

MINUTES
of a meeting of the Governance Board
19 September 2024
(13:30-15:30)
At Queen's Court

Present:

Anne-Marie Dean, Chairman
Ian Buckmaster, Company Secretary
Ron Wright, Non-Executive Director

Carole Howard, Office Administrator
Jenny Douglass, Community Support Assistant

Carol Dennis, Jenny Gregory, Dawn Ladbrook, Di Old, and Val Perry, Members

1 Welcome and apologies

All members were present.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations.

3 Minutes of meeting held 16 July 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2024 were agreed as a correct record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

There were no matters arising.

4 Finance Report

The Finance Reports for July and August were submitted.

There was nothing in the Report for July to which attention needed to be drawn.

Expenditure for that month had been £10,588, broadly in line with recent monthly outgoings.

Bank balances at the end of the month were noted.

In August, expenditure for the month had been £10,031, again broadly in line with recent monthly outgoings.

Bank balances at the end of the month were noted.

It was noted that, in September to date, interest of £47.50 had been received on the Savings account and that the third quarter's instalment of the Council's contractual payment for 2024/25 had been received. Committed and as yet unknown expenditure for the remainder of the year was likely to exceed the year's income but the reserves were sufficient to meet any shortfall.

In subsequent discussion, it was noted that the new Government had not yet given any indication of its view of Healthwatch or its funding arrangements. Healthwatch England remained keen to takeover the local authorities' role as funders of local Healthwatch but the Government's view of that was not yet known. It was also noted that Healthwatch Redbridge appeared to have had a good working relationship with Wes Streeting MP, the Secretary of State for Health, in his role as MP for an Ilford constituency.

5 Havering Place-based Partnership (HPbP)

The Company Secretary had given a presentation to the HPbP Board in August about the Long COVID project (see minute 8 following).

The Chairman reported that the Council's financial position remained a considerable concern, despite an extensive staff reorganisation and the new joint directorate structure with the NHS. There was particular concern that NHS funding for the local hospice was inadequate, given the range of services provided by that charity.

6 NHS North East London/North East London Health and Care Partnership

No matters were reported.

7 Safeguarding and Quality - update

Ms Old drew attention to problems at three specific residential care homes, adding that it was becoming increasingly notable that the CQC did not appear to be engaging with care homes generally. The Company Secretary advised that very few reports relating to health and social care facilities in Havering had been received in the past few months.

The Board noted that an interim report that was highly critical of the CQC had recently been published and that the final report was due to be brought out in

the near future. It was agreed that, once the final report had been published, a meeting should be sought with the head of the local CQC team (with the local Safeguarding team also invited to attend) to discuss how their services in Havering could be improved.

8 Engagement projects - update

- **Long COVID**

The report on the focus group work had been published in August, and a presentation about it was given to the HPbP Board. The Board had been supportive of the development of a Peer Support Group and the Company Secretary was due to discuss this further with Public Health and GP colleagues shortly.

- **NHS Dentistry in NEL**

- NHSNEL had recently launched its own survey, which was being promoted by Healthwatch.

- **Creative Health Havering**

- There has been no developments in this project. However, the Chairman and Company Secretary had recently met a representative of Healthwatch Essex, which had been offered the opportunity to hold an exhibition of art related to the experience of trauma in the Mercury Mall, Romford. HW Essex was seeking the support of Healthwatch Havering with their project. The possibility of holding similar exhibitions at the Queen's Theatre and in the St George's Centre would be explored.

- **Enter & View visits**

- The report on the Mealtime visits at Queen's Hospital was being finalised for pre-publication clearance with staff at BHRUT.

Arrangements were in hand for further visits to A&E services at Queen's Hospital, following which a report, incorporating reference to the visits undertaken in December 2023, would be published.

The visit to the Greenwood Practice had been undertaken in July/August, and the report had been published. The Practice Manager had given a very positive response to the visit.

A visit to the ELIFAR group of residential care homes would be taking place in early October and plans were in hand for a visit to the St George's Centre once it was operational.

- **Patient Participation Groups (PPG)**

- News was awaited of the appointment of the new staff member at the HPbP who would be dealing with the relaunching of PPGs.

- **Mystery Shopping – provision of Hearing Loop systems at health facilities**
 - Arrangements were in hand for the Mystery Shopper exercise to take place at the end of October. The Chief Executive of PELC, Steve Rubery, was being very cooperative.
- **Smoking cessation – focus groups**
 - The joint bid with HW B&D had been unsuccessful.
- **NSPCC Pants Campaign**
 - A survey aiming to find out grandparents' understanding of the Pants Campaign, and to raise awareness of it, would be carried out in October, to coincide with expected national publicity from the NSPCC.
- **Defibrillators in Havering**
 - HW Manchester had recently published a report on the location of defibrillators in that City (which revealed that, while most were where they should be, that a significant number of locations had been reported incorrectly). A proposal to carry out a similar exercise in Havering was being developed and the Company Secretary was due to meet a representative of the LAS shortly to discuss the possibilities. There had been enquiries in the past about the whereabouts of defibrillators locally so finding or creating a definitive list would be useful.
- **New community initiatives**
 - A number of new community initiatives had recently been launched by, or in association with Havering Council and/or the Havering Place-based Partnership, in which we are participating to some extent at least. In no particular order, they were:
 - Livewell Havering: Harold Hill Community Forum
 - Livewell Havering Partnership Network
 - Havering Community Safety Partnership
 - Havering Adult Mental Health Needs Assessment
 - Patient Experience of GP surgeries
 - The Joy App

Reports on these initiatives would be brought to the Board as and when appropriate.

9 St George's Centre - progress

The Chairman reported that there was likely to be a short delay in opening the Centre as a result of unexpected power supply problems.

The Company Secretary had recently met (at their request) some NELFT staff who would be responsible for central services in the Centre to discuss issues relating to reception arrangements. It was noted that meeting room facilities in the Centre would be available free of charge, and that Healthwatch would be very welcome to use them.

10 Next meeting

The next meeting was due on Tuesday, 15 October 2024 at the office.

The Board discussed Awayday arrangements and the Christmas function. It was agreed that the Awayday that had been due in October should be cancelled and a combined Awayday and Christmas event be arranged for 10 or 12 December. In addition, the November Board meeting would be postponed to be held during the Awayday in December.

_____ Chairman