

Healthwatch Board meeting
16 March 2015
Finance subgroup (paper 4)
Presented by: Bev Bookless



Members of the Board are asked to:
1. Note the contents of the update

The latest finance subgroup meeting was held on 23 February 2015. The notes of the last meeting are attached with this paper. The main points to highlight are:

- The Healthwatch Newcastle budget is still underspent for 2014-15
- There has been some expenditure since January 2015 (mainly relating to the conference) that has not yet been invoiced for
- Expenditure on salaries is on target
- The potential office move to allow the Healthwatch Newcastle team to work on one site was discussed

Finance subgroup meeting notes

23 February 2015 - 2pm

Higham House, Newcastle upon Tyne

Finance subgroup members present

Bev Bookless (BB)

Anne Bonner (AB)

Sarah Cowling (SC)

Alison Walton (AW)

In attendance

Steph Edusei (SE)

Chief Executive, Healthwatch Newcastle (HWN)

Deborah Hall (DH)

Information Support Worker, HWN

Graeme Lyall (GL)

Finance Manager, Newcastle CVS

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

1.1. All subgroup members were in attendance - there were no apologies.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

2.1. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record.

3. Matters arising

3.1. Item 3.3: **Action:** Graeme Lyall (GL) to re-allocate £4,977 from the young people's activity budget line; Steph Edusei (SE) has had preliminary discussions with Children North East to attend meetings about children and young people's mental health services, in an Associate capacity.

3.2. Item 3.4: SE stated that the assessment of ESOL is ongoing - will be assessing its impact pre-course, immediately afterwards, then six months after the course.

3.3. Sara Cowling (SC) mentioned an Australian system for identifying health literacy in the community called the Ophelia Approach. HealthWORKS participated in a trial of this with around 132 people. It is potentially a useful tool for GPs to measure pre-and post-intervention. There are training workshops for people to use this system.

Action: SE to speak to Involve North East about the Ophelia Approach

4. Budget 2014 - 15

4.1. GL went through the figures, which covered actual expenditure against the adjusted budget for the period to 31 December 2015.

4.2. Some key points included:

- Salaries are on target
- Travel - there has been a higher expenditure for this period
- Staff training - still a large underspend

- The events budget- extra has been spent on the March conference
- ESOL for health - has not come into effect

4.3. SE to let GL know about expected expenditure so he can prepare a forecast. Some budget lines have already been amended but Bev Bookless (BB) would like the group to review these for 2016 as they were originally formulated using LINK budget lines.

Action: GL to prepare a forecast and circulate to the subgroup for discussion via email

4.4. There has been recent expenditure on IT hardware and there will be further costs for office furniture, IT and networking costs related to an office move. These assets will be need to be logged.

Action: Deborah Hall (DH) to produce an asset register

4.5. A query was raised about database and website maintenance costs, which have a small cost allocation. At the moment the project has a mailing list, an old LINK database and data stored on spreadsheets. Healthwatch England plans to roll out a CRM system from April; costs are unknown at this stage but it is anticipated that individual user licenses will have to be purchased, also, time will be needed to migrate data.

4.6. A finance report will be presented at the Board meeting on 16 March.

Action: BB and SE to draft finance report for Board meeting

5. Any other business

5.1. A discussion took place on the planned move to one site for the staff team, with a need to look closely at the set-up and ongoing costs. Some caution may have to be exercised as the budget is only confirmed to September 2015: there has been a verbal discussion about an extension but will have to wait until the council budget sign-off for more clarity about this.

5.2. BB stated that more work may need to be done on the planned move: the future is uncertain and there may be the possibility of having to re-tender. With an uncertain future, HWN should not be tied into an accommodation contract of more than one year at this stage. The planned move will be discussed at the Programme Management Board meeting on 2 March.

Action: SE to circulate a paper on accommodation costs and then take to the Board meeting

5.3. The next subgroup meeting is scheduled for 1 June, but it may not be necessary to hold this meeting and for the subgroup to communicate via email instead.