

Healthwatch

Background

Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council officers have jointly been meeting with Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council Healthwatch Chief Executives and Chairs since the 18th of January 2017 to discuss the way forward for the organisation from 1st of April 2018.

Officers from both Councils highlighted the need to formulate a model that releases savings due to the financial difficulties both Councils are faced with. Portfolio Holders from both Councils have been integral to these discussions.

All parties have agreed to the following:

- 1) A merger between the two Healthwatches should be considered not only in a financial context but also in the context of the future of Health and Social Care planning across the region (Sustainable Transformation Plan).
- 2) The merged Healthwatch model needs to represent a strong and influential voice of the citizen/patient within the Health and Social Care sector especially during a time of tremendous change coupled with financial challenges.
- 3) The merged model proposed by the two Healthwatches needs to show how it will effectively deliver the following statutory functions: community voice and influence, making a difference locally, informing people and working with Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission.
- 4) The merged model proposed must ensure that the functions of Healthwatch remain independent.
- 5) Officers would consider the opportunity to contract for a longer period of time (five years). Nottingham City Council have confirmed this. Nottinghamshire County officers are working towards this.

Funding Envelope of Current Healthwatch:

Nottingham City Healthwatch is currently funded at £160k. £108k of this is funded through the Community Voices Grant whilst the remaining £52k has been funded via a non-recurrent funding pot. The new merged model has taken into account that the financial contribution will be reduced to the Community Voices Grant level of £108k.

Conclusion:

The two Healthwatches and officers from Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council have agreed the following:

- 1) The merged Healthwatch model will set up a commercial arm to its structure in order for them to earn income (they have done some of this already) to support their statutory work;
- 2) A multi-disciplinary stakeholder group will be set up to manage the contract supported by the Strategic Insight and Analysis team (Jon Rea). This group will support Healthwatch with dialogue between key stakeholders and any other key issues;
- 3) The merged Healthwatch model will hold two contracts, one with Nottingham City Council and one with Nottinghamshire County Council. Officers will ensure that where possible the contracts align. This will ensure the model retains both City and County focus.