

INFORMATION ITEM: C

| HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD | | | |
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| Report Title | Healthwatch – Performance Update and Recommissioning of Service 2015 | | |
| Contributors | Head of Strategy, Improvement and Partnerships | Information Item number | C |
| Class | Part 1 | Date: | 20 January 2015 |
| Strategic Context | Please see body of the report | | |
| Pathway | The Health and Wellbeing Board considered a report on the performance of Healthwatch in January 2014. The Healthwatch Annual Report was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 3 July 2014. | | |

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report presents members of the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update on the performance of Healthwatch. It also updates members on activity undertaken to secure a service provider for 2015.

2. Recommendation/s

- 2.1 Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to:
- Note the progress against agreed targets and action taken to improve performance.
 - Note the activity undertaken to secure a service provider for 2015.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The Health and Social Care Act (2012) introduced significant changes to the provision of advice, signposting and advocacy within health and care settings. Healthwatch England was established in October 2012 to provide a national consumer champion for users of health and care services. Healthwatch England has significant statutory powers to ensure the voice of the consumer is strengthened and heard by those who commission, deliver and regulate health and care services.
- 3.2 From April 2013, local authorities were required to establish a local Healthwatch organisation to replace Local Involvement Networks (LINKs). The main role of Healthwatch is to:
- signpost people to local health and social care services
 - collect and analyse the experiences that people have of local care to help shape local services
 - feed views and any recommendations to Healthwatch England to act on at a national level.

- 3.3 The Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of citizens in Lewisham. Healthwatch will support the Council to deliver the following key objectives of *Shaping our Future – Lewisham’s Sustainable Community Strategy*:
- *‘Healthy, active and enjoyable – where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and wellbeing’.*
 - *‘Empowered and responsible – where people can be actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities.’*

4. Background

- 4.1 The tender process for the Healthwatch service was undertaken in November and December 2012. Voluntary Action Lewisham (VAL) was awarded the contract commencing 1 April 2013 for two years with the option to extend for one further year.
- 4.2 An initial progress report was considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board in January 2014.

5. Performance Review

- 5.1 A performance monitoring framework was established at the start of the contract. It was agreed that formal reviews of Lewisham Healthwatch would take place on a quarterly basis starting at the end of the second quarter. The Lewisham officer responsible for monitoring the Healthwatch contract has met with the Healthwatch Manager on a regular basis since the contract commenced.
- 5.2 Lewisham Healthwatch reported key challenges during the first 18 months of the contract, relating to governance arrangements and the appointment of a chair, as well as the recruitment and retention of staff.
- 5.3 Following the first performance review in the second quarter of Healthwatch Lewisham’s operation, an improvement plan was developed, which addressed a number of areas where performance was not satisfactory. This has been monitored and updated regularly.
- 5.4 In some areas, significant progress has been made to address the actions within the improvement plan, including:
- Addressing governance issues by appointing a chair and establishing a reference group (new chair appointed August 2014)
 - Publication of an Annual Report
 - Developing a volunteer action plan
 - Planning the approach to implementing ‘enter and view’ visits and developing a programme of joint projects with neighbouring boroughs
 - Increased community engagement and attendance at events, including collaboration with the Lewisham Home Library Service to visit frail elderly people in their own homes
 - Recruitment of volunteers, with 10 regular volunteers and 6 others who engage less frequently

- Production of a protocol for working with statutory partners, establishing a more formal arrangement and ensuring all parties understand the process when commissioning work from Healthwatch
- 5.5 In addition, areas of Healthwatch Lewisham's work have been recognised nationally as demonstrating good practice: The Healthwatch England Conference in July 2014 awarded Healthwatch Lewisham awards for both collaborative working with South East London Healthwatch partners and for outstanding volunteering.
- 5.6 Recent monitoring showed that Healthwatch are starting to have an impact on service improvements – notably, prompting reviews of district nursing and service changes within SLAM, however, there remains a need to co-ordinate detailed investigations and make subsequent formal reports and recommendations for service changes and improvements. The Healthwatch role on the Health and Wellbeing Board is the key mechanism for this work.
- 5.7 The key areas where further development is needed are:
- Market testing and the establishment of a baseline for measuring the awareness/impact of Healthwatch locally
 - Engagement with commissioners demonstrating the ability to record and present robust research evidence to drive service improvements
 - Development of a robust marketing and communications plan – statistics show that contacts are primarily focussed on locating a GP or other similar signposting needs. Healthwatch need to encourage contacts about other issues by raising the profile of the organisation, which in turn will enable them to respond to the key remit of representing the consumer voice with service commissioners and providers.

6. New Contract for 2015

- 6.1 Lewisham Council received formal notice in late November 2014 that Voluntary Action Lewisham would not seek an extension of the contract to continue providing the Healthwatch service from April 2015.
- 6.2 A procurement exercise will be implemented in early January to ensure a provider is in place for April 2015. At the time of writing, options in relation to the value and the length of the contract are being explored. Soft market testing has been undertaken with the existing Healthwatch team and with organisations delivering Healthwatch services in neighbouring boroughs.
- 6.3 In securing a new provider, officers will work closely with colleagues from the CCG to update the specification and ensure an appropriate provider is sought within the timescale. A full tendering exercise is achievable in the timescale, but there will need to be contingency plans in place to ensure service continuity if an appropriate provider is not appointed.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The current contract value for Voluntary Action Lewisham to deliver Lewisham Healthwatch is based on a pricing schedule of £299,510 over two years (£145,605 in year one and £153,905 in year two).
- 7.2 The contract value for 2015 is not yet agreed, but it is likely that a reduction in spend will be sought, in line with other areas across the Council.
- 7.3 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires local authorities to establish a local Healthwatch service.
- 8.2 Members of the Board are reminded that under Section 195 Health and Social Care Act 2012, health and wellbeing boards are under a duty to encourage integrated working between the persons who arrange for health and social care services in the area.

9. Crime and Disorder Implications

- 9.1 There are no Crime and Disorder implications arising from this report.

10. Equalities Implications

- 10.1 Lewisham Healthwatch will continue to reduce inequalities through the targeted engagement of groups who are seldom heard or hard to reach.

11. Environmental Implications

- 11.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

12. Crime and disorder implications

- 12.1 There are no crime and disorder implications.

13. Conclusion

- 13.1 An update on the appointment of a new provider for Healthwatch Lewisham will be provided in March 2015.

If there are any queries on this report please contact Carmel Langstaff, Service Manager – Strategy and Policy, Community Services, London Borough of Lewisham on 0208 314 9579 or by e-mail at carmel.langstaff@lewisham.gov.uk