**Halton & St Helens VCA**

**MINUTES OF HEALTHWATCH ST HELENS DIRECTORS MEETING**

**Friday 7th February 2025**

**Online via zoom**

**PRESENT:** Pam Meredith (PM)

Tom Hughes (TH)

Jayne Parkinson Loftus, (JPL)

Dilys Quinlan (DQ)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Debbie Morris (DM) minute taker

Meeting started at 9.32am.

Chair: Tom Hughes

1. **Apologies**

Sally Yeoman

1. **Declaration of conflict of interest**

None

1. **Minutes of previous meeting**

Minutes of 18th October 2024 agreed as a correct record and it was agreed that due to the meeting being held online an electronic signature was acceptable.

1. **Matters arising**

* No progress on VCA Board member joining the Directors of Healthwatch currently.
* Would like to progress the election of the Chair position as it would provide a vote of confidence from the members.

1. **Manager Update**

Manager provided written report. Noted the following:

* Performance monitoring currently no one specific in post but continuing to send over monitoring reports to generic email.
* New contract due to start on 1st April. JPL was involved in the work around the new specification giving more flexibility and additional hours for the advocacy work 12 hours instead of 7 hours, have also asked for 1 case study each month to showcase work.
* Updated on Enter and View visits proving to be positive and valued by the Care homes. Through this work it has been identified that there is difficulty for the homes contacting clergy.
* Pleased to hear that Healthwatch opinion is relevant and appreciated by the statutory sector.
* Not a large response to the residential care survey however they have identified an issue with the wheelchair service and will report to the Quality and Performance Group meeting.
* Potential priorities for the coming year to be discussed at Forum meeting to include:
  + Suicide prevention due to the high rate of suicides in the borough focussing on the bereaved relatives. Directors want to ensure that if this is a priority that the staff are supported whilst dealing with this.
  + Referral times for appointments with patients having long waits.
  + Diabetes care.

1. **Monitoring report Quarter 3**

Manager provided written report.

* Monitoring report presented at meeting.
* Board asked JPL to pass on their approval for the newsletter layout and thank staff for all their hard work.

1. **Finance report**

Quarter 3 report showing an £8K overspend would like more details on this and have requested a copy of the budget for this financial year to compare DM agreed to go back through the papers to locate it.

1. **AOB**

Discussed Local Authority special measures and corridor care.

**Date of next meeting**

Friday 11th April at 9.30am

Meeting finished 10.37am

**Dates of future meetings**

Meeting dates agreed as follows:

Friday 18th July at 9.30am

Friday 17th October, 9.30am

Friday 16th January 2026, 9.30am