



Tower Hamlets Together Board

1 May 2025

Title of report	Update of the THT Board Community Voice Process
Author	Jon Williams, Engagement and Community Communications Lead Tower Hamlets
Presented by	Jon Williams, Engagement and Community Communications Lead Tower Hamlets
Contact for further information	Jon Williams, Engagement and Community Communications Lead Tower Hamlets jon.williams7@nhs.net
Executive summary	This report seeks to further embed the THT Board's duty of care towards residents who present the Community Voice to ensure empathy and avoid re-traumatisation, whilst at the same time addressing actions to effectively impact on the issues raised in the Community Voice.
Action / recommendation	The Board/Committee is asked to: (a) discuss and endorse this approach to its Community Voice session. (b) agrees this report is promoted by THT partners and to the Tower Hamlets residents
Previous reporting	Engagement Leads Group – 12 February 2025 meeting
Next steps/ onward reporting	N/A
Conflicts of interest	No conflicts of Interest are raised by this report.
Strategic fit	Which of the ICS aims does this report align with? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve outcomes in population health and healthcare • To tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access • To enhance productivity and value for money • To support broader social and economic development
Impact on local people, health inequalities and sustainability	The Community Voice session provides residents and their representatives access to THT Board to highlight and proposal actions to reduce health inequalities and re-shape services to be more sustainability. This enhancement of the Community Voice process will further embed these impacts.
Has an Equalities Impact Assessment been carried out?	No Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this report.
Impact on finance, performance and quality	There are no additional resource implications/revenue or capitals costs arising from this report. The cost for reward and recognition to residents has been met from within existing resources

Risks	Failure to operate Community Voice in a way residents trust and value would represent a reputational for the THT Board
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Update on the Community Voice Process at the THT Board

Summary

This report sets out the principles under which Community Voice operates and its enhancement following the discussion to improve the Community Voice at the December 2024 THT Board.

At the December 2024 THT Board the received feedback on the Community Voice process from Chandrika Kaviraj, who had spoken at a previous board. Following that previous meeting Chandrika raised concerns about the Community Voice process and offered advice how to improve it.

The section below, entitled 'Way Forward' was agreed with Chandrika to advise the Board to how to improve the Community Voice process. At the Board members asked this 'Way Forward' to be further articulated into advice to the Board on how to improve the Community Voice process; this is set out under the section entitled THT Board Community Voice Process.

Chandrika has reviewed this report and signed it off. She has requested THT promote this report across THT partners, who should report it in their newsletters and other comms channels, and to Tower Hamlets residents.

Recommendation

1. The Board are asked to discuss and endorse this approach to its Community Voice session.
2. The Board agrees this report is promoted by THT partners and to the Tower Hamlets residents

Way forward

Duty of Care approach

The THT Board will take a duty of care approach in line with the legal duty to provide a reasonable standard of care to patients and to act in ways that protect their safety. A duty of care exists when it could reasonably be expected that a person's actions, or failure to act, might cause injury to another person.

The THT Board recognises its meeting format has the potential to be challenging for some people. It will continue with its practice of the independent Community Voice Lead and Engagement and Community Communication Lead pre-meeting with people speaking to support their presentation and give focus to their ask of the Board.

At the start of the Community Voice session, the chair of the THT Board will explain to the presenters of the Community Voice session who is attending the meeting and the purpose of the session. The chair will emphasis to the Board the importance of actively listening to the presenters, and specifically where someone is sharing their story, to listen first with empathy and secondarily to focus on solutions.

Developmental training

As leaders it is important the THT Board demonstrates their commitment to trauma informed care and safeguarding. As part of the next development day all THT Board members will receive trauma informed care and safeguarding training.

THT Board Community Voice Process

Principles

- Mutual respect, understanding and diplomacy.
- Openness and trust.
- Objectivity, accountability, honesty and integrity.
- Equality, equity, diversity and inclusion.
- We work together to make positive change.¹

Identifying Community Voice Presenters

The independent Community Voice Board Member and NEL ICB Engagement and Community Communications Lead for Tower Hamlets will work with Engagement Leads to identify presenters for the Board's Community Voice Session.

The aim would be to align Community Voice with the Board Forward Plan, which would allow for a more comprehensive response to the Community Voice. However, the independent Community Voice Board Member may identify a presenting issue. Therefore, the Community Voice may not always align with the Forward Plan.

Pre-meet

The independent Community Voice Board Member and NEL ICB Engagement and Community Communications Lead will meet with Community Voice presenters prior to the Community Voice session. This is to:

- Explain how Community Voice operates at the Board, including sharing the Community Voice principles
- To support the presenter's articulation of their issues to the Board
- To advise on slides to the Board including the specific asks of the Board

Board Community Voice

At the Board the Chair will open the Community Voice session and ask Board members to introduce themselves so presenters understand who they are addressing. The Chair will reiterate to the Board the importance of actively listening to the presenters, and specifically where someone is sharing their story, to listen first with empathy and secondarily to focus on solutions. Following the presentation, the Chair will lead the discussion on the Community Voice. At the end of the session the Board will agree actions that arise from the Community Voice.

Community Voice Quarterly Monitoring Report

Actions resulting from the Community Voice will be monitored by independent Community Voice Board Member and NEL ICB Engagement and Community Communications Lead for Tower Hamlets. Progress on the actions will be reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.

Board Training to support Community Voice

The NEL ICB Engagement and Community Communications Lead for Tower Hamlets will identify trauma informed care and safeguarding training for the next Board development session. This will demonstrate the Board's commitment creating a caring and supportive environment for the presenters of the Community Voice.

Reward and Recognition

In line with the NHS NEL Reward and Recognition policy residents who present will be given a £20 Love2Shop voucher.

Jon Williams: Engagement and Community Communications Lead
Report drafted February 2025

¹ These principles originate from Redbridge Council [Community Voice process](#) -