



**Healthwatch
Wolverhampton
Oversight Group
Guide**

June 2024

INTRODUCTION

This guide has been produced as a reference tool for the Healthwatch Wolverhampton Oversight Group for the purposes of information giving and the establishment and maintenance of good practices. There are many policies and procedures which we use to ensure we deliver the best possible service.

Evolving Communities CIC is a community interest company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 08464602

The registered office is at Unit 2 Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH.

CONTENTS

	Page
• About Healthwatch Wolverhampton	4
• Statutory activities of local Healthwatch	5
• Governance, responsibilities and authorities of Evolving Communities and the Healthwatch Wolverhampton Oversight Group	6
• Healthwatch Wolverhampton Oversight Group responsibilities, membership, Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct	10
• Healthwatch Wolverhampton Chair – role and responsibilities	16
• Evolving Communities – company information	18
• Priority setting procedure	20
• Communications and media procedure	23

About Healthwatch Wolverhampton

Healthwatch Wolverhampton gives citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided within Wolverhampton.

It is set apart from the statutory structures, voluntary and community sector it works within, as it performs public functions, delivers statutory duties and receives public funding. Its core purpose is to make sure that the views of the public shape the health and care services they need. Therefore it is:

- **Independent in purpose** – amplifying the voice and experiences of the most pressing and difficult issues in health and social care.
- **Independent in voice** – speaking up on behalf of sometimes unpopular causes as well as groups who are marginalised and/or face disadvantage or discrimination.
- **Independent in action** – designing and delivering activities that best meet the needs of the people it serves.

If Healthwatch Wolverhampton is to hold others to account, it must itself operate with integrity, accountability and transparency to have accountability in the communities it serves.

Statutory activities of local Healthwatch

1. Promoting and supporting the involvement of local people in the commissioning, the provision and scrutiny of local care services.
2. Enabling local people to monitor the standard of provision of local care services and whether and how local care services could and ought to be improved.
3. Obtaining the views of local people regarding their needs for, and experiences of, local care services and importantly to make these views known.
4. Making reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved. These should be directed to commissioners, providers of care services, people responsible for managing or scrutinising local care services and shared with Healthwatch England.
5. Providing advice and information about access to local care services so choices can be made about local care services.
6. Formulating views on the standard of provision and whether and how the local care services could and ought to be improved; and sharing these views with Healthwatch England.
7. Making recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to conduct special reviews or investigations (or, where the circumstances justify doing so, making such recommendations direct to the CQC); and to make recommendations to Healthwatch England to publish reports about particular issues.
8. Providing Healthwatch England with the intelligence and insight it needs to enable it to perform effectively.

Governance, responsibilities and authorities of Evolving Communities and the Healthwatch Wolverhampton Oversight Group

The contract to deliver the Healthwatch Wolverhampton service is held by Evolving Communities. This document outlines the governance arrangements between Healthwatch Wolverhampton (HWW) and Evolving Communities and identifies where responsibilities and accountabilities lie.

As contract holder, Evolving Communities has corporate legal responsibility for the delivery of the HWW contract and for the achievement of the Key Performance Indicators agreed with the City of Wolverhampton Council, the local authority issuing the contract.

To support Evolving Communities in delivery of the HWW contract, HWW has a local Oversight Group, consisting of members who are representatives from a wide range of community and voluntary organisations. The blend of organisations on the HWW Oversight Group is designed to give voice and influence to the diverse communities of Wolverhampton so that the HWW team can better serve its community.

The purpose of this document is to explain how the HWW Oversight Group will operate with the contract holder, Evolving Communities, and provide assurance that HWW meets its obligations to operate as an independent consumer champion for health and social care services on behalf of the population it serves.

Strategy

Evolving Communities will sign the Trademark Licence with Healthwatch England, which outlines conditions to use the Healthwatch name and logo.

Evolving Communities delegates decision-making to the HWW Oversight Group in order to ensure local determination of priorities for HWW. This empowers HWW to set the strategic direction of their own local workplan.

HWW, with the support of Evolving Communities, is responsible for the following:

- Production of an Annual Report based on activity from April to March each year, in accordance with statutory guidance provided by Healthwatch England. The final report will be published at the time set out by Healthwatch England guidance, which is currently by 30 June.
- Publishing and complying with a Decision-Making Policy which meets the guidance provided by Healthwatch England.
- Holding HWW Oversight Group meetings in public to be transparent and accountable about their activities and updating the Oversight Group on progress with their workplan. The minutes of HWW Oversight Group meetings will be made available to the public.

- Sharing intelligence and insight with Healthwatch England in accordance with statutory guidance.
- Undertaking a self-assessment of the Healthwatch England Quality Framework in line with guidance provided, including periodic reviews. Where areas of the Quality Framework involve the responsibilities of Evolving Communities, they will be involved in the self-assessment.
- The Manager of HWW is responsible for undertaking contract reviews with their local commissioning team on a frequency informed the City of Wolverhampton Council.
- Public and media statements are to be given by designated trained personnel only. Statements will be evidence based, factual and aligned to workplan objectives.

Data protection

As the host organisation, Evolving Communities provides the Data Protection Officer (DPO) role for HWW. The DPO supports HWW in accordance with current guidance provided by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), including:

- Monitoring compliance with the UK GDPR and other data protection laws, data protection policies, awareness-raising, training and audits.
- Providing advice and information on data protection obligations, considering Healthwatch England guidance.
- Monitoring of the Data Protection Impact Assessment process.
- Contact point for the ICO.

HWW will raise any issues and concerns with the DPO.

Financial data

Evolving Communities is the legal entity for HWW and HWW must not enter into any contract without the agreement and involvement of Evolving Communities. HWW is not a legal entity and has no contractual or financial standing of its own.

As contract holder, Evolving Communities has budget accountability. The HWW Manager has responsibility for managing the HWW delegated budget and will share financial information with the HWW Oversight Group as agreed with their HWW Oversight Group Chair. This information will be sufficient to enable the Oversight Group to understand the funding available in the delivery of HWW services and activities relating to their annual workplan. The HWW Manager has reviews on an individual basis with the Evolving Communities Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to ensure monitoring of expenditure to projected budget.

Evolving Communities Finance Team produces reports as required by the City of Wolverhampton Council Commissioning Team to support the contract review process. Evolving Communities processes all invoices on behalf of HWW. HWW will follow the

procurement process as outlined within Evolving Communities policies. Evolving Communities has organisational responsibility to ensure accounts are filed in accordance with Companies House/gov.uk guidelines.

Health and safety

HWW follows the policies and procedures provided by Evolving Communities relating to health and safety. Evolving Communities provides training to HWW staff to promote awareness of individual and team responsibilities.

HWW undertakes venue checklists and risk assessments for their activities in line with Evolving Communities policies and procedures. Risk activity by HWW is agile and consider the need to reflect current circumstances at the time of their creation, for example the need to undertake specific COVID-19 related risk assessments and venue checklists, as guided by Evolving Communities.

Evolving Communities maintains an organisational Risk Register, the contents of which can be made available to the HWW Oversight Group when there is an identified risk which impacts the activity of HWW, or upon request. The HWW Manager works with Evolving Communities, with reference to the HWW Chair and Oversight Group, in the management of such identified risks on an individual basis.

Evolving Communities maintains a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) for the entire organisation, including its Local Healthwatch Teams. The HWW Manager is responsible for developing and maintaining their own plan based on the Evolving Communities template, to reflect local needs and ensure any information relating to their business is kept up-to-date. The HWW Manager has a copy of the BCP as it relates to their area.

Human resources

The HWW Team are employees of Evolving Communities and follow the policies and procedures provided by Evolving Communities for the management of staff. All payroll activity is undertaken by Evolving Communities, and members of staff in HWW provide the necessary information to enable this activity.

Staff appraisals and supervisions are undertaken or delegated by the HWW Manager in accordance with Evolving Communities procedures. Line management, supervision and appraisal of the HWW Manager is undertaken by Evolving Communities. Training and development are overseen within Evolving Communities supervision and appraisal process, and any development opportunities offered by Healthwatch England will be included within that framework.

The position of Chair of the HWW Oversight Group is recruited to by a competitive recruitment process. The Chair is a volunteer and subject to the Volunteering Policies and Processes. The recruitment panel will consist of the HWW Manager and at least one representative from Evolving Communities; it may also include a HWW volunteer. In the event of any action required to remove the Chair, an investigation would be led by the

CEO of Evolving Communities, with reference to the HWW Oversight Group and staff team as appropriate.

Evolving Communities CEO/Chief Operating Officer (COO) undertakes reviews with each Chair on a mutually agreed frequency, but no further apart than annually. In the event of any action required to remove a member of the HWW Oversight Group, an investigation would be led by the HWW Oversight Group Chair and HWW Manager, with reference to others as appropriate.

Healthwatch Wolverhampton Oversight Group responsibilities, membership, Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct

Responsibilities

The Healthwatch Wolverhampton Oversight Group exists to provide direction, oversight, scrutiny and support to HWW's workplan. In particular, it:

- Identifies key areas of work for HWW.
- Supports the development and delivery of activities.
- Shares information and insight from Wolverhampton's communities to help inform and direct the activities of HWW, avoiding duplication of resources and efforts and representing the voice of the communities they serve.
- Considers and identifies emerging key themes that are pertinent to strategies about, delivery of and access to health and care services in Wolverhampton.
- Offers experience, expertise and knowledge to promote and support HWW.
- Ensures that the activities and resources of the HWW Manager and team are focused on creating positive impact for the people of Wolverhampton.
- Ensures wider public involvement in the work of HWW.
- Ensures that HWW is fulfilling its legal and statutory obligations.

Membership

The HWW Oversight Group members are representatives from a wide range of community and voluntary organisations. The blend of organisations on the HWW Oversight Group is designed to give voice and influence to the diverse communities of Wolverhampton so that the HWW team can better serve their community. The blend and number of organisations may change over time to reflect the needs and demographics of the population and with particular regard to health inequalities.

The Oversight Group is led by an independent Chair, recruited by HWW. HWW will work with local organisations to identify HWW Oversight Group members on an ongoing basis. All Oversight Group members will receive an induction session with the Chair and Manager. Potential Oversight Group members will have the opportunity to observe an Oversight Group session before joining.

Terms of Reference

The HWW Oversight Group develops and maintains its own Terms of Reference for the operational running of the Oversight Group. It must cover the bullet points below, and should be reviewed, with no longer than three years between reviews.

- **Who can be a Healthwatch Wolverhampton Oversight Group member:** HWW Oversight Group members should be a representative (volunteer, staff member or service user) of an organisation that works with, serves or champions the cause of a community within Wolverhampton. The representative member is a named individual.
- **How many:** A minimum of five Oversight Group members, with a minimum quorate of three being necessary to make decisions.
- **How long:** HWW Oversight Group members serve a term of three years from the date of joining the HWW Oversight Group. No individual shall serve more than three consecutive three-year terms. HWW Oversight Group members shall serve staggered terms to balance continuity with new perspectives. Progression to a second or third term as a HWW Oversight Group member will be agreed by the HWW Manager, HWW Oversight Group Chair and a lead officer in the organisation represented by the individual.
- **Attendance:** HWW Oversight Group members must submit their apologies if they are unable to attend an Oversight Group session. Should any HWW Oversight Group member miss three consecutive Oversight Group sessions, their membership of the Oversight Group will be reviewed with a lead officer in the organisation represented by the individual.
- **Number of Oversight Group sessions:** The number of HWW Oversight Group sessions shall be no fewer than four per year, reflecting the quarterly cycle of contract delivery. There may be additional sessions, including learning and development sessions or public events.
- **Where:** HWW Oversight Group sessions will be held in accessible venues within the City of Wolverhampton Council geographical area. Where face-to-face sessions are not possible, virtual sessions will be held via video technology such as Zoom or Teams.
- **Agenda:** The agenda will be set by the HWW Oversight Group Chair in collaboration with the HWW Manager, taking account of the suggestions of HWW Oversight Group members. The agenda and supporting papers for each session will be sent to HWW Oversight Group members at least five days in advance of the meeting by email. Paper copies will be made available to members on request and on the day of the session.
- **Sessions in public:** HWW Oversight Group sessions must be open to the public. Should there be confidential matters on the agenda, part of the session may be closed to the public to protect that confidentiality. Notice and time of the HWW Oversight Group sessions will be published at least five days in advance through HWW public communication channels. A copy of the agenda/supporting papers can be provided to members of the public by email and where confidentiality allows.

- **Decision-making:** Decisions made affecting the activities of HWW must be in accordance with the statutory functions of HWW and in accordance with guidance provided by Healthwatch England. They must also be within the resource capabilities of HWW. The HWW Manager and a senior member of staff from Evolving Communities can offer guidance and information to support decision-making.
- **Voting:** Where it is necessary for votes to be cast, then any decision will be based on a majority vote. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair will have the casting vote.
- **Conflicts of interest:** Each HWW Oversight Group Member will register their own interests and those of the organisation they represent. Declarations of interest pertinent to the subject matter discussed at any session must be declared during the session.
- **Resignation:** Any HWW Oversight Group member may resign at any time. The HWW Chair and HWW Manager will liaise with the relevant organisation to ensure that they can maintain representation of their community of interest.

Code of Conduct

The Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles, apply to all those working, volunteering and involved in any role for HWW.

Seven (Nolan) Principles of Public life

- ❖ Selflessness - Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- ❖ Integrity - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- ❖ Objectivity - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- ❖ Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- ❖ Openness - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- ❖ Honesty - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in

a way that protects the public interest.

- ❖ Leadership - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Along with these Seven (Nolan) Principles of Public life Evolving Communities has an organisational Code of Conduct that will be provided to the Chair and all Oversight Group members. In addition, the Oversight Group members will agree to and abide by the following, which is in line with Healthwatch England guidance.

Law, mission, policies

- Act within the governing documents of Healthwatch Wolverhampton and abide by the policies and procedures of the organisation.
- Not break the law or go against regulations in any respect of their role.
- Support the objects and mission of Healthwatch Wolverhampton and act as their champion.
- Develop and maintain an up-to-date knowledge of Healthwatch Wolverhampton and its environment.
- Abide by and promote Healthwatch Wolverhampton's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Conflicts of interest

- Strive to act in the best interests of Healthwatch Wolverhampton as well as bringing their expertise and experience from the organisation they represent.
- Declare any conflict of interest about any particular issue that may be brought before or discussed by the Healthwatch Wolverhampton Oversight Group.
- Declare any conflict of interest as soon as it arises.
- Submit to the judgement of the Oversight Group and the Chair and do as they require regarding potential conflicts of interest.

Person to person

- Act in accordance with the law and organisational policies in relationships with fellow Oversight Group members, staff, volunteers, service users, contractors or anyone else they may meet as part of their role within HWW.
- Strive to establish respectful, collaborative and courteous relationships.

Protecting the Reputation of Healthwatch Wolverhampton

- Not make comments in any public forum about Healthwatch Wolverhampton unless authorised to do so.

- Consider any public comments made in line with organisational policies, whether made as an individual or an Oversight Group member.
- Ensure comments reflect current organisational policy even when these do not align with personal views.
- Uphold the reputation of Healthwatch Wolverhampton and those who work in and with it, when speaking as a private citizen.
- Respect the confidentiality of the organisation, Oversight Group and individuals.
- If approached for comment by the media, immediately notify the HWW Manager and act in accordance with Evolving Communities' Communications and Media Policy.

Oversight Group Sessions

- Accept responsibility to ensure that Healthwatch Wolverhampton has local determination and accountability in its activities.
- Abide by governance procedures and practices.
- Strive to attend all Oversight Group sessions, giving apologies ahead of time prior to the meeting.
- Study the agenda and other information sent to them in good time prior to the session and be prepared to debate and vote on agenda items during the session.
- Honour the authority of the chair and respect their role as session leader, and in return expect to be treated with respect.
- Engage in debate and vote in sessions according to procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making effective representation on behalf the community that their organisation serves.
- Accept a majority vote on any issue as decisive and final.
- Maintain confidentiality about any part of an Oversight Group session that is conducted in private, unless authorised to speak of it.
- Be proactive in their role and develop knowledge and skills in order to continually participate as an active Oversight Group member.

Enhancing Governance

- Participate in induction, training and development sessions for Oversight Group members.
- Continually seek ways to improve and share those with the HWW Chair and Manager.
- Support the HWW Chair and Manager in their roles.

Leaving the Oversight Group

- Understand and accept that substantial breach of any part of this code may result in their removal from the Oversight Group.
- Understand that they will be given the opportunity to be heard by the HWW Chair and Manager should any action be taken that may result in their being removed from the Oversight Group.
- If resigning from the Oversight Group, inform the HWW Chair in advance in writing, stating reasons for resigning. Additionally, participate in an exit interview.
- Participate in succession planning through discussions with the organisation they represent along with the HWW Chair and Manager.

Healthwatch Wolverhampton Chair – role and responsibilities

The HWW Chair leads and supports the HWW Oversight Group to ensure that it is fulfilling its responsibilities.

The HWW Chair is expected to:

- Be a volunteer of HWW and work within its volunteering policies, procedures and code of conduct.
- Work closely with the HWW Manager in ensuring that the HWW Oversight Group is able to determine the priorities for HWW and can hold HWW to account for its activities.
- Lead and work with the Local Oversight Group and Healthwatch team in setting the strategic plan and direction of HWW.
- Liaise regularly with the HWW Manager to share information about developments and issues within Wolverhampton's health and care system.
- Take an active role in the local health and care system as the ambassador of HWW representing the views of local people, including at the Health and Wellbeing Together Board.
- Chair all HWW Oversight Group sessions.
- Support the development of skills and knowledge amongst HWW Oversight Group members.
- Provide strong leadership in developing a positive culture for the HWW Oversight Group and ensure that this is reflected and replicated in the Oversight Group's behaviour and in the execution and delivery of all decisions.
- Discuss key issues with the Healthwatch team in a timely manner, providing appropriate information and advice when needed.
- Link with the Evolving Communities Board and COO to support the effective delivery of the Evolving Communities Healthwatch model.
- Agree to a term of no more than three years.
- Act in accordance with the Code of Conduct applicable to all HWW Oversight Group members.

Appointment of Chair:

- The Chair will be appointed by a competitive recruitment process.
- Candidates will be recruited by advertisement and/or by consideration of direct applications from volunteers or members of the public.

- Candidates will be invited to submit their CV and a covering letter outlining why they wish to apply to the position.
- A recruitment panel will consider applications and shortlist following the Evolving Communities Safer Recruitment Policy. The panel will consist of the HWW Manager, a representative from Evolving Communities and a volunteer.
- Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview for the position. The recruitment panel will interview candidates.
- Once a preferred candidate for Chair has been selected by the recruitment panel, a letter of approval will be sent by the Evolving Communities Chair.
- The new Chair will be given the opportunity to shadow the outgoing where wherever practicable.
- Evolving Communities and the HWW Manager will provide support to the new Chair during their induction.
- The position will be subject to a probationary period of six months. After this period, a review will be carried out by the Evolving Communities CEO/COO.

Evolving Communities - company information

Evolving Communities is a Community Interest Company specialising in delivering local Healthwatch services, Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnerships and professional consultancy to give those who use services a voice to influence positive change in health and social care. Evolving Communities has a board of non-executive directors, who along with the CEO, are responsible for the governance of the organisation and delivery of the strategic plan. To protect the local identities of the Healthwatch contracts we hold our locally driven governance model ensures that each Healthwatch operates as an independent consumer voice. The Evolving Communities Board delegate responsibilities to the local Healthwatch Boards/Oversight Group and managers to ensure local determination is supported.

Our Healthwatch teams are supported by the central support team based in Melksham. We oversee the contract monitoring for the Healthwatch contracts we hold and carry out the day-to-day tasks, for example our central team provides the HR and recruitment functions along with administering all the financial requirements. Alongside this we have a centralised communication and marketing team who work with Healthwatch on all their communication activities ensuring that they reach the right audience with the messages they want to deliver. The central team also make sure that all the legal accountability of running a company is taken care of. Our support structure means our Healthwatch teams are free to get on with the job of delivering their work programmes safe in the knowledge everything else is taken care of. Our expertise and approach, with local teams supported by our specialist consultancy and central services, enables us to deliver excellent work against the statutory requirements, cost effectively and with impact.

Our Vision

For everyone to have a voice in influencing positive change in health and social care.

Our Mission

To drive improvements in health, social care and wellbeing services, by delivering professional consultancy and Healthwatch services that provide stakeholder insight and empower and represent local people.

Our Values

- **Empowering:** We build understanding, confidence and influence
- **Ethical:** We act with integrity, transparency and respect
- **Accountable:** We accept responsibility for all our actions
- **Professional:** We are highly skilled, rigorous and professional
- **Collaborative:** We work together to maximise the value and impact of what we do

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Priority setting procedure

Each year local Healthwatch organisations agree their annual workplan priorities for the forthcoming year as well as the programme of core work. The principle of local determination means that the decisions about what Healthwatch Wolverhampton's priorities are, should be directed by local people and partners.

Our approach to priority setting is one which recognises that Healthwatch sides in the health and care system. The process is cyclical and typically starts in November with the plan for priorities shared with commissioners by the end of February.

Key themes and priority work areas for Healthwatch Wolverhampton are identified in some or all of the following ways:

Intelligence gathered through public engagement and involvement with local people

Throughout the year HWW gathers intelligence from engagement with the public in a variety of forms. We attend partner events, run our own public events, go out to visit partner organisations and groups, and engage with the public on specific issues when we are conducting investigations in more depth. We use a combination of qualitative and quantitative data to form a picture of the state of health and social care in Wolverhampton, and people's experiences of their care. Local people are also encouraged to identify areas of concern and bring these to the attention of HWW through our communication channels.

Healthwatch conference/city tour

We can hold a conference event or city tour to share our work and invite the public to help shape our work priorities for the next year.

Healthwatch volunteers and staff involvement

We seek input from our volunteers and staff on how we run HWW and their opinions on our forthcoming priorities. Staff and volunteers are consulted with during the priority setting process itself.

Partnership working and consultation with the Voluntary and Community Sector

HWW works with key organisations in the health and social care sector and in the voluntary and community sector. We aim to hear from them about the views and experiences of their members and clients; and at times arrange through them to hear direct from their members and clients about their views and experiences. We also coordinate our work with them so that we are not duplicating effort.

We reach out to many organisations through our engagement work and regularly contact them for their expert input on specific topics within their area of expertise or insight. We ensure that organisations receive copies of our newsletter and are invited to our events.

We are aware that some organisations may also provide health or social care services locally and that they may therefore be subject to review or investigation by HWW. We would, of course, expect to work with them in the normal way on any such process.

Working within the health and social care ‘system’

Commissioners and providers in both health and social care also assist HWW in identifying any specific topic related priorities. We also consider existing local needs assessment. An ongoing dialogue with stakeholders through forums such as One Wolverhampton, Health and Care Scrutiny Committees, Integrated Care Board and voluntary sector groups and forums is key to identifying ‘system’ priorities and support decision-making processes.

HWW, led by the HWW Manager, will undertake the following process to identify priority areas for its annual programme of work:

Undertake data analysis:

- Data and intelligence recorded on the database
- Data and intelligence collected from current workplan engagement activity
- Local priorities identified by system partners
- Data, intelligence and priority campaigns identified at a national level by Healthwatch England as well as the CQC.

Produce a long list:

The HWW Manager will produce a summary of the outcomes of the above data analysis. This might entail a large list of key message and possible areas to prioritise.

Consult:

The long list will be shared with staff, volunteers and relevant partners for consultation. The purpose of this is to ensure those involved with delivering the annual workplan and directly hearing the experiences and views of local people are involved. It is an opportunity to include additional priority areas for consideration and also to challenge why others might have been included.

Define:

A shortlist is developed using the ‘deciding it’s a priority’ matrix below, taking account of resource, capacity and wider system priorities and aligning to the following principles:

- Geographical communities
- Communities of interest
- Diverse communities
- Prevention, treatment and care services

- Primary care, community care, acute hospital care, mental health services and social care services

Decision-making matrix for ranking the different potential priority areas

Criteria	Weighting out of 5 (1 is low/5 is high)
Evidence – How much evidence is there that it is important to local people?	
Impact – From the evidence what impact is it having on local people?	
What’s the difference? – What is the likelihood a piece of work will make a difference to local people?	
Duplication – Are there other organisations tackling the issue with local people?	
Does it fit the ‘system’? – Is the issue a priority for partners within the local system, Health & Wellbeing Board and ICB?	
Result – What level of impact will a piece of work have on local people?	

Discuss, Decide and Determine:

The shortlist and associated scoring is incorporated within a recommendations paper for consideration by the HWW Oversight Group. It will be discussed by the Oversight Group at a designated HWW Oversight Group session and is intended to facilitate an exchange of views about the priorities and scoring. A decision will be made about which priorities to select for inclusion in the forthcoming HWW annual workplan.

The result of the process should be clear priorities which deliver on the outcomes required of HWW and determines the engagement work programme for the year. It ensures local determination in keeping with our governance model.

Communications and media procedure

It is the organisation's firm belief that efficiency, high productivity and a harmonious working environment are best achieved where effective communications are established between management and employee. In order to achieve this, systems will be set-up and maintained by managers to facilitate the flow of information throughout the organisation both from management to employees and vice versa.

Procedure

Job related information - managers are responsible for ensuring that their team are provided with all the information they need to perform their duties satisfactorily and safely.

Details of employees' terms and conditions of employment are contained in the following documents:

- offer letter
- terms and conditions statement (contract)
- handbook containing organisation rules and procedures
- job description

Management is responsible for keeping these items up-to-date and for distributing amendments and additions when necessary.

General guidance on health and safety matters will be provided to employees by management. Managers are responsible for supplying information to employees on safe working practices and particular hazards in their own departments.

Any queries employees may have relating to the work they are required to carry out, should be raised with their manager.

Employees are encouraged to make suggestions, which they believe may assist in improving efficiency and promoting job satisfaction. The dates of all Board meetings will also be circulated to employees.

Emails **must** be checked at least twice daily.

Dealing with media enquiries

Who deals with media enquiries?

Any queries received from the media must be passed immediately to the Communications and Marketing Lead or in their absence another member of the Senior Management Team. Employees must not attempt to deal with queries themselves. Please note that "no comment" is never appropriate.

The Local Healthwatch Board/Oversight Group are not authorised to deal directly with the media, unless asked to provide comment or interview by the Communications Lead or Healthwatch Manager, following a briefing about the enquiry.

If media enquiries are received by local Healthwatch staff or Evolving Communities staff, they should follow step one in the process outlined below before passing on the enquiry to the Communications Lead.

Any deliberate public statement, which could be detrimental to the image of Evolving Communities will be considered as a serious and possibly disciplinary offence.

Evolving Communities has an active communications policy and will always try to publicise the activities. In addition, we will ensure a steady stream of press releases to local and national press as part of our communications strategy.

Staff will be encouraged to inform the Communications Lead of stories/case studies that they feel will help increase the awareness of the work that Evolving Communities does.

Deadlines are important

Responding to media enquiries in a timely, professional and helpful manner, can help to build positive and mutually beneficial relationships with journalists. This can result in favourable and increased coverage.

Dealing with enquiries quickly will also ensure that we have time to gather the information we need to respond effectively, and it will give us an opportunity to correct misinformation or provide a positive reply in the face of negative media coverage.

How to deal with media enquiries

1. Establish who you are speaking to, what they want to know and by when

- a) Ask for the name and nature of the media organisation (for example, online news channel, radio station and programme, newspaper, community newsletter or website, magazine).
- b) If you are contacted by a freelance journalist, find out where they intend to publish and who they are writing the story for.
- c) Take the journalists name, telephone number(s) and email address.
- d) Ask about their deadline.
- e) If you are redirecting the enquiry, ask for brief details and tell the journalist who you are passing it on to.

2. Find out more about the nature of the enquiry

- a) Take down as many details as possible to help understand what story they are trying to tell and how they want us to help?

- b) Are they asking about our organisation and work, or about another organisation or issue? Is there a bigger story/agenda that we should be aware of?
- c) What do they want from us? Information or advice? An interview or formal comment? A case study? Contacts for other people or organisations who could help with the story?
- d) If they want an interview, do they know who they want to interview and what questions do they want to ask?
- e) Confirm their deadline and make sure the enquiry is dealt with promptly. If no response is possible, the journalist should still be contacted.

3. How to respond to different types of enquiry

- a) If the enquiry is about our organisation or work, review all relevant information and contact key colleagues for input and advice as required. Any response, verbal or written, should be approved by the Evolving Communities Communications Lead and senior managers as appropriate before issue.
- b) If the enquiry refers or relates to external partners or key stakeholders, it may be appropriate to inform them, to seek input, or at least to advise them of the story. Any response, verbal or written, should be approved by the Evolving Communities Communications Lead and senior managers and, if appropriate, by external partners.
- c) If the enquiry is about a broader issue, but related to the sectors we work in, consider if we want to be associated with the story. Is there any benefit to our organisation – to our profile, reputation or business? If not, we might be able to advise the journalist where to go for the information they need.
- d) If a formal interview is requested, ask if the journalist has a person in mind. We should offer the most appropriate person for interview (this would normally be the relevant senior manager or in some instances the Board Chair).

Arrange a time and place for the interview (this will depend on the medium, for example, video, audio or print), and agree the length of time available. Find out when the interview will be featured. Make sure the person being interviewed is well prepared, aware of the interview questions, and equipped with relevant answers, information and key messages. If it is a filmed interview, make sure the setting is appropriate and the person being interviewed is comfortable and confident – a run through can help.

4. Only issue approved information (whether over the phone, via email or social media)

- a) Do not give out any confidential information (including personal contact details) about staff, Oversight Group members or volunteers or case studies, without gaining their consent.
- b) Do not issue any photos or case studies without the formal consent of those featured.
- c) Ensure that all information issued about our organisation and our work has been approved for public dissemination and is aligned to our purpose and values. (Do not issue information relating to meetings, reports, papers or consultations unless it has been approved by the relevant team.)
- d) If you are unsure, say that you will call the journalist back after consulting with the relevant colleagues.