

Healthwatch Bolton

Decision Making Policy

Standing Rules and Delegations

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VOICE: local is a Charitably Incorporated Organisation recognised by the Charity Commission (Charity number 1157070). The Organisation emerged from Healthwatch Bolton which was first incorporated in 2014. The name change was necessitated in 2017 as a result of the organisation acquiring a second local Healthwatch contract. VOICE: local has the statutory contract for delivering local Healthwatch in Bolton.

This document explains our governance structure, our scheme of delegations and our arrangements for 'relevant decisions', as described in the statutory arrangements for Local Healthwatch.

Governance Structure

In keeping with our Healthwatch role as a champion of public voice, the organisation has developed a governance structure that aims to maximise participation in the running of the organisation. The governance structure is as follows.

VOICE: local is only used as a contractual name and not as a trading brand. The organisation continues to trade under the name Healthwatch Bolton.

As a CIO, VOICE: local has a single Trustee Board who are responsible for the overall management and governance of the organisation, set the local Healthwatch priorities, monitor delivery of the local Healthwatch contract and any other contracts we hold.

Decision making and Delegations

Membership

VOICE: local is a Charitably Incorporated Organisation, by association model. This means it is member led. Anyone who has a strong connection with the relevant area (Bolton) (either as a resident, carer or family member of a resident or in the capacity of someone working or volunteering locally) can be a member of Healthwatch Bolton. There is no charge and the only obligation is that Members abide by the Code of Conduct. Members may be periodically asked to confirm their membership by confirming their contact details. Members are entitled to stand and to vote in the Annual Elections for Trustees.

Trustees

The Trustees are elected by the membership. Elections take place at the AGM itself and proceed by show of hands. One third of the trustees should be re-elected every year and that anyone retiring either by rotation or by giving notice, is eligible for re-election.

Applicants for Trustee Roles are advertised annually and there is a selection process designed to ensure that the general and specialist skills required for An effective board are met. Applicants who fulfil the requirements at the time will be put forward to the election. The selection process is supervised by the Human Resources and Finance Subcommittee and supported by staff.

The Trustees meet quarterly plus at the annual away day. The Trustees provide overall leadership and direction for the organisation and maintain overall responsibility for legal compliance, good governance, strategic development and effective management of the organisation. In addition they are committed to upholding the statutory duties and obligations of local Healthwatch as well as upholding the values and mandate of the Healthwatch network. By right and duty the Trustees are bound to consider and decide on;

- Strategic Direction
- Direction and performance
- Contractual obligations (including those related to Staff)
- Efficient and Effective Use of Resources
- Risk and sustainability
- Compliance
- Complaints and Compliments
- The organisational policy framework

In order to maintain the integrity of the organisation as a charity the Board of Trustees have two named officers, a Chair and a Treasurer. Separate role descriptions exist for the positions of Chair of the Trustees and Treasurer.

Management & Strategy Committee (M & S committee)

The two Trustee Board officers (Chair and Treasurer) plus the Board Portfolio holder for Human Resources and any other members of the Trustee Board, as appropriate, form the management and strategy committee that meets bi-monthly.

The following duties are delegated to the M & S committee

- consider the appointment of auditors, the audit fee and any questions of resignation or dismissal of auditors,
- review the quarterly and annual financial statements, budget and cash flow forecasts and income-generating plans before submission to the Board,

- review the Company's financial policies and procedures prior to endorsement by the Board and regularly review those control systems,
- oversee any significant procurement activities,
- review the Company's HR policies and procedures prior to endorsement by the Board
- review and advise the Board on the remuneration and benefits framework for the staff
- develop a process for appointments of Enter and View Chairs and Volunteers, Trustees, Committee members, the Chair and the Operations Manager and advise and support staff to implement these as required,
- advise and support the Operations Manager on matters relating to discipline and resolution.

Lead Officer

The Lead Officer will be appointed by the Trustees and is accountable to them. The line management arrangements for the Operations Manager are through the Chair of the Trustees.

Any discussions about the role, re-numeration, performance or recruitment of the Lead Officer are delegated to the M & S Committee for ratification by the full Trustee Board.

The Board of Trustees delegate to the Lead Officer the day to day running the organisation.

Enter and View Group Chair and Enter and View Volunteers

The Enter and View Group Chair develops and supports the Enter and View volunteers and drives the enter and view programme forward. The E and V Chair is accountable to the Board of Trustees. The Enter and View Chair is delegated by the Board of the Trustees the powers to decide which premises or services to enter and view.

The recruitment of both Enter and View Group Chair and Enter and View Volunteers is supervised by the M & S committee.

Statement on ‘Relevant Decisions’ relating to Statutory Healthwatch Contracts

Local Healthwatch are obliged to have a procedure for making ‘relevant decisions’ which are listed as:

- How to undertake your activities.
- Which health and care services you are looking at covering with your activities.
- The amounts you will spend on your activities.
- Whether to request information.
- Whether to make a report or a recommendation.
- Which premises to enter and view and when those premises are to be visited.
- Whether to refer a matter to an overview and scrutiny committee.
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- Whether to report a matter concerning your activities to another person.
- Any decisions about subcontracting.

Our arrangements for these types of decisions are covered in our Governing Document and Standing Delegations but for ease of reference are listed separately here:

How to undertake our activities.	These decisions fall within the remit of the Trustees for strategic purposes, operational decisions are delegated to the Lead Officer
Which health and care services are being looked at with our activities.	Local Healthwatch are obliged to take reference from the public in regards to setting their Annual Priorities, which they publish their annual priorities. Healthwatch Bolton follows a public engagement approach in this regard. This involves; creating a long list of broad options for Thematic Priorities (usually around ten), engaging with the public via an online survey and face to face events as to a) their preferred options and b) potential projects within these themes. The final list of priorities is decided by the Trustees who are guided by the results of this exercise. The chosen themes are then published in

	the relevant Annual Reports. Decisions about actual projects within the broad themes are considered operational and are delegated to the Lead Officer.
The amounts spent on activities	This is an operational decision is therefore delegated to the Lead Officer, within the overall budget framework
Whether to request information	We assume this means whether to make a formal request for information such as via a Freedom of Information Request, in which any such decision must be made by the Board of Trustees
Whether to make a report or a recommendation	It is our agreed practice that all engagement projects result in one or more reports, each of which will make recommendations- unless no such recommendations can be deduced from the work.
Which premises to enter and view and when those premises are to be visited	These decisions are delegated to the Enter and View Chair who makes these decisions in collaboration with the Lead Officer
Whether to refer a matter to an overview and scrutiny committee;	Any such decision must be made by the Board of Trustees
Whether to report a matter concerning our activities to another person	Any such decision must be made by the Board of Trustees unless it is a safeguarding concern whereby it is covered by our safeguarding policy and procedures
Any decisions about subcontracting	Decisions to subcontract service delivery are to be made by the Trustees or the Lead Officer, depending on the level of financial commitment and the nature of the subcontract in question.