

CEO Report

Purpose

1. This report presents the Work Programme 2019/20 Annual Summary for Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, see accompanying document.
2. As a result of the Covid-19 emergency, interim work arrangements for 2020/21 are included in section 8-20 below.

Key issues

3. All planned activities for 2019/20 were achieved with further detail in the work programme summary. The key highlights are:
 - ‘What Would You Do’ project; the local response to the NHS Long Term Plan
 - Range of issues, escalations and projects throughout the year, reported to the Board on a bi-monthly basis (see attached summary table)
 - Successful merger of all Local Authority Partnership Boards
 - Four Healthwatch locality Health and Care Forums now in place with consistent approaches and ways of working
 - Our application for Investors in Volunteers accreditation has been completed and we await confirmation of the decision
 - Continuing high visible presence on social media, good relationship with local media and publishing extensive range of news stories
 - The Healthwatch Cambridgeshire website¹ went live on 28th February
 - The Healthwatch Peterborough site² went live at the end of March.
4. The Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Annual Report 2019/20 will be presented to this Board at the AGM in July 2020.
5. As a response to the Covid-19 emergency the organisational Business Continuity Plan came into action on 17th March 2020. All staff moved to home working and all face to face engagement was cancelled. This transition was smooth and new ways of working are evolving; focussing on digital channels and new ways of connecting with communities, for example actively supporting our local and NHS volunteering schemes. We are already securing impacts from sharing people’s feedback, see section 12.

¹ <https://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/>

² <https://www.healthwatchpeterborough.co.uk/>

6. The Business Continuity Plan has been reviewed, as has the Risk Register, and is presented as a separate item on this agenda. Horizon scanning is a priority and as the new strategic and service environment becomes apparent, we will adapt and adjust to maximise our effectiveness.

Action required by the Board

7. The Board is asked to:
 - Note the report.

Author

Sandie Smith, CEO

13 May 2020

Interim work plan

8. The interim work plan is focussed in three areas:

- Information Service
- Communications that increase feedback
- Community support.

Information Service

9. We have seen a steady flow of feedback and queries being raised. We have been able to answer many queries, often in liaison with providers and commissioners, and direct people to the correct services. We are escalating concerns that we have not had satisfactory responses to, and these are being tracked.

10. Some of the concerns raised are:

- Access to emergency dental services. Clarification being sought from the provider
- Confusion about letters going to people about shielding
- Confusing correspondence regarding appointments and treatments from Trusts
- Lack of clarity about information and support for people without internet access. This is a national concern
- Some difficulties in getting medication and concerns when pharmacies have to shut at short notice when patients are waiting for repeat medication. Ongoing discussions with CCG regarding pharmacy provision.

11. The new concerns and outcomes recording and tracking system is in place. In April we received 25 pieces of feedback without an element of signposting, 30 people contacted us for signposting and to tell us their experience. This is a large increase and we believe indicates the need for more information at this time.

12. Some of the immediate outcomes are have seen are:

- Clarified patient transport arrangements for people either more vulnerable or shielding who need to attend hospital, especially cancer treatment, and also information about what treatment is and is not continuing
- Notified one of our hospitals about calls regarding operations. People told to attend but had operation cancelled. Concern that they are at risk by going to hospital unnecessarily. Response received from hospital that welcomes the feedback and assurances to correct inaccurate messages

- As a result of our feedback, the CCG will send out public messages to reassure people about correct infection control measures
 - Guidance obtained and circulated about PPE for people receiving care via Direct Payments
 - Healthwatch England guidance developed and circulated to partners as a result of our Healthwatch raising a concern about people being inappropriately contacted to sign Do Not Resuscitate forms
 - People reassured regarding access to diagnostics especially where they may need urgent treatment.
13. All intelligence is shared with Healthwatch England via our CRM. Our intelligence regularly features in the monthly national intelligence bulletins that are shared with government and NHS England.

Communications

14. The first phase of communications focussed on supporting government and public health messages. As services consolidate into new arrangements, we are moving into a second phase to encourage more people to contact us with their experiences. We are developing a survey to help understand what it is like for people seeking help with health and care needs. This survey will be developed with commissioner and provider input and will be based around the Healthwatch England template.
15. The activities to support this second phase and our core business include:
- Regularly updating the websites with news stories, advice and information articles and event information
 - Maintaining active and responsive social media presence
 - Linking to strategic communications groups
 - Supporting the promotion of Healthwatch Board meetings and Forums
 - Promoting opportunities for people to get involved.

Community support

16. Following cancellation of all face to face engagement work we are devising new ways of engaging with our communities.

17. Our local authorities have set up the required Local Resilience Framework (LRF) to respond to the emergency. We are members of the countywide and district hubs that report to the LRF, as well as the Warn and Inform Group. These links are proving a very useful means to collect feedback, as well as influence and promote our Information Service.
18. Staff are encouraged to get involved in their local volunteer schemes as this not only helps local people but also is providing us with intelligence about people's experiences.
19. We are now making plans to hold our Community Forums and Partnership Boards online, where practical.
20. We are keeping in touch with our volunteers to make sure they are safe, well and keeping in touch with services, should they need help. Many of them are in the at risk or shielded groups, so current volunteering opportunities are limited. We are working on news ways on which volunteers will be able to help our work, as we move to a new working environment.