

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Health and Wellbeing Board	Dated: 11/07/2025
Subject: Healthwatch City of London Progress Report	Public report: For Information
This proposal: Provides progress information.	
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	£N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Healthwatch City of London
Report author:	Gail Beer Chair, Healthwatch City of London

Summary

This report details the work of Healthwatch City of London for Q1 2025/26

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

Note the report.

Main Report

Background

Healthwatch is a governmental statutory mechanism intended to strengthen the collective voice of users of health and social care services and members of the public, both nationally and locally. It came into being in April 2013 as part of the Health and Social Care Act of 2012.

The City of London Corporation has funded a Healthwatch service for the City of London since 2013. The first contract for Healthwatch came into being in September 2019 and was awarded to a new charity Healthwatch City of London (HWCoL).

HWCoL is registered on the on the Charities Commission register of charities as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and is Licenced by Healthwatch England (HWE) to use the Healthwatch brand. The current contract for Healthwatch City of London was awarded in September 2024.

HWCoL's vision is for a Health and Social Care system truly responsive to the needs of the people who live, work and study in the City. HWCoL's mission is to be an independent and trusted body, known for its impartiality and integrity, which acts in the best interests of those who live and work in the City.

Current Position

The HWCoL team continue to operate from the Portsoken Community Centre and through hybrid working – both at the office and home working.

The communication platforms continue to provide residents with relevant information on Health and Social care services via the website, newsletters, bulletins, and social media.

The team are fully staffed and have a team of volunteers.

Public Board Meetings

1. Board Meeting in Public 6th June 2025

HWCoL held a Board meeting in public in June 2025. This meeting was held at the Golden Lane Community centre with 15 attendees. David Curran, Director of Nursing and Governance, St Bartholomew's Hospital was due to present on the Healthwatch Enter and View report to the cardiology department and their response to the recommendations, however unfortunately, David was unable to attend at the last minute. We are rescheduling this update for a later date.

The meeting gave us the opportunity to outline our key priorities for the year which are:

- 1) Deliver 10 patient panels to inform service users about Health and Social care topics that are important to them.
- 2) Hold a summer information event in June and our AGM in October, both events will give residents important information on local Health and Social Care services and on the work of Healthwatch City of London.
- 3) Undertake two research projects – Emergency pathways at Barts Health and UCLH and access to dentistry in the City.
- 4) Carry out an Enter and View at the Physiotherapy department at St Leonards Hospital. This will enable a review of access, provision and satisfaction of the

service and with a full report to include recommendations for improvements or changes.

- 5) Increase engagement with the Portsoken community – hold two engagement events and increase representation from the community.
- 6) Maintain, train and utilise a dedicated team of volunteers. To attend focus groups to give the City's perspective, research and write reports for projects, help with HWCOL events and carry out enter and view visits.
- 7) Scrutinise how the City of London Corporation awards and monitors its contracts for Social Care provision. Focus on the patient/resident feedback elements of the contracts. Review feedback from patients via the annual social care survey and analyse safeguarding statistics.

The meeting also covered our workplan for the year, a financial update and an overview of the meetings we attend to make sure the City voice is heard.

Projects

1. Digital Apps in Healthcare

In April HWCOL held the public launch of the digital apps report 'Digital Apps: A help or hindrance? Understanding and accessing digital healthcare apps' to members of the project focus groups and the digital lead at the Homerton, this followed on from the last quarters launch to service providers.

The public launch was very well attended and continued the lively discussion around the use of apps in healthcare. This is clearly a subject that draws strong views from residents and an area that HWCOL will continue to monitor and keep abreast of any changes from service providers in the City. We need to keep this conversation alive and will continue to raise this at Integrated Care Partnership Board.

The report was shared to the Health and Wellbeing Board at the last meeting.

Support to the City of London Corporation

1. Adult Social Care Advisory Group

HWCOL have agreed to set up and manage an Adult Social Care Advisory group following a request from the City of London Corporation. The initial meeting of the group was scheduled for 19th June, however due to some hesitancy from service users and despite several attempts at contacting users, the meeting was cancelled.

HWCOL have met with the Adult Social Care team and agreed a way forward to increase interest and engagement with users of social care.

The team will be organising three sessions each with a different aspect of social care to try and appeal to a wider set of users with the Head Occupational Therapist who will present on the Adult Social Care services offered in the City. These will take place at the Guildhall, Portsoken Community Centre and the Golden Lane Community Centre to reach as many residents as possible.

The Adult Social Care team also attended the Health in the City Day to increase awareness of the sessions and their service provision.

2. Family Design Lab

Advertising of the City of London Corporation's Family Design Lab in response to the change in delivery of services for children, young people and families in the City of London in response to national government reform.

Enter and View Programme

Healthwatch have a statutory function to carry out Enter & View visits to health and care services to review services at the point of delivery.

1. Neaman Practice Enter and View

HWCOL undertook an Enter and View visit to the Neaman Practice on 13th February 2025. The visit was carried out by the HWCOL staff team and a Board member. The report has been written and is with the Neaman Practice for response and comment. This was received on Friday 20th June and once reviewed will be shared with this Board in Q2. The full report will be launched at a Public Board meeting with the Practice Partners.

Communications and Engagement

HWCOL Events

1. Health in the City Day with the Neaman practice

On Saturday 21st June HWCOL held its annual Health in the City Day at the Golden Lane Community Centre with the Neaman Practice.

This year there were stalls for residents to visit from City Carers Community, IMAGO, Older Peoples Reference Group, Age UK City of London, Dragon Café in the City, Advocacy Project, Together Better, Shoreditch Park and City PCN, NHS NEL Cancer Alliance, Gloji (City and Hackney Smoke Free Service), HealthSpot and the Adult Social Care Team, City of London Corporation.

Also provided by the Richmond Road Medical Centre, there were blood pressure tests and blood sugar readings, and the Mental Fight Club ran a Japanese Embroidery workshop.

HWCOL advertised the event via a leaflet drop to all flats in the Barbican and Golden Estate, regular social media adverts, adverts in estate communication bulletins, and promotion via stall holders.

Over 50 residents attended the event and initial feedback from the stall holders and residents was very positive.

2. Carers Week event with IMAGO and City Carers Community

To mark Carers week (9th – 15th June) HWCoL held a tea party at the Guildhall at which we were joined by Dragon Café in the City and supported by Imago, the carers support service.

Dragon Café led an embossed foil card making workshop, where participants created some imaginative and unique cards. This was followed by a tea party.

Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services and Hannah Dobbin, Strategy and Projects Officer joined us to express their appreciation and commitment of the unpaid carers community.

3. Patient Panels

Patient panels are designed as information sessions for residents to attend on topics of concern or interest to them. They also are for residents to give feedback on those services and share ideas for improvements. HWCoL's patient panel series attract new residents at every event. Reports from all Patients Panels are published on the HWCoL website. These are now a recognised and useful way of drawing providers and receivers of care together.

3.1 Patient Panel May Skin Cancer Awareness and Prevention.

Following a request from a residents, HWCoL ran a Patient Panel on Skin Cancer Awareness. It was our most popular Patient Panel to date with 20 people attending.

Dr Thomas McLeod, GP and clinical lead on North East London Cancer Alliance skin cancer risk reduction campaign led the session.

Dr McLeod told the audience about the two different groups of skin cancer, melanoma and non-melanoma, what to look out for on suntan lotion bottle labels, UVA, UVB and SPF, getting enough Vitamin D safely and what to look for when inspecting moles or dark spots. He promoted the NEL Cancer Alliance website [LDN get sun set](#) which gives advice on how to stay safe in the sun.

There is more work to do to promote the use of sun protection for City workers and tourists.

Upcoming panels

3.2 Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training session with the London Ambulance Service

Due to popular demand, we have organised another CPR training session with the London Ambulance Service. This will be held on Thursday 17th July at the Artizan Library, 1 Artizan Street, London, E1 7AF from 10:30 – 12pm.

These CPR training sessions are always sold out. There is a real appetite for a more comprehensive schedule of both CPR and first aid training amongst City residents.

3.3 North East London Cancer Alliance – Ovarian and Womb Cancer

For residents to find out more about the symptoms, prevention and treatment of ovarian and womb cancer.

North East London Cancer Alliance and leading gynaecological cancer charity The Eve Appeal have launched a second phase of their 'You Need to Know' campaign,

to raise awareness of ovarian cancer symptoms and improve early diagnosis, as with all cancers the early diagnosis and treatment supports better outcomes.

The campaign encourages women in north east London to speak to their GPs if they experience persistent bloating or other unexplained changes in bowel movement or eating habits.

The session will be held on Wednesday 3rd September 12 – 1.30 at the Golden Lane Community Centre, EC1Y 0SA.

4. Neighbourhoods Engagement Involvement

4.1 City Action Group

HWCoL attended the third City Action Group meeting in June. The City Action Group is a separate group formed from the Shoreditch Park and City Neighbourhood forums which specifically focus on residents in the City.

At the meeting there were representatives from CoL and the City advice. It was agreed that the meeting for residents would be held on 8th July at the Golden Lane Community Centre.

The Forum is designed for residents to discuss the local priorities for the City, these will be decided from the three key priorities in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

- Financial Resilience
- Mental Health
- Making Social Connections

Service providers representing each area have been invited to attend and support the event with an information stall. There will be a main presentation on each area by a CoL officer followed by group discussions.

5. Falls Prevention Engagement

The engagement work carried out by Healthwatch City of London and Healthwatch Hackney has been fed back to the Falls Prevention pathway review, as reported previously. The initial outcomes from the review are due to be presented in Q2, which HWCoL will attend.

MRS Independent Living have been commissioned to continue to provide the Staying Steady Classes in the City which the outcome of the review and next steps are agreed by the system and City and Hackney Public Health Team.

6. Portsoken Community Engagement

Unfortunately, the meeting arranged with Portsoken Councillors in Q1 was postponed. HWCOL have now contacted the councillors to agree separate meetings to progress this work. This has already started with some helpful initial engagement. A volunteer from the community has also agreed to work with HWCOL to promote engagement across the estate and community. The volunteer will help to produce leaflets in the correct languages, help encourage attendance at events and help interpret messages.

HWCOL has also had discussions with the Population Health Hub and NHS NEL who are both keen to improve engagement and promote health messages to the area. The Population Health Hub is looking at running some resident-led information sessions, where they will engage with the community to hear what areas they would like to have more information on. NHS NEL are looking at health literacy in the area.

7. Annual Survey

HWCOL has completed its annual survey. The results of this will be analysed in Q2 and reported on in the next report.

8. Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment

Gail Beer sits on the steering group who oversee the work of the City and Hackney Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment. The survey period for resident feedback has finished with the draft report now out for consultation. The final report will be presented at a Health and Wellbeing Board in the autumn.

HWCOL advised on the conclusions of the report and the easy read version.

9. Public Representative Programme

Last quarter HWCOL raised its concerns about the public representatives programme losing funding following the recent Government announcements on structures in the ICB. The programme was run by Healthwatch Hackney but supported representatives from both the City and Hackney. HWCOL are in discussions with Healthwatch Hackney on how to utilise the representatives going forward. It is also important to understand better the public's representation in this group and how they work amongst the wider population.

10. Sexual and reproductive health strategy and action plan

HWCOL have been participating fully in this piece of work, supporting Froeks from City and Hackney Public Health Team, to identify any gaps in the plan and suggest ways to address that.

Getting young people involved in this is core for the City, and HWCOL are already having discussions.

Issues raised on behalf of residents

1. Neaman Practice Booking system

As raised in the last report the Neaman Practice have introduced a new appointment booking system. HWCoL were contacted by several concerned residents that the system was confusing and more importantly that they had not been informed of the change. HWCoL had a discussion with the Practice who explained the new system, and why it had been implemented. HWCoL held a Patient Panel with Dr Hillier (who has overseen the roll out) for concerned residents. To support residents, HWCoL held a focus group to deep dive into the issues raised by residents which took place in Jan 2025. The team also held a focus group specifically for carers on 11th April.

Feedback from this engagement has now been reported back to the Practice, they have actioned the recommendations from the report which HWCoL will monitor.

Planned activities for Q2

- Continued monitoring of the Falls Prevention review
- Publish report of Neaman Practice Enter and View
- Report on engagement on Neaman Practice Booking System
- Report on Healthwatch City of London Annual survey
- Publish Healthwatch City of London Annual Report
- Continued work with CoL to set up the Adult Social Care Advisory Group
- Production of three year work plan
- Increased engagement with the Portsoken Community through Court of Common Councillors
- Develop draft plan for delivery of major projects

Conclusion

The team at Healthwatch City of London have had a busy Q1 delivering several well attended events, and continued engagement with residents of the City of London.

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