

**Healthwatch Worcestershire
Members Co-Opted to Public Board Meetings
Terms of Reference**

1. Background Information:

The Terms of Reference (TORs) for Co-Opted Members have been re drafted to take account of the change in governance and the requirement to review Terms of Reference (TOR) on a timely basis.

All of Healthwatch Worcestershire’s Directors’ Meetings are now held in public and referred to as Public Board Meetings (PBM). Directors still reserve the right to hold closed sessions when confidential business needs to be discussed.

In practice the Co-Opted Members have demonstrated that they have been able to effectively fulfil their role of debating and scrutinising the operational business of Healthwatch Worcestershire as a non-voting attendees of Directors’ meetings and Board Meetings in Public. It is envisaged that they will continue in this role as non-voting attendees at Public Board Meetings but will not attend closed sessions.

It was originally envisaged that there would be up to six co- opted members drawn from Healthwatch Worcestershire Volunteers and the Reference and Engagement Group reflecting areas of expertise and ‘hard to reach’ groups of the population. To support this four members were co-opted initially but two positions were kept vacant to allow the later appointment of members to represent young people and minority communities. However, over time it has proved impractical to fill these roles and in future all six positions will be filled from the general membership of the Reference and Engagement Group and Volunteers. Those who play an active part in HWW REGS and volunteers may apply for membership in the company.

2. Terms of Reference:

2.1 Appointment of Co-Opted Members to Public Board Meetings (PBM)

- The PBM will include in its membership up to six members of the Company’s Membership Scheme. Members will be co-opted who can act as a voice for the patients, service users and carers’ of Worcestershire .

The role of the Co-opted member is:

- To provide information to Healthwatch Worcestershire including patient, service users and carers’ experiences of health and social care services commissioned and provided for the public of Worcestershire.
- To provide advice to Healthwatch Worcestershire on its operational business activities.

- To provide assurance to Healthwatch Worcestershire on its operational business activities.
- The decision to co-opt a member to the PBM will be that of the Directors. In co-opting members to the PBM the Directors will invite expressions of interest from the members of the Company's Membership Scheme (drawn from Reference and Engagement Group and Volunteers) Members expressing interest will be required to complete an application form outlining their suitability for the role, experience etc. and required to attend an interview. The interview panel will consist of one Director, one Co-opted Member and a member of staff.
- Co-Opted Members and the company will be provided with a written agreement in relation to their role.

2.2 Tenure

- Members will be co-opted for a first period of 2 years and may serve a second period of 2 years by mutual agreement with the Directors. After a maximum of 4 years a Co-opted Member will need to reapply if they wish to continue.
- A Co-Opted Member should give 28 days' notice of standing down.
- The Directors may exercise discretion in the tenure periods of Co-Opted Members to manage succession planning etc.

2.3 Role of Co-Opted Members

- Co-Opted Members are NOT Directors of Healthwatch Worcestershire. Healthwatch Worcestershire must ensure that a Co-Opted Member is not required to act in such a way as to become 'de-facto' a Director of the company.
- Co-Opted Members are entitled to attend the Public Board Meetings as non-voting attendees.
- Co-Opted Members may by invitation of the Directors attend the other meetings as non-voting attendees.
- The role of the Co-Opted members is to act as the voice for the client group they have experience of, providing advice, guidance, support and challenge to the Directors. The role involves acting as a representative in matters of Healthwatch Worcestershire business as requested by the Directors.
- For the purposes of Data Protection and data security, Co-Opted Members will be provided with company computer equipment as required and will be required to comply with company policy in these matters.

2.4 Code of Conduct

- The relevant provisions of Healthwatch Worcestershire's volunteer policy will apply to co-opted members.
- The rules of the Company's Membership Scheme will apply to Co-Opted Members.
- A Co-Opted Member will be required to declare any personal interest or interest of a family member where there is a potential conflict with the business of a meeting they attend in the role of a Co-Opted Member.
- The Directors reserve the unfettered right to terminate the co-option of a member.

2.5 Remuneration/Expenses

- The role of a Co-Opted Member is not remunerated.
- Co-Opted Members may claim reimbursement reasonable expenses including car-parking charges, travel costs at the company rate, subsistence and *respite care* costs, supported by receipts when on the business of Healthwatch Worcestershire with prior authority of the company.