

State of support

Local Healthwatch funding survey: Key findings

Overview

A survey of 148 local Healthwatch about their funding for 2015/16 indicates that:

- Two thirds of local Healthwatch maintaining their funding or receiving increase.
- There will be a total reduction of just under £1.4m (4%) affecting 27% of local Healthwatch in 2015-16.
- The average reduction being experienced is £33,782 (13.1%) but ranging up to 53%.

While the reasons for funding reductions are often not clear, the most significant funding reductions include those in areas where health and care budgets and services are under pressure including:

- Eight local Healthwatch working in challenged health economies, and
- 11 local Healthwatch working with Trusts in or recently in special measures.

We are concerned that in certain areas health and social consumers could be left without a strong voice. We have written to a number of councils where significant reductions in local Healthwatch funding have been reported.



What is the history of local Healthwatch funding?

- Funding is given to local authorities to commission providers of their local Healthwatch.
- The Government originally announced a total of £43.5m¹, which was handed out to local authorities in 2013/14.
- Following research indicating that only £33.5m got through to front line local Healthwatch services in 2013-14, we were asked by the Minister of State for Community and Social Care to provide transparency about future funding.

What does the funding situation look like for 2015/16?

Carried out between March and May, our survey received responses from 147 of 148 local Healthwatch.

2015/16 Financial position	No. of local Healthwatch	As a % of local Healthwatch that know their budget for 2015/16
Increasing by more than £5k	5	3.6%
Decreasing by more than £5k	37	26.6%
Staying the Same or less than £5k change	97	69.8%
Unaware of funding for 2015-16	7	-
Figures varied between years to include/exclude complaints advocacy making like with like comparison of local Healthwatch funding impossible.	1	-
No response yet	1	-

¹ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/140319-0001.htm>



From the figures provided by local Healthwatch, we estimate that the network will receive a total of £32m in 2015/16.

However, while the majority of local authorities have maintained investment in local Healthwatch, a minority of local Healthwatch appear to be absorbing the largest reductions in funding.

What impact will this have?

Local authorities are required to have a local Healthwatch that is able to effectively fulfil its statutory duties.

Reductions in budget of this size and scale will inevitably affect what these local Healthwatch are able to deliver. We are concerned that this could limit the opportunity for consumers to have a voice in health and social care services.

What are we going to do?

We are contacting the ten councils which have overseen the most disproportionate reduction in their Healthwatch budget.

In many cases we are using our statutory powers to ask the councils to outline their contingency plans setting out when additional funds would be released to the local Healthwatch, the factors that will be taken into account in this decision, and who will make this decision

How are local Healthwatch being supported?

We have published a range of resources and held a number of events to support local Healthwatch in negotiations with their local authority commissioners.



What does the funding look like in my area?

Table 1: Ten local Healthwatch receiving the largest percentage cuts in 2015-16 (as of 8th June 2015)

Local Healthwatch	2015/16 Healthwatch Funding	2014/15 Healthwatch Funding	local Healthwatch funding difference between 2014/15 and 2015/16	Percentage Difference between 2014/15 and 2015/16
Hounslow	£89,378	£191,611	-£102,233	-53.4%
Blackpool ²	£58,000	£120,000	-£62,000	-51.7%
Harrow	£100,000	£175,000	-£75,000	-42.9%
Leicestershire	£187,391	£275,000	-£87,609	-31.9%
Ealing	£160,300	£218,000	-£57,700	-26.5%
Bradford and District ³	£223,692	£303,000	-£79,308	-26.2%
Barnsley	£150,000	£201,500	-£51,500	-25.6%
Calderdale	£120,000	£150,000	-£30,000	-20.0%
Northamptonshire	£355,000	£435,000	-£80,000	-18.4%
York	£115,000	£140,000	-£25,000	-17.9%

² Blackpool council has already written to Healthwatch England confirming their intention to make more funding available to the local Healthwatch. Healthwatch England is therefore not using our statutory powers in this instance and we are in contact with the council to clarify the amount of additional funding and when it will be released.

³ The £303,000 figure for 2014/15 was provided at an earlier date; we have since been informed that Healthwatch Bradford and District received an extra £5,692. This will give an overall difference of 27.5%.



Table 2: Remaining local Healthwatch funding comparison 2014/15 and 2015/16 and the reduction in local council funding through settlement

Note: Overall, the network received additional funding of £291,670 from councils in 2014/15 mainly in support of the set up and transition stage that many local Healthwatch had been going through.

Local Healthwatch	2015/16 Healthwatch Funding	2014/15 Healthwatch Funding
Barking and Dagenham	£124,000	£124,000
Barnet	£197,361	£197,361
Barnsley	£150,000	£201,500
Bath & North East Somerset	£81,579	£81,579
Bedford Borough	£93,000	£92,000
Bexley	£134,000	£134,400
Birmingham ⁴	£445,382	£445,382
Blackburn with Darwen	£165,000	£160,000
Blackpool	£58,000	£120,000
Bolton	£224,500	£224,500
Bracknell Forest	£100,122	£98,000
Bradford and District	£223,692	£303,000
Brent	£150,000	£176,600

⁴ Additional funding of £190k was provided in 2013/14 and 2014/15 to support setup and development



Brighton and Hove	£234,000	£234,000
Bristol ⁵	£422,343	£400,000
Bromley	£126,384	£144,169
Buckinghamshire ⁶	£240,000	£240,000
Bury	£122,000	£144,000
Cambridgeshire	£287,602	£318,000
Camden	£244,538	£257,430
Calderdale	£120,000	£150,000
Central Bedfordshire	£140,000	£140,000
Central West London	Not yet confirmed	£500,000
Cheshire East	£178,000	£170,000
Cheshire West	£189,385	£189,385
City of London	£54,678	£54,678
Cornwall	£309,886	£309,000
County Durham	£198,000	£197,226
Coventry ⁷	£239,000	£237,000
Croydon	£245,000	£245,000
Cumbria	£286,000	£286,000
Darlington	£131,697	£131,697

⁵ The figures for both 2014/15 and 2015/16 include complaints advocacy service funding; the Healthwatch contract is £278,912 for 2015/16.

⁶ Also received an additional \$21,670 in 2014/15 for an extra piece of work

⁷ The figures for both years also include complaints advocacy services funding, which we are not able to distinguish between local Healthwatch funding and complaints advocacy service funding.



Derby	£235,000	£230,000
Derbyshire	£321,114	£321,114
Devon	£468,295	£468,295
Doncaster	£279,950	£279,998
Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole	£446,700	£446,700
Dudley	£206,698	£206,712
Ealing	£160,300	£218,000
East Riding of Yorkshire	£180,000	£212,012
East Sussex	£395,000	£390,000
Enfield	£264,108	£268,640
Essex	£780,000	£780,000
Gateshead	£150,000	£176,000
Gloucestershire	£382,000	£382,000
Greenwich	£129,000	£129,000
Hackney	£150,000	£170,000
Halton	£134,715	£134,715
Hampshire	£475,374	£475,374
Haringey	£180,000	£200,000
Harrow	£100,000	£175,000
Hartlepool	£129,056	£129,101
Havering	£117,359	£129,359
Herefordshire	£155,557	£155,000
Hertfordshire	£455,000	£455,147
Hillingdon	£175,000	£175,000



Hounslow	£89,378	£191,611
Isle of Wight	£153,000	£153,000
Isles of Scilly	£50,507	£50,507
Islington	£176,200	£176,200
Kent	£730,000	£750,000
Kingston upon Hull ⁸	£213,800	£213,800
Kingston upon Thames	£122,000	£122,000
Kirklees	£205,000	£205,000
Knowsley	£180,000	£180,000
Lambeth	£265,000	£291,000
Lancashire	£638,000	£587,000
Leeds	£414,878	£460,000
Leicester	£200,000	£235,000
Leicestershire	£187,391	£275,000
Lewisham	£146,164	£154,395
Lincolnshire	£432,724	£446,575
Liverpool ⁹	£470,000	£496,792
Luton	£128,876	£128,876
Manchester	£80,000	£80,000

⁸ The current funding for 2015/16 is £106,900 to cover the initial 6 months, after which the contract will be retendered

⁹ The figures for both years include funding for complaints advocacy. We are not able to distinguish between local Healthwatch funding and complaints advocacy funding



Medway	Not yet confirmed	£128,000
Merton	£125,085	£125,085
Middlesbrough	Not yet confirmed	£111,208
Milton Keynes ¹⁰	£158,644	£158,644
Newcastle	£215,078	£215,000
Newham	£140,000	£140,000
Norfolk	£605,000	£638,000
North East Lincolnshire	£109,344	£112,451
North Lincolnshire ¹¹	£121,000	£131,000
North Somerset	£147,000	£157,000
North Tyneside	£148,900	£148,953
North Yorkshire	£140,894	£143,444
Northamptonshire	£355,000	£435,000
Northumberland	£224,000	£224,000
Nottingham	£160,000	£160,000
Nottinghamshire	£335,000	£385,000
Oldham	£144,000	£147,000
Oxfordshire	£335,000	£342,000
Peterborough	£153,000	£153,000
Plymouth ¹²	£159,855	£159,955

¹⁰ For both years this includes £43k is given to the organisation that provide back office support

¹¹ In addition for both years, £44,000 is provided for providing the complaints advocacy service.

¹² In addition for both years, there is also £20k that is ring-fenced to only be used for local groups.



Portsmouth	£119,908	£148,140
Reading	£130,311	£130,311
Redbridge	£166,000	£166,000
Redcar & Cleveland	Not yet confirmed	£127,500
Richmond	£146,000	£146,000
Rochdale	£156,068	£169,473
Rotherham	£215,000	£215,000
Rutland	£65,000	£64,000
Salford	£166,000	£190,000
Sandwell ¹³	£195,000	£195,000
Sefton	£143,300	£143,281
Sheffield	£239,619	£231,918
Shropshire	£191,487	£191,487
Slough	£113,163	£113,164
Solihull	£150,000	£158,000
Somerset	£199,047	£199,047
South Gloucestershire	£98,972	£98,972
South Tyneside	£103,000	£103,000
Southampton	£200,000	£199,995
Southend	£190,000	£190,000
Southwark ¹⁴	£120,000	£120,000

¹³ The figures for both years consist of £175k of funding to provide the service and in kind contribution of £20k from the council for premises.



St. Helens	£149,615	£152,096
Staffordshire	£512,000	£512,000
Stockport	£88,000	£110,000
Stockton	Not yet confirmed	£128,552
Stoke on Trent	£217,000	£217,000
Suffolk	£484,014	£484,000
Sunderland	£213,263	£213,263
Surrey ¹⁵	£666,240	
Sutton ¹⁶	£197,719	£197,986
Swindon	£151,000	£151,000
Tameside	£136,000	£136,000
Telford and Wrekin	Not yet confirmed	£168,000
Thurrock ¹⁷	£126,000	£151,000
Torbay	£139,000	£135,000
Tower Hamlets	£220,500	£245,000
Trafford	£158,000	£158,000
Wakefield	£217,268	£217,268

¹⁴ An additional £20k was given in 2013/14 and 2014/15 to support setup and development.

¹⁵ The funding for 2015/16 now includes complaints advocacy funding, as contracts for the Healthwatch and complaints advocacy services were combined in April 2015. It is not possible to compare funding across the two years because of this. Healthwatch funding for 2014/15 was £500,000.

¹⁶ The funding for both years include complaints advocacy service funding, the Healthwatch funding is £157,986.68 for 2015/16.

¹⁷ Thurrock also received an extra 10k in 2014/15 for set up and development.



Walsall	£220,000	£223,000
Waltham Forest	£160,000	£160,000
Wandsworth ¹⁸	£170,000	£170,000
Warrington	£160,000	£160,000
Warwickshire	£304,000	£304,000
West Berkshire	£112,406	£108,000
West Sussex	£584,000	£584,000
Wigan ¹⁹	£200,000	£200,000
Wiltshire	£205,000	£205,000
Windsor, Ascot & Maidenhead	Not yet confirmed	£128,481
Wirral CIC	£170,000	£174,000
Wokingham Borough	£107,677	£107,677
Wolverhampton	£195,000	£195,000
Worcestershire	£320,000	£320,000
York	£115,000	£140,000

¹⁸ In addition for both years, there is £20k available based on performance

¹⁹ In 2015/16, there is an additional £16,666 for complaints services

