

Committee Member Recruitment Pack

Our principles

The way that we work is important if we want to make an impact and everything we do is driven by our values and principles:

Selflessness – we will work in the interests of Your Voice in Health & Social Care (YVHSC) only: we won't make any financial gain or other benefits for ourselves, our family or our friends

Integrity – we won't place ourselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations who might then seek to influence us in the performance of our role

Objectivity – in carrying Healthwatch business forward we will make decisions based on merit when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits

Accountability – we are accountable for our decisions and actions to the public and will ensure that our performance and finances can be scrutinised

Openness – we will be open about the decisions and actions that we take and we will give reasons for our decisions

Honesty – we will declare any private interests that are relevant to Healthwatch and take steps to resolve any conflicts of interest

Leadership – we will promote and support these principles by leadership and by example

The structure and Healthwatch committee of YVHSC

Company and business structure

YVHSC is the contract holder for: Healthwatch Hounslow, Healthwatch Ealing, Healthwatch Waltham Forest, Healthwatch Bromley, Healthwatch Lewisham and Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham.

We are a Company limited by guarantee and a registered charity:
Company Number – 08397315
Registered charity number – 1154672

YVHSC Article of Association can be found [here](#)

Healthwatch Committee

The Healthwatch Committee will comprise approximately 10 – 12 Committee members.

As the contract holder, Your Voice in Health and Social Care will have a standing seat on the Committee. This is so there are clear lines of communication and reporting.

Whilst it will be best practice for the Healthwatch Committee to reflect the borough's diverse and geographical communities, it will not be representational - it is felt important to have a Committee that is high functioning and has the required skills to fit the profile and needs of the Committee rather than filling spaces.

The Role, Responsibilities and Liabilities of Committee Members

For all intents and purposes the Committee will operate as a sub-committee of the Board of Directors. The Directors of YVHSC retain overall responsibility and all liabilities rest with them.

The Healthwatch committee does not have formal authority to govern the organisation, that is, the Healthwatch committee cannot issue directives, which must be followed. Rather, the Healthwatch committee serves to make recommendations and/or provide key information. Any recommendations made by the Healthwatch Committee will need to be ratified by the Board of Directors. To ensure this relationship operates efficiently there will be a formal link between the board and the Healthwatch Committee.

The Healthwatch committee plays an important public relations role as well as providing staff with a fresh perspective on local issues. A properly composed and structured Healthwatch committee can be a tremendous complement to the effectiveness of the YVHSC board of directors as it works to carry out a specific initiative.

Since the board of directors has ultimate governance authority for the organisation, the Healthwatch committee is able to focus narrowly on a specific program in order to advise or support the local Healthwatch. The Healthwatch committee may evaluate the performance of a program, review/monitor/assess a specific program, serve as advocate for the organisation to the community it serves, gather input from/serve as a liaison with relevant constituencies, provide feedback to the organisation from the community, provide technical expertise, provide an independent/unbiased sounding board, and assist staff in determining important activities.

Other possible responsibilities of the Healthwatch committee include determining mission and purpose of a program, articulating the goals, means, and primary constituents to be served by a program, ensuring effective planning, monitoring and strengthening of programs and services, and enhancing the organisation's public standing.

Effective Healthwatch committees have terms of service. Members are appointed by YVHSC to a specific term, usually of not more than 12 months. It is important to ensure the Healthwatch committee has a clear purpose and guidelines for membership. Healthwatch committees are expected to consist of between 10 – 12 members and must be quorum in decision making processes. Healthwatch Committee members will usually be recruited through a formal recruitment process.

How the Healthwatch group contributes knowledge/skills to the larger board of directors should also be formalised as well as how it interacts with the board of directors and members. A representative from the YVHSC Board will have a seat on the Healthwatch Committee in order to ensure links between the two bodies. Healthwatch committees will be bound by the policies and procedures of the governing board of directors – for example: meeting attendance, decision-making, conflict of interest, and ethics policies.

Where necessary YVHSC will develop specific policies for Healthwatch Committees, for example, an Enter & View policy.

Healthwatch committees need a sufficient range of expertise to accomplish the organisation's mission.

Healthwatch Committee Responsibilities

Healthwatch committees do not have any legal authority; therefore, all of their responsibilities are assigned at the discretion of the executive director and/or board of directors. Responsibilities assigned to a Healthwatch committee may include any or all of the following:

Program Creation and Planning

Committee members can provide advice concerning the design and plans for the program. It is easiest to begin with a small Healthwatch committee, for example, four to seven community leaders and community members, during initial stages.

Development of Program Policy

While Healthwatch committees cannot create legally binding policies for the organisation, they can help create guidance that provide direction and support for the program staff.

Planning and Implementing Public Relations

A Healthwatch committee that includes influential community leaders can be effective at spreading the word about program services.

Funding Leadership

Often Healthwatch committees are created specifically to raise program funds. The executive director or the board of directors must grant the Healthwatch committee this authority.

Subcommittees

The Healthwatch committee may develop subcommittees, which have assigned tasks in specific areas. For example, a public awareness subcommittee composed of four members may be responsible for making recommendations about public awareness strategies and resources. Subcommittees may be short-lived according to a specific assignment or ongoing.

Other Tasks

Healthwatch committees can be created to address a specific organisational need. These Healthwatch committees are usually short-lived and are disbanded as soon as their specific goals are met.

It is expected that being a Committee member will require a time commitment of approximately 1- 2 days a month, including reading and preparing for meetings, with this increasing to 3 days for those wishing to take on an executive role such as chair.

All relevant and agreed expenses associated with the role will be reimbursed.

Application and Selection Process

Applications are invited from people who are over the age of 16 and who live or work in borough or who can demonstrate substantial knowledge of the borough and health and social care issues and services.

To apply, candidates are asked to provide a copy of their CV together with a personal statement of 2 sides of A4, detailing how they meet the person specification criteria included in this document.

Selection of Committee members is against a standard laid out in the core attributes, key specialisms and person specification sections of this document. Candidates that meet the requirements will be invited for an interview.

After identifying successful candidates through the recruitment process, Committee eligibility will be assessed based on the requirements of the Charity Commission and Companies House and conflicts of interest before formally offering a place on the Healthwatch Committee.

Unsuccessful applicants will be invited to support Healthwatch by getting involved in other ways, e.g. through alternative volunteering opportunities.

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact us on 0203 603 2438.

Conflicts of interest

Applicants should make it very clear at the time of application whether any conflicts of interest, or potential conflicts of interest, exist or may arise. These might include immediate family's existing roles within the borough's health and social care sector. Likely conflicts of interests are:

- Health or social care providers and their employees within borough or who supply health and social care services to people in the borough.
- Providers affiliated with a private company providing goods and services to local healthcare and social care providers
- Commissioners of health and social care services in the borough
- Elected members of Local or Central Government

All Healthwatch Committee members will need to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (previously known as a Criminal Records Bureau check).

Role outline – Healthwatch Committee Member

Responsible for*:

- Supporting the staff team and Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC) to deliver Healthwatch activities
- Reviewing details and making recommendations regarding this to YVHSC
- Overseeing Healthwatch's (HW) strategic direction, monitoring and advising the progress of HW against its work plan.

Purpose of role*:

Advisory: To ensure HW is efficiently guided and effectively delivering against its workplan, in line with its statutory obligations, its code of conduct and best practice.

***All governance, finance and contractual obligations rest with YVHSC**

Main responsibilities and key result area

1. To participate in setting, implementing and monitoring Healthwatch's work plan, in line with its statutory core purposes.
2. To promote HW and its work. To build successful partnerships with key stakeholders and enhance both influence and effectiveness of HW on behalf of local people.
3. To consider, assess and challenge reports on local health and social care services, and on HW itself, to ensure that Healthwatch's public work and internal decisions are well-founded.
4. To ensure that decisions taken by the Committee are in the best interests of HW and that its moral responsibilities to the wider public are met.
5. To regularly attend Committee meetings, sub-Committee meetings, working groups, and training events as required. To offer advice and expertise to the Committee, and to make well-informed, respectful contributions to discussions and decision making, based on the interests of patients and the public.
6. To contribute to, abide by and take collective responsibility for decisions, publicly supporting any decisions made.
7. To commit to Healthwatch approach to valuing diversity, equality, inclusion and human rights and to ensure that Healthwatch processes, activities and recommendations are inclusive of all communities.
8. To undertake special tasks and/or responsibilities as agreed by the Committee or one of its sub-Committees, including representing Healthwatch at conferences, seminars, meetings and events.
9. To declare any relevant personal, professional or commercial interests in any matter being discussed by the Committee.
10. To respect the confidentiality of information, where its release would compromise the interest of Healthwatch.

Core attributes

All Committee members are expected to demonstrate a number of core attributes and skills. Please refer to these in your application, giving one example of how you have this experience:

Core attributes and skills	Purpose
Strategic and solution focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To lead, oversee and shape the strategic direction of Healthwatch and its projects and reports. b) To contribute to positive results, clear impact and better outcomes in health and social care, through creative, strategic and forward thinking.
Good communicator and good interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) To be capable of playing an active role at meetings, and contribute to discussion and decision making. d) To communicate and engage with a range of different individuals from providers and commissioners to members of the public, and to liaise effectively and diplomatically, promoting collaborative working and acting as an ambassador for Healthwatch. e) To be able to take account of a wide range of views and to effectively represent the views of others. f) Members should have experience of building and developing successful partnerships, alliances and working relationships, ideally with a range of organisations, stakeholders or communities.
Analytical skills and intellect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> g) To guide rational and responsible decision making in determining Healthwatch's strategy. h) To guide research and identification of gaps in patient and public feedback and the provision and quality of local health and social care services.
Understanding of health, social care and equality legislation and policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To understand health and social care legislation and policy and the importance of patient, service user and public involvement. j) To understand equality legislation, its relevance and application. k) To understand the current challenges and how these may affect people in the borough.
Understanding of good governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> l) Members should have experience of working as an effective member of a Committee or senior management team, influencing decisions and having a clear understanding of good governance principles. m) Members must have personal credibility, integrity and honesty with a commitment to probity, being independent of any special interest, transparent in their own motivation, and supporting transparency in the workings of Healthwatch.
Public spirited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n) Members are tasked with acting in public interest, and should therefore be public spirited and committed to the principle of championing the public's interests in health and social care.

	<p>o) Members need to be open-minded and inclusive; Healthwatch will be tasked with engaging and representing the entire spectrum of the local population.</p> <p>p) Members should have a commitment to equality for all, including that enshrined within the Equalities Act, to promoting human rights and to valuing of diversity.</p> <p>q) Members should have an active interest in how patient and service user involvement can shape health and social care services and have the desire to promote it.</p>
<p>Email and computer software literate</p>	<p>r) Members should be competent users of IT to enable active participation as a Committee member and undertaking of responsibilities.</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>Candidates should:</p> <p>s) Live or work in the borough or be a patient, service user or carer of local health and social care services, demonstrating an interest in and knowledge of the borough and a commitment to public/voluntary service.</p> <p>t) Be able to give a commitment of time and be willing to attend some evening and weekend meetings</p> <p>u) Adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life, known as the Nolan Principles, which were defined by the <u>Committee for Standards in Public Life</u>. They are:</p> <p>Selflessness Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.</p> <p>Integrity Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.</p> <p>Objectivity In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.</p> <p>Accountability Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.</p> <p>Openness Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.</p> <p>Honesty Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.</p> <p>Leadership Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.</p>