

Appendix 1

Governance Arrangements for the conduct of a Board meeting of Healthwatch Worcestershire in public

Director with responsibility: Isobel Dale

Background Information

Healthwatch Worcestershire is a social enterprise and as a legal entity is constituted as a private company limited by guarantee. The responsibilities of its Directors towards the company are therefore governed by the Companies Act and associated legislation.

Although Healthwatch Worcestershire is not a public body, its Directors are committed to governing the company within the spirit of transparency and have therefore unanimously agreed to conduct in public those Board meetings which address issues in which consumers may have an interest.

The Board meetings in public will provide the community with the opportunity to scrutinise the work of Healthwatch Worcestershire and the role of the Directors and Officers.

This decision does not prevent the Directors from meeting in private to deal with issues of company business.

Frequency of meetings and their location

To promote the accessibility of Healthwatch Worcestershire to Worcestershire's communities, the Directors aim to hold a minimum of six Board meetings in public; one in each District Council area during the Company's first year of operation. This practice and its effectiveness will be reviewed in March 2014.

The schedule of Board meetings will be published on the Company's website and notice of individual meetings will be promoted through local media channels in the 28 day period prior to a meeting.

Public participation

As well as attending to observe the business of a Board meeting in public, the community will be encouraged to participate in the meeting by having the opportunity to address the Board on an issue or by contributing to an agenda item.

Rules for the good governance of a Board meeting in public

Healthwatch Worcestershire will publish the time, date and venue of Board meetings in public at least 28 days in advance of the meeting.

The agenda for a Board meeting in public and any supporting papers will be published on the Company's website 7 working days in advance of the date of the meeting. Copies of the agenda and supporting papers will be made available at the meeting on request.

Agenda items will be those matters, which in the opinion of the Directors, are of interest to the community. The Directors will consult the Reference & Engagement Group in preparing the agenda.

A Board meeting in public will normally be scheduled for 90 minutes of which 30 minutes will be allocated for public participation.

In order for the Board to provide an effective response to matters addressed to the Board the Directors recommend that the Company Secretary should be given a minimum of 2 working days' notice together with a written summary of the issue in no more than 500 words. This does not preclude a member of the public addressing the Board without notice with permission of the Chairman.

A member of the public will be expected to limit their contribution to a maximum of 5 minutes. This can be extended at the discretion of the Chairman.

Those attending or participating in a Board meeting in public will be expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. The Chairman reserves the absolute right to request a member of the public to leave the meeting if their conduct disrupts the business of the meeting.

A note of a Board meeting in public will be prepared by the Company Secretary for approval by the Directors and publication on the Company's website within 28 days of the meeting.

Social Media

The Directors and those attending a Board meeting in public should be aware of the potential for those attending to publicly comment on the business of the meeting using social media channels such as Twitter.

Recommendation:

Directors agree the arrangements for the conduct of a Board meeting in public.