
**Manchester Health and Wellbeing Board
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Manchester Health and Wellbeing Board – 22 January 2014

Subject: Healthwatch Manchester Engagement with Local People

Report of: Vicky Szulist, Chair, Healthwatch Manchester

Summary

The Health & Social Care Act requires that each local authority in England establish and resource a Healthwatch as its strong local consumer champion for health and social care which seeks to make sure every voice is heard, especially the voices of those who are vulnerable and speak more quietly. Manchester presents a complex system for engagement between its citizens and its commissioners and providers of services. Any productive engagement process is required to be equally complex and sophisticated. As an independent organisation embedded within the communities it serves, and exclusive to Manchester as its area of operation, Healthwatch Manchester seeks to achieve this.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

1. Consider and approve the proposed engagement structures and arrangements as set out in this paper and how these arrangement might work with the board;
2. Task the Chief Officer of Healthwatch Manchester with implementing the strategy for this kind of engagement through Healthwatch Manchester

Board Priority(s) Addressed:

Priorities 1 through 8

Contact Officers:

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents

are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact the officer above.

Health & Social Care Act 2012 (Department of Health 2012)

Establishing Local Healthwatch, Working with Health & Wellbeing Boards (Local Government Association 2012)

Involving Local Healthwatch, The role of Chairs and members of Health & Wellbeing Boards (Local Government Association 2012)

1. Introduction

Health and social care services have recently undergone major reforms through a series of new pieces of legislation. Public engagement with health and care structures and services has been affected by these reforms and new ways to engage productively with each other are still to some extent unclear both to local people, providers of services and the infrastructure organisations which support them. In Manchester we have a unique situation around engagement compared to most other local authority areas in that:

1. There are a larger number of structures with which to engage
2. Some structures are new and have complexity
3. The Manchester demographic is diverse and changes quickly and so presents a greater demand for a responsive engagement system
4. The socio-economic inequities and subsequent health inequalities experienced by the people of Manchester are often pronounced and create higher demand on the system

Add to this Greater Manchester initiatives such as hospital service reform which will create large-scale change and the need for a system of engagement becomes clear which:

- Responds to need
- Adapts to change
- Is integral to the whole health and care system
- Is embedded within the people and communities of Manchester

This brief report describes how Healthwatch Manchester will aim to provide this system of engagement through its approach to the people of Manchester and its relationship with the Manchester Health & Wellbeing Board.

2. Overview of Healthwatch Manchester

Healthwatch Manchester was formed on 1st April 2013 as part of the legal requirements for each Local Authority in England laid out in the Health & Social Care Act 2012. Each Healthwatch is required to be an independent corporate body and has three main functions:

- The provision of information of and signposting to local health and social care services
- Research into patient and public experience of these services and
- The communication of its findings to local commissioners and providers of these services

Through this pattern of information exchange and engagement each Healthwatch seeks to improve local services through collaborative partnership.

Advocacy around raising issues or complaints is an optional function and is not provided through Healthwatch Manchester. Healthwatch Manchester is supported by Healthwatch England the national infrastructure organisation which provides practical resources as well as support around policy issues.

2.1 Healthwatch Manchester Vision:

To enable real and long-term improvements to the health and social care of the people and communities of Manchester.

2.2 Healthwatch Manchester Mission:

Healthwatch Manchester is an independent not-for-profit organisation driven by National government policy, mandated by its local membership and supported by Local Authority. Through engaging and informing the people and communities of Manchester as their consumer champion, and influencing the design and commissioning of services; Healthwatch Manchester seeks to improve their access to and experience of health and social care.

In its first year of operation Healthwatch Manchester has focused on establishing its governance and structural arrangements and has an interim management board. The organisation currently derives its membership from the local voluntary and community sector. At its launch and Inaugural General Meeting this year the interim board will step down and the new board will be formally appointed from the membership.

3. How we work

Healthwatch Manchester is staffed by one full-time Chief Officer, a part time Volunteer Development & Training Officer and over 50 volunteers. It is housed within Manchester Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), its contractor, and out-sources its Information and Signposting service to Manchester CAB's staff & volunteers. 100% of calls to Healthwatch Manchester are responded to.

Other functions which are out-sourced from Manchester CAB include:

- Administration
- Finance
- Human Resources
- IT support

Working to an early delivery plan in its first year, Healthwatch Manchester is supported by a Delivery Team with representation from Manchester Citizens Advice Bureau, the City Council and the Manchester CCGs.

Volunteers take on either research or communication roles within a robust management system. Research involves data capture from local people. Communication involves information management to inform areas of prioritisation and any need for escalation.

See Appendix: *Flow chart describing the use of information in the strategic planning of Healthwatch Manchester*).

See: Healthwatch England Escalation Guidance - available on request from Healthwatch Manchester.

4. Engagement

Arrangements for consideration

The following arrangements describe the approach of Healthwatch Manchester to the issue identified within the introduction to this report

1. There are a larger number of structures with which to engage Healthwatch Manchester acknowledges that engagement must not be done in isolation and that collaborative partnership needs to be central in its approach to this and other issues. Triangulation of information with other local engagement leads and

other bodies such as Patient and Public Advisory Groups, the Care Quality Commission, user & carer and other patient groups will ensure a more robust whole-system approach. The notion of subsidiarity should underpin any collaborative partnership.

2. Some structures are new and have complexity

In describing the complexity of structures and their relation to public experience, Healthwatch Manchester acknowledges the requirements for brevity in reporting to its own Board and to the Health & Wellbeing Board. In future, all such reported information from Healthwatch Manchester will also be available in 'plain English' for our public audience. Ideally a further stage of reporting would be possible where adjustment is made for people with sensory impairment and/or learning disability to ensure ease of access and understanding. In this case Healthwatch Manchester would seek the support of local community groups such as the Manchester Disabled Peoples Action Group and the Manchester Learning Disability Partnership Board. The Living Longer Living Better initiative and the changes this will bring about presents the major engagement opportunity between health and social care and the people of Manchester over the coming years. The Healthwatch Manchester board has directed the focus of our work to closely align with the target populations identified within this initiative.

3. The Manchester demographic is diverse and changes quickly and so presents a greater demand for a responsive engagement system

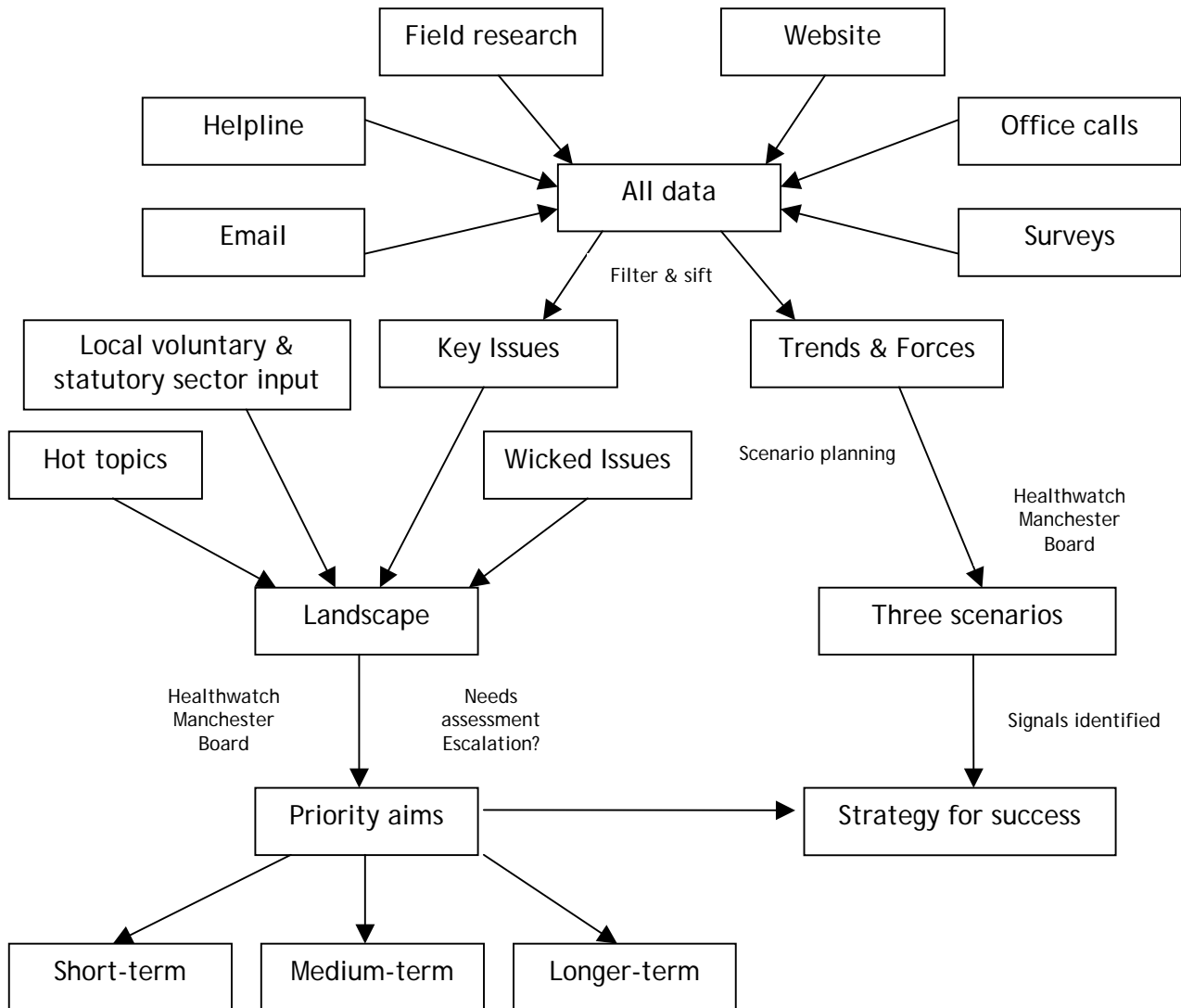
Healthwatch Manchester's approach to engagement & diversity is enshrined within its Values & Principles (See appendix). Traditional responses to diversity have included resources printed in languages other than English. New ways of engagement around diversity will include the use of community initiatives. For example, Crescent Radio broadcasts in Urdu to an estimated 25000 households across Northern Greater Manchester. Healthwatch Manchester has a demographically diverse volunteer base especially around age and ethnicity and so seeks to be culturally sensitive in engagement through matching demographic need. Volunteers have a maximum service of two years and so the volunteer base is constantly refreshed in order to maintain responsiveness.

4. The socio-economic inequities and subsequent health inequalities experienced by the people of Manchester are often pronounced and create higher demand on the system

Healthwatch Manchester has a person-centred approach to engagement where people are engaged equally as citizens and not immediately categorised as say, patients or carers and are never perceived as problematic. The demand on the system requires an acknowledgement that the Pareto principle will apply in terms of engagement where people are accessing multiple services. Engagement must always reflect need although Healthwatch Manchester will work creatively to expand the range of people accessing its services.

Appendix

Flow chart describing the use of information in the strategic planning of Healthwatch Manchester



Criteria for the assessment of the usefulness of information*:

- Relevant
- Concise
- Accurate
- Complete
- Timely
- Clear
- Thorough
- Through the correct channels
- To the correct people
- Value is greater than the cost of its acquisition

* Lucey 1991

Healthwatch Manchester Values & Principles

We will:

- Be independent, non-political and impartial in our activities
- Be non-judgemental, open and transparent, and seek the trust of local people
- Actively engage with seldom heard communities
- Value the people and communities of Manchester and their contributions

This means that our methods of working will be:

- As a critical friend and always challenge constructively
- Reflective of a strong evidence-base
- Realistic and influential
- Innovative and adaptable

Our key messages are:

- We are a local listening service
- We provide information and signposting
- We work with local people to improve health and social care services