

## Press Release

For immediate release:

### **Consumer champion for Health & Social Care set to continue.**

Healthwatch Shropshire has won the competitive tender to be recommissioned to provide both the Healthwatch service and the Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCAS) for the people of Shropshire for the next 3 years. However, this comes with huge financial challenges as the funding allocated for these services by Shropshire Council has been drastically reduced by 27%.

Jane Randall-Smith, Chief Officer of Healthwatch Shropshire, said: “Over the last five years Healthwatch Shropshire has represented people’s views to service providers and commissioners across the county. We are proud to have been recommissioned to carry on the work of ensuring the voices of Shropshire people are heard in times of great uncertainty over the future of health and social care services in Shropshire.

“However, given the level of funding cuts, we are looking at all our budgets and will have to make some difficult decisions about staffing and accommodation and how we are going to work most effectively within the new constraints.”

Volunteers are vital to the work of Healthwatch Shropshire. They take on many roles including overseeing all activities as Board members and visiting hospitals and care providers as authorised Healthwatch representatives. For further information visit [www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk) or contact [enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk) / 01743 237884.

Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent consumer champion for health and social care in Shropshire. It gathers the views and experiences of patients, service users, carers, and the general public about services including hospitals, GPs, mental health services, community health services, pharmacists, opticians, residential care and children’s services. It also has statutory powers that it can use to influence service provision by encouraging improvements.

**Ends**

### **Notes for Editors:**

Healthwatch Shropshire is one of a network of 148 Local Healthwatch in England. It is supported by a national organisation, Healthwatch England.

It has a team working in community engagement, plus a volunteer programme, a visit programme to health and social care premises, an advocacy service and an associate

membership scheme to involve the public in its work. It also has a signposting service to help people access health and social care services and support.

## **Contact**

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