker Log

Jo mentioned that all three Sussex Healthwatch ensure they escalate as necessary to the ICB.

9. Risk Register

The risk register is updated as necessary and the current planned risks around the closure of Healthwatch appears on the Help & Care risk register.

10. AOB

Steve confirmed that the CIC is almost closed and he has received correspondence from Companies House regarding this.

Jo mentioned that there is a potential new board member and they will be meeting with Jo and Steve to discuss further. Jo is also looking into adding Sue, Jane and Patrick's profiles to the website.

Action: Jo to have new board members information added to the website.

Action: Steve will contact Ali about his role on the board.

Future Board meeting dates:

Board Meeting dates 2025/26
Q3 25 th February, Q4 27 th May, Q1 19 th August, Q2 25 th November

Action Plan

Item Number	Action required	By Whom	Notes/ Completed
03	Contact Colliers to increase sixth form engagement	Jo	Completed
04	Once agreed, share policies to be held on the website with the board	Jo	Update given on 25 th February
05	Add new board members information to website	Jo	Completed
06	Speak to Ali about board membership	Steve	Completed