

Appendix 1: Health Overview & Scrutiny Recommendation Response Pro Forma

Where a joint health overview and scrutiny committee makes a report or recommendation to a responsible person (a relevant NHS body or a relevant health service provider[this can include the County Council]), the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 provide that the committee may require a response from the responsible person to whom it has made the report or recommendation and that person must respond in writing within 28 days of the request.

This template provides a structure which respondents are encouraged to use. However, respondents are welcome to depart from the suggested structure provided the same information is included in a response. The usual way to publish a response is to include it in the agenda of a meeting of the body to which the report or recommendations were addressed.

Issue: Retaining the functions of Healthwatch Oxfordshire

Lead Cabinet Member(s) or Responsible Person:

- Matthew Tait (Chief Delivery Officer, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board).
- Dan Leveson (Director of Places & Communities, BOB ICB)
- Stephen Chandler (Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director for People, Oxfordshire County Council).
- Ansaf Azhar (Director of Public Health, Oxfordshire County Council).
- Karen Fuller (Director of Adult Social Care, Oxfordshire County Council).

It is requested that a response is provided to the recommendation outlined below:

Deadline for response: Tuesday 4th November 2025.

Response to report:

Enter text here.

We acknowledge and appreciate the recommendation from the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the safeguarding and development of the Healthwatch function, and the importance of engaging and meaningfully consulting with all local stakeholders to ensure national reforms meet patient and community needs at neighbourhood level.

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It is important to clarify that Healthwatch Oxfordshire operates under a statutory framework, as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012. As such, the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) and system partners do not have the authority to directly safeguard or alter its statutory functions. However, we fully recognise and value the unique role Healthwatch plays in amplifying the independent patient and public voice, and its contribution to shaping services through evidence-based insight.

While we cannot commit to safeguarding Healthwatch’s statutory function, the ICB and system partners are committed to ensuring the patient and public voice remains central to our work. We will continue to work collaboratively with Healthwatch Oxfordshire and other community partners to ensure that community insight informs our planning, decision-making, development and delivery of services, particularly as we implement national reforms.

We also welcome the opportunity for Oxfordshire HOSC to scrutinise any local decisions relating to patient and public engagement before they are made, and will ensure transparency and openness in our approach.

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation	Accepted, rejected or partially accepted	Proposed action (including if different to that recommended) and indicative timescale.
<p>‘For system partners to safeguard and develop the Healthwatch function, and to engage and meaningfully consult with all local stakeholders, to ensure the local delivery of national reforms at neighbourhood level best meet patient and community need. It is recommended that the Oxfordshire JHOSC has an opportunity to scrutinise any local decisions on this before they are made.’</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>We cannot commit to safeguarding Healthwatch’s statutory function, the ICB and system partners are committed to ensuring the patient and public voice remains central to our work. We will continue to work collaboratively with Healthwatch Oxfordshire and other community partners to ensure that community insight informs our planning, decision-making, development and delivery of services, particularly as we implement national reforms.</p> <p>We also welcome the opportunity for Oxfordshire HOSC to scrutinise any local decisions relating to patient and public engagement before they are made, and will ensure transparency and openness in our approach.</p>

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