

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board  
**DATE:** 28<sup>th</sup> March 2013  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Communities  
**PORTFOLIO:** Health & Adults  
**SUBJECT:** Healthwatch update  
**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Executive Board with an overview of Healthwatch functions and its relationship to the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.2 To seek approval for a retrospective waiver of the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) that has been tendered as part of a cross boundary procurement exercise led through Liverpool City Council (see paragraphs 3.4-3.6)

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That approval is granted to use Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.3 (b), (d) and (f) to waive Procurement Standing Order 4.1 to enter into a contract for an Independent Complaints Advocacy Service from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2-013 that has been tendered as part of a cross boundary procurement exercise led by Liverpool City Council.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**3.1 Healthwatch Functions**

Healthwatch will be the new consumer champion for both health and social care. It will exist in two distinct forms – local Healthwatch and Healthwatch England. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 sets out that a local Healthwatch will be established by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

Healthwatch Halton will be the local Healthwatch organisation and will operate as an independent organisation. Healthwatch Halton will begin operating on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

The main aim of Healthwatch Halton will be to give citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided locally.

The main functions of include, but are not limited to:

- Healthwatch Halton will be an effective, powerful and independent local

voice for all aspects of adult and children's health and social care within Halton and it will be representative of the diverse communities in Halton.

- Healthwatch Halton will influence the planning and delivery of health and social care services.
- Healthwatch Halton will provide a signposting, advice and information service to help people access health and social care services and support and make informed choices.
- Healthwatch Halton will hold commissioners and service providers to account for local health and social care services.
- Healthwatch Halton will scrutinise the quality of local service provision for local health and social care services.

Healthwatch Halton will link with Healthwatch England, who will amalgamate the collective views and experiences of people who use, or may use, local services to influence national policy, advice and guidance.

Healthwatch England has been established as a committee of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and it is anticipated that this governance structure will enable links to be strengthened between patient / public views and regulation.

Healthwatch Halton will have a responsibility to report local views and experiences to Healthwatch England and identify concerns regarding local services.

### **3.2 Healthwatch Relationship to the Health and Wellbeing Board**

A key part of the role of Healthwatch Halton will be participation in the Health and Wellbeing Board, to ensure that the consumer voice is heard and to ensure that the views and experiences of the consumer are taken into account when local needs assessments are carried out and strategies are formulated.

There is a requirement that a Healthwatch Halton representative is a member of the Health and Wellbeing Board and their role will include, but not be limited to:

- Providing a credible voice on the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Participating fully in discussions and elevating patients' voice to the Health and Wellbeing Board and effectively representing their views in a clear and evidenced manner.
- Speaking on behalf of consumers of health and care services.
- Providing constructive challenge, from a patient and public perspective.
- Facilitating two-way communication between Healthwatch Halton and the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Effectively communicating outcomes and decisions from the Health and Wellbeing Board to Healthwatch Halton, demonstrating the rationale for how these decisions were reached and how they relate to the wider contexts of Health and Social Care service planning.
- Demonstrating an awareness of the health and care landscape.
- Demonstrating an awareness of equalities issues and the Public Sector

Equality Duty.

### **3.3 Progress on the transition from LINK to developing Healthwatch Halton**

In Halton, Executive Board agreed to commission Halton LINK to become the local Healthwatch organisation, a process which has also been adopted in other local authority areas. It has been determined that Healthwatch Halton will operate as an independent Community Interest Company (CIC) from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013, which is a form of Social Enterprise.

One of the main benefits of enabling the LINK to become the local Healthwatch organisation is that service continuity can be achieved and that Healthwatch Halton can continue to build upon the legacy of Halton LINK.

A LINK to Healthwatch Transition Plan is in place and the implementation of the transition plan is being co-ordinated by Halton Borough Council's Commissioning Team. The transition process is currently on-track.

Considerable progress has already been achieved in terms of the transition process and only a small number of actions, mainly finalising the CIC and a launch event in the summer, remain to be undertaken to ensure that Healthwatch Halton is up and running by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

### **3.4 Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)**

Halton BC has participated in a cross-boundary project to procure a local Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) across Cheshire and Merseyside. A procurement exercise has been entered into with 8 other local authorities (Liverpool CC as the lead) to identify the provider of the above service that will be branded as the Merseyside and Cheshire Healthwatch Advocacy Service. Halton participated in the selection process at the end of January and a preferred bidder has been identified.

3.5 It was originally planned that each of the participating authorities would work under a partnership agreement to authorise Liverpool CC to operate the cross-boundary contract on their behalf, an arrangement covered under Halton's existing standing orders (1.3.1). However, Liverpool CC has amended their position after the completion of the procurement exercise and has informed each Local Authority that they are now be required to enter into a separate contract with the new ICAS provider.

3.6 Due to this change in approach from Liverpool CC and the clear financial benefit secured through the collaborative procurement process, this report is seeking approval to waive standing order 4.1 in order to enter into contract with the successful tenderer for the ICAS service across Merseyside and Cheshire.

#### 4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Health and Social Care Bill 2011 proposes that Healthwatch will be the new consumer champion for both publicly funded health and social care. Local Healthwatch will have membership to the Health and Wellbeing board and will be an integral part of the preparation of statutory Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies.

#### 5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The funding for Healthwatch is provided to Councils via the Local Reform and Community Voices Grant. The indicative funding allocated for local Healthwatch includes an allocation which was previously provided for LINK organisations. Additional monies will also be allocated to Councils for the provision of a local Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) and also additional funding for start-up and development costs and for the provision of signposting and advice and information services across health and social care in the local area. Indicative allocations are set out below:

£111,938	Local Reform and Community Voices Grant allocation (Previsouly LINK funding)
£30,277	Additional funding for Start-up, Signposting/Information and Advice Service
£37,562	Additional funding for local Independent Complaints Advocacy service (ICAS)
<b>£179,777</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

5.2 The annual value of the ICAS contract is £16,185. It is proposed that the contract period will be for two years, giving a gross value of £32,370 over the proposed term of the contract. Procuring this specialist service across a number of authorities has proved highly cost effective and has secured a price for Halton below the Department of Health's estimated cost for the provision of this service in our area.

#### 6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### 6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Healthwatch Halton's responsibilities will extend to Children and Young People, which was not a requirement under LINKs. It will be important that Healthwatch Halton develops meaningful engagement with Halton's Children and Young people so that their views and experiences inform local service delivery.

## 6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

## 6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The main aim of Healthwatch Halton will be to give citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided locally. By collating and communicating the views and experiences of local service users, it is intended that local services can be improved in light of service users' expectations. Ultimately, improving local service delivery could contribute to better health outcomes for Halton residents.

## 6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

## 6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

## 7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There is a need to ensure that the transition is managed in a positive and timely manner. The change of legal status for Healthwatch Halton will impact on the existing volunteers. The main risk currently is if the planned recruitment of Executive Directors is unsuccessful. This has been mitigated as the current Chair and vice-chair have agreed to stay on in an interim capacity until the posts are filled.

## 8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Local Healthwatch will be an effective, powerful and independent local voice for all aspects of adult and children's health and social care within Halton and it will be representative of the diverse communities in Halton.

8.2 Healthwatch Halton is expected to have an awareness of equalities issues and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## 9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
Executive Board Report, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2012, Healthwatch.	Runcorn Town Hall	Angela McNamara