



Item 6

REPORT

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9 April 2013

Subject Heading:

Report Author and contact details:

Policy context:

Financial summary:

Role of Local Healthwatch with the Outer North East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Anthony Clements, Clerk to the Committee
Tel: 01708 433065
Anthony.clements@haverling.gov.uk
To decide if Local Healthwatch in Outer North East London should have a formal role on the Committee.
There are no apparent financial implications of the Committee's decision on the role of Healthwatch representatives.

SUMMARY

This report asks the Committee to consider various options for how it could work with Healthwatch in this geographic area and to decide which be the most effective method for its future work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee decide among the following options for working with local Healthwatch in the future:
 - A. To co-opt one representative from each Local Healthwatch for Barking & Dagenham, Havering, Redbridge and Waltham Forest.
 - B. To co-opt a single person representing all four Healthwatch organisations onto the Committee.
 - C. To not co-opt any Healthwatch members onto the Committee but to consult and receive input from Healthwatch on any appropriate matters.

REPORT DETAIL

- 1.1 Members will be aware that Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) ceased operations on 31 March 2013 and were replaced from 1 April by the Local Healthwatch organisations. As with LINKs, there is one Healthwatch for each of the London boroughs covered by this Committee. As with LINKs, Overview and Scrutiny Committees will continue to have a statutory duty to consider matters referred to them by Healthwatch.
- 1.2 Since 2010, the Committee has agreed to co-opt a member of each LINK onto the Committee in order to assist with the scrutiny work undertaken and give an insight into the views of LINK members. Given the change from LINK to Healthwatch outlined above, the Committee now needs to decide whether it wishes to retain or amend these co-opting arrangement as regards the new Local Healthwatch organisations.
- 1.3 Members may feel that they would like to keep a “borough-based” focus and retain co-optees from each of the four Local Healthwatches and hence retain four Healthwatch co-optees on the Committee. If however Members feel there may be a danger however of this making the Committee too large and unwieldy, Members may prefer to co-opt only one Healthwatch representative to cover the Outer North East London area or indeed to not formally co-opt any Healthwatch members at this time.
- 1.4 It should be noted that, regardless of the decision on Healthwatch co-optees, meetings of the Joint Committee are normally held in public and it therefore remains open to any Healthwatch member to attend any meeting. At the discretion of the Chairman, Healthwatch attendees, as well as other members of the public, will also retain the opportunity to ask questions of witnesses giving evidence.

- 1.5 Members should also note that, whilst there is no legal requirement to co-opt a Healthwatch member (or indeed any other person) the Committee does remain legally required to respond to any issues formally referred to it by Healthwatch, in much the same way that it was with the Local Involvement Networks.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None.

Legal implications and risks:

Although the Joint Committee is required to consider matters referred to it by Healthwatch (under the Health and Social Care Act 2012) it has no statutory obligation to co-opt any Healthwatch members onto the Committee.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None.

Equalities implications and risks:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.