

Independent Healthwatch Evaluation

Summary

This report provides the Committee with the summary results of the Independent Healthwatch Evaluation of the five Tees Valley Healthwatches and Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees in particular.

Background

1. Local Healthwatches commenced operation in April 2013 replacing the Local Involvement Networks (LINKs). Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council commissioned Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) Ltd to run Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees.
2. When the five Tees Valley local authorities commissioned their local Healthwatches, the Directors of Adults and Children's' Social Care committed to reviewing their progress after a year of operation through an independent evaluation. Following a procurement process Emily Sweetman Associates was appointed to evaluate the five Tees Valley Healthwatches.
3. The independent evaluation took place during April /May 2014. The results will be delivered in a presentation by the independent evaluator.

Summary Results

4. Summary results show that Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees has been relatively successful in:
 - Establishing a distinct and separate identity from the former LINK organisation
 - Consulting widely as the basis for a work programme
 - Demonstrating a rigorous and successful process to recruit Board Members and provide them with ongoing support
 - Developing effective relationships with CCGs and Trusts, at both strategic and operational levels
 - Achieving a moderate level of public awareness (according to survey results)
 - Extending the reach of Healthwatch into a wider constituency than had been achieved with LINKs
 - Engaging individual members and training volunteers
5. Due to staffing changes and training needs of volunteers there had been delays particularly around the 'enter and view' aspect of Healthwatch, this was identified in the independent evaluation. In addition there was general agreement about where efforts should be concentrated over the coming months. They were that Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees should:
 - Help local people to have a better understanding of what Healthwatch is and does
 - Ensure a period of stability in terms of staffing

- Increase the pace of activity and output in terms of the work programme, particularly by using 'enter and view' where appropriate
- Improve levels of dialogue and exchange with local authority officers as commissioners of Healthwatch and the Service Navigator project, commissioners of social care services and public health, as well as with Overview and Scrutiny.

Circulation

The independent evaluation has been considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board, and will also be considered by Adult Services and Health Select Committee.

Appendices

Healthwatch Annual Report – Appendix 1

Tees Valley Healthwatch Evaluation Overarching Report – Appendix 2

Stockton on Tees Healthwatch Evaluation – Appendix 3