

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS OF THE
HEALTH AND WELL BEING BOARD**

1.	Meeting:	Health and Well Being Board
2.	Date:	11th July, 2012
3.	Title:	Consultation on the development of Healthwatch
4.	Directorate:	Resources

5. Summary:

Consultation with stakeholders is planned in line with the consultation plan agreed by the Health and Well Being Board on the 6th June 2012 meeting. This consultation will inform the development of Healthwatch Rotherham. Public consultation will run from the 12th July to the 18th September, 2012.

It is proposed that the attached two surveys are sent out as follows:-

1. To members of the public and health and social care service users initially via an online survey on the Council website with a link from the Health and Well Being Board webpage. The survey will also be sent to a representative sample of health and social care service users.
2. To voluntary and community sector networks and community interest groups via email.

The surveys include a draft 'vision' for Healthwatch Rotherham and it is proposed that this vision is consulted on before final agreement to ensure it is representative of Rotherham people's aspirations for their local Healthwatch.

6. Recommendations

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:-

- 6.1 Approve the vision for Healthwatch Rotherham for further consultation.
- 6.2 Approve the consultation plan and consultation surveys attached.
- 6.3 Agree that a report on the findings of the consultation is brought back to a future meeting.

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 The Vision for Healthwatch Rotherham

In a recent report published by the LGA on the progress of the Local Authority pathfinders, one of the key findings to success was the development and approval of a vision for their local healthwatch. (LGA report Building Successful Healthwatch organisations).

It is therefore proposed that the draft vision is:-

Healthwatch Rotherham will work with local people to ensure that they receive the best quality health and social care services by:

- *Providing information, advice and support that will enable Rotherham people to make choices and access health and social care services.*
- *Providing leadership and support to strengthen the collective voice of local people.*
- *Ensuring that service user's views and experiences influence, shape and improve health and social care services and reduce health inequalities.*
- *Working collaboratively with local health and well being board, community networks; building on existing information, advice and local knowledge.*

The proposed vision is based on the requirements for Healthwatch but also intentionally aspirational to inspire people to be part of improving health and social care services.

7.2 Consultation with Members of the Public and Service Users; Community Networks and the voluntary and community sector

It is proposed that the attached two surveys are sent out as follows:-

1. To members of the public and health and social care service users initially via an online survey on the Council website with a link from the Health and Well Being Board webpage. The survey will also be sent to a representative sample of health and social care service users. This survey will seek views about the three main functions of Healthwatch: information and advice, signposting, and NHS complaints advocacy. The questions also relate to the current service provision so that a baseline position can be determined for future performance monitoring and also inform the drafting of the service specification.
2. To voluntary and community sector networks and community interest groups via email. This will determine the position in relation to the current spread of organisations that are currently providing information, advice and signposting information about health and social care services but also those

organisations that are actively seeking the views of their service users to influence service developments. This will provide, not only a baseline position, but also determine the priority information areas to be included in the service specification. It is also anticipated that those organisations completing this survey will wish to take an active involvement in the implementation of Healthwatch and its vision and values.

Some of the questions in the surveys are the same as those used by other local authorities which will enable some element of benchmarking to be achieved.

Healthwatch Rotherham should strengthen the collective voice of local people across both health and social care services and will need to be truly representative of local communities. To achieve this Rotherham Healthwatch will therefore need to work in collaboration with existing local community networks and organisations. This will avoid the need for Rotherham Healthwatch to start from scratch saving time and resources. It will also recognise and build on the experiences of such groups to ensure it reaches all of Rotherham's diverse communities.

The intention is that the consultation will raise awareness about the new Healthwatch services that will be available from April 2013. Both surveys comply with the 12 week Council consultation code and the requirement to develop a Consultation Plan (attached at appendix 3).

8. Finance

The costs of carrying out the consultation exercise will be met from existing resources.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The consultation raises the expectations of members of the public about what they want from Healthwatch which may not be possible to meet through the service specification or the DH guidance.

That survey response rates are low. This risk could be reduced by issuing a press release and using Rotherham Link's database to send the survey to their members. Making reference to the survey through existing consultation exercises, direct mailing and telephone calls to key partners and stakeholders will also help.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The performance of and work programme of Healthwatch Rotherham will be clearly linked to the priorities of the Health and Well Being Strategy.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix 1 – Survey to Members of the Public and Service Users

Appendix 2 – Survey to networks, and the voluntary and community sector.

Appendix 3 – Consultation Plan

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