

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Healthwatch Dorset
Meeting date	2 March 2020
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch organisations were established in 2013, under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). Healthwatch England was established as an effective, independent consumer champion for health and social care and provides a leadership and support role for local Healthwatch organisations.</p> <p>Local Healthwatch Dorset is the County's independent health and social care champion. It exists to ensure that people are at the heart of care and listen to people's views about health and social care services. These views are then shared with decision-making organisations, so together a real difference can be made.</p> <p>Healthwatch Dorset is funded by Dorset Council and BCP Council through funding received from Central Government. The contract was previously held by Help and Care until 31st March 2019. On contract renewal and after competitive tender the contract was awarded to Evolving Communities, a community interest company.</p> <p>As part of the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Well Being Board and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 local Healthwatch can escalate matters of concern to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, when it is felt necessary to do so. Local Healthwatch must produce an annual report in relation to activities for the financial year and Overview and Scrutiny Committees should be sighted on this.</p> <p>Healthwatch priorities for the coming year include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering feedback on cancer support services in West Dorset • Working with young people to influence the Children & Young People's Mental Health services review • Access to primary care, including work on Learning Disability health checks, carers and disabled access • Accident & Emergency services and transport.

Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>The Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Note the Content of the Report and in particular, note the roles, responsibilities and priorities for 2020/21 of Healthwatch b) Ensure that as the Committee develops its Forward Plan it takes into consideration the Priorities of Healthwatch to ensure effective alignment and avoid duplication c) Continue to invite a Healthwatch representative to be an observer at the Committee to ensure that Healthwatch can directly input into the work of the Committee insights gained from Healthwatch's engagement with local people and communities. d) An annual basis, ensure that the Committee considers both the Annual Report of Healthwatch Dorset and its annual priorities.
Reason for recommendations	As part of the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Well Being Board and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 local Healthwatch should work collaboratively with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to improve outcomes for individual residents of the BCP Council area.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Lesley Dedman, Adults and Health
Corporate Director	Jan Thurgood, Corporate Director, Adult Social Care, BCP Council
Contributors	<p>Louise Bate, Manager, Healthwatch Dorset</p> <p>Elaine Stratman, Head of Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance, Adult Social Care, BCP Council</p>
Wards	all
Classification	For Update

Background

1. Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch organisations were established in 2013, under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). Healthwatch England was established as an effective, independent consumer champion for health and social care and provides a leadership and support role for local Healthwatch

organisations. It advises NHS England, English Local Authorities, NHS Improvement and the Secretary of State for Health. It also has the power to recommend that action is taken by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) when there are concerns about health and social care services.

2. Healthwatch Dorset was established in 2013 and is the County's independent health and social care champion. It exists to ensure that people are at the heart of care.
3. Dedicated teams of staff and volunteers listen to what people like about local health and social care services, and what could be improved. These views are then shared with the decision-making organisations, so together a real difference can be made. Healthwatch Dorset can also help people to find the information they need about the health and social care in their area.
4. Healthwatch Dorset is funded by Dorset Council and BCP Council through funding received from Central Government. This funding is not ringfenced. It has powers to ask both the NHS and the Local Authorities, which have responsibility for social care, for information which is relevant to the exercise of its functions. It is also empowered to make recommendations to the NHS and Local Authorities and has a seat on the Health and Wellbeing Boards.
5. The contract for Healthwatch Dorset was previously held by Help and Care until 31st March 2019. On contract renewal and after competitive tender the contract was awarded to Evolving Communities, a community interest company. It provides a professional consultancy service specialising in research, evaluation and public engagement. It is an independent organisation and supports the work of 3 local Healthwatch organisations across the South West.
6. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 also makes provision for local authorities to arrange an Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS), in relation to their area, for complaints relating to the provision of health services. SEAP provides this service for the Dorset and BCP Council areas.
7. As part of the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Well Being Board and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013, local Healthwatch organisations can escalate matters of concern to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, when it is felt necessary to do so. Part of the obligation of the committee is that the committee should acknowledge receipt of anything escalated and keep Healthwatch informed of any action the committee takes.
8. As well as above, Local Healthwatch must produce an annual report in relation to activities for the financial year that ends 31st March. These reports must address such matters as the Secretary of State may direct and will include information

about the amount of spending and details regarding what this is being spent on. This report must be made publicly available and a copy sent to a number of organisations including the relevant Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

9. During the last year a lot of work has taken place to establish the new provider of local Healthwatch. This has included continuing with projects carried over from Help and Care. Over the past year, focus has been on:
 - a. Speaking to over 1000 local people in 2019.
 - b. Working on projects such as the NHS Long Term Plan, Diabetes Awareness, A&E services, homelessness, cancer support services.
 - c. 200+ engagement events in 2019 across Dorset.
 - d. Established a bank of over 110 volunteers across Dorset, carrying out visits, gathering feedback & supporting promotion stands.
 - e. Establishing a new Steering Group to set our work priorities, local volunteers have helped us create our Workplan.
10. Over the coming year, a number of work priorities have been identified and these are currently being consulted upon, these include:
 - a. Cancer Support Services in West Dorset – pilot project working with Macmillan & Wessex Cancer Trust.
 - b. Children & Young People's Mental Health services – work with young people to influence the CAMHS review.
 - c. Access to Primary Care – to include work on Learning Disability Health Checks, carers & disabled access.
 - d. Accident & Emergency Services – gathering feedback from patients at Dorchester & Bournemouth Hospitals.
 - e. Transport - clear & accessible information, disabled access, older people and rural communities.
11. It is important that the BCP Council Health and Adult Social Care Committee and Healthwatch Dorset have good communication in order that the work of both bodies can add most value in improving the outcomes and experiences of residents who use health and social care services. One way in which communication is enabled is that a Healthwatch Dorset regularly attends the Health and Adult Social Care Committee meetings as an observer and is enabled to contribute to the discussion in meetings. As the Committee develops its Forward Plan, it will be useful for the Committee to consider the priorities and work plan of Healthwatch Dorset to ensure effective alignment and avoid duplication. The Committee is also recommended to ensure that it annually has an item on the Healthwatch Dorset Annual Report and on the annual priorities of Healthwatch Dorset.

Appendices

Healthwatch Dorset presentation attached.