

Health and Wellbeing Board - 29 November 2022

Item for noting:

Update on Healthwatch Contract B&NES

The commissioning of Healthwatch B&NES is transferring across to Specialist Commissioning moving from Strategy and Engagement. One of the core functions of Healthwatch is to engage with local residents as such it is felt that the valuable work that The Care Forum do in this area sits better within Health and Social Care Integrated Commissioning. Commissioners have agreement to issue a direct award 12 month contract with The Care Forum for Healthwatch B&NES following successful completion of the exemption process. This will support consistency across Healthwatch B&NES for a further 12 months. This has been discussed with the current provider and The Care Forum is agreeable with this approach. We will issue a slightly revised 12 month contract, aligned to the changes within Healthwatch England and legislation. We are keen to consider how we tender the new contract 24/25 to ensure it is more integrated with the ICB and aligns to the Health and Social Care Act 2022.

The Health and Care Act 2022 sets out a clear expectation that Healthwatch, as the statutory champion for service users and the public, will play a key role in supporting both the Integrated Care Boards and the Integrated Care Partnerships (ICB) in delivering their statutory duties to engage communities.

Commissioners can work in partnership with Healthwatch B&NES to develop improved engagement and co-production with local residents to shape and influence commissioning strategies for health and social care services and to support the growth and design of local services. I will be attending the next two contract review meetings for Q3/Q4 for this current contract to ensure a smooth handover of this contract and I have had two meetings with the Care Forum to discuss our future approach and develop our future delivery model for Healthwatch B&NES. The role of Healthwatch locally is supported by Laura Ambler Director of place within BSW ICB and the integrated arrangements with Bath and North East Somerset Council. This will enable us to develop a more cohesive, strengthened Healthwatch locally as a partner in improving the quality of local services and supports our collegiate and joint working across system and place.

Vicki Allan

Head of Specialist Commissioning, Specialist Services
Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire CCG and
Bath and North East Somerset Council