

# Notes and Key Points of Meeting of HealthWatch Programme Board Thursday, 21 July 2011

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1. Mary Simpson updated the meeting on the Government's response to the Future Forum report – this has already been widely circulated – she focussed on the changes in relation to Healthwatch England, local Healthwatch and Health and Well Being Boards ("HWB")
2. LINKs made point that we wanted input to the HWB development process at DH level.  
Chair suggested a paper would come back to Programme Board.
3. We reinforced points around making sure papers were updated in time for meetings of Programme Board.
4. Future Forum – an approach would be made to ask for LINK representation on the continuing work of the Future Forum.
5. Kasey Chan reported on the House of Commons Bill Committee session on Thursday, 14th July – this had focussed on Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch – the session had lasted 2 hours. The key concerns of MPs had related to:- the independence of both Healthwatch structures; the current variation in the current performance of LINKs and the related governance issues; the need to include representation of children and young people's interests; the need to ensure equality and diversity issues are covered. The 3rd reading stage was expected to take place on 6th or 7th September.
6. Children's issues. Agreed to a presentation from the National Children's Bureau to the HW Advisory and possibly representation from the National Children's bureaux on the HW Advisory Group.
7. There was discussion about reports from the HW Advisory 'Task & Finish' Groups. It was agreed there needed to be better two way communications between the Programme Board and the Advisory Group. Specific proposals would be considered at the next meeting. Agreed it was important to have transparency in relation to the decision making processes of the Programme Board, i.e. the Programme Board advises Minister and the Advisory advises the Programme Board.
8. HWE Shadow Board – this is currently under active consideration – there was pressure from LINKs reps for this to be addressed soon, but it is unlikely to go ahead until the HWE Chair is appointed, i.e. early 2012 soonest (see note below). Joan Saddler was asked if money could be found to support a shadow HWE – she replied, "we'll see what we can do" but may approach CQC. The appointment process for

Chair would start with advertising in the Autumn of 2011 with appointment in Spring 2012. The CQC Board meeting in September would be considering the appointment schedule.

9. LINK Transition Developments - NALM emphasized that it is unreasonable that GP consortia are getting substantial funds for organisational development, but that no money is going to LINK/Healthwatch for parallel learning and development. In fact LINKs are getting cuts.
10. T&F Group on developing a good local HW – concern that the paper presented did not refer to relationships with local CQC offices or other local resolution of issues concerning the quality and safety of health and social care. Language needs changing to plain English. LHW should respond to public rather than council (unfortunate wording). Dealing with soft intelligence is resource intensive and the paper needs to recognise this. Indemnity for members flagged as an issue to look at in relation to advice, advocacy and monitoring of services.
11. Equality & Diversity - A new (6th) T&F Group would be established to cover Equality & Diversity. (Post meeting conversation established there was a possibility of presentations on Mental Health and rural issues at AG).
12. Local Government paper. Narrative on LAs commissioning multiple bodies was dropped, as goes against the requirement of 'body corporate'. This area to be looked at by the LHW sub-group.
13. Advocacy, complaints and information - Mary Simpson said it was likely a T&F Group (6 or 7th?) would be established to cover these areas.
14. A draft timeline was circulated; this would be refined and be available at the next meeting. This will also show how AG work feeds into the bigger picture of development.
15. Healthwatch Online Forum – going live July 21<sup>st</sup> 2011. Everyone was invited to sign up.
16. Media/communications strategy will look at how to reach those not online – a media plan would be developed for the next meeting.
17. Pathfinders – the Secretary of State would be announcing the approval of pathfinders himself, probably in early August. There have been 75 applications and 74 or 75 would be approved. There were a number of focus areas: - operational models; governance; the development and use of local intelligence; the use of local knowledge. There was no additional central money to support pathfinders, only for evaluation - but it was expected they would work closely with pathfinder Health & Wellbeing Boards.

18. Action Learning Sets – They would be co-ordinated by regional leads who were now in place for all regions except West Midlands – (in discussion after the meeting it did not appear likely that anyone would be identified for the West Midlands).
  19. Risk Register – noted that relationships with Monitor had been added, a Monitor representative would be invited to the next meeting of the Advisory Board on Thursday, 15th September. NALM has commenced conversation with Monitor. LINKs pushed for more mitigating action on funding cuts(HW9) suggesting judicial review, suggested funding should be via CEQ office rather than Social Services to partly mitigate conflict of interests (HW11), made clear that sense of isolation (HW13) for LINKs was at a higher level than listed. LINK raised new risks that LINKs were being excluded from transition processes locally.
  20. Payment of expenses – Joan Saddler resisted the idea of putting this on the Register (on the basis that continued very late payment of expenses could mean withdrawal of representatives), but said she would ensure the problem was dealt with.
  21. New matters for work programme: Health and Wellbeing boards, Monitor, Advocacy and Complaints. Also Timescales.
  22. AOB: LHW to be considered in context of PPE more generally. Patrick asked that HW be linked with the DH's Strategic Partner Programme for feeding information in and out of DH with other key stakeholders.
  23. Opportunity to start dialogue between Clinical Commissioning Groups with LINK/HW as PPE part of their authorisation requirement. Has started in some places but exception rather than the rule.
- Date of next meeting: - Thursday, 29th September – Nick, Malcolm and Anita attending

**Note produced by Dag Saunders, Nick Kennedy and Malcolm Alexander**

Dag Saunder's comment on the proposal for a Transitional HealthWatch England: - it's a "chicken and egg" situation. If HWE is going to assist in the establishment and induction arrangements for LHW it will need to be in place before Autumn 2012, but if it is to include representation from LHW it cannot be formed until after October 2012!

## **Key points from the Programme Board – July 21<sup>st</sup> 2011**

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### **1) Future Forum:**

- LINKs requested inclusion in the Future Forum final stage.

### **2) Defining Independence**

- Agreed to ensure LINKs are involved in work on defining independence being carried out by the Local Government T&F (Task and Finish) group.

### **3) Shadow HWE**

- Agreed to explore the potential roles and advantages of developing a shadow HWE Board in relation to the development of LHW and the high level functions of HWE

- Agreed to explore the potential role of a shadow HWE in relation to standard setting, duties, functions and clarity about role

### **4) Ring Fencing**

- The Board noted the concern of members that the budget of £50-60m intended for HW will not be ring-fenced and the consequent potential loss of development activity and comprehensiveness for LHW

### **5) Healthwatch Advisory Committee.**

- Noted that the Programme Board needs to demonstrate evidence of impact in relation to issues raised by the Advisory, what is accepted and rejected, the reason and details of process and outcomes.

### **6) Development Funds for LINKs in transition to Healthwatch**

- To note that while GPs are receiving substantial funds to develop their commissioning capacity that many LINKs have received budget cuts while participating in the same process.
- The Board noted the case made for development funds to ensure that LINKs are able to develop their capacity to influence commissioning in tandem with GP commissioners.

### **7) Indemnity**

- The Board noted the case made for indemnity cover for LHW and the request that this should be explored in relation to the giving of advice, providing advocacy and monitoring health and social care.

### **8) Local Government paper**

- Agreed to delete sentence re the 'potentially disconnected delivery model' for LHW in the narrative.

### **9) Body Corporate**

- The Board noted the contradiction between a body corporate and functions provided by a range of suppliers.

### **10) Complaints and advice infrastructure**

- The Board agreed to explore the development of these components of LHW in more details in a Task and Finish group.

### **11) Communications**

- The Board agreed to ask national voluntary sector bodies to distribute information about the development of Healthwatch.

### **12) Monitor**

- The Board agreed to invite Monitor to attend the HW Advisory for a discussion about their delivery role in relation to HWE and LHW

### **13) Pathfinders**

- Noted that All 75 Pathfinder HW will be given the go ahead but there is no money to fund Pathfinders individually.

- Funding received by DH team will be used to support networking for pathfinders and share learning with all LINKs.

- Action Learning Sets will be set up by the end of September 2011

### **14) Expenses**

- Joan Saddler will expedite the payment of expenses to Advisory Committee members

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**Note prepared by Malcolm Alexander, Nick Kennedy and Dag Saunders**

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