

## **Task Group Terms of Reference**

### **Name:**

Mental Health Task Group

### **Aims:**

The aim of the Mental Health Task Group is to support Healthwatch Kingston (HWK) in its work with a specific focus on Mental Health services in Kingston upon Thames.

### **Objectives:**

- To propose priorities and a work plan for the mental health task group in line with Healthwatch Kingston's strategy for agreement by the Board of HWK
- To provide input in HWK responses to mental health concerns and issues raised by members of the public
- To gather feedback from local people on mental health issues, passing this on to Healthwatch Kingston staff and the Board as appropriate. Feedback to be gathered systematically by using:
  - Surveys and questionnaires
  - Focus Groups
  - Attending special interest meetings
  - Other methods agreed by the Board
- To represent Healthwatch Kingston at mental health meetings and events as agreed with the Board
- To put forward members to assist Healthwatch Kingston in investigating mental health services, for instance through Enter & View
- To review the task group's priorities and work plan regularly to ensure they are relevant, and to recommend these to the Board for final approval

### **Accountability:**

The Mental Health Task Group will be accountable to the Board of Healthwatch Kingston.

### **Working methods:**

- The MH Task Group will appoint a chair and a deputy who will be responsible, together with HWK staff, for deciding and circulating the agenda and notes for meetings
- A member of staff will attend each meeting to take notes and report back any issues and concerns to the Board
- Notice of meetings will be given two weeks in advance. Board members will be notified of the dates and may attend by confirming with the MH Task Group chair or a member of staff
- Meetings will take place every 6-8 weeks, with notes to be circulated to members no later than 2 weeks after each meeting
  - The Board will receive a copy of the notes
  - The notes will be made publicly available on the HWK website
- Reports that are produced by the MH Task Group must be approved by the Board before publication
- Members are expected to follow up on any actions assigned to them within the deadline given and report back using the provided forms
- Members are required to adhere to HWK/ Parkwood Healthcare Data Protection and Confidentiality policies to ensure that data is stored and circulated in the appropriate way
- Members are required to abide the HWK code of conduct and any other policies and procedures which apply to the work of the MH Task Group

- Members are expected to represent HWK only, not their own interests, and to declare any conflicts of interest in advance
- Members are asked to record their hours so HWK has an overview of the number of hours its volunteers provide

**Membership:**

- Membership is open to Healthwatch Kingston members, local people with an interest in mental health services and representatives of people with mental health conditions in Kingston upon Thames
- Members will be appointed by the Board; existing members and staff can recommend new members to the Board for appointment
- The Board may remove any member who fails to abide by the HWK Code of Conduct and any other policies and procedures which apply to the work of the MH Task Group
- Depending on their role, members of the MH Task Group may be asked to undergo a DBS check
- All Board members will be ex-officio members of the Task Group; the Board will endeavour to ensure that at least one Board member attends each meeting of the Group
- Membership is on a voluntary basis and may be cancelled by a member at any time, although a minimum of two weeks notice is requested where possible
- The Task Group will need a minimum of five members to be operational and a maximum of 10 members (excluding Board members)
- Representatives from mental health services may be invited at the MH Task Group's discretion
- Members are asked to provide as much notice as possible if they cannot attend an event or meeting, either internally or externally
- Membership is reviewed by the Board regularly

**Other:**

- Members of the MH Task Group may claim back reasonable expenses incurred through their work - details are provided in HWK/ Parkwood Healthcare policy and procedure

**Amendments to the Terms of Reference:**

Any amendments to the Terms of Reference must be approved by the Board of Healthwatch Kingston.

Date approved by the HWK Board: .....

Date adopted/ agreed by the MH Task Group: .....

Signed by: ..... on behalf of the HWK Board

Print name: