

Healthwatch Sheffield: Strategic Advisory Group

Terms of Reference (March 2021)

Purpose: The Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) will be responsible for giving strategic advice about direction, delivery of statutory functions; and in conjunction with Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) and the Healthwatch Sheffield staff team, the setting of priorities and planning for Healthwatch Sheffield.

Objectives:

Set and maintain vision, mission and values: The SAG will clearly articulate and maintain Healthwatch Sheffield's vision, mission and values. It will ensure that all statutory requirements are met. These are noted below:

1. **Promoting and supporting the involvement of local people** in the commissioning, 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 and providers of care services, and 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 to share these views with Healthwatch England.
7. **Making recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission 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 intelligence** and insight to enable it to perform effectively.

- a. **Advise on strategic direction, impact and priorities:** The SAG will:
- advise on the strategic direction and priorities for Healthwatch Sheffield. The SAG will base its advice on information and evidence collected about services. This will include feedback from Healthwatch England, key stakeholders and partners, and the Expert Forum.
 - agree key messages and issues so representatives (SAG members, Healthwatch Sheffield staff and volunteers) can communicate confidently when representing Healthwatch Sheffield.
 - carry out an ambassador role for Healthwatch Sheffield. They will work with the staff team to promote Healthwatch Sheffield's work and priorities and enhance and protect Healthwatch Sheffield's reputation.
 - review the impact of Healthwatch Sheffield's work on health and social care in Sheffield.
- b. **Ensure accountability:** The SAG will:
- work in partnership with the Board and Executive of Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) to assure that Healthwatch Sheffield fulfils its contractual accountability and responsibilities as required by relevant legislation. [VAS has corporate responsibility for Healthwatch Sheffield. VAS has responsibility for resource management, contract management, staffing and policies.]
 - sign off the annual report to Healthwatch England.

Membership:

1. The SAG will consist of **9 members** including the Chair. The Chair is appointed to the SAG by the VAS Board. A list of the current members is at Annex One.
2. Appointments to the SAG are made by a search committee convened by the VAS Chief Executive. Appointments will be made in line with the Nolan Principles. Appointments will usually be for three years. The search committee will include the Chair of SAG (unless recruiting for the Chair).
3. In some cases SAG members may be offered an initial two-year appointment – to ensure that the SAG membership is regularly refreshed. This will avoid the whole SAG being replaced every three years – reducing the risk to business continuity.
4. No SAG member (including the Chair) can serve for more than six consecutive years (without a break of at least one year).
5. The VAS Board will appoint a full member to the SAG in addition to the Chair (to be included as one of the 9 SAG members).

6. The Chief Officer of Healthwatch Sheffield will be in attendance but will not be a SAG member.

Accountability: VAS Trustee Board

7. SAG is accountable to the VAS Trustee Board.
8. The Chair of the SAG will be a member of the VAS Trustee Board.

External accountability: Sheffield Health and Wellbeing Board

9. The Chair of the SAG attends the Sheffield Health and Wellbeing Board.
10. The Chair of SAG reports annually to the Sheffield Health and Wellbeing Board and NHS Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group Board.

Review:

11. The SAG will undertake a review of its work and its Terms of Reference every two years. The main purpose of this review is to assess the relevance and value of its role and to ensure that its Terms of Reference are fit for purpose.

Ways of working:

12. SAG will meet eight times a year. Four of these meetings will be in public. Meetings will usually last for no more than 2.5 hours.
13. Healthwatch Sheffield welcomes questions from the public. Meetings in public will include an agenda slot for submissions from members of the public. There is a 24 hour notice period prior to the meeting for the submission of items to be dealt with at the meeting. It will be at the Chair's discretion to accept any submission that has not been notified and a response may be given at a later date in writing. Questions which arise in a meeting in public will be answered where possible at the meeting but Healthwatch Sheffield reserves the right to research a reply subsequent to the meeting and will aim to reply within 2 working weeks. For meetings in public on a specific theme, no notice of questions from the public will be required.
14. SAG members will act in accordance with VAS policies on Health and Safety, Equality, Safeguarding and confidentiality.
15. SAG may set up task and finish groups to progress specific tasks or issues in the agreed work programme. The task and finish group must report back to each meeting of SAG.

16. The agenda for SAG meetings will be generated jointly by the Chair and the Chief Officer, Healthwatch Sheffield. Members of SAG can submit suggestions for agenda items to either the Chair or the Chief Officer.
17. Papers for the meeting will be circulated (electronically) at least five working days before the meeting.
18. When SAG is meeting in public there will be a short (usually 30 minutes) pre-meeting to cover any items of urgent business (not relevant to the public meeting).
19. SAG will welcome guests where appropriate to the agenda of the meeting. SAG members will be given details of any guest attending when they receive the meeting papers. [Names of people attending the public meeting will not be known in advance and so will not be notified to SAG members.]
20. Secretariat for each meeting will be provided by a member of the Healthwatch Sheffield Team [usually the administrator]. Members of SAG will be informed of any change to the secretariat when they receive their meeting papers.

Information and Resources (including confidential materials)

21. SAG members are expected to respect the trust placed in them when confidential and copyright materials are shared with them.

[Annex One: Current membership.]

Judy Robinson (Chair)
Asma Rabeha
Beth Kyte
James Lock
Janet Harris
Marim Alfakih
Patricia Edney
Simon Duffy
Verni Tannam