

Healthwatch Barnet
Advisory Board Minutes
7 November 2025

Attendees

Debra Gordon (DG) - Chair

Richard Strong (RS) – Board member

Dan Rogers (DR) - CEO Public Voice

Sarah Campbell (SC) - Healthwatch Barnet Manager

Apologies

Martin Quilter (MQ) – Board member

Jennifer Blyth (JB) – Board member

Meeting summary

This Healthwatch Barnet Advisory Board meeting focused on a number of key matters, including the implementation of AI for minute-taking, amendments to the Advisory Board's structure including term lengths, and the confirmation of national funding for local Healthwatch through to March 2027.

Discussions also covered governance processes for declaring interests, updates on exercise research and GP access, and the implementation of the Accessible Information Standard.

1. Welcome and introductions

DG welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Governance and declarations of interest

SC thanked members for completing their declaration of interest forms. She reminded the board that Public Voice was looking to develop a new process, whereby board members' declarations of interest would be published on the relevant website – so the Healthwatch Barnet website for this board. The group discussed this matter briefly.

Action | SC to follow up with PV colleagues on the proposed process for publishing members' declarations of interest. **In hand**

3. Matters arising

The board members who were present advised that they were content with the minutes of the June 2025 Advisory Board meeting.

The new AI minute-taking process was discussed. The members who were present advised that they were content for the meeting to be recorded, purely for the purposes of minute-taking. DR advised that the AI recording would be deleted after the minutes were drafted to comply with GDPR regulations.

Action | SC to email the board members who were not present on 7 November to seek approval of the minutes due to lack of quorum. **Completed – the minutes were approved over email with no further amendments**

Action | SC to add the minutes of the previous meeting to the Healthwatch Barnet website, once these are agreed. **Completed**

4. Board governance

Funding for local Healthwatch is expected to be confirmed shortly for the financial year 2026-2027, with public announcements anticipated soon.

The board discussed extending the term length for board members from two to three years with a possibility of renewal, aligning with Public Voice standards. The board agreed to set the term length as three years with the option to extend for a further three further years.

The board members who were present indicated that they were in agreement with the other changes to the Terms of Reference which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Action | SC to amend the Terms of Reference to ensure that these consistently refer to board Vice Chairs rather than Deputy Chairs. **Completed – this point has been amended in the new Terms of Reference.**

Action | SC to email the board members who were not present on 7 November to seek approval of the revised Terms of Reference, including extending the term length for board members to three years. **Completed – the Terms of Reference were agreed over email with no further amendments and have been published on the Healthwatch Barnet website.**

5. Exercise research update

SC provided an update on Healthwatch Barnet's research on access to exercise for people with long-term conditions. She advised that the team were carrying out surveys with Barnet residents, as well as one-on-one interviews to gather in-depth feedback.

SC went on to say that she was working with Barnet Council's Engagement Team to organise a special meeting of the Council's Involvement Board in December 2025. Attendees would include people with lived experience of using adult social care

services and Council staff working on parks and health communications. This would be a good opportunity to share the emerging findings of Healthwatch Barnet's exercise research, hear people's views and discuss practical solutions.

Future research priorities DG reminded the group that, prior to this meeting, three project proposals had been circulated, for research on 1) Ageing Well, 2) Neighbourhood Health Systems and 3) the Accessible Information Standard. SC and DR provided further feedback on the proposals and members discussed them in detail.

The board members present advised that, while they felt that all three projects had merit, their recommendation was for Healthwatch Barnet to take forward the project on the Accessible Information Standard, as they felt that this was the piece of work that was likely to achieve the greatest impact. Members said that, in future months, they would be happy to reconsider development of the other two projects, alongside any further emerging project proposals.

Action | SC to email the board members who were not present on 7 November to seek approval of the recommendation that Healthwatch Barnet take forward a research project on the Accessible Information Standard. **Completed – this recommendation was agreed over email with no further amendments**

Neighbourhood Health Systems

SC provided an update about the work which Healthwatch Barnet had been doing in relation to Neighbourhood Health Systems. She advised that Healthwatch Barnet was sitting on the Barnet Borough Partnership Board's Neighbourhood Sub-group, which met on a monthly basis. Healthwatch Barnet's contributions were focused on inputting relevant feedback which had been shared with Healthwatch by members of the public through the enquiry line, outreach events and pertinent research.

Members noted that, in November 2025, Healthwatch Barnet would be running an event for residents and grassroots voluntary sector groups, to gather their feedback about plans for Barnet's Neighbourhood Health Service.

National Healthwatch changes

DG reminded the group that, in June 2025, the government announced plans to abolish Healthwatch England and all local Healthwatch, including Healthwatch Barnet. SC advised members that Healthwatch Barnet has been working hard on communicating and engaging with residents and stakeholders to ensure that they were aware that no changes were planned until March 2027 and that Healthwatch Barnet was continuing to work with residents to gather their feedback and improve local services.

DR shared some information about the national Healthwatch response group which he was involved in. He said that this group was made up of local Healthwatch and was engaged in challenging the planned changes and advocating for the continuation of independent resident and patient voice services. SC advised that

Healthwatch Barnet was also working to raise these matters at a local level and recently provided a well-received presentation on this subject to the Barnet Borough Partnership Board. Both DR and SC said they would continue to keep the board updated about developments in this area.

Meeting closed.

Next meeting date: 31 March 2026