

## **Standing Orders/Terms of Reference Healthwatch Rutland (HWR) Advisory Board**

The following are guidelines for the efficient and effective operation of the HWR Advisory Board (hereafter The HWR Board):

- 1) The HWR Board will meet at least 3 times per year, unless decided otherwise.
- 2) HWR Board meetings are meetings that are held in public and not 'public meetings'. The public and press are warmly invited to attend however only HWR Board members and invited speakers/guests will sit at the Board table to discuss HWR business.
- 3) Once Board members have had an opportunity to ask their own questions for information and clarification, the public may be invited to ask questions of any invited speakers at the discretion of the Chair.
- 4) There will be time allotted for questions on agenda items from the public. These questions should be submitted 48 hours in advance of the meeting to enable the Chair and the Board to give them due consideration. An opportunity for the public to speak and ask questions at the meeting without prior notification will be at the sole discretion of the Chair.
- 5) The HWR Board, may, at its discretion, go into 'closed session' when matters of a confidential matter are to be discussed. Such 'closed sessions' will be announced prior to the start of the meeting.
- 6) All HWR Board members are elected for 3 years or the duration of the contract if less, and re-elected via self-nomination. The Board should elect a Chair and a Vice-chair for continuity.
- 7) The Chair and Vice-chair may stand for re-election after 3 years. It will then be open for anyone else to self-nominate followed by a rigorous selection process and interview.
- 8) The deliberations of the HWR Board should be recorded, with particular reference to decisions made and action points. Other information to be recorded is at the discretion of the Chair.

9) Supporting papers:

- a. Items for the forthcoming Agenda should be with the Chair at least 10 days before the due date of the meeting.
- b. Agenda, previous minutes, and any other supporting papers should be circulated to Board members at least 7 days (5 working days) before the due date of the meeting, unless there are exceptional reasons for not doing so.
- c. Items for inclusion under Any Other Business should be submitted to the Chair before the Agenda is circulated and, in any case, no less than 24 hours before the start of the meeting. Any item not notified prior to the commencement of the meeting, will not be considered unless directed otherwise by the Chair.
- d. Minutes of meetings will be approved by the Chair or Vice Chair before being circulated to members.

10) Conduct of meetings:

- a. The Chair is responsible for the conduct of the meeting. However, it is incumbent on the Chair to ensure that Board members, HWR staff and people invited to sit at the table are allowed, within reason, to voice their opinions on any matter under discussion.
- b. Minutes of the previous meeting should be approved as an accurate record by the Chair at the commencement of any proceedings. Once this has been done, they should be available to any interested party and be posted on the HWR website.
- c. Where the Board has gone into 'closed session', the minutes of that part of the meeting are not to be regarded as part of the public record and their distribution restricted, at the discretion of the Chair.
- d. Any person whose conduct falls short of what is acceptable, can be asked to leave by the Chair, whose decision is final.

## **HWR Board Membership**

- 11) The HWR Board is responsible for the strategic direction of HWR.

- a. The HWR Board consists of people who have expressed an interest in the workings of Healthwatch Rutland, and who may, in addition, have some experience in the issues that may come before the Board for its consideration.
- b. Prospective candidates to join the Board will be invited for informal interview with the HWR Chair and HWR Manager before any proposal to formally join the Board is raised with other Board Members.
- c. Prospective candidates for Board membership will be asked upfront to declare other potential conflicts of interest arising from involvement in business, social and campaigning interests. Where such conflicts of interest may be expected due to the candidate's other activities, the application will not be pursued.
- d. When an application to the Board proceeds, applicants may be asked to undertake a short 'proposal period' of volunteering to the Board during which time the applicant will not have voting rights. This will allow the candidate to become accustomed to the working activities of the Board, staff, volunteers and stakeholders.
- e. Full membership of the Board will be voted upon at the end of the agreed proposal period at the next Board meeting in public.
- f. The Board will take into account any recommendations from the working groups e.g. the Operations and Planning Group, but is not bound by them.
- g. The HWR Board may co-opt any person who in its opinion may assist in its deliberations. Co-opted members may be invited to join the Board for a set period and their appointment can be terminated at any time during the period.
- h. The number of Board members will be limited to a maximum of 7 plus co-options.
- i. There will be no more than 2 people co-opted onto the Board at any one time.
- j. Co-opted members will have the same voting status as other HWR Board members.
- k. Co-option status will be reviewed every year for each co-optee.
- l. If a Board member fails to attend two consecutive meetings without offering apologies or a good reason, the HWR Chair will contact the member to seek clarification. This will also apply to co-opted members.

m. The HWR Board is quorate when 3 Board members/co-optees are in attendance.

## 12) Declarations of Interest

Members of the HWR Board and staff members of HWR, will be required to complete a 'Register of Interest' form, declaring any possible conflict of interest with their work for HWR and their relationship with outside organisations or individuals, where such relationship may be perceived as being detrimental to the impartial discharge of their roles and responsibilities as HWR members etc.

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