

Summary report of public consultation

Consultation report

**Proposed changes as to how Healthwatch is
commissioned across Leicester,
Leicestershire and Rutland**

September 2017

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1. Background

- 1.1 Healthwatch was established as part of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Each local authority is required to have a Healthwatch service in its area to be representative of the diverse communities it served providing intelligence - including evidence from people's views and experiences to:
 - influence policy
 - planning
 - commissioning and delivery of health and social care services
- 1.2 In addition it would provide information and advice to help people access and make choices about local services.
- 1.3 Currently across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland each local authority has a separate agreements in place for the delivery of a Healthwatch service. These arrangements are all due to end on the 31st March 2018.
- 1.4 This provided an opportunity to consider whether there was an appetite to commission one Healthwatch service across the three local authorities. A consultation was held to ascertain the views of the general public and a range of interested stakeholders on a proposed new delivery model. The outcome of which is provided in more detail in the sections below.

2. Our Approach

2.1 A joint consultation exercise took place between Tuesday 1st August 2017 and Friday 8th September 2017. The consultation proposed changes to the contracting approach for Healthwatch services across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

2.2 In more detail, the consultation gathered views on the following proposals:

- To jointly commissioning services for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
- To continue to use the majority of the funding for Healthwatch, but to also retain some of the funding to undertake specific investigations or focused additional consultations with service users
- To ask any new provider to include a focus on volunteering in supporting the delivery of Healthwatch
- To ensure that engagement is a key aspect of the new service particularly focusing on seldom-heard groups

2.2 The consultation was undertaken using a range of methods to capture views, this included:

- A consultation webpage with an online survey open to all resident and other stakeholders across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
- A link to the consultation page, which was hosted by Leicester City Council on behalf of all the three authorities, was sent to each respective Healthwatch organisation to issue on their webpages. It was also published in Voluntary Action Leicestershire's weekly E-Briefing to its stakeholders.
- Individual meetings with key stakeholders were undertaken across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland as follows:
 - **Leicester City**
 - Leicester City Council Public Health
 - Leicester City Council Children's Services
 - Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group
 - Healthwatch
 - Healthwatch Stakeholder
 - Leicester City Council – Ward Councillors
 - **Leicestershire County Council**
 - Public drop in session
 - **Rutland County Council**
 - Health and Scrutiny Panel

3. Consultation findings - Overall Survey Response Rate:

- 3.1 A total of 390 online responses were received for this consultation (table 1). The majority of those who responded (71%) identified themselves as residents of Rutland.

Leicester		Leicestershire		Rutland		all Areas		Didn't answer	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
44	11.3	20	5.1	277	71.0	46	11.8	3	0.8

Table 1

Proposal 1:

The three local authorities are considering jointly commissioning Healthwatch across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

3.2 The results of the response to the first proposal have been separated out as the response rate from Rutland was much higher and the overall result indicates the majority of respondents didn't agree. However, by separating out the responses we can see that the proposal was supported by the residents of Leicester and Leicestershire to jointly commission a Healthwatch services across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (table 2).

	Agree	Don't Agree	Don't Know	Didn't Answer
Leicester	31	11	2	0
Leicestershire	15	4	1	0
All	23	16	6	1
Not Answered	1	0	1	1
Total	70 (61%)	31 (27%)	10 (9%)	2 (3%)

Table 2

3.2 In comparison the proposal was rejected by the residents of Rutland as can be seen in the table 3 below.

	Agree	Don't Agree	Don't Know	Didn't Answer
Rutland	70	181	22	4
Total	70 (26%)	181 (65%)	22 (8%)	4 (1%)

Table 3

3.3 Therefore each local authority needs to consider, given the strength of feeling, the best commissioning approach as a result when arriving at its recommendations.

3.4 A broad range of comments were received in relation to the proposal which is summarised as follows:

Agree:

- Reduces duplication and allows for more consistency, and more effective use, of resources and funding
- Will make Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland more powerful by having a stronger, united voice given that representatives from all 3 areas are present and working collaboratively.
- Would make for better use of the funding available where it is needed and supports cost savings required due to reduction in the number of personnel across the 3 areas.
- A more joined up approach will benefit the NHS and the public, and will be able to influence the changes within Health and social care and support the Sustainability and Transformation Plans.

Don't agree:

- Use of other areas: Rutland residents also use health care services in neighbouring authorities such as Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire therefore this would not be considered through a joint commissioned service with Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- Numerous responses that Rutland will lose its identity and the opportunity to influence services due to being overshadowed by larger authorities
- Local people need local services
- Demographics: The demographics in each area differ significantly and would need to be represented for each area to support what local people need. A number of comments felt that the issues within the smaller areas would not be considered priority due to the larger areas and their priorities.
- Concerns that Rutland needs and priorities would be overshadowed significantly and that the voice and identity of Rutland would be lost amongst Leicester and Leicestershire.

Don't know:

- Local issues may no longer be priority through a joint approach.
- Reducing duplication would be good but the 3 areas involved having very different demographics, needs and priorities.
- Various comments that this may work in favour for Leicester and Leicestershire but not Rutland and a separate Healthwatch would be required unless further information on this proposal was given.

3.5 The outcome from meetings held with a broad range of stakeholders provided a similar result with both Leicester City and Leicestershire County Council respondents supporting the proposal. Whereas the Rutland stakeholders, mirroring the online survey results did not support the proposal.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

3.6 The significant response from those living in Rutland clearly indicate they don't agree with the proposed service model and indications coming from the Authority themselves indicates that they are likely to procure an independent Healthwatch Service for Rutland as a consequence.

3.7 The response from Leicester City and County residents and stakeholders, although smaller numbers, conversely support a joined up approach and the recommendation will be to seek a joint procurement approach between Leicester City and Leicestershire County Council.

Proposal 2:

To continue to use the funding for Healthwatch to carry out the service but to also retain some funding to undertake specific investigations or focused additional consultations with service users

3.8 In relation to this proposal there is broad support from those who responded (table 4) via the online survey, for there being some retained funds to enable Healthwatch to undertake specific or focused work in any future model.

	Agree	Don't Agree	Don't Know	Didn't Answer
Leicester	26	12	6	0
Leicestershire	12	5	3	0
Rutland	150	83	43	1
All	27	8	8	3
Not Answered	1	0	1	1
Total	216 (55%)	108 (28%)	61 (15%)	5 (1%)

Table 4

3.9 A range of comments were received in relation to the proposal which is summarised as follows:

Agree:

- Need to make sure the money is spent where it is needed.
- Current provisions work well and ensures Rutland voice is heard

Don't agree:

- Various concerns raised over who decides how the funding will be spent: some feel this should be down to the council to decide, other feel this should be down to the organisation, such as Healthwatch, and others feel the public should decide how the funding is allocated and spent.
- Through a joint approach there would be different priorities in each area which would affect the funding and priorities in the other areas.

Don't know:

- More details required: what funding would be lost?
- Clarification required on some of the proposals as to how this would affect local areas.

3.10 The outcome from meetings held with a broad range of stakeholders across the three local authorities saw broad support for this proposal. However a comment raised a number of times questioned whether this could affect / call into questions their independence. This will need to be further investigated and addressed in the recommendations.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

- 3.11 There was clear support for this recommendation and pending Legal advice regarding its independence it is proposed to recommend inclusion in any new model.

Proposal 3:

Expectation that an organisation would have a clear volunteering programme

3.12 Responses to this proposal indicate broad support (table 5) for any new organisation to have a clear volunteering programme to support its work in any new Healthwatch service across LLR. Noting that a number of respondents wanted to be assured that such a programme wasn't to save money.

	Agree	Don't Agree	Don't Know	Didn't Answer
Leicester	21	13	10	0
Leicestershire	13	4	3	0
Rutland	147	66	61	3
All	26	12	6	2
Not Answered	1	0	1	1
Total	208 (53%)	95 (24%)	81 (21%)	6 (1%)

Table 5

3.13 There were a variety of comments identifying the merits of using volunteers in supporting the work of Healthwatch but there were some notes of concerns about them being used to save money and providers forced to do so, which will need to be considered.

Agree:

- Training and support needs to be in place for volunteers
- There are already a large number of volunteers working within local communities but there are further people who's experience and skills can be better utilised.
- Good way to improve and develop community engagement

Disagree:

- Concerns that over utilising volunteers is a money saving technique
- Concerns raised that commissioners are forcing providers to change the way they work in relation to volunteers
- A whole service cannot be managed purely on volunteers alone and where there is inappropriate training or support to ensure they are able to work effectively and safely.

Don't know:

- Those who answered don't know commented that this proposal would need to be more specific for people to have a better understanding of this and what the role of volunteers would be
- Again concerns raised that using volunteers would only assist with cost savings

3.14 Outcomes from the meetings held with the broader stakeholders echo the online results with broad support for this proposal.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

3.15 There was clear support for this recommendation that any new service will have a strong volunteering function to support its delivery.

Proposal 4:

Engagement to include a focus on seldom-heard groups and to use a range of methods to seek their views

3.16 In relation to the final proposal there was clear support for this from 74% of the respondents. (table 6). However, there was some concerns about the diverse nature of the seldom-heard groups across the geographical area.

	Agree	Don't Agree	Don't Know	Didn't Answer
Leicester	36	3	4	1
Leicestershire	17	2	0	1
Rutland	197	49	27	4
All	40	4	1	1
Not Answered	0	0	2	1
Total	290 (74.4%)	58 (15%)	34 (9%)	8 (2%)

Table 6

3.17 A range of comments were received in relation to the proposal which is summarised as follows

Agree

- Those that agree feel that some people may not understand some of the terms used such as 'engagement' and 'consultation' so clearer definitions are required
- Access to social media- there are still a significant amount of people that do not use or have access to social media meaning that they are less likely to be able to share their views on services.
- Suitable engagement work is required, not only through social media but through event, open meetings, using current community facilities and in an accessible format for all.

Don't agree:

- What works in one area may not work in another
- When engagement events take place they need to be accessible across the county to ensure people have the opportunity to attend and publicising of this needs to be prioritised.

Don't know:

- More details required on this proposal
- Minority groups may not be heard as well as the majority groups
- Could take up a lot of time and money, and may create further concerns which otherwise did not exist

3.18 Again outcomes from the meetings held with the broader stakeholders again echoed the online results with broad support for this proposal.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

3.19 There was clear support for this recommendation and any new service will need to have a clear approach to engagement.

Demographics

Demographics:

In terms of demographics key headlines show that:

- 44% of the respondents were 66 years +
- 79% of the respondents were White British
- 55% were female

Although there has been a good response it is not representative of the communities we serve within the city and must be factored into any recommendations.

AGE

Age Range	All	Leicester	Leicestershire	Not Answered	Rutland	Grand Total
18 - 25		1			1	2
26 - 35	1	3	1		6	11
36 - 45	6	9	2		12	29
46 - 55	6	11	3	1	33	54
56 - 65	8	11	2		53	74
66+	21	6	11	1	149	188
Not Answered				1	6	7
Prefer not to say	4	3	1		16	24
under 18					1	1
Grand Total	46	44	20	3	277	390

Gender

Gender	All	Leicester	Leicestershire	Not Answered	Rutland	Grand Total
Female	27	26	12	1	152	218
Male	15	13	7	1	102	138
Not Answered				1	7	8
Prefer not to say	4	5	1		16	26
Grand Total	46	44	20	3	277	390

DISABILITY

Disability	All	Leicester	Leicestershire	Not Answered	Rutland	Grand
No	30	30	14	1	213	288
Not Answered				1	11	12
Prefer not to say	6	4	1		18	29
Yes	10	10	5	1	35	61
Grand Total	46	44	20	3	277	390

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual Orientation	All	Leicester	Leicestershire	Not Answered	Rutland	Grand Total
Bisexual	1	1			1	3
Hetrosexual / straight	35	32	16	1	208	292
Not Answered	2	3	2	2	28	37
Other (please specify)	1	2			2	5
Prefer not to say	7	6	2		38	53
Grand Total	46	44	20	3	277	390

ETHNICITY

Ethnicity	All	Leicester	Leicestershire	Not Answered	Rutland	Grand Total
Asian or Asian British: Any other Asian background			1			1
Asian or Asian British: Indian	1	4	1		1	7
Black or Black British: Caribbean			1			1
Chinese					1	1
Dual/Multiple Heritage: Any other heritage background					1	1
Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Black Caribbean					1	1
Not Answered		1	1	1	11	14
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group					1	1
Prefer not to say	6	11	2		19	38
White: Any other White background		2			1	3
White: British	35	23	14	2	235	309
White: European	2	3			6	11
White: Irish	2					2
Grand Total	46	44	20	3	277	390

RELIGION

Religion	All	Leicester	Leicestershire	Not Answered	Rutland	Grand Total
Any other religion (please specify)	1	2			2	5
Atheist	4	4	1		18	27
Buddhist					1	1
Christian	23	16	11	2	160	212
Hindu	1	2	1			4
Jewish		1			1	2
No religion	7	9	4		44	64
Not Answered	3	1	1	1	17	23
Prefer not to say	7	8	2		33	50
Sikh		1			1	2
Grand Total	46	44	20	3	277	390