

Healthwatch Barnet Advisory Board Minutes 25 June 2025

Present:

Board members -

Debra Gordon (Chair), Jenny Blyth, Martin Quilter and Richard Strong

Staff -

Dan Rogers, Public Voice CEO

Sarah Campbell, Healthwatch Barnet Manager

Minute-taker -

Daria Duda, Healthwatch Barnet Research Coordinator

No.	Item	Actions arising	Status
1	Introductions Debra welcomed all attendees and facilitated a round of introductions.		
2	Minutes of previous meeting The group approved the minutes from the previous Advisory Board meeting. Members also reviewed and agreed the Healthwatch Barnet Volunteer Code of Conduct.	Sarah to add the minutes of the previous meeting to the Healthwatch Barnet website.	Completed

3	<p>Introduction to Public Voice</p> <p>Dan gave a presentation on Public Voice's strategic goals and the work that the organisation is doing via Healthwatch Haringey, Healthwatch Croydon and Healthwatch Hounslow. The board then had a wide-ranging discussion about ideas and plans for Public Voice's delivery of Healthwatch Barnet.</p> <p>Board members asked about where the key points of operational interface lay between the Healthwatch Barnet team and other teams within Public Voice. Dan advised that teams were working together in numerous areas, for example the four Healthwatch managers were able to support one another with policy and influencing work. Dan went on to say that, since Healthwatch Barnet's transfer to Public Voice on 1 June, Public Voice's central communications team and information and signposting team had been providing workflow support to the core Healthwatch Barnet staff. He advised that, for example, the information and signposting team were responsible for day-to-day management of the Healthwatch Barnet public enquiry line, with Healthwatch Barnet staff offering support as and when it was needed.</p> <p>Members asked about the opportunities for Public Voice's four Healthwatch services to collaborate with one another. Sarah said that, as both Barnet and Haringey fall within the North Central London Integrated Care System footprint, she had already been working quite closely with Paul Addae, the Healthwatch Haringey Manager, before Healthwatch Barnet transferred to Public Voice. She went on to say that, since the transfer, she had been able to further develop this collaboration with Paul as well as building closer links with the Healthwatch Hounslow and Healthwatch Croydon Managers.</p> <p>The board went on to discuss Public Voice's decision-making processes. Dan advised that co-production is a guiding principle of Public Voice's work, and that Public Voice engages in a co-design process with each Healthwatch</p>	<p>Sarah to work with Debra and Dan on an initial review of the Board's Terms of Reference. Sarah to then arrange a discussion with the Board, to share any suggestions arising from this work and to hear all members' views.</p>	In hand
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	<p>Advisory Board to decide on the priorities for individual services. Board members said that they welcomed this process and would be keen to participate in it at upcoming meetings.</p> <p>The Board noted that, as the Healthwatch Barnet hosting arrangements had changed, it would make sense to review the Board's Terms of Reference and any related governance documentation, to check whether any changes were needed. Sarah agreed to follow up with Debra on this in the first instance and to then arrange a discussion on this with the Board as a whole.</p>		
4	<p>Operational update</p> <p>Annual Report:</p> <p>The Board observed that the Healthwatch Barnet Annual Report would be published on the website on 30 June and would include a detailed overview of the last year's achievements.</p> <p>GP access guide:</p> <p>Members noted that Healthwatch Barnet's guide for the public on 'How to Access Your GP' was published in mid-June. The guide offers simple information in plain English on points including how to register with a GP surgery, appointment booking and where people can get help when their GP surgery is closed.</p> <p>Sarah reminded members that the guide was developed as a result of feedback from the public about the need for clearer information in this area. The Board noted that the Healthwatch Barnet team had consulted with a wide range of stakeholders when developing the guide, including the Barnet GP Practice Managers Forum, several Clinical Leads from the Integrated Care Board and the NCL Training Hub.</p>		

<p>Sarah advised that the PDF version of the guide had been published on the website so people could download it. However, this was primarily designed to be printed out and Healthwatch Barnet would be distributing copies as part of face-to-face outreach, with digitally excluded people being a key audience. Sarah went on to explain that an online version of the guide would be published shortly - this would be laid out on a webpage with 'jump to' links.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion of the guide, and members noted that it was helpful that the guide explained the role of different professionals in GP surgeries, such as Care Coordinators, Social Prescribers and Clinical Pharmacists, as the role of different professionals was not always clear for patients.</p> <p>Mystery shopping:</p> <p>Sarah provided an update on Healthwatch Barnet's mystery shopping work with GP surgeries. Members noted that the team had phoned all 48 of Barnet's GP surgeries, posing as patients who wished to register. They had asked key questions about access to care, particularly around how patients could register and book appointments. The research uncovered both good practice and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Sarah advised that the team had written up individual reports for all 48 GP surgeries. She went on to explain that, to date, 30 surgeries had confirmed that they had taken steps to ensure that learning from this mystery shopping exercise was embedded in their reception team's day to day work.</p> <p>Outreach and engagement:</p> <p>Sarah summarised Healthwatch Barnet's Q1 engagement to date. She advised that the team had reached 141 members of the public at venues</p>		
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	<p>including libraries, Barnet's affordable 'Better' gyms and community centres. Sarah noted that the groups engaged included Bravanese, Somali, Eastern European and South Asian residents. Overall, 81% (n=114) of participants were from ethnic minority communities. The team reached residents from a wide range of different age groups, from attendees in their twenties to participants in their seventies.</p> <p>Sarah advised that preparations were being made for the next phase of outreach, with activities planned at Finchley Memorial Hospital and GP surgeries. She went on to explain that the team had devised a 'General Survey' and that the upcoming engagement work would focus on gathering residents' views about the health and social care issues that mattered to them. Sarah advised that findings would be shared with the Board, to help inform the process of deciding Healthwatch Barnet's upcoming priorities.</p>		
5	<p>Next meeting date</p> <p>The group discussed possible dates for the next Advisory Board meeting. Some members mentioned that Wednesdays and Fridays tended to work best for them. It was agreed that a date would be arranged over email.</p>	<p>Sarah to contact the board to arrange the next meeting date.</p>	In hand
6	<p>Any other business</p> <p>None.</p>		