

evaluation of healthwatch stockton-on-tee



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL



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Our brief: A light touch evaluation of the five Tees Valley HealthWatches

- One year in
- Taking stock
- What's working
- What needs attention

Approach across Tees Valley

- Five localities
- Three HealthWatch providers
- 11 weeks from end February to mid-May
- 55 interviews, local surveys and 360 degree feedback

Some caveats

- A snapshot in time
- Relatively new organisations
- Preoccupations of commissioners
- Impact is all

Context for HealthWatch

- Out with PCTs, Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS), SHAs
- In with Public Health England, PH in local government, NHS England, Area Teams, HWBBs
- Inspection of Health and Social Care: a crowded field
- Scale of HealthWatch relative to all of this

Intentions for HealthWatch

- Replace LINKs
- National brand and profile via HealthWatch England
- Additional powers and responsibilities
- Councils to commission them
- Statutory seat on HWBB

Commissioning of Healthwatch

- Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) in Stockton, Middlesbrough and Redcar
- Transition phase 1 Jan to 31 March 2013
- Operational from 1 April
- Two year contract with option to renew

One year in - questions and concerns

- Staff turnover / capacity
- Value for money
- Visibility / presence / public awareness
- Pace of progress, impact
- Engagement, representation
- Work programmes



Data collected in Stockton-on-Tees

- 21 phone and face to face interviews
- Public Awareness survey (153 returns)
- 360 degree feedback (14 raters)
- Desk review of website, social media, published reports and minutes
- Attendance at a volunteer event

Setting up HealthWatch Stockton-on-Tees

- TUPE of former LINK staff
- Shared back office at Catalyst House
- Staff capacity
- Focus: connecting with organisations, recruiting board members, gathering community views

‘Stockton have been very engaged. They took their role very seriously. [...] They brokered key relationships between HealthWatch, the local authority and local community early on. It paid off.’

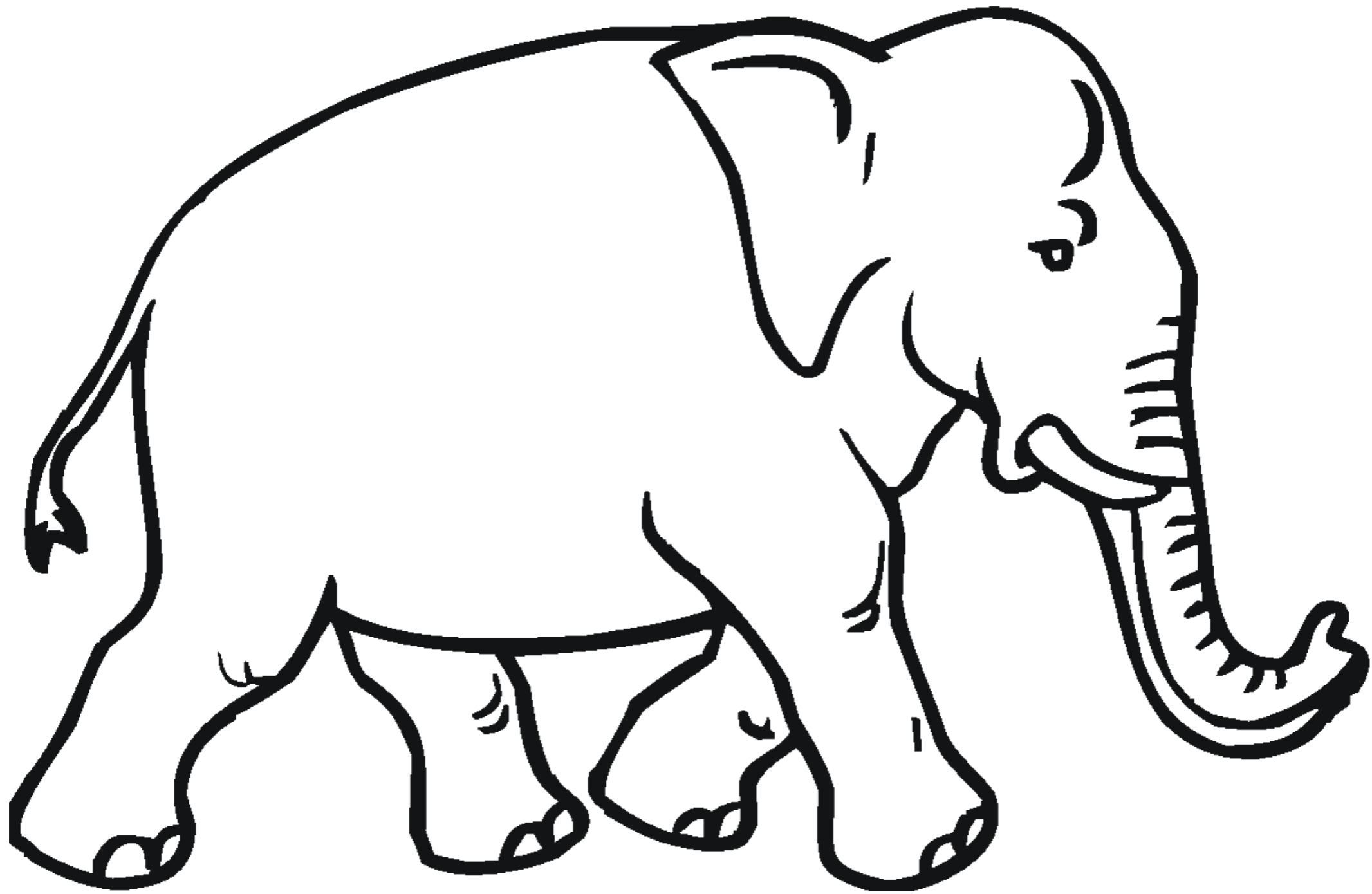
–PCP member of staff

Period of turbulence



Current capacity of HealthWatch Stockton-on-Tees

- Weakness: Strategic capacity is spread thin
- Strength: capacity for community engagement, information gathering and giving



Seeing the 'whole elephant'

Public awareness of HealthWatch Stockton-on-Tees

- 20% recognised the HealthWatch logo
- 25% had heard of HealthWatch Stockton-on-Tees

How did they find out about it?

- 12% read about it in a council newsletter
- 9% through a voluntary organisation
- 6% from a HealthWatch leaflet
- 6% through the news,
- 6% by word of mouth,

A distinct identity

- Distinct from LINK
- User-friendly website and content
- Active social media @HwStockton

Engaging with communities

- 113 organisations linked to HW Stockton-on-Tees
- Feedback: HealthWatch is ‘connected to a wide range of groups and organisations’
- 240 individuals engaged during work programme development in 2013
- Low numbers of enquiries by phone

Output

- Limited output so far
- Early Review of Mental Health Services, School Nursing Services project
- Contribution to Eye Health consultation for NHS England
- Slow to produce a work programme:
 - Process - opaque to commissioners (need to 'show workings out')

Representation: The Board

- Early engagement with potential candidates for Board membership
- PCP 'looked for people with contacts, networks and experience'
- Rigorous selection process - held things up
- High quality individuals
- Pressure on Board members

Representation: Information Volunteers

- 65 volunteers recruited summer 2013
- 12 fully trained
- Communication with volunteers lapsed
- Re-connecting from April-May 2014



“...the long gap... It's been disjointed. I was so enthusiastic at the start. [...] The danger is you don't feel useful and valued because it has come to nothing. I'm sticking with it though.”

–Information Volunteer, 9 April

HealthWatch Stockton-on-Tees' relationship with the Council

Multi-dimensional:

- Council commissions PCP as HealthWatch provider
- Council commissions and provides health and social care services
- Healthwatch is 'independent consumer champion'
- Council also scrutinises health and social care services

Relationship with others

- Good relationship with Hartlepool and Stockton CCG
- Less regular contact with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust
- Could do more to capitalise on proximity to Catalyst strong local VCSE

What's gone well?

- Distinct identity from LINks
- Increased reach, engagement, wide consultation
- Credible Board
- Effective relationships with Trusts, CCG
- Moderate public awareness



Areas for development

- Local understanding of what HealthWatch is and does
- Stability in terms of staffing
- Pace of activity and output
- Use of Enter and View
- More attention to critical relationships

Shared responsibility?

healthwatch
Stockton-on-Tees