

INFORMATION PACK

Plymouth LINK Becoming HealthWatch

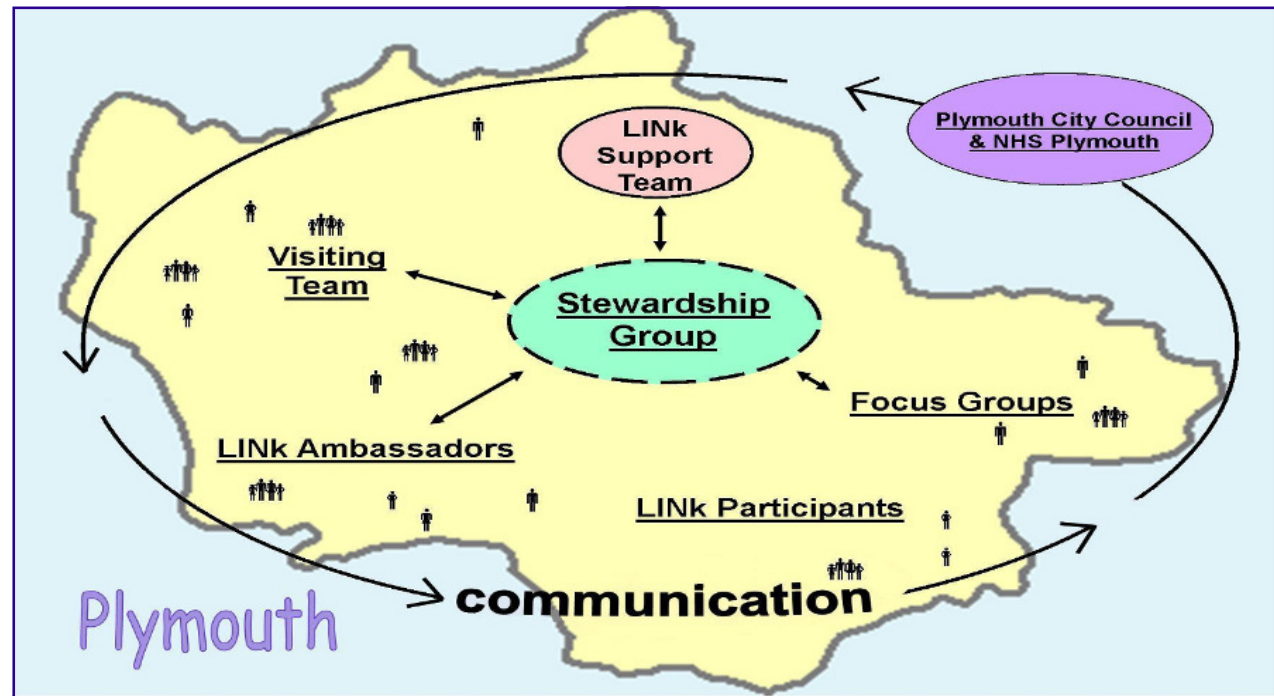
Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 14th September 2011

A bit about Plymouth LINK

What is a LINK?

Plymouth LINK is one of 151 LINKs across the country, funded by the government to enable local people to share their views on local health and social care services and to work with services to make sure those views improve existing and future services. LINKs aim to support local services to better reflect the needs of local people.



Plymouth LINK is made up of over 2,500 local people and groups and is driven by a number of active and passionate volunteers. Working with the Support Team, active LINK members work with services to share local views and represent the LINK on a wide variety of groups and boards that make decisions about health and social care services.

Plymouth LINK reaches different communities and groups across the city through a wide variety of events and meeting and talks to its membership through newsletters, its website, Facebook and Twitter.

A bit about Plymouth LINK

Success

- ☆ The chair of Plymouth LINK represents Southwest LINKs on the HealthWatch National Advisory Group, influencing HealthWatch development
- ☆ Advised on public/patient involvement in Plymouth
- ☆ Supported new resources for carers and training for GPs
- ☆ Improved the door system in A&E
- ☆ Improved cleanliness and staff approach on wards at Derriford
- ☆ Carried out a survey of experiences of hospital discharge and reported to Derriford
- ☆ Championed the use of a poster for people who do not speak English, to be used as they approach services
- ☆ Produced a report on access to primary care services, from which 11 recommendations have influenced service developments
- ☆ Shared your views of parking at Derriford to inform the new parking contract
- ☆ Involved in plans for commissioning specialised services in the Southwest

Plymouth LINK regular meets and works with our partners in health and social care to feed in the views of local people.

Plymouth LINK is currently working on a number of priorities, including:

- * **Improving access to services for gypsies/travellers**
- * **Improving access to an NHS dentist**
- * **Access to and discharge from hospital**
- * **Care of the elderly in hospital**
- * **Talking to people who live in care homes**
- * **Learning disability services**
- * **Monitoring trust quality accounts**

Changes to the NHS

With the introduction of a new Health and Social Care bill, there are proposed changes to the NHS:

- Setting up of GP Consortia, who will take the lead on commissioning (buying) services as part of clinical commissioning groups;
- Creating a Health & Wellbeing Board, who will consider the needs of the community and make decisions about priorities for services;
- Improving patient choice about the services they use and extending personal health budgets;
- The evolution of LINKs to become local HealthWatch - a consumer champion of health and social care;
- Creating HealthWatch England, a national voice for patients to influence health and social care services nationally.

LINK to HealthWatch

The new bill makes provision for LINKs to evolve into HealthWatch. HealthWatch will retain all of the existing good work of LINKs with some added extras

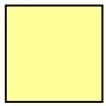
LINK

- ◆ Captures views to influence policy, planning and development of services
- ◆ Focussed on communities and collective voice
- ◆ Focussed on Plymouth services and a local voice
- ◆ Visits services to check out how they are working
- ◆ Signposts people to independent complaints services.

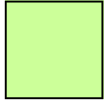


HealthWatch

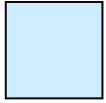
- ◆ Will also participate in decision making (working with commissioning groups and Health & Wellbeing Boards)
- ◆ Will also provide information and advice to help individuals make decisions and access services
- ◆ Will also have a national voice through HealthWatch England
- ◆ Will continue to visit services
- ◆ Will be a point of access to independent complaints and advocacy services



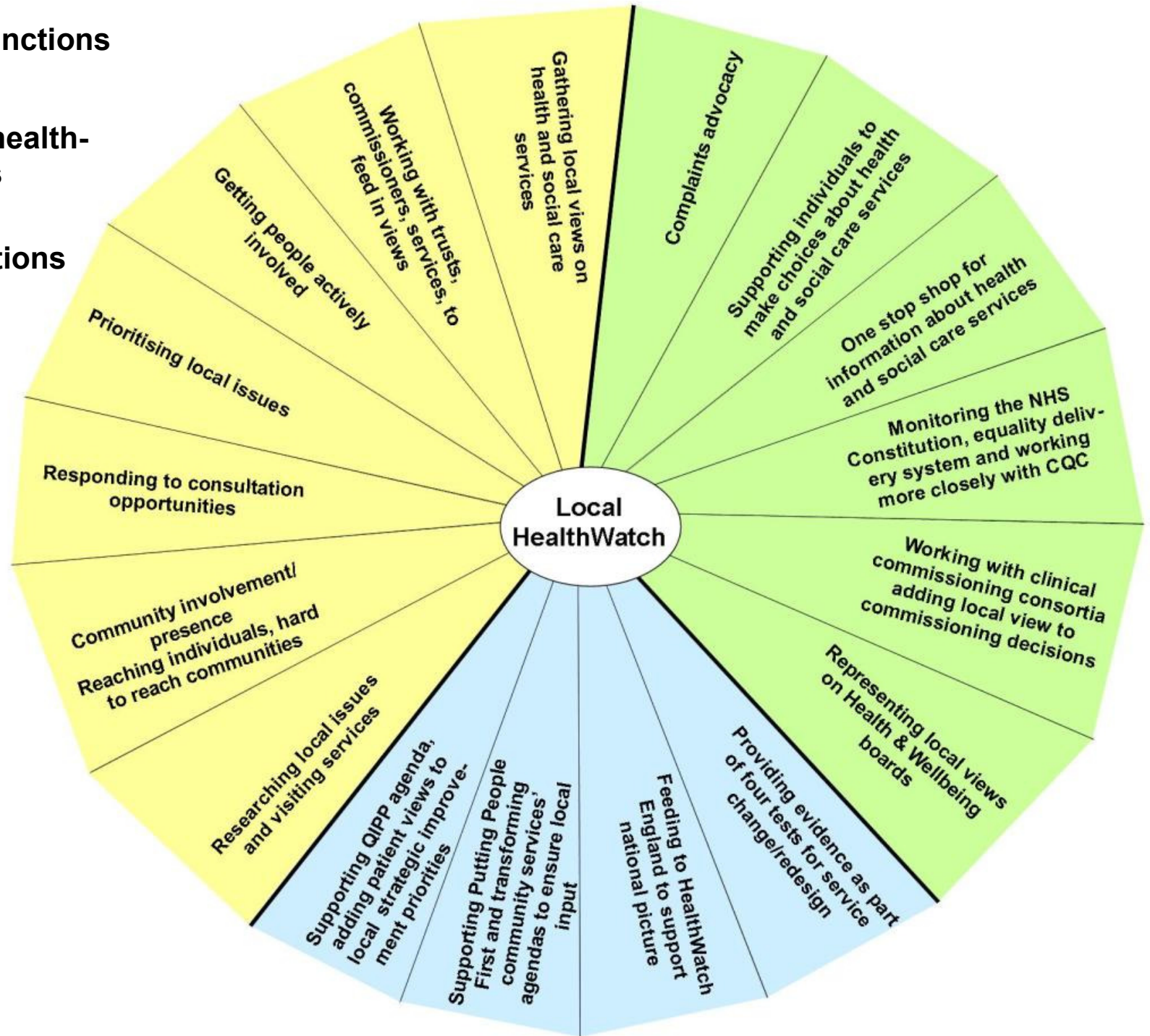
Existing LINK functions



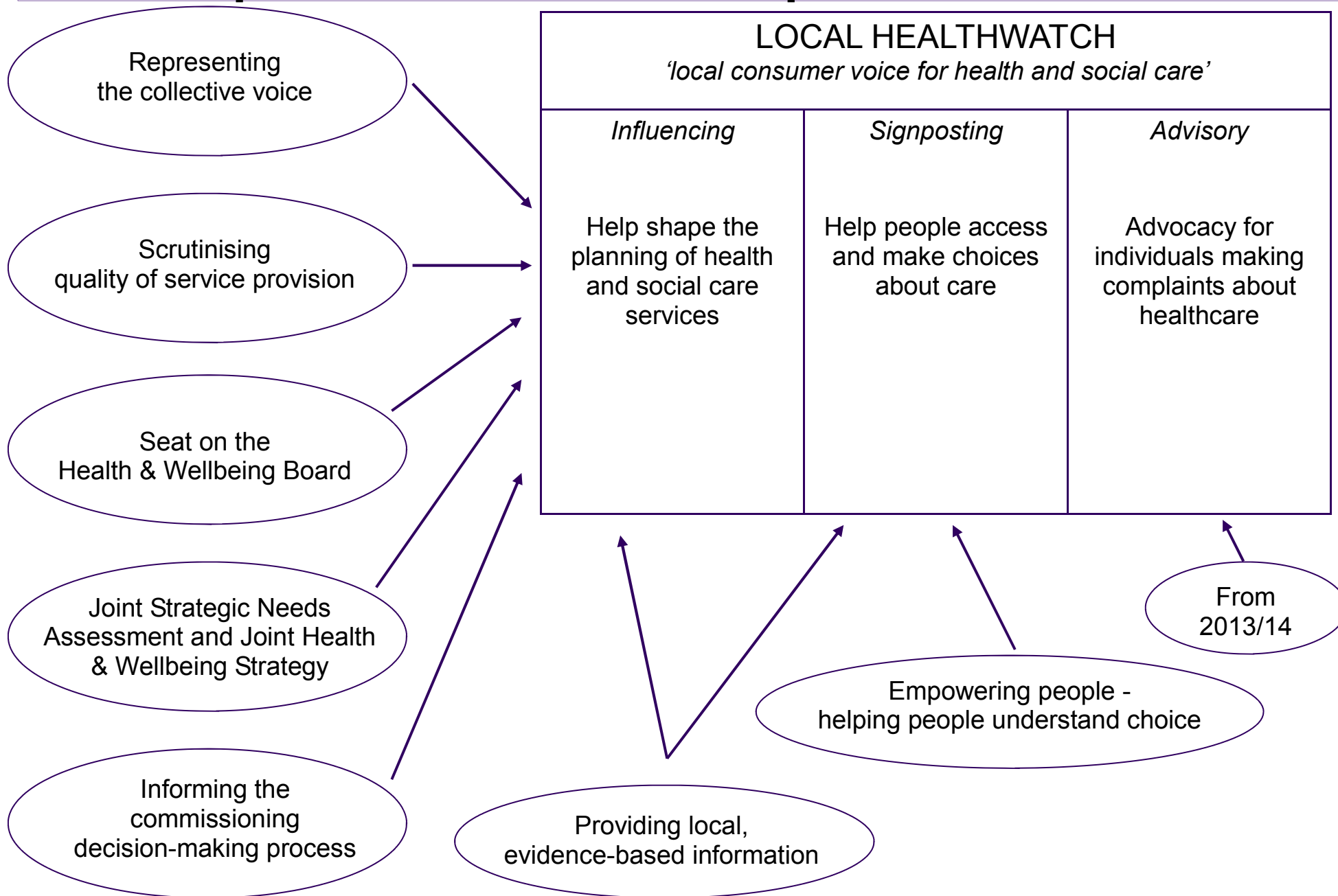
Proposed new health-watch functions



Additional functions

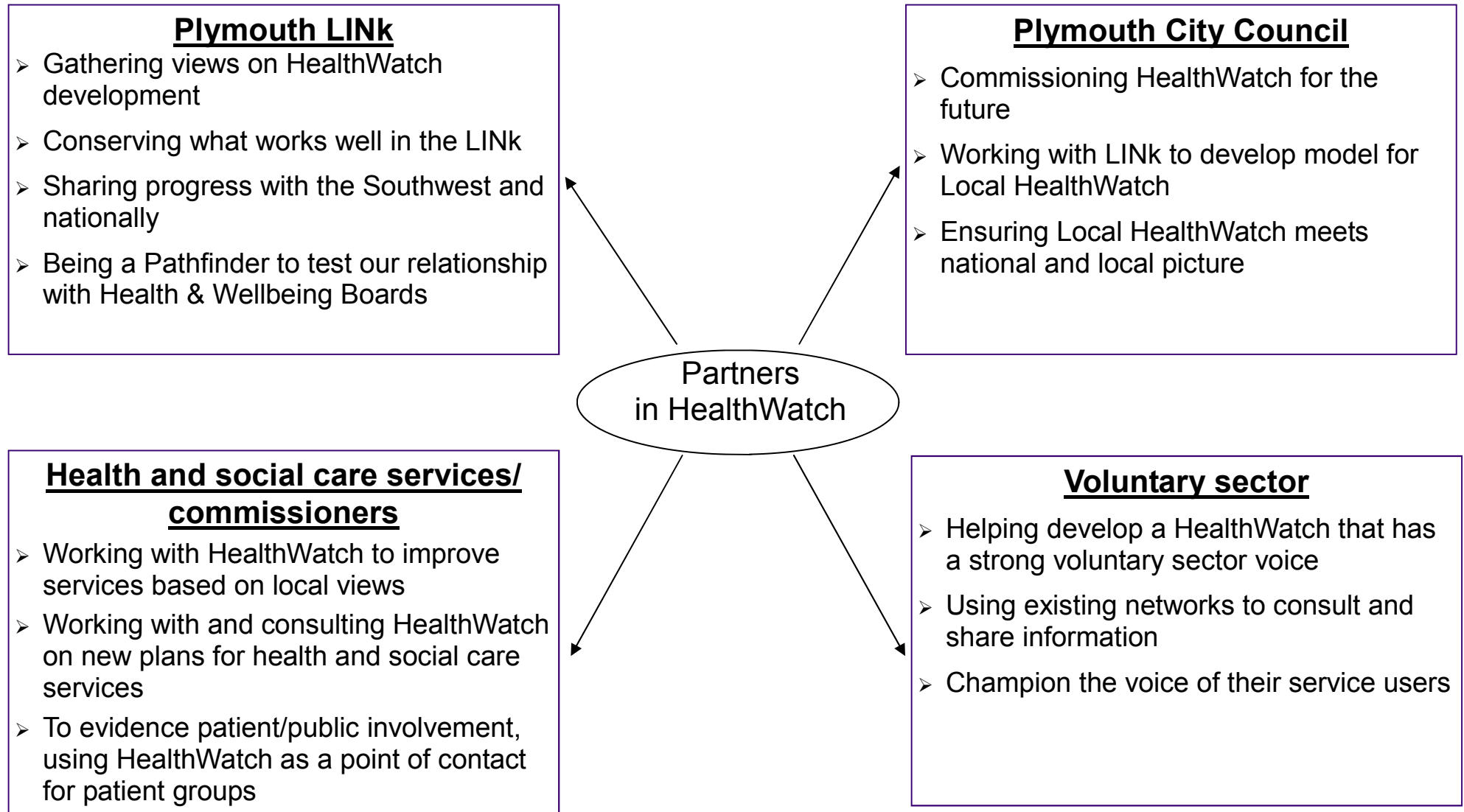


The Department of Health Proposal for HealthWatch



Working together to develop HealthWatch

Key partners in HealthWatch will be working together to ensure HealthWatch meets the needs of Plymouth.



HealthWatch Timeline - preparing for HealthWatch

Plymouth LINK is working with the local authority on the transition to HealthWatch, which will take place over the next 18 months.

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- July 2011 - Start consultation on local HealthWatch with local people, services and groups through public and targeted events
 - August 2011 - First meeting of HealthWatch Development Group to oversee the transition
 - September 11 - Begin work with the local authority on developing Health & Wellbeing Board to ensure a strong patient voice
 - November 2011 - Identify potential models for HealthWatch from public consultation
 - Early 2012 - Develop spec and quality standards for HealthWatch and plan to create the service
 - March 2012 - Consult on model for complaints advocacy working with HealthWatch
 - October 2012 - Local HealthWatch in place
 - March 2013 - New arrangements for complaints advocacy to take effect