

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Item No.</b>
<b>Open / Closed</b>	

<b>Meeting:</b>	Bury Health and Wellbeing Board
<b>Meeting date:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
<b>Title of report:</b>	Healthwatch Bury Annual Report 2024-25
<b>Report by:</b>	Andrew Griffiths – Chief Operating Officer for Healthwatch Bury
<b>Decision Type:</b>	<b>Information / Discussion</b>
<b>Ward(s) to which report relates</b>	<b>All wards in Bury</b>

## Executive Summary:

### 1. Overview

Healthwatch Bury strengthened its role as the independent champion for people using local health and social care services, expanding engagement and influencing system decisions across Bury and Greater Manchester. Key focus areas included inequalities, navigation, and amplifying seldom-heard voices.

### 2. Key Highlights

#### Leadership & Infrastructure

- New Chief Officer, Andrew Griffiths, appointed — driving visibility, sustainability, and community reach.
- Opened a new accessible town centre office, now functioning as a community hub for drop-ins and partner events.

## Community Reach

- 400+ residents shared direct feedback.
- 1,300+ engagements via events, drop-ins, and outreach.
- 5,435 website visits for information and signposting.
- Extensive outreach with seldom-heard groups: asylum seekers, homeless residents, carers, veterans, sensory impairment groups.

## 3. Major Projects & Impact

### Women's Health

- Identified significant barriers across life stages.
- Outcomes: GM Women's Health Steering Group established; GP training increased; menopause support expanded.

### Dementia

- Highlighted gaps in diagnosis and post-diagnosis support.
- Led to re-establishing the Dementia Steering Group and informing a new boroughwide dementia strategy.

### Prescriptions

- Captured patient challenges with digital access, delays, and GP pathways.
- Informed the ICP and triggered a follow-up study on patient-led prescribing.

### Clearer Communications

- Feedback from >140 patients led to standardised, clearer NCA appointment letters, improving accessibility and reducing non-attendance.

### Eye Care (National Project Contribution)

- Local insights informed Healthwatch England's A Strain on Sight national report.

## 4. Support for Vulnerable Residents

Healthwatch directly supported individuals with:

- Delayed Continuing Healthcare decisions
- Domestic abuse-related communication risks
- Unmet social care needs
- Long waits for surgery

- Digital exclusion affecting access to prescriptions and GP services

These interventions resulted in improved care coordination, safety, and access.

## 5. Finance

- Core Local Authority funding: £122,000 (unchanged for 11 years).
- Additional income: £12,700 plus ICS collaborative funding.
- Total expenditure exceeded income, indicating future sustainability considerations.

## 6. Priorities for 2025–2026

1. Reducing inequalities, especially in deprived communities.
2. Identifying unmet needs, including focused work with veterans.
3. Improving health and care navigation across the system.

Cross-cutting theme: Visibility

Increasing reach, recognition, and engagement across all communities in Bury.

## **Recommendation(s)**

### **That:**

The report is noted and the work of Healthwatch Bury be recognised as valuable and effective in supporting people reaching appropriate outcomes when they need it.

### **Key considerations:**

#### **Introduction/ Background:**

Healthwatch Bury has been the independent voice of patients and service users in Bury since 2013, providing support to individuals who need it across a range of topics.

#### **Key Issues for the Board to consider:**

The changing landscape following the Dash Report and what the future may look like for the independent public voice going forward.

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## **Community impact/links with Community Strategy**

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**Equality Impact and considerations:**

*Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:*

*A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -*

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

*The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.*

<b>Equality Analysis</b>	<i>Please provide a written explanation of the outcome(s) of either conducting an initial or full EA.</i>

*\*Please note: Approval of a cabinet report is paused when the 'Equality/Diversity implications' section is left blank and approval will only be considered when this section is completed.*

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**Legal Implications:**

*To be completed by the Council's Monitoring Officer*

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**Financial Implications:**

*To be completed by the Council's Section 151 Officer*

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**Report Author and Contact Details:**

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**Background papers:**

Healthwatch Bury Annual Report 2024 - 25

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning