

## HEALTHWATCH OXFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

### April 2013

As some readers will know, Oxfordshire County Council has appointed Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) to provide interim Local Healthwatch arrangements while the procurement process for a permanent provider is progressed.

ORCC, a long established community development charity, had been the 'host' of the Oxfordshire Local Involvement Network for the 2 years before its abolition on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. Because of the success of the LINK during this period, Oxfordshire County Council turned to ORCC after it had decided not to award the contract to any of the organisations who bid for the Healthwatch Oxfordshire tender and has awarded ORCC a one year interim contract.

Since the County Council's announcement, ORCC has had to work fast. It's obviously important to 'design' Healthwatch Oxfordshire in a way that will do the job well and ORCC has drawn on ideas already discussed by people who took part in the County Council's Healthwatch consultation last year. It has also looked at previous systems for public involvement in Health and Social Care to see what worked well and what didn't. "None of our ideas about what Healthwatch Oxfordshire will look like are completely new" says Linda Watson, ORCC's Chief Executive. "Instead, we have tried to take the best and most effective ideas from different places, so that we create a balanced system that will do the best possible job of feeding back the views of patients, services users and carers, and of the wider public, to service providers and financial decision-makers".

#### **Who can be part of Healthwatch Oxfordshire?**

The more people involved, of all ages, the better. So we will be asking for your help to spread the word about HWO and about how to join. We will be using all our own ORCC contacts and those of the former LINK, and will also be asking partners in other organisations and across different agencies to pass this newsletter on to their own members so that we widen the net as far as possible. *If your organisation is willing to help spread the word, please let us know.*

We would also be delighted if individuals would help by telling their friends and neighbours about Healthwatch Oxfordshire – you don't have to be involved in an organisation to take part. We are aiming to reach as many people as we can as quickly as possible – and we will be working with the media on a campaign to tell people about HWO and how to join. Watch out for more information!

#### **Who will choose the priorities for action?**

We want you to tell us what you think is important – and that will inform the work plan for 2013/14. We will be holding a big event at the **Kassam Stadium in the morning of 23 May** so that the people who pay for and provide Health and Social Care in Oxfordshire can hear directly what YOU think should be the focus of HWO. The Director of Public Health, the Chief Executive of the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and the Director of Social and Community Services at Oxfordshire County Council will all be there. These are the top decision-makers and this will be a great chance to discuss priorities with them and their teams.

We will also look forward to your comments by phone, e-mail, Twitter and Facebook – details to follow shortly.

### Who will develop HWO and drive the organisation forward?

HWO needs clear direction to drive it forward and help lead the changes to Health and Social Care. The first year is especially important as this new organisation gets under way and although HWO will be operating under the wing of ORCC, the ORCC Board wants it to be as independent as possible. There will be a new **Healthwatch Oxfordshire Board** that will have responsibility for its effective management and operation. It will be this Board's job to promote good communication and clear reporting processes between you, the broader public, and the NHS and local authority primary decision-makers.

This Board will consist of a maximum of 20 people, made up of:-

- **12** people elected from and by the membership.
- **5** elected members (i.e. Councillors), one from each of the 5 District Councils – Cherwell, Oxford City, West Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire
- **2** people elected from the Voluntary and Community Sector

### How will this work? Why these people?

The election of the 12 member representatives will be managed by 'Electoral Reform Services' so that we can all be confident that it is a fair, open and inclusive process. We will be looking for people who are *interested in* (but not *representing* anyone from) the following:-

- Primary Care
- Acute Care
- Public Health
- Health Inequalities
- Black and Minority Ethnic issues
- Children and Young People
- Elderly People
- Carers
- Physical Disabilities, Sensory Impairment and Long Term Conditions
- Mental Health and Learning Disabilities
- ....and one more?

**Questions for you:-** does this list look right? We think that Public Health may need 2 places allocated to it because of the importance of health promotion and prevention. Do you agree?

What's missing?

Should we leave room for 2 co-options or is a committee of 22 too big?

Tell us what you think!

Please reply **by Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2013** by email to: [healthwatchoxfordshire@oxonrcc.org.uk](mailto:healthwatchoxfordshire@oxonrcc.org.uk)  
or write to:

Healthwatch Oxfordshire, ORCC, Jericho Farm, Worton, Witney, Oxon OX29 4SZ

**District Councillors** are important because of their councils' role in promoting health and well-being. The County Council has not been included in the list because they provide Social Care, and because they have commissioned HWO, so there would be a conflict of interest.

**The election for the 2 VCS representatives** will be managed by Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action.

The Healthwatch Oxfordshire Board will elect its own **Chair and Vice Chair**. For the sake of continuity and getting it started, the Chair of the former LINK will attend and chair the first meeting and oversee the election of the new Chair and Vice Chair. She will then stand down.

**We want as many people as possible to take part in the election to the Healthwatch Board so why not SIGN UP NOW! Tell your friends too and help us to make sure that everyone who wants to take part *can* take part.**

It's really important that the election includes:-

- ✓ the quiet voices as well as the loud ones
- ✓ people who don't see themselves as 'joiners' as well as those who are used to being involved
- ✓ important groups such as military families and minority ethnic groups
- ✓ young people – Healthwatch includes Children's and Young People's services so we really want you to join too!
- ✓ people who don't use Health and Social Care services very often as well as people who are 'regulars'
- ✓ people who look after someone who has health or social care needs

See 'Join Us' on the Healthwatch Oxfordshire website - [www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk)

#### **What staff will there be?**

There will be staff team of 5:-

- ❖ A Director who will be responsible for leading Healthwatch Oxfordshire and driving it strongly forward
- ❖ An Information and Advice Officer
- ❖ Two Healthwatch Officers
- ❖ An administrative officer
  
- ❖ Policy and research support will be provided by member/s of the ORCC staff team
  
- ❖ Publicity and PR will be provided on a contractual basis by an external agency that ORCC is already working with

**Adverts will be going out by 22 April.** Please help us by sending them on to anyone you think might be interested!

#### **What is ORCC's role?**

ORCC's task is to make sure that the Healthwatch Oxfordshire contract is delivered to the satisfaction of the County Council, who are paying for it, and to the satisfaction of the public, who will be using it. There will be a small sub-committee of the ORCC Board, the **Contract**

**Compliance Sub-Committee**, composed of 2 ORCC Trustees and 2 representatives from the HWO Board and attended by the CEO of ORCC and the Director of HWO. One of the ORCC representatives will act as Chair of the sub-committee and will have a casting vote.

#### **And finally.....**

.....the success of HWO depends on YOU! We look forward to hearing from you.

## Local voices improving local health and care

Healthwatch will give children, young people and adults a powerful voice locally and nationally. Local Healthwatch will work to help people get the best out of their local health and social care services. Whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow.

Local Healthwatch is all about local voices being able to influence the delivery and design of local services. Not just people who use them, but anyone who might need to in the future.

All LINK reports, including the final Annual Report and legacy recommendations for Healthwatch Oxfordshire will be available on the new website:

[www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk)  
and on request from the office

Keep up to date with the latest news about *Healthwatch Oxfordshire* and how YOU can become involved



[www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk)



[www.facebook.com/HealthwatchOxfordshire](http://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchOxfordshire)

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