

## POLICY COVER SHEET

<b>Policy Name</b>	Conducting Board Meetings in Public
<b>Owner</b>	Healthwatch Salford
<b>Contact</b>	Alex Leach, Chief Officer
<b>Approved by</b>	Healthwatch Salford Board
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## **Policy on Conducting Board Meetings in Public**

### **1. Introduction and purpose**

This policy on conducting Board Meetings in Public is one of several means introduced by the Directors of Healthwatch Salford for involving members of the public for the purpose of transparency and accountability.

### **2. Board Meetings in Public**

Healthwatch Salford will hold six Board meetings in public a year attended by Directors and the Chief Officer. The objective of these meetings is to ensure that the operations of Healthwatch Salford are meeting the strategic direction, that key activities are reviewed, contractual and other performance measures are being met, and that good governance is being observed and any corrective action is agreed. Any member of the public from within or outside Salford is welcome to attend these bi-monthly meetings of the Healthwatch Salford Board.

### **3. Notice of Board meetings**

Healthwatch Salford will give five clear working days' notice of any public meeting by posting details at the place where the meeting is to be located, if possible, and on the Healthwatch Salford' website.

### **4. Access to agenda and reports**

Healthwatch Salford will make the agenda and any associated reports available three working days ahead of the meeting on the Healthwatch Salford website. If an item is added to the agenda afterwards, the revised agenda will be posted on the website.

### **5. Access to agenda and reports at a Public Board meeting**

Healthwatch Salford will make available a minimum of two copies of the agenda and one copy of associated reports (the office set) for the use of members of the public present at the meeting.

### **6. Admission of reporters to Public Board meetings**

Healthwatch Salford will make reasonable facilities available to any person attending for the purpose of reporting the proceedings.

### **7. Right of the public to address Board meetings**

Whilst these are meetings in public, they are not public meetings and the public do not have an automatic right to speak. There will be an agenda item during which the public will be invited to make any general statements. Questions are welcome in advance in writing, by email, or by telephone and those received in advance will take priority. The Chair, at their discretion, may also invite the public to raise questions, although this will not be possible in online meetings. The questions asked will be answered if possible, during the meeting. If this is not possible, a written reply will be sent within 10 working days. The time limit for an individual will be three minutes, and in the interests of good order each individual will be limited to two questions or statements during the meeting. The public questions agendum will be limited to 15 minutes, and all outstanding items will be responded to in writing within 10 working days.



## **8. Access to agenda, reports and minutes after the Board meeting**

Healthwatch Salford will make available copies of the following at its Registered Office and on its website: Agenda and associated reports, excluding any which are exempt or contain confidential information; Minutes and records of decisions taken, excluding any part of the minutes of proceedings where the meeting was not open to the public or which disclose exempt or confidential information. Draft minutes will be posted within 10 working days after the subsequent Board meeting. They will have been reviewed by the Chair and Chief Officer.

## **9. Exclusion of access by the public to Board meetings**

There is a presumption that all meetings will be held in public. However, there may be times when the nature of the business to be transacted, or of the proceedings, means that confidential or commercially sensitive information would be disclosed. In these instances, the Board will hold a business meeting, where members of the public will be excluded for that part of the meeting.

The Chief Officer of Healthwatch Salford will exclude access by members of the public to reports and minutes related to items during which the meeting is not open to the public.

Such reports and minutes will be marked 'not for publication' with a brief note of the reason.

It is of the Chair's discretion in which a Board Member may wish to raise a point which would be in the Business part of the meeting at the public section of this meeting, or the Chair meeting wishes to move an item into the Business part of the meeting in light of the discussion.

## **10. Maintenance of good order**

The Chair shall at his or her sole discretion, have the right to exclude any person whose behaviour is or is likely to be disruptive to the meeting, and to suspend the meeting until any such person has been excluded

## **11. Access**

Healthwatch Salford will ensure that public meetings are held in locations offering ease of access and car parking for all.

Healthwatch Salford may be required to conduct its Board meetings online, in which case the platform which will be used will be Zoom and the session will be live streamed on Healthwatch Salford's YouTube channel where the public can access the meeting.

