

# Committee minutes - approved

7 July 2020, 10.30am to 12.30pm

Online via Zoom

## Committee members present

Alexandros Deargies-Chantler (AD-C)      Healthwatch Newcastle Chair  
Terry Bearpark (TB)  
Feyi Awotona (FA)  
Alisdair Cameron (AC)

## Apologies

Gill Clancy (GC)

## In attendance

Cynthia Atkin (CA)	Interim Operations Manager
Kim Newton (KN)	Project Manager, HWG
Rachel Wilkins (RW)	Project Manager, HWN
Lyndsay Yarde (LY)	Associate, HWN
Beth Nichol (BN)	Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, HWG & Office Manager
Jacqui Thompson (JT)	Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, HWN
Kate Beattie (KB)	Finance and Administration Officer, HWN

## 1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 The meeting began with a round of inductions via Zoom.

## 2. Apologies for absence

2.1 Apologies were sent from Gill Clancy (GC).

## 3. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising (paper 1)

3.1 The minutes for the meeting were agreed as a true record.

3.2 No actions.

## 4. Lyndsay Yarde update (papers 2a, 2b, 2c)

4.1 The PPGs were due to finish in September 2020 but due to COVID-19, LY asked everyone involved what their circumstances were and she received feedback that participants involved wanted the deadline to be postponed, LY proposed that this would be December 2020.

4.2 LY told the Committee that one practice has completed theirs with a Distinction and TB has moderated this as well. Two more are wanting to complete theirs in August and four in the Autumn. She is still waiting to hear back from more of the participants involved and two have dropped out.

- 4.3 In September, LY plans to go out to the different practices involved to help and engage as we will need to start adapting to new ways of working. However, the participants involved are still happy to stay in contact via Zoom and telephone calls.
- 4.4 The Committee agreed with what LY is doing and what she proposed about the award being postponed to December 2020. FA suggested to keep the portfolio simple as it will receive more reviews and as well to ask if the practices are interested in being involved in some publicity after they have completed the award.

**Action: Completion of the PPG pilot: December 2020.**

**LY left the meeting.**

## **5. Operations Manager update**

- 5.1 CA informed the Committee that the team are all still working from home and working on the five key priorities. Challenges she is facing includes banking issues and that she cannot conduct any wages without Steph, who is still providing help and support.
- 5.2 BN has taken over the role as Office Manager and KB has taken on more roles in finance. CA and the members present showed their appreciation towards them both. CA reminded the Committee that this is on a temporary basis as the new CEO may make changes to this.
- 5.3 CA told the Committee that she had two meetings with two potential applicants for the CEO role. There have not been many applicants but there is still time.
- 5.4 JT has been working on the mapping in the Outer West of Newcastle and making connections with groups out there to be involved with. CA explained why we are conducting this.
- 5.5 CA stated that we received over 200 responses for the survey we produced for CBC Health Federation in Gateshead about patients returning to their practices after COVID-19. CA suggested mirroring this in Newcastle. LY is writing the report for this and CA will provide feedback when it has been completed and explain to the Committee why it would work in Newcastle as well.
- 5.6 AD-C suggested that CA and BN produce a risk assessment for when the team return to work in October, this would need to include a structure and an official plan so reduce stress and anxieties of going back into the office. CA needs to take into account staff concerns and starting to reassure and resolve these. FA stated that we should look at all the good aspects from working from home and adapt to a more balanced approach when we decide to return to work.

**Action: To include a risk assessment plan for returning to work in the agenda for the next meeting.**

5.7 CA showed her appreciation towards JT and BN for their continuous work with the Champions throughout COVID-19. The Committee can read and keep up to date with the Champions by reading their profiles on the two websites and also in the newsletters. BN told the Committee that we are currently looking for specific volunteers to join who would be interested in the following roles within Healthwatch: Online feedback collector, Information sharer, Digital Communicator and Read and commenter. BN also stated that we are looking for members to join who are interested in our approach to social media.

5.8 RW is waiting for feedback from the commissioners for her report on children and young people's mental health. Due to this, there is a delay in the social media campaign for it. However, she was advised to publish it when she feels comfortable and when it is ready to go out.

## **6. Chairs update**

6.1 AD-C stated that CA is doing a fantastic job as Interim Operations Manager as she is bringing the team together. He also showed his appreciation towards the whole team.

6.2 AD-C informed the members present that the Health Scrutiny Board and Wellbeing for Life Board (this has been reformatted and renamed as "Future City Board") are now holding live streams both addressing COVID-19.

6.3 The team are submitting evidence to Healthwatch England and we provide feedback and intelligence from the public.

6.4 He stated that JT has been working on the Committee recruitment package in making it more user friendly. AD-C stated that he wants to make the recruitment process and meetings more policy rather than practice meaning that there is a set of structures to follow.

6.5 Alexandros expressed his apologies that he had inadvertently not followed the usual practice for recruiting members to the HWN Committee. This was due to misunderstandings, and his understanding that there was no formal committee recruitment policy in place. This has highlighted the need to review our committee recruitment policy. The issue has now been resolved and the Committee have agreed to move on. CA to begin to look at our policy.

## **7. Communication and Engagement plan (papers 3, 4)**

7.1 CA explained that this plan shows the five key priorities and how we are implementing them through our work. All staff are stepping up ensuring that these get completed. CA is making sure she signposts what we are doing.

7.2 The next CEO will take over this and make sure it is ongoing as this is only the start. Once we have looked at the trends, we will then start to plan which specific areas we are going to target. AD-C to send CA a copy of the national survey to help make actions.

## **8. Any Other Business**

8.1 AD-C explained his current circumstances regarding his current health challenges and informed the Committee and team what his plans to do. He is going to take sabbatical from 10 July until the start of September, but this could change. He plans to make arrangements with CA about what will change and if a member of the Committee stands in for this time or if it's shared out through the Committee. Everyone wished him well and reassured him that the work will still go on in his absence.

**The meeting closed at 12.30pm.**