

Committee minutes – Public

22nd January 2025: 10 am – 11:30 am

Hybrid model – In person, with an online option (Zoom available) for those unable to come to Milburn House, Newcastle.

Committee members present

Michael Brown (MB)	Chair (in person)
Terry Bearpark (TB)	(in person)
Feyi Awotona (FA)	(in Person)
Alisdair Cameron (AC)	(via Zoom)

In attendance

Yvonne Probert (YP)	CEO of Tell Us North CIC (in person)
Courtney Peel (CP)	Business Support Manager (in person)
Daniel Milburn (DM)	Healthwatch Newcastle Lead officer (in person)
Iqra Hussain (IH)	Research and Data officer (in person)
Nooshin Shabani (NS)	Enter & View Officer (in person)
Avish Johnson (AJ)	Business Support Officer (in person)

Lauren Jones (LJ) Observer (via Zoom)

1. Welcome by the Chair

- 1.1 MB formally welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

2. Apologies for absence

- 2.1 Absences received from
 - Ann Wynn (AW)
 - Alex Hoole (AH)
 - Nick Linfoot (NH)

3. Minutes of meeting held on 20th November 2024

- 3.1. Star awards process has been drafted and require review.

Action – TB to send the draft copy to YP for review and to be presented at the next committee meeting.

3.2. AW has temporarily stepped away from subgroup due to personal commitments.

Action – YP to contact AW to offer support.

3.3. Shared values to be discussed later in the meeting as on the agenda.

3.4. DM to continue to find more details on the NHS app awareness program which is been conducted at the national level.

3.5. Report on Project topics for 2025 have been delayed and to be presented at the next meeting

3.6. The minutes of the meeting held on the 20th of November 2024 were approved as a true record.

4. Electronic Decisions

4.1. None.

5. Chair – Verbal Update

5.1. The National and Regional Healthwatch Chair Meetings were held on 13th January 2025. Lead Officer Daniel Milburn attended the Regional Meeting and provided an update on the topics discussed.

Action – MB to send National Chairs meeting notes to YP to share it with the committee.

Action – DM to send the official notes from the regional meeting to AJ to send it in the weekly communication.

5.1.1. The Dash review is expected to be published by late February or early March, pending public and Government responses. Healthwatch forms one part of the review, while another key focus will be patient safety.

5.1.2. Healthwatch England is exploring options to administer the funding at national level instead of through the local authorities which is the current route. This is still under review and not yet confirmed.

- 5.1.3. It was noted that the funding from the ICB is guaranteed for 2025/26, with all local Healthwatch receiving a core operating payment to be used for Regional Network purposes such as travel and face-to-face meetings. Significant amount of fund is being held for a possible future work around anthropology
- 5.1.4. The NENC Regional Healthwatch gathering/event is scheduled to take place on 31st March at the Royal Station Hotel in Newcastle.

Action – A decision about who the attendees will be, which will be communicated shortly.

- 5.1.5. NHS 10 year plan – Four discussion groups have been organised. A combined Healthwatch Newcastle and Healthwatch Gateshead event was held at One Strawberry Lane on 17th January, with an online event scheduled for 22nd January. Healthwatch Gateshead event to be held at Central Library on 31st January and Healthwatch Newcastle on 3rd February. Feedback from the public gathered at these events will be submitted to the Regional Healthwatch Network and be given to the ICB.

6. CEO update

- 6.1. Recruitment for committee members is currently closed, as the committee is now at a sufficient number.
- 6.2. MB is interim chair until March 2025 and a new Chair will need to be appointed at the next committee meeting. Existing members are invited to nominate themselves for the role.

Action – Any committee members interested in chairing the committee should reach out to the current Chair or CEO.

- 6.3. ICB update – the subcommittee place meetings are still split between Newcastle and Gateshead; however the new forward plan is expected to be a combined Newcastle and Gateshead plan.

- 6.4. Newcastle Council budget consultation – these details have already been shared with the committee via weekly communication and a draft letter to be signed by MB and final copy will be share with the committee shortly once finalised.
- 6.5. Quality Accounts 2024/25 – We are awaiting the Quality Accounts from the public bodies E.g NEAS, CNTW. Once received, the organisation’s response will be submitted as per the statutory duty.

Action – YP to send the draft of quality account response via weekly communication.

- 6.6. YP suggested a joint response to the Quality Accounts like last year with other local Healthwatch (e.g. Northumberland, North Tyneside) and all agreed on the approach. Also agreed to include any good practice observed to be included in the response.
- 6.7. Healthwatch Newcastle – Monitoring Report Quarter 3 has been submitted to commissioners.

Action – YP to share the Monitoring Report with the committee members.

- 6.8. Shadowing staff – all committee members were offered the opportunity to shadow staff to gain a better understanding of the various roles and responsibilities within the organisation. One of the potential board members recently shadowed staff at locality and shared that it had been a great experience.

Action – any committee meeting interested to shadow staff to contact YP.

10:59 Alisdair left the meeting

7. Project Update

- 7.1. Newcastle Hospital Discharge – Project scope redrafted with new information resulting in extending dates for data collection. Currently, in process of internal data dissemination and analysis, scheduled to be completed 20th January. Staff team continuing to meet regularly to focus on next steps e.g. discussion of recommendations.

- 7.2. Mental Health Crisis Services – Internal data dissemination and analysis has been completed. Draft report in progress. Staff team continuing to meet regularly to focus on next steps e.g. discussion of recommendations.
- 7.3. Reasonable Adjustments Phase 2 – Awaiting feedback and suggestions from ICB: Commissioning Manager is reviewing the scoping document with senior leaders once more. Timeline will be reviewed and amended again.
- 7.4. Accessible Information Standards – Previously, a subgroup met to discuss this topic and outlined Health Literacy and Accessible information as a priority.

Action – AB and team to research priority topics and present at the next committee meeting.

- 7.5. Enter & View – next training session to be held on 29th January. And committee requested to set a theme for Enter & view. A discussed was held on various topic and committee identified four major areas such as Hospital discharge lounge, Reasonable adjustments in GPs, Residential Care and adult social care with accessibility / learning disability and Dementia care.

Action – NS and AB to research on the four topics on feasibility and present at the next committee meeting to finalise a single topic Enter and View Visits.

- 7.6. Youthwatch – In process of delivering first workshop with Youth Focus NE, scheduled for 24th January.

8. Enter and View update

- 8.1. Included in project update.

9. Volunteers review update

- 9.1. The three role descriptions have been finalised, and role descriptions are ready. The next step is to distribute to current volunteers. Recruitment for new volunteers will begin shortly.

10. Locality working update from Lead Officer

- 10.1. Locality work is progressing successfully, with drop-ins at regular venues.
- 10.2. Report on locality work and signposting were presented showcasing the number of people the staff have engaged with in various ways in the last quarter and noticed that there has been some decrease in the number which could be due to Christmas break and office closure.

10.3. Committee suggested to look at supermarkets and leisure centres for locality drop-in in the future.

Action – DM to do a comparison report on Q2 and Q3 and present it at the next committee meeting.

11. Finance Update

11.1. There has been overspending due to several factors, including backdated employee pay resulting from the NJC pay scale increase, Freepost costs for paper surveys related to projects, office setup costs for new staff, recruitment costs, and travel and accommodation expenses for sending two representatives to the Healthwatch England Conference.

11.2. The Healthwatch England Conference expenses were fully covered by the bursary awarded, so these costs will be reimbursed. Other costs are expected to decrease, as office setup is a one-off expense, and the overall budget is anticipated to balance out over the next quarter

12. Standing Items

12.1. No reported safeguarding concerns, health and safety issues, equality and diversity concerns, or freedom of information requests.

13. Any other Business

13.1. Shared values – draft of the shared values was presented and committee approved.

13.2. Marmot City Event –to be held in March by Newcastle County Council. YP, AB and TB are in attendance and other committee members are encouraged to attend the event scheduled.

14. Date and time of next meeting.

14.1. 19th March 2025 at 10am.