The Vision for Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire:
A Discussion Document

This document is aimed at all those interested in how Local HealthWatch is provided in Oxfordshire.
This document is issued by Oxfordshire County Council who are responsible for making sure there is an effective, efficient and representative Local HealthWatch for local people.

Following work to engage with key stakeholders through questionnaires, a series of workshops and focus groups, as well as a large event attended by a diverse group of interested people, it is clear that there is already good practice on which to build across the area in the delivery of Local HealthWatch.

Our findings indicate strongly that people do not want a new organisation to be created that takes over or re-creates existing services that are already well respected and trusted as doing a ‘good job’. People want an organisation that can make good use of existing skills and expertise and build on existing locally recognised successes.

People have described how Local HealthWatch should be ‘the voice of the people’, co-ordinating information from peoples’ views and experiences, using its powers, described by many as its ‘teeth’ to make sure these views and experiences are able to influence the people and organisations who make the decisions. There is a clear message that Local HealthWatch should not be a ‘talking shop’.

The current timetable for the delivery of Local HealthWatch requires us to be ready to commission a service from October 2012. Following our engagement work so far there are a number of questions that we feel need to be explored in more depth if we are to commission an effective Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire.

Within this document we have described what people have told us so far about what they would like to see and invite you to provide your further thoughts. We have identified a number of questions but you may have further questions and views and we would be happy to receive those too.

You are welcome to provide your individual thoughts to us in writing or you could meet as part of a group to discuss the document and then provide a response to us. Contact details and dates for returning your responses are available at the end of the document.

Your views are essential to help inform and shape the specification for a Local HealthWatch that is efficient, effective and representative of the people of Oxfordshire.

Further information is available from Lisa Gregory at lisa.gregory@oxfordshire.gov.uk or call on 01865 323604.
The Background for Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire

The vision as set out in the HealthWatch Transition Plan published on March 29th 2011 by the DH

‘HealthWatch will be the independent consumer champion for the public - locally and nationally - to promote better outcomes in health for all and in social care for adults.

HealthWatch will be representative of diverse communities. It will provide intelligence - including evidence from people’s views and experiences - to influence the policy, planning, commissioning and delivery of health and social care. Locally, it will also provide information and advice to help people access and make choices about services as well as access independent complaints advocacy to support people if they need help to complain about NHS services.

HealthWatch will have credibility and public trust through being responsive and acting on concerns when things go wrong, and operating effectively and efficiently.’

All Local Authorities in England who provide Adult Social Care services have been given the duty to commission a new service called Local HealthWatch from October 2012.

We understand that Local HealthWatch is to be a corporate body that will provide a range of services and support to communities enabling and facilitating improvements in health and social care services. As well as enabling improvements in the delivery and outcomes of health and social care services, Local HealthWatch will also be responsible for making sure that the voice of patients, service users, clients and the public are heard and have a demonstrable influence on the decision making that takes place in the development or change to local health and social care services. They will have an important relationship with the newly established Health and Well Being Boards.

We know Local HealthWatch will need to encompass the statutory roles and responsibilities undertaken by the previous structure of Local Involvement Networks (LINks) as well as new areas of work and outcomes including the provision of consumer advice and support for people to make health and social care choices, from October 2012, and complaints advocacy from April 2013.

Additional funding has been identified but exact figures are not yet confirmed by the Department of Health for Local HealthWatch to undertake these new duties. We are committed to considering local needs and requirements and ensuring that the newly commissioned HealthWatch is fit for purpose. Funding will be available for Local HealthWatch to Local Authorities through the formula grant from the Department of Health. We understand the funding will be more than it is currently for LINks and includes an allocation of funding drawn from existing arrangements for the delivery of Patient Advice and Liaison Services within the Primary Care Trusts as well as the existing funding allocated to the Independent Complaints Advocacy Services currently commissioned direct from the Department of Health. The funding will not be ring fenced and the formula grant in total will be reducing.
A Vision for Local HealthWatch

The following themes and responses have emerged from our engagement work so far and are set out below to describe the emerging vision of Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire.

We would be pleased to hear from you and have included a number of questions following each theme. Please consider the questions but please feel free to provide any other response you feel is appropriate.

Well Led

Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire will be a sincere well-led, high quality organisation with knowledge, skill and integrity at its core. It will have a strong sense of its own values. Local people as well as local health and social care organisations will have trust and confidence in it by observing how it operates and seeing the evidence of its success. It will be realistic about its limitations but excel in what it does undertake. It won’t tolerate bad practice and will have clear measurable processes in place to ensure that quality underpins everything that it does.

People described aspirations for a Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire that could co-ordinate the provision of advice, support, information, engagement and advocacy recognising the difference between each of these and how they can work together. With effective governance to ensure it can deliver services of the highest quality. It will develop a strong sense of identity and have a clear and sustainable business model to underpin it.

The use of a ‘tree of life’ was used by 2 groups at the stakeholder event to describe how Local HealthWatch should be ‘rooted’ into the community, with the ‘trunk’ representing a solid Local HealthWatch organisation, developing knowledge and experience through its ‘branches’ informing decision makers through its ‘fruit’, this was used to describe how the fruit would fall to enrich the communities it is there to serve creating a cycle of listening, engaging, learning and changing.

Those involved in its leadership will have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and be held to account for their performance.

People described Local HealthWatch as needing to be appropriately funded for its work but there was a recognition that it might have to work hard to show how it could add real value in these difficult times.
Through high quality information and insight generated through its activity, it will use its power on the new Health and Well Being Board with care, finding the right balance between the competing demands of passionate representative of local people and influential decision-making partner.

People have described a joined up organisation that can operate as a conduit to ensure all voices are heard – linked across the community using existing organisations. Using creative approaches and partnerships to provide services to people in their communities. A co-ordinating body will be necessary to focus on outcomes.

An organisation that strives to represent the views of all people with particular interest in those who find it harder to have their voices heard and it should understand the importance of social care equally as well as health.

**Question 1 - How can this level and type of leadership best be achieved?**

**Question 2 - What are the barriers and how might these be overcome?**

**Well Managed and Organised**

Participants said that Local HealthWatch should not be bureaucratic or political getting a balance between its information and signposting activity and the need to reach out into the community to seek the involvement and engagement of all people in Oxfordshire. It will need to be realistic about what it can achieve and develop fully through a phased approach underpinned by effective planning.
It will champion and support local patient and user groups and it will avoid structures that make it harder for people to become involved. Bringing local evidence from a broad view, not just stories from a few friends, to create intelligence on behalf of the whole community into one place and use this to influence decision-makers.

To make sure the right skills and expertise is available to ensure confidence and trust people said that Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire should deliver its services through a combination of paid staff and volunteers. The role of volunteers will be valued, both volunteers and paid staff will be treated fairly and with mutual respect.

Local HealthWatch will ensure the right people are in the right place to provide a high quality service. Those involved both in a paid or voluntary capacity will have clear roles and responsibilities and will adhere to performance monitoring processes to ensure high quality at all times. There will be standards and training for people who provide information, advocacy, support and advice particularly in view of the needs of the most vulnerable people in the community. Local HealthWatch will utilise existing expertise to help it meet the needs of all people.

Local HealthWatch will take a proactive role in enabling high quality user involvement by providing training, skills and support to the public, empowering local people as it goes. Awareness will be raised amongst professionals who will understand what Local HealthWatch does and what it has to offer. It may consider implementing a health and social care consumer champion ‘kite mark’ scheme to support itself and others to operate to the highest quality possible.

It will be accountable to the community it serves and be able to represent in all circumstances without bias or subjective influence. It will be able to demonstrate high quality prioritising and decision-making through the use of clear processes and an evidence base not influenced by the vested interests of other organisations, individuals or politics. It will focus on outcomes not its own existence and will be accountable to but not led by HealthWatch England and will be as good as other recognised and trusted organisations. It will work as part of a wider Local HealthWatch network to create a regional and national profile as well as a local one. Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire will also share good news and celebrate good practice in health and social care.

Measures of success will be developed that describe Local HealthWatch as a well managed organisation and performance will be assessed against them.

**Question 3** - How can this type of organisation be realised in Oxfordshire?

**Question 4** - What are the implications of managing and organising Local HealthWatch to achieve the vision described?
Well known

Within the questionnaire people were asked whether they feel able to have a say on local health and social care services now. With 53 of the 81 respondents indicating that they did not feel they had a say, Local HealthWatch has an important role in helping people to find their ‘voice’.

People described Local HealthWatch as needing to have a high profile supported by a clear identity that makes it as easy as possible for people to find it and use it. The name Local HealthWatch will be recognised as having a national identity but locally it will be made clear that social care is within the remit. Its purpose will be easily communicated and understood and will be accessible to all. It will promote a single brand that is consistent across localities, using Local HealthWatch England to communicate this at a national level.

It will be recognisable and relevant to local people who will understand and know what it does and can do for them. It will have credibility built up through successfully sharing stories about the impact it makes. It will be inclusive to everyone. Measures of success on terms of how well known Local HealthWatch is amongst local people will be agreed and performance will assessed against those.

It will be available to people in the places they use, for example, at the local GP surgery or in the library or other voluntary organisations with a high street presence. People also described a ‘Kite Mark’ that could be used by organisations who met specific standards or who became accredited to provide some of the Local HealthWatch services.

Question 5 - What does Local HealthWatch need to do to make sure people know what it is and what it can do for them?

Question 6 - What are the barriers to achieving this vision and how can they be overcome?

Accessible and ‘For Everyone’

There is a strong message that Local HealthWatch should start and finish with people. ‘Not just doing it for us but involving us’

People have said Local HealthWatch needs to find the ‘silent majority’ and should communicate with people in different ways to achieve this. A vision for a ‘universal service’ has been described that can get to those who don’t get heard by going to where they are and by using many routes to talk, engage and communicate.

Local HealthWatch Oxfordshire will be proactive in its inclusion of people and communities and not exclude people by creating barriers to their involvement or engagement in it. It will not shy away from difficult service areas and to support its work it will work with and utilise existing skills and
expertise particularly within the voluntary and community sector enabling people to find Local HealthWatch through existing groups and organisations that support particular communities.

Information should be shared openly. Using evidence to back up any views. We have heard the vision described as a ‘circle of shared experience’ that can ‘hear, see, speak and do’.

Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire should ‘enable ordinary people to have their say’. Through creating a physical and online presence in peoples’ communities of place and interest it will listen and act, not just pass people on. It will consider the level of information and support a person or group needs and respond appropriately to make sure they receive the right help, support and information.

People have described the need to receive feedback about how their engagement in Local HealthWatch has made a difference and have described the need to both receive feedback directly through a range of sources, for example, a ‘you said, we did’ section on the website so that people can track what happens. People are also keen to see the evidence that they have been listened to through being able to see and experience changes and improvements.

The aspiration for Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire is of an organisation that will support individuals, groups and wider communities to have a voice. It will provide an information exchange and be there to listen to people when they have a need. It will proactively engage and reach out to the community too.

It will be available to people in numerous ways including where necessary face to face. Working with and through other voluntary organisations it will use the information it gathers through its work to become an intelligent organisation able to share its findings with the people responsible for planning, delivering and managing care services to influence the decisions they make as a result of the views, opinions and experiences of local people.

**Question 7 - What are the main considerations in achieving the aspirations set out above?**

**Question 8 - How will we know if Local HealthWatch is really there for everyone?**

**Influential, Independent and Trusted**

By bringing communities together Local HealthWatch will aspire to work in partnership for the whole community to assert more influence. It will balance the need to be locally accessible across rural and urban areas and have influence across the whole County, it will listen to people and act on their behalf. Recognising the diversity of the community it serves it will make itself available to people in many different ways and not rely on one or two methods.

Using its independence it will be able to evaluate and monitor others on behalf of the communities and individuals its serves. It will be commissioned and performance managed by the Local
Authority in such a way as to preserve its ability to independently carry out scrutiny and monitoring functions and the County Council as the funder will be careful not to dictate the remit of Local HealthWatch but instead support its development as an independent organisation able to add real value to the decisions that are made about health and social care services on behalf of local residents.

The aspirations described included Local HealthWatch as an organisation that knows and understands the local health and social care infrastructure and an organisation that is a respected part of local decision-making processes including joint commissioning to present a sophisticated picture of local needs as determined by local people. It should aspire to be recognised by others as a true consumer champion seeking and presenting the ‘voice’ of local people and will be tested against this aspiration.

It should have consistent representation on partnerships, influencing policy and service change locally. It will be a recognised part of the Health and Well Being Board and will do this through the presentation of intelligent and robust evidence. This will enable Local HealthWatch to be able to independently challenge decisions on behalf of the communities of Oxfordshire. Those in the statutory sector will take Local HealthWatch seriously and will honour their commitment to engage with it proactively and productively.

**Question 9** - How can relationships with the statutory sector be developed to achieve the role for Local HealthWatch as an independent partner of influence?

**Question 10** - What issues does this raise and how can they be overcome?

**Question 11** - Please provide us with any other comments or ideas you may have that have not been captured by the questions we have asked.

**What next?**

It is Oxfordshire County Council’s responsibility to ensure that the people of Oxfordshire have an effective, representative and efficient Local HealthWatch. Your contribution to date and responses to this document will help inform how we shape the specification for the delivery of Local HealthWatch.

**Please send us any written responses to this document by January 16th (apologies for the short turnaround) To: Lisa Gregory, Strategy & Performance, 4th Floor, County Hall, New Road, Oxford. OX1 1ND or email: lisa.gregory@oxfordshire.gov.uk**

On the following pages are some potential options for Local HealthWatch delivery, to stimulate discussions about models and plans. It is not comprehensive and is simply provided to get discussion going and ideas flowing.

We will be holding a further meeting for organisations/people interested in getting together to think about these delivery options, on 27th January 2012. If you would like further information about this, please contact Lisa Gregory on the contact details above.

Thank you for taking the time to work with us on the development of Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire!
Possible Local HealthWatch Delivery Options and Attributes – not exhaustive!

The options set out below can be used as a ‘pick and mix’ of possible Local HealthWatch attributes relating to the:
- Contract
- Leadership
- Management and the Organisation
- Accessible and ‘For Everyone’
- Influential, Independent and Trusted.

Each option could be put together in a range of combinations to help think through possible models and plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Management and the Organisation</th>
<th>Accessible and ‘For Everyone’</th>
<th>Influential, Independent and Trusted</th>
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<tr>
<td>A local, regional or national independent organisation could offer to provide all the Local HealthWatch services and functions in the area as a natural extension of its existing remit.</td>
<td>Local HealthWatch could be led and governed through an independent Board elected from a 'membership' of community representatives from geographical areas and from communities of interest. The Membership via the Board would be responsible for the effective running of the organisation.</td>
<td>Leadership could be provided through a Board of 'Trustees' who are representatives of the local community appointed to roles based on the skills identified to lead the Local HealthWatch organisation. The Board would be responsible for the effective running of the organisation.</td>
<td>Local HealthWatch could be led by a Board of Directors made up of people drawn from the community who undertake roles in a non-executive capacity and whose primary role is to ensure the organisation is established to serve the interests of the community, who sit alongside people who are there as employees each with an equal place or share. Ensuring non-executive shareholders are in the majority would help to ensure the community interest is protected.</td>
<td>A consortium of local independent organisations could work together to deliver the Local HealthWatch functions and services.</td>
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**Possible Local HealthWatch Delivery Options and Attributes – not exhaustive! Continued**

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<tr>
<th>Management and Organisation</th>
<th>The Local HealthWatch Board could be supported by an organisation who would provide a ‘house-keeping’ function including staff and key support roles.</th>
<th>The Board could directly employ staff to provide Local HealthWatch functions and services.</th>
<th>The Board could train and support volunteers to deliver Local HealthWatch functions and services.</th>
<th>The Board could establish sub-contracts or partnerships with existing voluntary and community organisations and groups to help it deliver its functions and services.</th>
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<td>Accessible and ‘For Everyone’.</td>
<td>A central office, telephone number, email address and website.</td>
<td>Voluntary and community organisations who have a high street presence and who are part of the Local HealthWatch organisation.</td>
<td>A network of ‘members’ open to everyone, who are available and active within their communities.</td>
<td>A mostly ‘virtual’ organisation with people mainly communicating with it on-line and by telephone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Influential, Independent and Trusted.</td>
<td>Representatives ‘elected’ from within a membership. Membership would need to be open to all local people. People could be identified to represent the Local HealthWatch based on where in the County they live or a particular area of interest or expertise, for example children and young people, or a combination of the two.</td>
<td>Appointing volunteers from the local community based on where in the County they live or a particular area of interest or expertise, for example dementia care, or a combination of the two.</td>
<td>Skilled and experienced employees or volunteers, who are tasked with representing the views of the public by presenting information and evidence generated through the delivery of the Local HealthWatch functions and services, could carry out representation of Local HealthWatch.</td>
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Possible Local HealthWatch Options for Contracting

Single contract with a supplier established specifically for the delivery of Local HealthWatch

Single contract with a supplier providing Local HealthWatch as an extension of existing remit

Single contract with a consortium of organisations who provide Local HealthWatch

Separate contracts with specialist single suppliers required to work in partnership to deliver Local HealthWatch
Introduction to costing Local HealthWatch

The amount of funding for Local HealthWatches has not yet been determined by the Government. However, potential providers of Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire will need to start thinking about the costs of different organisational models.

To help this thinking, we have considered 3 example organisational models and put basic annual salary and office costs to them. These are not comprehensive costings and do not show the full range of models and options that potential providers may want to consider. They are however designed to prompt thinking on the potential for Local HealthWatch in Oxfordshire.

A ‘Virtual’ Model
Chief executive £65,000
2 x Local HealthWatch officers £60,000
5 or more voluntary organisations/charities £60,000
who allow the 3 Local HealthWatch staff to use their office facilities and undertake work on behalf of Local HealthWatch (each receives £10,000)
TOTAL = £185,000

An Office-based model
Chief executive £65,000
4 x Local HealthWatch officers £120,000
Volunteers who are paid expenses £30,000
Office costs £30,000
TOTAL = £245,000

A Virtual + Office-based model
Chief executive £65,000
Deputy £40,000
10 x Local HealthWatch officers e.g. covering specialist &/or geographical areas £300,000
10 or more voluntary organisations/charities who undertake work on behalf of Local HealthWatch (each receives £10,000) £100,000
Volunteers who are paid expenses £20,000
Office costs £30,000
TOTAL = £555,000

Oxfordshire County Council Engagement Team (01865 323604)