

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

14 MARCH 2013

SUBJECT:	<i>HEALTHWATCH WIRRAL</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>GRAHAM HODKINSON</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>CLLR CHRISTINE JONES</i>
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The development of Wirral Healthwatch is a statutory requirement. A decision on the future organisational model is now required to enable a Wirral Healthwatch to be put in place for April 2013. Members are asked to support the development of the most appropriate model for a successful Wirral Healthwatch organisation.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 places local government at the centre of ensuring their communities receive the care they deserve. Together with new responsibilities for Public Health and Health and Wellbeing Boards, Healthwatch represents an important opportunity for local people to influence the decisions being made about their services, across the NHS and social care.

The vision is for the NHS to be genuinely centred on patients and carers giving citizens a greater say in how the NHS is run. One of the main ways the Government intends to do this is by creating a new consumer champion – Healthwatch.

Healthwatch will strengthen the collective voice of local people across both health and social care, influencing Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA) and joint health and wellbeing strategies – on which local commissioning decisions will be based – through its seat on every statutory health and wellbeing board

A requirement of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007) was that Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) should be established. Each Local Authority contracted an organisation to establish and then support a LINK. In Wirral, Voluntary Community Action Wirral (VCAW) was the successful bidder to host the Wirral LINK and has provided excellent support and guidance for the activities of the Wirral LINK to date. The Health and Social Care Act (2102) now makes provisions for the establishment of existing LINKs into local Healthwatch organisations.

The relationship between VCAW and the Wirral LINKs has been very productive. All LINK members are volunteers and have been able to concentrate on the areas of interest whilst the business function has been overseen by VCAW. The relationship with the Department has also functioned very well, whilst not compromising the ability of LINKs to operate as an independent champion for continually improving the quality and standards of health and social care provision for the people of Wirral.

Local Healthwatch organisations will maintain all existing LINK functions, such as their powers of 'Enter and View', and will continue to have a role in influencing the provision of local services and monitoring any concerns about services but in addition will have a seat at the Health and Wellbeing Board and take on responsibility for advocating for individuals who wish to make a complaint about healthcare.

The key functions are described as:

- **Influencing**, by helping shape the planning of health and social care service
- **Signposting**, by helping people to access and make choices about care
- **Advising**, by advocating for individuals making complaints about healthcare

The key issue for the development of a Wirral Healthwatch service is the form of the organisation that will enable these functions. The Government's 'Healthwatch Transition Plan' states clearly that there should be an evolution from the current LINKs organisations to the new Healthwatch organisations.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 Procurement advice has been sought given the governmental advice that in relation to the evolution of one organisation (LINKs) into the new organisation which may be contradictory to the council's standing orders in relation to procurement and tendering.

It was agreed that given the somewhat unique circumstances surrounding this project and the fact that as we have a start date of 1st April 2013 that the time restrictions involved meant that there was not an appropriate opportunity in which to enter into a full tender exercise.

In addition, there was risk that a suitable organisation may not be found leaving the Council failing in its statutory duty to deliver a local Healthwatch for Wirral on time.

Some Local Authorities have chosen the tender option, however this decision was made at a very early stage in the process, Wirral was unable to do so for a variety of structural and operational reasons.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 The challenge of implementing a local Healthwatch that fits the unique requirements of each local authority has been complex and many different approaches have been adopted.

Local North West Local Authority approaches

- Warrington: Transition from LINK to Healthwatch
- Liverpool: Breaking up the service functions
- Sefton: Transition from LINK to Healthwatch
- Halton: Transition from LINK to Healthwatch
- Cheshire W: New service provider
- St Helens: Transition from LINK to Healthwatch
- Trafford: Transition from LINK to Healthwatch
- Manchester: New service provider
- Wigan: Transition from LINK to Healthwatch
- Knowsley: Transition from LINK to Healthwatch
- Tameside: Fund parent org to set up Healthwatch
- Salford: Fund steward org to set up Healthwatch
- Bury: New service provider

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 Widespread public consultation has taken place, this focussed on the delivery and accessibility of Wirral Healthwatch rather than the model and management. The decision on model needs to be made by the Council to enable them to manage risk and have confidence that the model can deliver.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 The development of the Healthwatch Wirral service will strengthen the role of the voluntary, community and faith groups. The knowledge, experience and organisational constitution of VCAW will be able to provide a level of expertise that will support the VCF sector.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 A central government grant will be made available which will fund the Healthwatch Service and the Independent Healthwatch Advocacy service: as follows:

Proposed HealthWatch Budget	£	Plus 3% Pensions
Staff Costs		
Full time HealthWatch Manager	38,800	39,964
Part Time Volunteer Co-ordinator	14,283	14,711
Full Time Information & Intelligence Officer	27,414	28,236
Full Time Facilitator	27,414	28,236
2 x Full Time Navigator	47,598	49,026
Admin Support	8,944	9,212
Delivery	104,471	104,471
Building	15,000	15,000
Total	283,924	288,856

Staff Costs

Salary costs are based on VCA Wirral's salary scale and include on-costs. Team role information is provided in a separate document. VCA Wirral will need to factor in pension contribution from 2013.

Delivery

Delivery costs are based upon actual delivery costs for LINK 2011/12 plus 3%, totalling £76,060. This includes:

- volunteer expenses and training
- meeting room hire and events
- production and printing of publications in appropriate formats
- stationary and postage
- capital costs for equipment purchase and/or maintenance
- website maintenance
- insurance
- professional fees
- IT and telephone infrastructure
- Communications and marketing support and materials
- Memberships and subscriptions

The remaining £28,411 included within delivery costs will be used for:

- Support services such as finance, HR and data management
- Staff training budget of £500 per person per annum
- Staff expenses based on 2011/12 figures of £420 per person per annum

Building

Building costs have been estimated on the average commercial rental for a space required for 7 staff, plus volunteers and meeting rooms. If office space is given in kind by Wirral Council or NHS Wirral, this cost can be removed from the budget.

Independent Healthwatch Advocacy Service

The new Independent Healthwatch Advocacy service will ensure that independent advocacy skills are used to provide practical support and direction to Clients, in order to assist them in finding a resolution to their complaint about Health Services in the following local authority areas:

- Liverpool
- Halton
- Knowsley
- Sefton
- St Helens
- Wirral
- Cheshire East
- West Cheshire and Chester
- Warrington

The Independent Healthwatch Advocacy service will be fully compliant with all relevant Regulations of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Authority	Population	1st year cost	Subsequent annual cost
Knowsley	145,900	£26,650	£24,832
Liverpool	466,400	£85,191	£79,382
Sefton	273,800	£50,011	£46,601
St Helens	175,300	£32,020	£29,837
Wirral	319,800	£58,413	£54,431
Cheshire East	370,100	£67,601	£62,992
Cheshire West & Chester	329,600	£60,203	£56,099
Halton	125,800	£22,978	£21,411
Warrington	202,200	£36,933	£34,415
Total	2,408,900	£440,000	£410,000

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Section 221 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act is amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to place the following additional duties on a local Healthwatch in addition to those duties already undertaken by LINK;

- Providing advice and information about access to local care services and about choices that may be made with respect to aspects of those services.
- Reaching views on the matters mentioned in subsection 3 and making those views known to the Healthwatch England committee of the Care Quality Commission. These matters are; (a) the standard of provision of local care services; (b) whether, and how, local care services could be improved; (c) whether, and how, local care services ought to be improved.
- Making recommendations to that committee to advise the Commission about special reviews or investigations to conduct (or where the circumstances justify doing so making such recommendations direct to the Commission).
- Making recommendations to that committee to publish reports under section 45C(3) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and about particular matters
- Giving that committee such assistance as it may require to enable it to carry out its functions effectively, efficiently and economically

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes and impact review is attached.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 N/A

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 N/A

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 Members are requested to agree to build upon on the legacy built by Voluntary Community Action Wirral in partnership with LINK and using this experience to develop Wirral Healthwatch as a subsidiary company, which is the most suitable model for Wirral.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 The development of Wirral Healthwatch is a statutory requirement. It is vital that the council supports the development of the most appropriate model for a successful Wirral Healthwatch organisation. A decision on the future organisational model is now required to enable a Wirral Healthwatch to be put in place for April 2013. Members are asked to support the development of the most appropriate model for a successful Wirral Healthwatch organisation.

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APPENDICES

N/A

REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date