



Governance Document

1 Introduction

The strapline for Healthwatch Bedford Borough is *“a strong voice for local people”*. It is registered as a Community Interest Company (CIC) and as part of its company registration has had to satisfy the CIC Regulator by way of confirming:

- an asset lock - which in essence means the CIC is “owned” by the local community
- a Community Interest Test which means it has to dedicate its services to the benefit of the local community

2 Vision

Healthwatch Bedford Borough will be:

- a critical friend in challenging service providers to ensure that their services are person-centred and responsive to local community needs
- seeking to empower all patients with confidence to make an informed choice about their health and social care needs

3 Mission Statement

“Healthwatch Bedford Borough will consult, engage and empower the wider community in a fair, transparent and realistic way. It will:

- *provide positive influence and encourage improvements in local health and social care services, acting as a critical friend to service providers and establishing valid outcomes against which changes can be measured.*
- *act as the voice of the public, providing a bridge between the commissioners and providers of Statutory Health and Social Care”*

4 Healthwatch Bedford Borough (HBB) - Organisational Structure

This is comprised as follows:

- HBB CIC Board which consists of four Directors who are the original subscribers to the Company, which is limited by guarantee.
- HBB Management Group which consists of the Directors and the paid staff.
- Healthwatch Reference Group which consists of individual Healthwatch Ambassadors and representatives nominated by organisations from within Bedford Borough.
- Stakeholders is any person living in the Bedford Borough area who has cause to be concerned about the structure/delivery/quality of health and social care services. Whilst there is no direct right to a vote it will be possible, subject to satisfactory information being provided for a Healthwatch Ambassador(s) to act on behalf of an individual(s) to ensure that the

Healthwatch Reference Group discuss and resolve upon the issue in question.

5 Governance arrangements

(a) HBB CIC Board

The Governance arrangements for the CIC Board are contained in the Articles of Association for the CIC as approved by the Registrar of Companies on the 1 February 2013.

The overall remit for the Board is to:

- Ensure the design/delivery of the outcomes defined in the HBBCIC Business Plan
- Ensure the delivery of outcomes as required by the Service Specification for Healthwatch Bedford Borough. Reporting back on this to Bedford Borough Council
- Ensure continuing and effective representation on the Health and Wellbeing Board is sustained
- Ensuring that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) fully reflects the needs of the local community
- Liaison/development of relationships, joint working initiatives and development opportunities with the Care Quality Commission, Ofsted and Healthwatch England
- Governance and communications, including ensuring the need for transparency, championing diversity and ensuring that HBBCIC has a strong local identity.

(b) Healthwatch Reference Group (HRG)

The overall remit for the Healthwatch Reference Group is:

- Working to strengthen the collective voice of local people across both health and social care services.
- Using collective knowledge drawn from the needs of the local community to help the HBB CIC Board bring influence to bear on local commissioning strategies and delivery plans.
- Assist the HBB CIC Board in its strategic role with regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis work and reporting back to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

6 Authorised Representatives (Qualified to Enter and View Premises)

The Enter and View process enables authorised representatives to observe and assess the nature and quality of local health and social care premises.

Recommendations for service improvements based on evidence gathered from staff, people using the service and carers can be made to those managing or commissioning those services.

Authorised representatives will at all times follow the guidance and procedures outlined in the Enter and View policy document.

7 Relationships with other local Healthwatch organisations

To avoid duplication of work programmes in some areas, Healthwatch Bedford Borough will liaise with adjoining Healthwatch organisations in the case of cross border issues. If appropriate a joint working group may be set up to carry out an investigation and then be disbanded when the work is completed.

8 Code of Conduct

All members of the HBB CIC Board and the Healthwatch Reference Group will be expected to abide by the Nolan Principles.

9 Registering an Interest

All members of the HBB CIC Board and the Healthwatch Reference Group will be expected to disclose any interests that may conflict with their HBB role.

10 Complaints

In the case of a complaint being made about them, members of the HBB CIC Board and the Healthwatch Reference Group are expected to comply with the HBB Complaints Policy.

11 Review

This document will be reviewed as necessary, particularly when there are major changes to the Statutory Powers of local Healthwatch.



Anne Bustin
Chair Healthwatch Bedford Borough.

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“A strong voice for local people”