

## Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Policies, Procedures and Services

Proposal name	Award of Healthwatch Walsall Contract		
Directorate	Change & Governance		
Service	Communities & Public Protection		
Responsible Officer	Paul Gordon		
EqIA Author	Paul Gordon		
Proposal planning start		Proposal start date (due or actual)	05/04/2016

<b>1</b>	<b>What is the purpose of the proposal?</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	<b>New / revision</b>
	Policy		
	Procedure		
	Internal service		
	External Service	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Revision</b>
	Other - give details		
<b>2</b>	<b>What are the intended outcomes, reasons for change? (The business case)</b>		

The Health & Social Care Act 2012 set out the role and purpose of Local Healthwatch services in providing the public and patient voice in relation to health and social care services as commissioned and delivered by the NHS and local authorities.

The commissioning of Local Healthwatch service is a statutory requirement for local authorities under the Act and covers the following key service elements:

- Information, Advice and Signposting
- Patient and Public Involvement
- NHS Complaints Advocacy

The existing contract for Healthwatch Walsall expires on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 and the Council have undertaken a procurement exercise to award a new contract. It is important to note that the fundamental functions of a Local Healthwatch have not changed since the establishment of a Local Healthwatch service in 2013.

The aim of local Healthwatch is to act as the consumer voice for health and social care. It aims to benefit patients, service users, carers and the public through promoting and supporting the involvement of people in the commissioning and provision of services. In so doing, it helps to make services more user-driven with improved outcomes.

Healthwatch Walsall will be representative of Walsall's diverse community, including the nine groups with characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. Through the requirements set out in the service specification and ongoing contract monitoring arrangements, the council will make provisions to ensure that these groups are represented equally by Healthwatch Walsall and that any additional provisions that may be required are put in place.

**3 Who is the proposal potential likely to affect?**

People in Walsall	Yes / No	Detail
All	Yes	
Specific group/s		
Council employees		
Other		

**4 Evidence, engagement and consultation**

**4.1** Function three of the service specification makes provisions for “promoting the involvement of people in the commissioning and provision of local care services and how they are scrutinised.” To facilitate this, Healthwatch Walsall will operate an ‘enter and view’ policy which enables residents to visit the service with staff and observe for themselves first hand how it operates. Enter and view will ensure that all groups with characteristics protected under the equality act are engaged in the provision and scrutiny of local care services. By

reflecting the demography of Walsall, enter and view will also work towards addressing any health inequalities that may impact upon the groups protected by the equality act in the borough.

<b>Type</b>		<b>Date</b>
<b>Audience</b>		
<b>Protected characteristics</b>		
<b>Feedback</b>		

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<b>Audience</b>		
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<b>Feedback</b>		

#### **4.2 Concise summary of evidence, engagement and consultation**

Function five of the service specification states that “continuous dialogue with members and the local community” is a key aim of Healthwatch – this would ensure that all age groups are involved in the commissioning and provision of local services.

Healthwatch Walsall will develop and maintain a membership comprising of individuals and organisations as well as patients and communities including children and young people to join and take part in Healthwatch activities. This would ensure that all age groups, specifically young people, are engaged and given the opportunity to provide input on the commissioning and delivery of local health services and any health inequalities that may affect them. The two provisions detailed above would therefore, have positive equalities outcomes for this protected characteristic.

Healthwatch Walsall will need to demonstrate that it has clear systems and processes that ensure full engagement of the diverse community, including resident’s gain access to Healthwatch Walsall through a range of avenues and opportunities, which would ensure that provisions are made for elderly residents who may require additional assistance to gain access to venues and provide input into Healthwatch Walsall. This would have a positive equalities impact on elderly residents who may require additional support, as it would allow them to engage with the service in a more robust and effective manner.

5	How may the proposal affect each protected characteristic or group? The affect may be positive, negative or neutral.			
	Characteristic	Affect	Reason	Action needed Y or N
	Age	Positive	The Local Healthwatch service will be available to anyone who is legally entitled to access health or social care services or anyone who cares for or represents them.	N
	Disability	Positive	There are no activities identified that would exclude people with a disability.  The contact specification requires Healthwatch Walsall to ensure access to the service for people with disabilities, and to actively seek the views of those who are seldom heard.	N
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	There are no activities identified that would exclude people undergoing or having undergone gender reassignment.	N
	Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	There are no activities identified that would exclude people who are married or in a civil partnership.	N
	Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	There are no activities identified that would exclude pregnant women or mothers.	N
	Race	Neutral	There are no activities identified that differentiate between people of different races.  The contact specification requires Healthwatch Walsall to ensure that its services are delivered in a way that respects the ethnic diversity of local residents, and to actively seek the views of those who are seldom heard.	N

	Religion or belief	Neutral	There are no activities identified that differentiate between people of different faiths.  The contact specification requires Healthwatch Walsall to ensure that its services are delivered in a way that respects the cultural diversity of local residents, and to actively seek the views of those who are seldom heard.	N
	Sex	Neutral	There are no activities identified that differentiate between people of different genders.	N
	Sexual orientation	Neutral	There are no activities identified that would exclude people of any sexual orientation.	N
	Other (give detail)			
	Further information			
<b>6</b>	<b>Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative affect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details below.</b>			(Delete one) <b>No</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation suggest you take? (Bold which one applies)</b>			
	<b>A</b>	<b>No major change required</b>		
	B	Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality		
	C	Continue despite possible adverse impact		
	D	Stop and rethink your proposal		

Action and monitoring plan				
Action Date	Action	Responsibility	Outcome Date	Outcome

Update to EqIA	
Date	Detail