

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**19th December
2012**

Report of the Head of Communities and
Equalities

Local HealthWatch York: Progress Update

Summary

1. To update the Health OSC on the progression from LINks (Local Involvement Networks) to Local HealthWatch by April 2013.

Background

2. Local HealthWatch will be the new local consumer champion for patients, service users and the public. It will have an important role in championing the local consumer voice, not least through its seat on the Health and Wellbeing board. Local Healthwatch will be closely interlinked with the new localised NHS Complaints Advocacy service provision.
3. On 4th January 2012 the Department of Health (DoH) announced that all local authorities would be required to commission independently managed Local HealthWatch and NHS Complaints Advocacy functions for their local areas by 1st April 2013.
4. Healthwatch replaces the current Local Involvement Network (LINK) arrangements as the primary vehicle for public and patient engagement in shaping / influencing health and social care services at a local level. It will report its findings to a new national body, Healthwatch England, which was launched in October 2012.

Commissioning Process – Update

5. The CYC tender process for HealthWatch and NHS Complaints Advocacy was launched on 19th September 2012, with a closing date of 31st October 2012. It was deemed as being particularly important for the Healthwatch successor body to have time to work alongside the current LINK in order to manage the handover process, secure premises, recruit / train staff and undertake marketing and promotional activity.
6. Two separate contract lots were made available as part of the same tender process - one for Local HealthWatch and one for a local NHS Complaints Advocacy service.
7. Assessment of both contract lots took place in the first two weeks of November 2012. Tenders were assessed by a panel of CYC Adult Social Care Commissioners and senior Neighbourhood Management staff. To ensure impartiality and a fresh perspective an independent lay person was also appointed to the Tender Evaluation Panel.
8. Further to a rigorous and transparent assessment process York Council for Voluntary Service have been appointed as the successful provider to establish Local Healthwatch York and York Mind have been appointed as the successful provider of NHS Complaints Advocacy services. In both cases the full contract will commence April 2013, but the providers will initiate some transitional work beforehand to ensure a smooth handover.
9. City of York Council is one of the first authorities in the country to complete the tender process for Local HealthWatch / Complaints Advocacy services.

Next Steps

10. As outlined above both HealthWatch York and the NHS Complaints Advocacy service will have a contract implementation phase from December 2012 to March 2013, prior to a formal launch in April 2013.

11. In both cases the successful providers will use the forthcoming months to concentrate on handover arrangements, contract finalisation, staff recruitment, marketing, publicity and awareness raising and establishing governance arrangements, premises etc.
12. The CANs Neighbourhood Management Team will be responsible for ongoing contract management and monitoring arrangements.

Options

13. This report is for information only report, there are no specific options for members to decide upon.

Analysis

14. Please see above.

Council Plan 2011/2015

15. The establishment of Local HealthWatch in York will make a direct contribution to the following specific outcomes listed in the City of York Council Plan:
 - Improved volunteering infrastructure in place to support increasing numbers of residents to give up their time for the benefit of the community
 - Increased participation of the voluntary sector, mutuals and not-for-profit organisations in the delivery of service provision

Implications

- 16. Financial** - The contract value for the delivery of Local HealthWatch is £140,000 per annum (two-year contract) with up to £10,000 in year start-up costs (to be determined by the Council and the successful provider). The contact value for the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service will be £44, 000 per annum (two year contract) with up to £10,000 in year start-up costs (to be determined by the Council and the successful provider)
- 17. Human Resources (HR)** - There are no human resource implications

18. **Equalities** - Establishing a successful Local HealthWatch in York will enable the targeting of support towards activities which contribute towards all the equality outcomes set out in the draft Council Plan. It will be a requirement of the successful organisation(s) delivering Local HealthWatch to demonstrate and evidence their commitment to equal opportunities in the work of their organisations, in line with the Equalities Act 2010
19. **Legal** - There are no legal implications
20. **Crime and Disorder** - There are no crime and disorder implications
21. **Information Technology (IT)** - There are no information technology implications
22. **Property** - There are no property implications
23. **Other** - There are no other implications

Risk Management

24. There are risks of challenge to the validity of City of York Council's procurement and commissioning procedures but steps have been taken at all stages to ensure a fair and transparent commissioning and procurement process has been adopted.

Recommendations

28. Members are asked to note the report and the latest progress towards establishing HealthWatch. A further update will be provided at the next Health OSC meeting.

Reason: To oversee the transition from LINKs to HealthWatch is identified as a priority in the Health Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan.

Contact Details

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report:**

Mary Bailey

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**Report
Approved**

Date 05.12.2012

Specialist Implications Officer(s) n/a

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report