

Protocol between the Bracknell Forest Health and Wellbeing Board, the Bracknell Forest Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Healthwatch Bracknell Forest.

This protocol concerns the relationship between the Bracknell Forest Health and Wellbeing Board, Bracknell Forest Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Healthwatch Bracknell Forest. Its purpose is to ensure that:

- Mechanisms are put in place for exchanging information and work programmes so that issues of mutual concern/interest are recognised at an early stage and are dealt with in a spirit of co-operation and in a way that ensures the individual responsibilities of the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Healthwatch Bracknell Forest are managed

- There is a shared understanding of the process of referrals and exchange of information and that arrangements are in place for dealing with these.

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Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board

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Chairman of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

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Chair of the Healthwatch Bracknell Forest Board

THE BRACKNELL FOREST HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Health and Wellbeing Board is a committee of the Council. The membership of the Board includes local Councillors, officers of the Council, representatives from the NHS and local Healthwatch. The board takes the lead on improving health and wellbeing outcomes and reducing health inequalities for the local community. Although there is a prescribed minimum membership, boards operate differently responding to local circumstances. Health and Wellbeing Boards are an executive function of the Council and are responsible for identifying current and future health and social care needs and assets through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and developing Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies to set health and social care priorities.

The role of the Health and Wellbeing Board is to:

- Set priorities and to drive the development of health and social care within the Borough
- Bring together individual and organisational knowledge, expertise and experience and to act as a system leader
- Develop a strategic, area-wide view of health and social care needs and resources through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Agree an area-wide alignment of services to deliver improved health and wellbeing through the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Facilitate shared understanding of information to improve outcomes from decision making
- Develop arrangements to involve key providers in improved health and social care.

To do this the Board will:

- Communicate and engage with local people on how they can achieve the best possible quality of life and be supported to exercise choice and control over their health and wellbeing by working with other stakeholders
- Have oversight of the relevant health and social care resources across all sectors so that it can drive the further integration of health, social care and public health
- Monitor performance against agreed targets and service standards across the local health and social care economy to inform future commissioning by the Council and the National Health Service.

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Councils with social care functions can hold NHS bodies to account for the quality of their services through powers to obtain information, ask questions in public, and make recommendations for improvements that have to be considered. Proposals for major changes to health services can be referred to the Secretary of State for determination if they are not considered to be in the interests of local health services. Within Bracknell Forest this is done in conjunction with the Executive Member and Council. The way Councils use the powers is commonly known as “health scrutiny” and forms part of Councils’ overview and scrutiny arrangements. From April 2013, all commissioners and providers of publicly funded health and social care services may be subject to overview and scrutiny, as may the health and social care priorities arising from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Scrutiny also has a pro-active role in helping to understand communities and tackle health inequalities.

The Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel has decided that the overall aim of Health scrutiny is:

‘Through constructive challenge and accountability, to work with the Executive, the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Service Providers to help ensure good health services are provided to residents of Bracknell Forest, reducing health inequalities, and helping everyone to stay fit and lead healthy lives.’

In relation to the Health and Wellbeing Board and Healthwatch, the role of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel is to:

- Evaluate policies arising from processes and decisions and outcomes from services
- Consider whether service changes are in the best interests of the local health service
- Carry out pro-active qualitative reviews that can inform and enhance policy and services
- Work with Healthwatch to capture the views of people using services to inform their work.

To do this the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel will:

- Take the lead for Overview and Scrutiny function on the relationship between O&S with Healthwatch Bracknell Forest, referring matters to other panels as appropriate
- Refer issues to Healthwatch Bracknell Forest for investigation or may commission HWBF to research evidence.

HEALTHWATCH BRACKNELL FOREST

Local Healthwatch is the consumer champion for health and social care, representing the collective voice of people who use services and the public in general. Healthwatch will build up a local picture of community needs, aspirations and assets, and the experience of people. It will report any concerns about services to commissioners, providers and Scrutiny committees. It does so by engaging with local communities including networks of local voluntary organisations, people who have used or are using services, and the public. Through its seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board, local Healthwatch will present information for the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and discuss and agree with other members of the Board a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It will also present information to Healthwatch England to help form a national picture of health and social care. Local Authorities have the responsibility to ensure that the local Healthwatch operates effectively and is value for money; managing this through local contractual arrangements.

The role of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is to:

- Act as a “watchdog” and advocate for consumers
- Be a source of information for people in the community; to share information from networks of voluntary and community groups
- Gather and present evidence and information for Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and support scrutiny reviews
- Use good public engagement to demonstrate the “real-time” experiences of people who have experience of using health and social care services
- Highlight concerns about services to health scrutiny. In line with national guidance, Healthwatch has a duty to report concerns to Health Scrutiny. Within Bracknell Forest, it has been agreed that Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel will act as the recipient of the concerns.
- Cascade information to people in the community and the public about services and support that is available.

To do this Healthwatch Bracknell Forest will:

- Collect and share relevant public opinion and experiences using an evidence based approach
- Have an oversight of trends and local issues
- Access the Healthwatch England repository of information
- Exercise its powers to “Enter and View”
- Hold regular discussions with people in the community, commissioners and providers
- Provide evidence based feedback, attend Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel meetings as an observer, relevant workshops and working groups.
- Refer matters to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the purposes of securing information and expertise
- In accordance with The NHS Bodies and Local Authorities (Partnership Arrangements, Care Trusts, Public Health And Local Healthwatch) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012:3094), escalate issues as necessary to the Health

Overview and Scrunity Panel. The respective Overview and Scrunity Panel has an obligation to acknowledge referrals within 20 working days of receipt.

For more information about Healthwatch Bracknell Forest please visit:

www.healthwatchbracknellforest.co.uk

WORKING PRINCIPLES

Given that the common aims of the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Healthwatch Bracknell Forest are to improve outcomes for people and ensure the commissioning and delivery of high quality, appropriate and efficient services, it is vital that they:

- Work in a climate of mutual respect, courtesy and transparency
- Have a shared understanding of their respective roles, responsibilities, priorities and different perspectives
- Promote and foster open relationships where issues of common interest are shared and challenged in a constructive and mutually supportive manner
- Share work programmes and information or data that have obtained to avoid duplication of effort

PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Scenario 1: The refreshed JSNA has indicated a need for integrated health and social care teams aligned with GP practices

Health and Wellbeing Board	The board has a duty to support integrated services and, reflecting on the JSNA, decides to include integrated teams as a priority in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Following the implementation of the strategy, it assesses what impact the changes have had and makes recommendations for improvement.
Local Healthwatch	Undertakes local research about what people who use services are looking for, identifies gaps on service provision and feeds the outcomes onto the Health and Wellbeing Board to influence the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
Health Scrutiny	Examines the process in light of members' knowledge of the local area and makes recommendations about how people in the community, particularly vulnerable groups, can be informed about changes to services. Depending on the outcomes or any issues raised, scrutiny could consider whether it would merit the establishment of a working group, recognising that there may be competing priorities.

Scenario 2: An issue related to health inequalities: A low uptake of child vaccination in particular wards

<p>Health and Wellbeing Board</p>	<p>The refreshed JSNA indicates a low uptake that has implications for health and social care in some Council wards. Because the reasons are unclear, the Health and Wellbeing Board asks Health Scrutiny to review the issue.</p>
<p>Local Healthwatch</p>	<p>Through their seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board, local Healthwatch were involved in reviewing the JSNA, and now it uses its local networks to gather views about why some children are not being immunised and reports this to the Health and Wellbeing Board and Scrutiny.</p>
<p>Health Scrutiny</p>	<p>Scrutiny asks Local Healthwatch to gather local views. As a result of the discussions with Clinical Commissioning Groups, schools, health visitors and social workers, makes recommendations about ways to improve immunisations.</p>

Scenario 3: A reconfiguration of maternity services across Council areas

<p>Health and Wellbeing Board</p>	<p>Providers have proposed this as a solution to improving outcomes and make better use of available resources. The health and wellbeing board assesses whether the plans fit their Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and takes a strategic view on the outcomes and engagement with the clinical commissioning groups.</p>
<p>Local Healthwatch</p>	<p>Undertakes a comprehensive exercise to gather views from people who use services and the public, checks whether consultations reflect what is known about best practice and presents views as a health and wellbeing board member and to Council scrutiny during the formal consultation process.</p>
<p>Health Scrutiny</p>	<p>Agrees that proposals are a substantial/significant variation and, either individually or through joint arrangements with other Councils, engages in early discussions with the commissioners/providers regarding policy, plans and consultations. During the formal consultation stage it would analyse the proposals in a public forum, taking evidence and coming to a conclusion about whether the proposals are in the best interest of the local health service. This would be in conjunction with key officers and the Executive Member to seek to secure a “Council” response to proposals.</p>