

## Healthwatch Southwark Advisory Board Meeting

Date: 15/04/2021, Time: 5:00pm-6.30pm

Location: Zoom

### In attendance:

**HWS AG Members:** Sheona St Hilaire (Chair), Graham Head (Deputy Chair), Chris Henry, Robert Ede, Rosa Clavane, Kevin Steward, Lisa Mitchell, Jonny McDaniell, Mannah Kargbo, Chinelo Njaka

**HWS/ CS Staff:** Chris Mikata-Pralat (CS CEO), Shamsur Choudhury (HWS Manager), Alice Godmon (HWS Research & Intelligence Officer), Bridie Hindle (HWS VCS Engagement Officer- Covid 19)

**Apologies:** Zuwena Blagrove (CS/HWS Comms Officer), Lizzy Macauley (HWS Engagement & Signposting Officer)

### Agenda Items:

	<b>Agenda Items</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Lead</b>
1.	Welcome and Introductions (plus welcoming new AG members)	5 - 5.10	Sheona / All AG members
2.	Review minutes of 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 meeting	5.10 - 5.20	Sheona / All AG members
3.	Healthwatch Contract Discussion (feedback and agreement on preferred option)	5.20 - 5.40	Shamsur / All AG members
4.	AG Terms of Reference (review if any new amendments need adding to existing TOR)	5.40 - 5.50	Sheona / All AG members
5.	HWS work update (plus AG member questions)	5.50 - 6.15	All HWS staff
6.	Future agenda items discussion	6.15 - 6.25	Sheona / All AG members
7.	AOB	6.25 - 6.30	Sheona / All AG members

### Notes of meeting

#### Welcome and Review of Minutes (Agenda Items 1 & 2)

Sheona (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the new members. New members introduced were Lisa Mitchell, Chinelo Njaka, Jonny McDaniell and Mannah Kargbo

She summarised the minutes from the 25 February 2021 meeting, and the group agreed that there were no changes (all agreed to accuracy of minutes and actions)

The group was reminded that a quarterly cycle of meetings was agreed, but there may need to be flexibility with additional meetings if necessary. (please see page 4 for further discussions under 'Terms of Reference')

### **HWS Contract Discussion** (Agenda Item 3)

- Chris M reminded everyone that a decision will be made at the CS board meeting at the end of May. He briefly reviewed the three options (see Appendix to minutes). Shamsur (HWS Manager) is preparing a report and will be guided by AG members, HWS staff and CS staff feedback.
- Graham has thought about the decision from the perspective of people living in Southwark and feels it is best to ensure continuity. He is against Option 3, and unsure of Option 2 - what will happen if becoming independent does not work out? If that can be clarified, he would prefer Option 2.
- Chris M mentioned that HWS being part of CS restricts its capacity to apply for and get additional funding, if HWS was independent it could apply for wider source of funding.
- Kevin is also against Option 3, as he feels the Council will go for the cheapest option. He is unsure of Option 2 as it will be a lot of additional work. He is in favour of Option 1 and thinks should show the Council that HWS is doing good work overseen by CS. He feels that the AG needs more information to be able to decide on Option 2 at this moment.
- Robert is also against Option 3 as it may diminish the quality of service. He is provisionally in support of Option 2 in terms of strengthening the independence of Healthwatch but is concerned that HWS work may be disrupted as resource is pulled towards the transition to independence.
- Shamsur spoke about his experience at HW Tower Hamlets of becoming independent and shared that it was more to do with management processes and did not impact their work with local people.
- Chinelo is also against Option 3 as it has the most risk. Option 1 seems the safest, but Option 2 has ideological appeal. However, Option 2 may bring extra pressure on capacity and affect continuity. Chinelo also asked about the certainty of the funding being increased.
- Chris M said that a pro of Option 2 is that CS' primary work is supporting charities to become independent and is prepared to dedicate resource to 'hand holding' and ensuring HWS is ready for independence.

- Lisa is also against Option 3. She would like a clearer presentation of the pros and cons of Option 1 and 2.
- Shamsur responded that he is working on this and there will be more detail in his report. He briefly mentioned some pros of Option 1: access to office space, HR training etc. and Option 2: giving HWS a stronger name in the local area. He is having an informal meeting with HW Trafford next week (who have been through the process) and will share the notes from that meeting. He is also being supported by HW England.
- Jonny is in support of basing the decision of what will be best for Southwark residents. He is also against Option 3. Could HWS continue the contract with CS and then make the decision between Option 1 and 2 later?
- Sheona is supporting Option 2 under the proviso that AG can get further information on the pros and cons. She also asked to see a breakdown of the current HWS budget and what we would potentially spend the money on if we had an increased budget as result new contract negotiations (if this was to happen).
- Chris M agreed that Shamsur would share the budget and informed the group that HWS is currently breaking even due to the additional funding from the Community Health Ambassadors project.
- Chris H suggested an additional meeting in mid-May to finalise the preferred option.
- Shamsur shared that the Council may want to commission the contract out anyway, and it is important for the AG as community members to make a strong case for their preferred option, which in his opinion is to encourage Community Southwark to retain the HWS contract and review the independence option in the future. He mentioned that so far majority of people he has surveyed preferred Option 2, so there is a strong case to support that CS support HWS to become independent organisation in the future.

#### **Actions (For Shamsur)**

- to share HWS budget with AG members
- share HWS Contract Discussion report submitted to CS Board
- To review positive and negatives of option 2 and circulate to AG members
- To provide a summary of what activities HWS would do if a higher value contract was to be achieved/ won.

## **AG Terms of Reference (ToR) (Agenda Item 4)**

- Graham feels the ToR are very focused on the corporate and governance side, and do not give a sense of the core purpose of HWS. He feels more needs to be added about the role of the AG e.g. providing access to certain communities, offering specialist skills.
- Jonny feels the introduction could have more clarity about the role and gave HW Thurrock as an example of using clear bullet points (but Graham feels that HW Thurrock's ToR are too corporate).
- Sheona suggests it be made more specific to Southwark.
- Chris H feels the ToR could be clearer and less wordy. He agreed with Graham that it could further draw out points related to community engagement, links with the community, and diverse representation.
- Chris H also suggested the AG meet more frequently in the first 6 months to get to know each other better, and support HWS during the difficult climate of the pandemic.
- Chinelo raised the point that it could be an opportunity to highlight the work of HW on community engagement and consultation, and also suggested forming sub-committees/subgroups that could be tailored towards specific actions/work priorities.
- Lisa suggested forming a WhatsApp group for AG members. Shamsur reminded the group that he has set up a Slack account for AG members, and Chinelo and Graham supported this as it has greater privacy and document sharing capacity. Shamsur will share the Slack account following the meeting.
- Sheona suggested that HWS survey group members for their preference for frequency of AG meetings. (additional comments by Shamsur: HWS would prefer to host bimonthly or quarterly meeting, monthly meetings are not an option due to work commitments. We will also organise meetings tailored for work priorities on a regular basis (based on subgroup model) and any AG members can attend.
- Graham and Johnny volunteered to support with the redrafting of the Terms of Reference

### **Actions: (For Shamsur)**

- to add members to Slack (as preferred method of group communication)
- ask members if they would also like to part of a Whats App group and anyone interested can forward their name and one person can take on the

responsibility of creating the group. (HWS staff will not be part of this group)

- to survey AG members their preference of frequency of meeting
- Graham and Jonny will meet to redraft AG terms of reference based on our discussions and will send a draft for AG members to review

### **HWS Work Updates (Agenda Item 5)**

HWS staff presented on their current areas of work and took questions. Some questions were raised around how we are addressing digital exclusion and how we are linking up with social prescribing.

### **Agenda Items for next meeting (Agenda Item 6)**

Sheona asked if members they had ideas for agenda items for next AG meetings.

She advised the following to be on the agenda item:

- Update on HWS contract discussion
- Discussion and agreement on Terms of Reference

Chris H suggested that getting updates from HWS staff on HWS work is important (albeit not all staff need to attend), it gives oversight of work and helpful for AG members.

Sheona closed the meeting by thanking everyone for a thoughtful and productive discussion.

### **Actions**

- AG members to email Shamsur/Sheona with any agenda items they want discussed.

### **Future Meeting Dates:**

- Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021, 5-6.30pm (Zoom)
- Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021, 5-6.30pm (Venue:TBC)
- Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021, 5-6.30pm (Venue:TBC)
- Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 5-6.30pm (Venue:TBC)

### **A.O.B**

None

## **Appendix for discussion: Contract options**

1. Community Southwark says to the Council that they would like to retain the contract and HWS contract stays with Community Southwark subject to the contract covering full cost recovery without the need for Community Southwark to subsidise it
2. Community Southwark applies to retain contract (as per option 1) and supports HWS to become an independent charity (within the next 4-year contract)
3. Community Southwark doesn't apply for HWS contract beyond 31/03/2022 and Community Southwark suggests to the council that they opt for a competitive tendering process (other providers can bid for the contract)