**Meeting of Healthwatch City of London Board: Annual General Meeting**

**Date and Time:** Thursday 16th September 2021, 2pm – 3pm

**Venue:** Zoom

**Chair:** Gail Beer

**Present:** Trustees: Gail Beer (GB) (Chair), Steve Stevenson (SS), Malcolm Waters (MW), Lynn Strother (LS). Board Associates: Janet Porter (JP), Dr Cynthia White (CW). Staff In attendance: Teri Anderson (TA), Paul Coles (PC), Rachel Cleave (RC), Salma Khatun (SK).

Annie Roy CoL, Alvin Kinch

Members of the Public (MP): 3

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| **Item** | **Issue** | **Action** | **Owner** | **Date for Resolution** |
| 1 | **Welcome, introductions and apologies** | The Chair welcomed and introduced the trustees and associate board members Apologies for absence were received from Sean Lee, Trustee. | GB  | N/A |
| 2 | **Declaration of Conflicts of Interests** | The trustees declared the following interests:MW is a patient at the Neaman Practice, GB is a patient at the Neaman Practice and Director at Guy’s & St Thomas’ Hospital, SS is a patient at the Neaman Practice. SL made no declarations of interest.  | PC |  |
| 3 | **Minutes of AGM 16th October 2020** | Circulated previously. Minutes were approved by the trustees as true and accurate. The minutes will be made available on the website | PC |  |
| 4 | **Chair’s report** | GB gave an overview of the role and work of HWCoL and the purpose of the AGM. HWCoL are required to hold an AGM to meet the requirements of the Charity Commission HWEngland (HWE), and the Corporation of the City of London (CoL) HWCoL must demonstrate that it provides a public benefit as well as satisfying the Corporation of the City of London (CoL) that the service it provides represents value for money. GB described the challenges of the past year to meet the requirements of both the contract and those required by HWE. These have been largely due to the restrictions imposed during the pandemic. HWCoL have had to access local service users and residents in new ways. This has provided HWCoL with new opportunities to connect with all residents. Not forgetting that access to digital platforms can be restricting. GB described the challenges of bringing together a new team who worked remotely and did not meet each other until the summer. GB gave an overview of the work undertaken which included; multiple surveys, Teams and Zoom meetings with service users and residents as well as engaging through multiple digital platforms Events included; mental health focus groups, and city carers events.GB thanked the staff team for their input and RC for her regular bulletins and newsletters. These were exclusively online, but HWCoL would not have reached as many people had it not been for the newsletters and bulletins.HWCoL have regularly reached 1846 people via newsletters and bulletins and have held two COVID-19 webinars, TA has ensured that the social media content was constantly updated with COVID-19 updates and other health concerns. Regular factsheets have been put together to reach residents. MW clarified that the factsheets are short, printed documents and more information on COVID-19 has been published online in the bulletins and newsletters. Distribution of the factsheets has been a challenge due to the pandemic. GB asked members of the public to spare some time to help with distribution of leaflets and information.  GB described how health and social care has been changing over the course of the year, including the creation of the new CCG for North East London (NEL) and how HWCoL has been involved in those changes. This has mainly been though attending meetings to ensure that the City voice is heard. As the NEL CCG governing body develops, HWCoL has been working with the team to ensure patient participation in the City is robust. The population may be small, but there is a lot to be said. HWCoL has been listening to local voices through questionnaires and surveys. A recent focus of HWCoL’s work has been the Neaman Practice Patient Participation Group. GB stressed the importance of residents attending so that the Practice receives helpful feedback. The redevelopment the St Leonard’s Hospital site has been a focus of attention and the team have been working with Healthwatch Hackney (HWH) to promote public engagement on the future of the hospital. MW and GB have been working with HWH to draw up a public engagement plan to obtain the views and aspirations of local people. Progress on the public engagement plan has been more limited than hoped for but work on this is ongoing. The next step is to conduct an online survey to ascertain the r range and type of services that residents would like to see situated at St Leonards Hospital. GB described the important work carried out with regard to dentistry services. SM has been heavily involved in this and has attended events, written reports which have been influential locally and contributed to the national picture. Dental services were very difficult to access during the first lockdown and even though things are getting back to normal, people may be anxious about their access to dentists. PC gave an update on the development of the Primary Care Network (PCN) and it’s engagement plan. A PCN is a group of GP surgeries working together to support residents in their geographic area, normally with a population of between 30,000 and 50,000. Their aim is to help improve the health of their local population. PC has been working with HWH to establish residents’ priorities. The work to obtain insights from disabled people in the City during Covid was described. HWCoL was able to effectively engage with the population in the City regarding their experiences during Covid and the services they required afterwards to enable them to re- establish a degree of normality. This report for will be published later in the year. HWCoL have been able to support both the Neaman Practice and residents experiencing difficulties making appointments and the handling phone calls. Dr Chor, a partner in the practice, attended a recent public board meeting with an action plan to remedy the areas of concern and will report back again later in the year. GB commended the Practice Team on their response to the concerns raised. GB thanked SM and CW for their hard work to address the issues in accessing the podiatry clinic and commended them in making sure services we made available More information can be found on the HWCoL website. PC provided an update on the outcomes of the monthly listening events for the unpaid Carers Community in the City where issues are raised in a confidential manner. HWCoL organise a monthly focus group for carers to discuss issues around health and social care delivery to carers and the people they care for. In July, Ian Jarman, City of London Commissioner attended the focus group to discuss the City of London Homecare Contract. Carers and give feedback on their experiences of using Homecare providers and suggestions on how a revised Homecare contract could meet the needs of the people they care for.HWCoL organise a bi-monthly focus group for mental health service providers and residents receiving mental health support. The focus groups are attended by East London Foundation Health Trust, the statutory mental health service provider to the City, Mind City, Hackney and Walthamstow and City Connections The focus groups have discussed the results from HWCoL’s mental health survey, where a lack of bereavement care and loneliness were identified as areas of concern and received updates from services providers about the quality and standard of the services they deliver. Residents’ feedback is that they are unaware of the services available to them. HWCoL are working with providers to address this. Finally, GB introduced Sean Lee who has recently joined the board as a Trustee. As a resident in the east of the City he has a keen interest on what is happening in his local patch. GB also introduced the staff team and thanked them for their hard work over the past year.  GB also thanked fellow Trustees and Associate Board Members and volunteers for their considerable contribution.  | GB |  |
| 5 | **Treasurer’s report & Presentation of accounts** | SS first referred to the independent examiner’s report to the trustees. The independent examiner cannot sign the report until it has been approved by the trustees. The examiners written report has been circulated to the trustees together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. Last year HWCoL received its annual grant from the City, a small amount for a Covid Information project and a small amount to support the development of the Primary Care Network. Unfortunately, these grants are for specific work so there is little profit and very little to put into reserves. The financial statements and trustees report will be published on the website. The trustees’ report also covers the public benefit that HWCoL provides. This year HWCoL has not been required to pay rent as all staff have been working from home. This situation will change when the planned permanent base becomes available either later this year or early next year. The savings from rent have been used to fund additional salaries to enable the move to online activities. The Trustees accepted that the trustees’ report and financial statements were circulated before the meeting and therefore enable both SS GB can sign them off, and the accountant is able to sign off the independent examiner’s report.  | SS |  |
| 6 | **Confirmation of New Trustees** |  Sean Lee, a qualified accountant, has been appointed as a new Trustee. The Trustees confirmed his appointment and also approved his appointment as Deputy Treasurer in place of Malcolm Waters. | GB |  |
| 7 | **Questions to the Board** | None | GB |  |
| 8 | **Other comments** | Alvin Kinch from HW England commented on the work the team have undertaken and noted the achievements of such a small team. |  |  |