

Minutes of Board Meeting held on 18 November 2020

Context

Due to the Government restrictions and need to social distance to reduce the risk of acquiring the COVID 19 virus, 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 the meeting.

Present

Board Directors: Frances Russell (Chair), Mark Sharman (Help & Care Member Director), Emma Leatherbarrow (Help & Care Member Director), Non-Executive Independent Directors: Jeremy Gardner, Steve Cooper, Martin Phillips, Linda Cairney, Helen Goodman

In attendance: Sally Dartnell, Katrina Broadhill, Keith Hinckley -Executive Director for Adults and Health (West Sussex County Council), Seth Gottesman - Contracts & Commissioning Officer (West Sussex County Council), Alison Nuttall - Commissioning Lead; All Age Services (West Sussex County Council and CCGs)

Apologies: Alan Pickering (Independent Director), Amanda Jupp - (West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care and Chair of the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board.

1. Welcome

FR welcomed all to the meeting and invited Keith Hinckley to introduce himself.

KH explained he has a dual role, with 80% of his time for West Sussex, and the remaining 20% given to East Sussex. He directly manages the Directors of Adult Social Care in both areas, as well as the Directors of Public Health. In addition, he is chair of the regional Director of Adult Social Services Association.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

Approved and no matters arising.

3. Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Presentation

Ru Gunawardana, Safeguarding Adults Board Team Manager joined the meeting to provide an update to the Board on SAB priorities anew, more robust processes.

The slides used for the presentation are [included here](#).

Independent Board Director, Martin Phillip represents Healthwatch West Sussex on the SAB Board. Ru explained that Martin had helped them to ensure they get feedback from people who have been subject to a safeguarding concern and also ask the question '*Are we making a difference?*'

SAB has a new website and requested that Healthwatch follows them on twitter (actioned).

KB thanked RG for making sure that Healthwatch is approached for insight to any potential Serious Adult Reviews (SARs), making the point that Healthwatch Independent Health Complaints Advocacy (IHCAS) service provides advocacy for some very significant health concerns, often involving multiple agencies. The West Sussex support is seeing more significant and complex complaints when compared to similar services.

KH asked if the service knew why this was. KB suggested that service has worked hard to raise awareness, and this may account for this, but that it would be worth trying to map the complexity against other similar areas (perhaps in the North of England). (Action 17.)

RG acknowledged the significant beneficial impact Healthwatch West Sussex's IHCAS has had on the outcome of a Serious Adult Review.

KB suggested Ru invites a senior advocate from the IHCAS team to present at a SAB team meeting to share information on what IHCAS does and how this can support people and the work of the SAB.

4.1 Impact and Performance

The Impact and performance report shows high numbers of experiences being shared from members of the public, their families and carers and through community organisation partners. The number and complexity of IHCAS cases that was already discussed in the meeting was also highlighted in this report.

SD reported that Emily King, Director of Communities (West Sussex County Council) and Dr Timothy Fooks, High Sheriff of West Sussex had expressed thanks for all the resilience work that Healthwatch West Sussex had been doing to support their understanding of impact on communities.

Escalation Log - the new escalation process has been put in place and that unresolved issues will come to the Board for decision.

4.2 Financial & Performance Sub Committee Report

Reported that the financial report had been examined and discussed. Although a very tight budget all continues to plan. Increases in meeting requirements resulting from the pandemic have been somewhat offset by a lower than budgeted expenses. Less funding available for Community Projects and we continue to explore all opportunities. Reserves are being maintained at board agreed level to adhere to best practice. Westlake Clark will be the independent auditors for the end of year accounts for 2019/20.

SC confirmed several new risks have been added to the risk register including the increase in meetings relating to the ICS and Pandemic which is placing a burden on already constrained resources and the growth in number and complexity of IHCAS cases.

Escalation Log is sent to WSCC Commissioning Lead whenever additional items are added. The Board noted no response has been received from the letter to Becky Shaw regarding Financial Assessments. Having raised the issue at every level of Local Healthwatch influence we will alert Healthwatch England that we have had no choice but to close the issue on our Log and request that they continue to seek to influence at national level.

5. Independent Director and Staff Feedback

5.1 Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB)

SD updated that virtual formal meetings of the Board have resumed and engagement is high with good levels of interaction. A HWB Seminar is scheduled for 19 Nov.

There has also been an initial meeting of the Board Children's Sub-Group, at which Caroline Whiteman represents Healthwatch West Sussex. Healthwatch feedback was well received and influenced the terms of reference this group.

5.2 Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC)

KB updated that this committee has had a productive task and finish group/programme looking at COVID responses, resulting in some recommendations to the system. KB attended the meeting and Healthwatch were able to contribute significant insight.

The committee also recently met in full and has introduced a pre-meeting to look at primary care in more detail. This seemed to be a useful way of interacting and inform the scrutiny that followed. The Healthwatch in Sussex and West Sussex work on digital consultations was included and HASC supports all the recommendations.

5.3 Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB)

MP reported that the Sub-group discussions are focused on care homes, and they are particularly looking at soft information such as the homes where they see no safeguarding concerns being raised whilst having a high number of beds. Whilst the governance and management of the SAB is much improved he still asks “do we make a difference”

KH also raised the concern for this sector of the adult social care market, as many care homes were under financial strain before COVID. But now with the reduced bed occupancy the financial position has deteriorated further with a potential risk to quality of care. Local authority fund around 30% of the care home beds in W Sussex. SAB are working with the School of Local Economics to better understand the impact and future sustainability of homes. It is forecast that the market is going to contract, and it is important this is done safely.

5.4 Communication and Engagement

This group was disbanded by the previous West Sussex CCGs so they could review membership. A new group was to be established but this has not yet happened and therefore this group has not met recently. The new West Sussex CCG have planned a meeting for December and KB will be attending.

5.5 Stroke Task & Finish Group

JG shared that the Executive is meeting next week and will sign off the work of the Stroke Communication & Engagement Group, that has been developing the narrative for the pre-consultation that is planned to go public in January 2021. The actual consultation will take place after the local election in May.

Healthwatch is having a notable impact on how the narrative is shaped, including the vision and purpose information. Our feedback has been positively received and there has been good representation from providers.

There are still some obstacles around the options and agreeing finances for the consultation and engagement which has still to be secured.

5.6 Cancer Board

The Board continues to meet monthly and Healthwatch continue to share insight and push for communications to share with the public and Community Partners. In mid November for the first time since our offer in April, we had an opportunity to comment on a patient template letter (this one was a holding letter for patients needing endoscopy). Healthwatch were able to highlight some key issues that need to be covered off, which we hope will demonstrate the value of working with us and result in more template letters being share for suggestions before being rolled out.

A new Patient Engagement Lead has recently been appointed for the Surrey and Sussex Cancer Alliance and we have met and are sharing Community Partnership contacts and recent patient, family and carer insight. We have repeated our offer to support with comms and engagement, comment on draft patient letters and share insight at every opportunity.

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. We have been able to highlight a link to this trusted real time data in our latest Heads Up and use it to correct misinformation which we have seen a considerable amount of often leading to confusion and concern.

KH acknowledged the need for consistent leadership and that they are recruiting for a permanent Director of Public Health with interviews due to take place in the third week of December - SD is part of the community appointment panel for this post.

KH stated that the WSCC team are working through the local *Test and Trace* opportunities but currently have no access to latent testing.

6. Policies and procedures update

SD reported there were no policy or procedure updates.

7. Questions

No further questions raised.

8. Future Board meeting dates:

Board Meeting dates
Wed 10 February 2021
Wed 12 May 2021

Action Plan

Item Number	Action required	By Whom	Notes/ Completed
17	Work with other Local Healthwatch (in the North of England for example) to better understand why West Sussex IHCAS has such challenging cases.	KB	