

Healthwatch Essex Pathfinder

CONSTITUTION

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The pathfinder for Essex will be known as the '**Healthwatch Essex Pathfinder**'.
- 1.2 This constitution is made by Essex County Council (ECC) using its powers under section 221 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and paragraph 2 of the Local Involvement Network Regulations 2008 to create required procedures for the Local Involvement Network for Essex.
- 1.3 This constitution provides the governance framework for the Healthwatch Essex Pathfinder (HEP) and was formally adopted by Essex County Council on *(insert date)*. The HEP is an autonomous group within the Essex & Southend LINK. Future amendments must adhere to Article 14 of this constitution.
- 1.4 The 2007 Act placed a duty on Local Authorities to establish Local Involvement Networks (LINKs). The Health and Social Care Act 2012 says that Local Heathwatch will replace LINKs as the consumer champion for health and social care from 1st April 2013. In addition, Essex County Council wishes the Local Healthwatch Pathfinder to explore the consumer champion role for all County Council services
- 1.5 Seventy five localities, including Essex, have been identified as Healthwatch Pathfinders, to test different approaches to the HealthWatch function.
- 1.6 This constitution applies only to the Essex Pathfinder and not to the Healthwatch after 31 March 2013. It will also apply only to the area under Essex County Council's geographical remit. However, within the terms of this constitution, the HEP should collaborate with neighbouring pathfinders such as those for Southend and Thurrock.
- 1.7 A Service Level Agreement (SLA) provides the basis for cooperation between Essex County Council (ECC) and the Healthwatch Essex Pathfinder.

2. What is the group planning to do (Aims and Objectives)?

2.1 The objectives of HEP are as follows: -

- a. Ensuring communities, service users and the public have a greater voice in shaping decisions about public health and health and social care services in their locality and holding policy makers, commissioners and service providers to account.
 - Understanding public and patient views, needs and experiences in order to elevate the public voice;
 - Monitoring of the standard of provision; and identifying areas for improvement.
 - Making recommendations, based on the views obtained, to commissioners, providers, regulators and scrutinisers.
- b. Influencing the provision of advice and information regarding access and choices, including the delivery of influencing, signposting and advisory services.
- c. Supporting the development of the Healthwatch service: -
 - To share views and make recommendations to Shadow Healthwatch England;
 - To focus on Pathfinder transition projects and to support work to clarify the role of the Healthwatch; and
 - To advise the Care Quality Commission on reviews or investigations that it might wish to conduct.
- d. To carry out all functions economically and with the maximum effectiveness and efficiency whilst also ensuring independence.

2.2 Subject to further guidance from the Government, the scope of these functions covers health care for adults and children and social care for adults only.

2.3 Essex County Council wishes the HEP to explore how consumer championship can be provided in respect of all local government services provided by the County Council. However, the HEP's primary focus should be on health and social care. In deciding on how much time to allocate to broader issues, the HEP should have regard to those that have an impact on the level of need for health and social care in the long-term.

2.4 A more detailed description of the aims and objectives can be found in the Service Level Agreement.

3. Powers

Decision Making

- 3.1 To satisfy its aims the HEP will be constituted as an autonomous decision-making group within the Essex & Southend LINK and will have access (independent of any other LINK decision making groups) to all the powers that the law confers on LINKs.
- 3.2 The only exceptions to paragraph 3.1 are that:
 - a. any use of Enter & View powers by members of the HEP must comply with all the requirements relating to this purpose set out in the LINK governance framework until such time as the HEP Executive has defined its own requirements and these have been incorporated into this constitution;
 - b. the HEP is under a duty to collaborate with other Essex & Southend LINK decision taking bodies and with the local LINK host organisation in the interests of full and accurate reporting of income, expenditure and balances and of effective financial management arrangements and practice; and
 - c. during any period in which the HEP exists alongside any other decision-making group or groups of the Essex & Southend LINK, the HEP Executive should have regard to the plans and activities of such groups when taking its own decisions.
- 3.3 For matters connected with the development of Essex Healthwatch, the decisions of the Executive will take precedence over those of any other LINK decision taking group. This does not preclude the continuation of existing LINK activity, subject to existing LINK groups continuing to be funded by the County Council.

Participation

- 3.4 The Executive has the power to create committees and co-opt to those committees associate members and any other individuals deemed appropriate (subject to their consent) for specific tasks, enabling wider participation. However, such committees must each contain at least one Executive member.
- 3.5 The Executive will nominate as many of its members as are required to a seat or seats on the Essex Health & Wellbeing Board to assist in developing the joint health and well being strategy for Essex.

Resource Management

- 3.6 The Executive will have the power (through the host organisation for the LINK) to: -

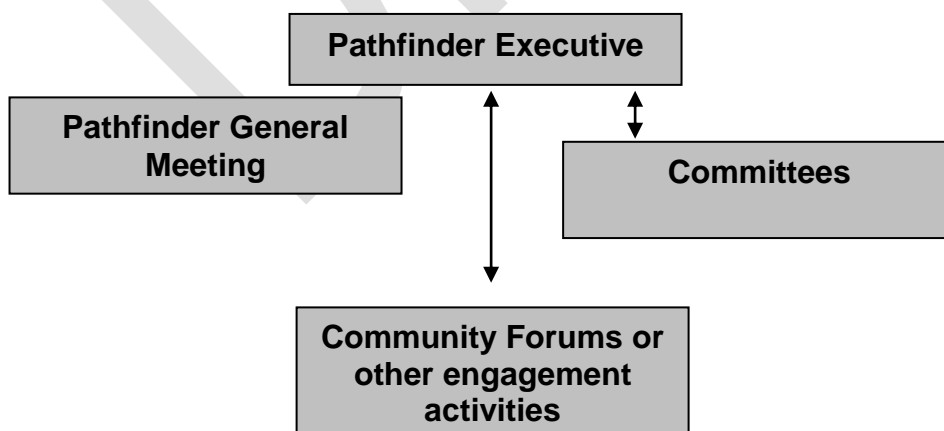
- manage its own budget – see Article 12;
- employ paid staff and recruit voluntary staff;
- rent premises or equipment;
- conduct research; and
- work in partnership with different organisations.

4. What is the legal status of the group?

- 4.1 As an autonomous group of the LINK, the HEP will be able to exercise full LINK powers as defined in Article 4. These powers belong to the HEP Executive but may be shared with associate members in the ways defined in this constitution.
- 4.2 The HEP will consist of a Pathfinder Executive and associate members. The Pathfinder Executive will have full decision-taking powers as described in this constitution and will be accountable to Essex County Council for efficiently and effectively fulfilling the purposes of the HEP. Associate members will join in the work of the HEP and may within the terms of this constitution be co-opted onto committees and other groups.

5. How will the group be run, and what structures will exist?

- 5.1 The HEP will have responsibility for developing its own internal structures. This should include the kinds of bodies described below.



- 5.2 **Pathfinder Executive** – This will be a decision making group comprising the Executive members, which should normally meet monthly. A full register of

interests must be maintained which is accurate and up to date, given the decision making role of this group, with conflicts of interest being declared at meetings. The Executive will be able to decide how to use such resources as the HEP attracts to carry out its functions in line with this constitution.

5.3 The HEP Executive's decisions will be made by consensus but where this cannot be reached voting will identify a majority view. Only those with voting rights (ie, properly appointed or formally co-opted members of the Executive) and who are present at the meeting may cast a vote. Members will not be able to designate other people to act as voting substitutes. In the event of a tie, the Chair may exercise a casting vote.

5.4 The following principles should be followed when making decisions to ensure they are done so in a transparent, accountable and effective manner. They are that decisions should be:

- made in public;
- made with justifiable reasoning
- based on a thorough evaluation of possible options;
- based on due consultation;
- informed by professional advice and information provided;
- proportionate to the desired outcome;
- respectful of human rights; and
- clearly linked to HEP the groups aims and objectives.

5.5 Article 7 outlines the process for managing meetings and includes further detail regarding decision making. Article 9 outlines financial restrictions placed on decision making.

5.6 **Pathfinder General Meeting** - All Executive and associate members will be invited to attend Pathfinder General meetings where all-member debates may take place. At least one such general meeting must take place during the lifetime of the Pathfinder. All members (including associates) must declare any conflicts of interest at General Meetings.

5.7 **Arrangements for committees and community forums** – The Executive may choose to establish committees or community forums or other engagement activities in Essex localities, which will be open to the public. It will be for the Executive to design and pilot what it considers to be the most effective locality and specialist groups or other engagement activities; and there is no presumption that formal meetings are required.

5.8 Decisions made in committees or community forums will be subject to final approval by the Executive unless the Executive has already made a decision to

delegate some of its decision making power, which must be done within specified tolerances.

Committees

- 5.9 The terms of reference, composition and powers for these must be agreed by the Executive. They may be convened to address special issues or oversee projects but must be time limited in nature. While they need not be comprised solely of Executive members they should include as a minimum two Executive members. All committee participants must adhere to the guidelines laid out for members in this governance framework (Article 6).
- 5.10 The Pathfinder Executive may choose to delegate some of its decision making powers to such a committee but where this is the case the Executive should clearly state the constraints that apply. The Executive may delegate a budget to a committee and the committee can only spend money up to the limit of this allocation. Where a committee does not include a two-thirds majority of Executive members, no budget delegation may exceed £5,000 per financial year.

Community Forums

- 5.11 These forums will encourage the public to share their views and provide an opportunity for them to give their feedback regarding health and social care. The public will therefore be able to raise items that relate to a local health or social care service, or to a health or social care issue, or to a wider public policy issue having a bearing on health and social care, and are in the public interest. The Executive will have the discretion to use different forms of community forum or other forms of community engagement as it sees fit; and this constitution does not imply that the HEP's community engagement work should be limited to formal forums. The Executive may choose to delegate a budget of no more than £2,000 per financial year to a community forum.
- 5.12 All the above meetings will require a full and comprehensive set of meeting minutes to document all key decisions and attendance information.

6. What specific duties and responsibilities will exist?

Chair of the Executive

- 6.1 The Pathfinder Executive will be responsible for electing the Chair, whose role will be separate and distinct from that of the Essex LINK Chair. The Executive may at its discretion define the period in office of the Chair. Should the Chair stand down, then a new Chair would be elected by the Executive.

- 6.2 In addition to the duties and responsibilities for Executive members (outlined below) the Chair will carry out the roles described in paragraphs 6.3 to 6.15.

Executive

- 6.3 To lead the Executive and to chair its meetings, having agreed a balanced agenda with the Executive Officer covering organisational priorities, performance, strategy, risk and people. To ensure Executive Members receive accurate, timely and clear information for robust debate and high-quality decision-making and to manage the Executive's meeting time so that it focuses on key issues.
- 6.4 To create the conditions for overall Executive and individual member effectiveness so that the Executive achieves its full potential. To facilitate and encourage active engagement of and appropriate challenge by the Executive, particularly on organisation strategy and priorities. To ensure that once an Executive decision is reached, there is appropriate delegation of authority to the Executive Officer.
- 6.5 To liaise with the County Council in any periodic reviews of the effectiveness and value for money of the Healthwatch Essex Pathfinder and over the development of detailed plans for Local Healthwatch .
- 6.6 To review the performance of the Executive Officer and to ensure that the performance of any other staff assigned to the HEP is reviewed..

Business

- 6.7 To be a sounding board for the Executive Officer and in particular in the formulation of governance, strategy, policy, operational processes and in succession planning for key roles within the organisation.
- 6.8 To provide leadership for the Organisation to staff, partners, health and social care commissioners, stakeholders, the media, the community and the public.
- 6.9 To promote constructive relations and open communication between the Executive Officer and other staff and members, both inside and outside the Executive meetings.

Stakeholder/engagement

- 6.10 To create the conditions for effective dialogue between the Executive and external stakeholders about the strategy, priorities and operations of the HEP.
- 6.11 To ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to gain the views of the public on health and social care issues, including associate issues which may affect health and wellbeing

- 6.12 To chair general meetings of the Organisation, making sure that they are conducted in a proper and efficient manner; that stakeholders have an opportunity to debate issues with all areas of opinion given a fair hearing; that stakeholder questions are answered.

Governance

- 6.13 To ensure that governance is in accordance with best practice and that there is a clear structure for, and effective running of, the Executive and its associated activity.
- 6.14 To lead the annual review with the Executive Officer of the Organisation's effectiveness and ensure that Executive members do the same.
- 6.15 To be a sounding board for the Executive Officer in the provision of tailored induction for new members and review and agree with each Executive member their training and development needs.

Vice Chair

- 6.16 In addition to the duties and responsibilities for Executive members (outlined below) the Vice Chair will have the roles described in paragraphs 6.17 to 6.19.
- 6.17 Carrying out the chair's duties in his or her absence,
- 6.18 Providing support and assistance to the chair in carrying out his or her responsibilities, acting as a 'critical friend' and sounding board
- 6.19 Taking on specific responsibilities from the chair, with the acknowledgement of the board as being capable and suitable to do so.

Executive Members

- 6.20 Executive Members will have the following general duties and responsibilities:
- ~ attending a majority of Executive meetings;
 - ~ determining the strategic direction of HEP;
 - ~ allocating resources to priorities;
 - ~ carrying out HEP's duties and responsibilities as described in the SLA;
 - ~ attending meetings with a variety of health and social care commissioners to represent public views as gathered through outreach work;
 - ~ representing the Healthwatch Pathfinder at meetings of the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board;

- ~ championing and representing public concern or opinion about health and social care issues or Essex County Council services;
- ~ providing opinions informed by public feedback;
- ~ overseeing reports compiled by HEP and make recommendations based on this information;
- ~ providing a link (and communication) between the public and health and social care commissioners;
- ~ engaging in monitoring and reporting on the work of HEP to ensure effective, efficient and economical operation;
- ~ identifying gaps in existing advice and advocacy services and commissioning services or making recommendations based on this information;
- ~ maintaining communications with officers who provide professional advice and guidance to inform; recommendations and support implementation;
- ~ representing HEP effectively when appointed to outside bodies;
- ~ attending any necessary training to support effective undertaking of the role;
- ~ acting at all times in accordance with the constitution and the law and
- ~ upholding and promoting the constitution,
- ~ preparing, approving and assessing a range of projects, research, and reports that will help Healthwatch fulfil its role; and
- ~ co-ordinating and attending forums, committees and committees with a variety of stakeholders (including user-groups and partners) where these will help Healthwatch to deliver its aims.

6.21 The following duties are specific to monthly Pathfinder Executive meetings: -

- ~ preparing for, attending and participating in meetings;
- ~ ensuring prompt progress against allocated actions;
- ~ Identifying conflicts of interest and notifying the chair; and
- ~ requesting items for the agenda at least 5 days before the meeting.

Associate Members

6.22 Associate members are not appointed and are therefore not inherently obligated to the same roles and responsibilities as Executive members. They are, however, required to adhere to the same code of conduct when engaged in HEP business. However, if appointed to a committee of the Executive they are obligated to the same duties and responsibilities as Executive members.

6.23 Associate members will be eligible to take part in community forums as well as attend general meetings and, as observers, the Executive's meetings. They may also be appointed to committees by the Executive. At these meetings, associates should champion and represent public concerns and opinion regarding health and social care. Associates should communicate freely with Executive members regarding items of Executive business where they feel they have a useful input.

Staff

- 6.24 Any officers appointed as policy advisers or executive officers to support the Pathfinder Executive will have the following roles and responsibilities:-
- ~ monitoring performance and budgets and supporting members in undertaking their roles;
 - ~ delivering or commissioning activities based on Executive decisions and recommendations;
 - ~ identifying issues the HEP is facing and communicating these to executive members and ECC, and to support issue resolution;
 - ~ managing the day to day running of HEP for all groups identified to support the SLA;
 - ~ assisting members in delivering projects and producing reports as agreed by the Executive;
 - ~ providing training, guidance, professional advice or information and support to members;
 - ~ set up a user friendly website that with regard to fulfilling its functions;
 - ~ ensure a phone line is manned between the hours of 09.00 and 16.00 Monday to Friday and an answer phone system at all other times; and
 - ~ make information from completed projects publicly available, incorporating into Essex Insights where necessary.

7. What procedures will exist for managing meetings?

Pathfinder Executive Meetings

- 7.1 The procedures for meeting are as follows;
- ~ Meetings will be held on a monthly basis and held in a convenient and accessible location.
 - ~ The quorum for meetings will be 50% of Executive members.
 - ~ Executive members may not nominate voting substitutes in their absence.
 - ~ Executive meetings will be open to the public (including associate members) unless the chair indicates that a private discussion is needed of an agenda item.
 - ~ A private discussion is permissible only where the item relates to a subject that inherently involves matters of a personally confidential nature; and no valid decision to spend public money or use the legal powers of the LINK can be made in such a private discussion.
 - ~ Formal meetings in private should only be held in exceptional circumstances. No valid decision on spending of public money or use of the LINKs' legal powers can be made in such a meeting.

- ~ A regular agenda item will provide opportunity for public or associate member questions.
- ~ Agendas and reports with sufficient notice of decisions to be taken will be published at least five working days before any meeting
- ~ Minutes will be a matter of public record and published within 5 working days following the meeting.

Pathfinder General Meetings

- 7.2 Pathfinder General Meetings are based on need rather than a regular schedule, although at least one should be held during the life of the pathfinder. They may be called: -
- Where the Pathfinder Executive feel it would be useful for an all member debate on a given issue (rather than associate members only having direct input during a regular question and answer session at the Pathfinder Executive).
 - Where associate members request the Executive's Chair to call a Pathfinder General Meeting – but this would require support from at least 50 associate members.
- 7.3 In either scenario above, and where practical to do so, these meetings should be held directly before or after the monthly Pathfinder Executive Meeting. This would reduce the administration bureaucracy of meetings. The procedures for Executive meetings relating to location, public attendance and agenda, report and minute circulation will also apply to these meetings.

Committees and Community Forums

- 7.4 The Pathfinder Executive will be responsible for developing the terms of reference for these groups, with the support of its officers. In general, however, no committee or community forum may take a valid decision on any use of LINK legal powers including the power to spend without at least five working days' notice having been given to the public of the agenda and items for decision. Where such a decision is to be taken, members should declare any conflicts of interest and in that case not take part in making the decision. Minutes of committee and community forum meetings will be a matter of public record and will be published no later than five working days after the meeting.

8. What is the approach to dispute resolution?

- 8.1 In the first instance disputes should be handled via the normal decision making route for the Pathfinder Executive (see Article 3) – where this is not possible the

dispute should be escalated to Essex County Council (as the responsible Local Authority) for resolution.

- 8.2 Any disputes over the interpretation of this constitution shall be resolved by simple majority vote at a Pathfinder Executive meeting, and be in accordance with Article 11 of this constitution.

9. Financial Arrangements

- 9.1 Essex County Council will make a proportion of the LINK grant each year available to the Pathfinder Executive. This money may only be spent by the Executive through arrangements consistent with this constitution and to achieve the outcomes identified through the Service Level Agreement (SLA). Funding will be provided in regular instalments. In the event that HEP is found to be seriously failing to meet the performance criteria agreed in the service level agreement, Essex County Council may withhold some portion of funding.
- 9.2 The funds and assets of the HEP would belong to the LINK and the LINK's host organisation would be accountable for these. In the event of the dissolution of the LINK by the new Act, transfers would take place under the terms of the Act; otherwise, funds and assets would come back to Essex County Council as stipulated through the contract with the host organisation.
- 9.3 The host organisation will act as treasurer and be accountable for keeping up-to-date financial records, making timely and accurate financial reports to the Executive and ensuring value for money. The accounts will also be subject to periodic independent examination through the external audit arrangements made by the host. Essex County Council also has the right to ask its internal auditors to carry out an audit of the HEP arrangements.
- 9.4 Urgent spending decisions under £1,000 can be agreed by the Chair or Vice Chair of the Executive. Over the course of a year no more than £6,000 can be spent via such urgent action. All other spending decisions must be made by the Executive or a committee of the Executive or community forum with clear financial delegations and within the requirements of this constitution.
- 9.5 Members will receive reasonable expenses for travel and subsistence costs incurred whilst carrying out Healthwatch work.

10. Performance monitoring

- 10.1 HEP is required to make regular reports (outcome and finance based) and attend performance management meetings with ECC as agreed in the Service Level Agreement.
- 10.2 Key performance metrics should be identified by the Executive and agreed by ECC, which may also propose its own metrics.
- 10.3 Members should take a lead role in monitoring the effectiveness of HEP. Officers are required to support members in this function by providing them with relevant information and producing reports. Where required members should uphold confidentiality to ensure sensitive or damaging information is not in the public domain.
- 10.4 Members must not disclose information given to them in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which they believe or are aware, is of a confidential nature, except where:
 - you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;
 - you are required by law to do so;
 - the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person;
 - reasonable and in the public interest;
 - it prevents another person from gaining access to information to which they are entitled to by law.
- 10.5 HEP will be expected to produce publications periodically on its work and these publications are required to be publicly available. Also publications produced should pay due regard to the guidelines laid out in this constitution.
- 10.6 Publications produced by HEP may be attributed to their authors or to the HEP itself when the Executive decides to express a corporate view.

11. Amendments to the Constitution

- 11.1 This constitution is a living document, and that means it may need to be changed and updated as circumstances change. Essex County Council has the power to change the constitution at any time and will notify the Pathfinder Executive and the LINK host organisation in writing if it does so.
- 11.2 Any other proposals to change the constitution should be discussed at Pathfinder Executive meetings, If at least two thirds of the Executive's members are in agreement, then a recommendation should be made to ECC for its consideration.
- 11.3 All changes should be identified on the change log attached as appendix A to this document.

12. Dissolution of the group

- 12.1 Subject to changes in primary and secondary legislation, HEP will either dissolve automatically when the decision is made by Ministers or by the County Council or other proper authority to wind up the LINK and replace it with Local Healthwatch .

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Appendix A

Constitution change log

Date of proposed amendment	Article to be amended	Current text	New text	Date agreed by Executive

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Appendix 2

How is the membership of the organisation defined?

- 1.1 Up to 24 members will be appointed to sit on the HEP Executive by Essex County Council. Nominations for membership will be invited from existing LINK members and from all those using or potentially in need of health and social care services in Essex. Successful applicants will demonstrate the ability to fulfil the duties outlined in Article 6 of the constitution.
- 1.2 The selection process will be through application forms only and decisions will be made by an appointment panel, made up of three non-executive Essex County Councillors, and an equal number of service-user representatives. The appointment panel will discuss and review the application forms provided by a separate shortlisting panel of independent service users trained in research.
- 1.3 Anyone who is over the age of 18 and lives within the county boundaries of Essex, or anyone who uses health or social care services within Essex, is eligible to apply to become a member of the HEP Executive. However, the following exceptions apply:
 - a. Major health or social care providers (and their employees) who provide services to the people of Essex;
 - b. People whose work directly involves them in commissioning health or social care services for Essex, or in commissioning or making strategic policy for other Essex County Council services;
 - c. All county councillors and any district councillors who hold an executive position in their council; and
 - d. Criminal Record Bureau checks will be mandatory for members-designate of the Pathfinder Executive. If these raise issues about suitability, the panel may take them into account when deciding whether to confirm or rescind appointment.
- 1.4 Should any Executive places become vacant they will be filled either by co-option under paragraph 1.5 or, if all co-opted places are already filled, by another selection process as defined in paragraph 1.2 will be undertaken. All associate members and other interested parties will be invited to apply but will be subject to the eligibility criteria outlined above. However given the time limited nature of the Executive, vacancies will not be filled by appointment process within three months of any definite published date for the commencement of Local Healthwatch proper.

- 1.5 The Executive will have the power to co-opt new members to its own number, with full participation and voting rights, provided that the number of co-opted members at no time exceeds four. In exercising this power, the Executive will not override the exclusions in paragraph 1.3 and will have due regard to paragraph 1.6.
- 1.6 The selection process will ensure that appointments are made with respect to equality and are representative of the diversity of the service user population, including strong links to a range of voluntary sector organisations.
- 1.7 The HEP will include associate members as well as executive members, and the Executive will be tasked with recruiting associates who in time will become members of the LHWO proper [see previous comments about the superfluous use of 'proper']. No limit will be placed on the number of associate members recruited and those interested should register their associate membership with the Pathfinder Executive. Subject to paragraph 1.9, there are no exclusions on associate membership.
- 1.8 Both executive and associate members will hold office from the date of commencement of this constitution until the date of commencement of Local Healthwatch proper [again see previous comments re 'proper'].
- 1.9 Executive or associate members of the HEP will only be liable to removal from their roles upon conviction for criminal offences, serious breaches of an HEP code of conduct or the Nolan Principles (Appendix 3) or for contravening this constitution. The final decision on removals will be made by a panel constituted in the same way as the appointment panel.
- 1.10 Essex County Council will make best efforts to find policy advisers and executive officers for the HEP. These officers may be seconded from ECC or other organisations, subject to the terms and conditions of their employers. All staff will be subject to the organisations constitution and code of conduct. Administrative support to HEP will also be provided by the LINK host, working alongside any seconded officers. These officers will ultimately support members in meeting the service expectations outlined in the service level agreement.
- 1.11 Since the form of membership of Local Healthwatch proper will not be known until Ministerial Regulations are issued following the enactment of the Bill, Executive members of the HEP will not automatically become full members of the final Essex Healthwatch.

Appendix 3

The organisations code of conduct

1.1 Any member (executive or associate) may be asked to stand down if they are seriously failing in their role or in violation of the HEP code of conduct which should include the following items:

- ~ Individuals should treat others with respect they would expect in return.
- ~ Nobody should bully any person or intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person.
- ~ Individuals should not do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of HEP.
- ~ Individuals should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability
- ~ All individuals should work in partnership to improve the quality and provision of health and social care

1.2 Furthermore all individuals would be required to work in accordance with the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life and the general code of conduct:

- ~ **Selflessness** – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- ~ **Integrity** – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- ~ **Objectivity** – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- ~ **Accountability** – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- ~ **Openness** – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- ~ **Honesty** – Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- ~ **Leadership** – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Executive Members

1.3 In addition Executive members are required to adhere to the following code of conduct: -

- ~ to serve only the public interest and never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person;
- ~ to not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, and should not behave improperly including giving the appearance of inappropriate behaviour;
- ~ to take decisions based on merit;
- ~ to be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities and should co- operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny process;
- ~ to take account of the views of others, but reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with them;
- ~ to respect the impartiality and integrity of the HEP officers;
- ~ to uphold the law and, on all occasions;
- ~ to do whatever they are able to do to ensure their resources are used prudently and in accordance with the law;
- ~ to be aware of their role and responsibilities and work in accordance with both, to the best of their abilities; and
- ~ to identify individual learning and development needs and participate fully in training opportunities provided.