**Healthwatch Priority Project Decision Checklist**

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| Proposer: Alexia Farmer |  | Date proposed: 09.05.24 |  |
| Decision to be made on proposed Healthwatch Funding to focus on targeted engagement with underrepresented groups and carers. |
| Summary of decision to be made ***A decision is required on whether*** * **To focus efforts on engaging with under representative groups in Sandwell.**
* **To gather the experiences of carers from underrepresented groups including young children with SEND.**

***should be a priority project for HWS this year because of the following evidence/ intelligence received:*** *To undertake engagement with ethnic minority and underrepresented groups across Sandwell.*• Particular ethnic minority groups •Carers • People with disabilities • Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer people• Refugees/asylum seekers• People who are homeless • Younger people • People with language barriersAlso, to further engage with carers in Sandwell. We will focus our efforts on engaging with people who care for someone predominantly from ethnic minority backgrounds and children with SEND needs. Sandwell MBC have recently reviewed their Carers strategy to look at gaps, challenges and opportunities to support carers. On the back of this we are also going to talk to carers across age ranges to gather their experiences, and challenges of being a carer and the support that they receive.  |
| How much evidence is available about the issue? (1 being limited evidence from limited sources, 4 being well researched with a range of evidence from a range of robust sources)? 4 /4Information to support score: **Between 2011 and 2021 Sandwell has the 5th highest population increase across the West Midlands conurbation.** **Asian and British Asia make up over 26% of the population of Sandwell whilst we also have increasing establish communities from Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East. There is evidence to show that there are higher levels of health inequalities within many of these communities in relation to understanding how to access the right services, getting the right support and help in relation to health and care.** **We want to look at the barrier’s and challenges that people from underrepresented groups have when accessing health and care services.** **We will be working with groups and individuals and asking a series of short questions around:*** **Digital Inequalities and GP access (how do people access their GP)**
* **Do people care for someone (if they do, what support do they receive)**
* **Do people know where to go to access the right support**

**This will be undertaken through a questionnaire (outreach) and through making contact with existing groups.** Reason for score: **Underrepresented groups often face higher health inequalities as evidence shows.**  |
| Is the issue going to impact on lots of people? (1 being relatively little, 4 being community wide and likely to affect large numbers of people)  3 /4**There are currently 35,084 carers in Sandwell, almost one third of whom are caring for over 50 hours per week, a projected increase of 6.8% since the 2011 Census.****A further significant increase in the number of carers can be expected towards the next census when published in 2022: using data from the 2011 census, it is estimated that there were 36,796 carers in 2021, and 41,105 carers by 2036. The carer’s population in Sandwell may exceed 49,000 by 2037, according to Carers UK estimates.****There is also an increase in parents and carers with children with SEND. We want to speak to parents as carers about the support they receive from Sandwell MBC and other stakeholders to see of the resources that they receive or can access suits their needs** Reason for score:**Sandwell as a increasing diverse population from many ethnic backgrounds. Some communities are fairly new to Sandwell. There are also a large number of ethnic minority people that are not registered with a GP / often find it difficult due to language barriers.****The increase in the number of carers in Sandwell and to see whether the resources on offer by Sandwell Council and its stakeholders is meeting the demand. Look at what the main gaps are in provision.**  |
| What is the impact on people in community groups who experience health inequalities and who feel their voice is seldom heard? (1 being relatively little, 4 likely to affect large numbers of those seldom heard)**Underrepresented groups or groups of people that are seldom heard find it more difficult to navigate the health and care sector and are more likely to experience health inequalities but also not getting the right support at the right time.**  3/4Reason for score:**There is local and national evidence that underrepresented groups often face higher levels of health inequalities for a number of reasons including knowing where to go for the right care.**  |
| Does the issue help HWS to have a positive influence on health and social care services? (1 being unlikely to, 4 being highly likely to)**Healthwatch Sandwell already has a good reach of people and groups that are engaged with through outreach, projects and through awareness raising. We want to delve even deeper into access people that are underrepresented or have challenges in getting the right support.****This maybe due to a number of factors:****Education****Language Barriers****Cultural** **Poverty****By extending our reach we would be able to gather more data on health inequalities and health and care experiences, signpost people to the right support and share data with providers and commissioners so that improvements or reasonable adjustments can be made to support underrepresented groups.**  2 /4Reason for score: **Raise awareness of Healthwatch, gather evidence on peoples experiences, able to raise issues or concerns with providers, build up an increasing relationship with commissioners and providers.**  |
| Does the issue align with local strategies and needs assessments? (1 being little alignment, and 4 being significant alignment)[**https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/carers/sandwells-carers-strategy**](https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/carers/sandwells-carers-strategy)[**The Health Of People From Ethnic Minority Groups In England | The King's Fund (kingsfund.org.uk)**](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/long-reads/health-people-ethnic-minority-groups-england) 3 /4Reason for score: **Sandwell carers strategy has recently been reviewed. We want to look at the support / experiences that ethnic minority care receives. This will identify if the resources or offer aligns with the care support that people can receive.**  |
| Is the issue already being dealt with effectively by someone else? (1 being dealt with satisfactorily by someone else, 4 not being dealt with at all)**Whilst there is support through Sandwell Council, carers groups and through Crossroad’s care as examples we want to specifically find out peoples experiences of accessing health and care services, identify best practice but also where there are gaps in services delivery.** 2.5/4 |
| Total score: 17.5/24 Vote of HAB members taken: Yes Majority reached: Yes |
| Decision of the HAB: Agreed May 2024 |
| Reasons why the decision was made: Data and outcomes show that there needs to be more understanding re inequalities in underrepresented groups  |
| Date decision ratified:  |