

Healthwatch Board meeting
14 March 2016
Futures subgroup update - paper 2
Presented by: Bev Bookless

Members of the Board are asked to:

- Note the contents of the report

The futures subgroup met on 14 January 2016 and again on 7 March. A verbal update of the most recent meeting will be given due to the timing of the meetings.

At 14 January meeting, subgroup members discussed the topic of organisational independence in the light upcoming contract re-tender. A number of options were considered to bid for the contract:

- Maintaining the current co-hosted relationship
- A joint venture with another complementary organisation(s)
- Bidding as an independent entity

Key points from the discussion:

- It was always the intention within the existing contract for Healthwatch Newcastle to become a independent legal entity
- The benefits of a joint venture option to Healthwatch Newcastle were unclear as we already work closely with a number of other organisations in the city to draw on their strengths and expertise
- In some ways Healthwatch Newcastle is already some way down the route of independence: we have our own premises and Board, and produce an annual financial statement
- The most significant change should Healthwatch Newcastle become an independent entity would be to the position of Board members, but as most are experienced members of other boards/businesses these were felt to be well understood and familiar

Subgroup members were in agreement that independence should be recommended at the extraordinary Board meeting.