

Birmingham City Council

Birmingham/Solihull Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

Date 19 January 2023



Subject: Healthwatch Groundrules for Reviews announced by NHS Birmingham and Solihull

Report of: Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager, Birmingham City Council
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Report author: Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager, Birmingham City Council

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To seek endorsement of the Birmingham and Solihull Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 4 groundrules proposed by Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull in relation to the reviews announced by NHS Birmingham and Solihull on the 8 December 2022.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee endorses the ground rules proposed by Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull as set out in Appendix 1.

3 Any Finance Implications

- 3.1 There are no new financial implications for the Council arising from this report.

4 Any Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report however in the event any issues arise these will be considered as and when necessary.

5 Any Equalities Implications

- 5.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 5.2 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties. This should include considering: How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within the Joint HOSC area; Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1: Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull letter to Joint HOSC Chairs 21.12.22

7 Background Papers

- 7.1 None

To:

**COUNCILLOR M BROWN
CHAIR OF THE BIRMINGHAM
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

**COUNCILLOR M MCCARTHY
CHAIR OF THE SOLIHULL HEALTH
AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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**RICHARD BURDEN
CHAIR**

**ANDY CAVE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

HEALTHWATCH BIRMINGHAM
AND HEALTHWATCH SOLIHULL

Date: 21st December 2022

**NHS Birmingham and Solihull and University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust –
Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull’s ground rules for the announced three
reviews following BBC Newsnight report.**

Dear Cllr M Brown and Cllr M McCarthy,

Following our informal meeting on the 20th December 2022, we are writing to the Joint Committee to confirm your support for our ground rules as part of the three reviews announced by NHS Birmingham and Solihull on the 8th December 2022. In confirming your support for these four conditions, we ask you to request assurance from NHS Birmingham and Solihull and University Hospitals Birmingham NHS FT for your Joint meeting on the 19th January at 14:00, outlining how the ground rules outlined in this letter will be met.

NHS Birmingham and Solihull announced three reviews to take place following the allegations raised in the BBC Newsnight Programs aired on Thursday 1st December and Friday 2nd December 2022.

In our role it was vital for us to be the voice of local Birmingham and Solihull residents as part of the program and following the airing of the episode we published our first [statement](#) published 2nd December 2022.

In this statement we called for an independent investigation into the allegations raised in the TV report.



Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull

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The allegations around bullying and patient safety at University Hospitals Birmingham (UHB) made by former and current UHB staff in the report by Newsnight and BBC Midlands Today are extremely worrying and it is imperative they are investigated seriously, thoroughly and urgently.

As concerns about the organizational culture at UHB were central to the BBC report, any investigation must be both transparent and independent if it is to command the confidence of patients and staff.

In the follow-up BBC Newsnight Program on the 9th December 2022, we outlined our ground rules for any investigation or review into the allegations at the Trust. These conditions are outlined in our [statement](#) on the 9th December 2022.

Our four ground rules for the announced reviews are:

1. The reviews must be carried out by people who are transparently independent.
2. That Terms of References for the reviews enable the investigation to go wherever the evidence leads and that this must not be fettered in any way.
3. That the findings of all reviews will be published in full as well as shared within the system and with any reference groups in which Healthwatch and others may be invited to take part.
4. That all recommendations from the reviews must be actioned and the reviews should not be allowed to gather dust. This needs to be communicated to build public confidence in local services.

We have raised these ground rules directly with David Melbourne, CEO of NHS Birmingham and Solihull and subsequently at the Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Partnership meeting on the 14th December 2022, where they received support from members.

We ask the Birmingham and Solihull Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to:

1. Support our four ground rules for the reviews taking place, as announced by NHS Birmingham and Solihull.
2. Use your influence to request assurance of these ground rules being met at the meeting scheduled for the 19th January 2023 at 14:00.
3. To continue to work with Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull to ensure action is taken as a result of these reviews for the people of Birmingham and Solihull.

Yours sincerely



Richard Burden, Chair



Andy Cave, CEO



Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull

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