Protocol for submitting 20 day requests for a response letters, reports and recommendations from Healthwatch

This protocol recognises that Healthwatch acts as an independent consumer voice for people who health and social care services.

Healthwatch reporting arrangements

Healthwatch provides quarterly Project Highlight Reports to the Local Authority as its commissioner on progress against agreed annual milestones, tasks and targets at regular contract monitoring and relationship meetings. These Project Highlight Reports are also shared with the Healthwatch Board and include a process for alerting either party to risks to project delivery. As part of reporting on its current work programme, Healthwatch will alert the Local Authority Commissioners to any activity likely to generate Reports and Recommendations which require a response from the Council within 20 days. The Healthwatch Board may also choose to alert commissioners of other services about Reports and Recommendations which require a response from their service providers.

From time to time Healthwatch will also provide updates to the Health and Well Being Board and Scrutiny committees about Healthwatch Reports and Recommendations and reports annually on responses to its requests as part of its Annual Report to Healthwatch England

Protocol

1. Final drafts of all Healthwatch Reports requiring a 20 day response will be sent to a named senior manager in the appropriate agency at least 5 working days prior to an agreed publication date. This will allow them to check facts or seek clarification from Healthwatch as appropriate. Where any factual inaccuracies or omissions, these will be considered by Healthwatch and feedback provided prior to publication. In the unlikely event that agreement cannot be reached, a Healthwatch Board member and/or senior member of Healthwatch staff will meet the named senior manager to agree a way forward

2. Recipients of final draft reports will not attempt to influence the content or recommendations in any Healthwatch report prior to publication or attempt to delay publication

3. Healthwatch will include in this final draft a list of all those to whom the final report will be circulated

4. The named senior manager will not share or discuss the content of the draft report with any other person or organisation without the consent of Healthwatch

5. Healthwatch will send the appropriate agency a copy of the Final Report, including the final circulation list and incorporating any agreed amendments prior to the final publication date

6. The named senior manager will be asked to co-ordinate a full and appropriate response to Healthwatch Reports, recommendations and requests for further information within the 20 day timescale and as far as practicable, sooner

7. The named senior manager will co-ordinate circulation of the Final Report to their own key staff, officers and Elected Members as appropriate and may suggest additions to the circulation list
8. Healthwatch Final Reports will be published on the Healthwatch website within five working days of Executive Board sign-off and will be publicised through e-bulletins, newsletters and social media. Responses to Healthwatch reports will be published on the Healthwatch website alongside the Final Report.