

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD: 19<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2015**

### **REPORT OF LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

#### **HEALTHWATCH LEICESTERSHIRE RECOMMISSIONING**

##### **Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Health and Wellbeing Board of proposals for recommissioning Healthwatch services for Leicestershire.

##### **Link to Better Care Together**

<b>Workstream</b>	<b>Relevance</b>	<b>Workstream</b>	<b>Relevance</b>
Maternity, neonates, children and young people	√	Mental health	√
Long term conditions	√	Frail and older people	√
Urgent care	√	Planned care	√
Learning disabilities	√	End of life	√

2. The purpose of Healthwatch is to promote continuous improvement in local health and social care services and achieve improved outcomes for local people. The contract scope includes services related to all of the above workstreams.

##### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

3. At its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014 Leicestershire County Council's Cabinet decided to reduce funding and support to agencies in order to achieve budget savings. The detailed proposals included a reduction in funding for Healthwatch Leicestershire of £80,000 from £267,391 to £187,391 for the current financial year and for subsequent years.
4. The Healthwatch Leicestershire Annual Review 2014 – 15 was reported to the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015 when the work of Healthwatch Leicestershire was noted by the Board. The report also set out the funding context identified in paragraph 3 above.

##### **Background**

5. Healthwatch Leicestershire is a statutory service established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and proposals for procurement of the existing service were reported to the County Council's Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2012 ([16 October Cabinet](#)).

The Healthwatch Leicestershire (HWL) contract is delivered by Voluntary Action Leicestershire via Healthwatch Leicestershire, and is due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. The contract includes provision for an extension of up to two years.

6. The Annual Report of HWL highlights impressive progress which is proposed to be carried forward further through the current year's work programme. HWL support is focused on:-
  - a. Listening to local people across Leicestershire – engaging with the public and targeting seldom heard/hard to reach communities to understand what matters most.
  - b. Providing quality advice, signposting and information to inform patient choice.
  - c. Gathering intelligence to inform and influence key stakeholders to improve health and social care services.
  - d. Reviewing health and social care services from a lay perspective to observe the nature and quality of service improvements.

### **Proposal**

7. The County Council proposes to review the Healthwatch offer prior to retendering the contract for HWL so as to inform re-commissioning. In order to allow time for this review to be carried out, and also to support continuing strong performance under the existing contract, it is proposed to extend the contract for a further year until March 2017. This extension is subject to agreement on service provision with VAL/HWL within the reduced funding allocation of £187,391 and to confirmation of Government funding for next financial year which is expected to be provided in January 2016.
8. The review is proposed to be carried out during the first quarter of 2016/17 so as to take account of the performance of HWL during the current financial year and the development of national quality guidance due to be completed later this year. The review will be led by Sarah Carter/Mike Thomson within the Council's Communities Team. Future commissioning proposals will be reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board prior to being reported to County Council Cabinet for approval.

### **Consultation/Patient and Public Involvement**

9. The review of the HWL contract will include engagement and consultation with partner organisations, the Health and Wellbeing Board, Healthwatch members etc.

### **Resource Implications**

10. Department of Health funding for Healthwatch and associated contracts (Independent NHS Advocacy Services (ICAS) and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) in hospitals) is via the Local Reform and Communities Voices Grant (LRCVG). This funding is separately identified although not ring-fenced within the Leicestershire County Council Revenue Support Grant. All of the budget will continue to be used for the named purposes. The County Council budget allocation is expected to be confirmed by Central Government early next calendar year.

### **Recommendation**

11. It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board note this report.

## **Background papers**

Report to the Leicestershire County Council Cabinet on Reduction in Funding to Agencies – Outcome of Consultation and Proposed Reductions in Funding, dated 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014. [Cabinet Report – September 2014](#)

## **Officer to Contact**

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## **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

12. Healthwatch Leicestershire is committed to reducing inequalities in health and social care outcomes and this priority will be reflected in future commissioning.

## **Partnership Working and associated issues**

13. Partnership working is fundamental to the work of Healthwatch Leicestershire and will be central to future service specification. Partners will be consulted in order that they can contribute to the Healthwatch review.