

## Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board

### Tuesday, 18 July 2017, County Hall, Worcester - 10.00 am

#### Minutes

#### Present:

Mr C J Bloore (Chairman), Mrs E A Eyre (Vice Chairman), Mr P Middlebrough, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr C B Taylor and Mr P A Tuthill

#### Also attended:

Mr P M McDonald  
Dr K A Pollock, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economy and Infrastructure  
Mrs E B Tucker  
Elizabeth Hall, Office of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner  
Ms T L Onslow, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner  
Lizi Piggins, Office of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

Sheena Jones (Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager) and Samantha Morris (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

#### Available Papers

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 June 2017 (previously circulated).

(A copy of documents A will be attached to the signed Minutes).

#### 984 Apologies and Welcome

Apologies were received from Mr A A J Adams and Mrs J A Brunner.

#### 985 Declaration of Interest and of any Party Whip

Mrs E A Eyre, Mr P Middlebrough, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr C B Taylor and Mr P A Tuthill declared an interest in Item 5: Police and Crime Commissioners: Fire and Rescue Functions as they were Members of Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority.

#### 986 Public Participation

None.

#### 987 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 June 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## Meeting

### 988 Police and Crime Commissioners : Fire and Rescue Functions

At its last meeting, the Board agreed to consider the draft initial Business Case for the joint governance of Police and Fire and Rescue services in Hereford and Worcester, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin, with a view to providing comments to Council for its Meeting on 14 September 2017.

The Chairman welcomed the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to the Meeting on behalf of the PCC who was unable to attend due to a prior commitment.

The Deputy PCC explained that in September 2015, the then Minister for Policing, Crime, Criminal Justice and Victims, Mike Penning carried out Consultation to look at transforming the way the police, fire service and ambulance services worked together. Following this Consultation, the Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduced a process enabling a PCC to take on the responsibility for the governance of fire and rescue services in his area and to become the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for that area.

Beckford Consulting were subsequently appointed on behalf of the PCC to prepare the draft initial Business Case, which was currently out for Consultation.

In summary, three options were considered:

- Maintain the status quo
- Joint governance
- Single employer

Beckford Consulting concluded that there was a business case for a change to joint governance of the three organisations. If achieved the PCC considered that joint governance would create an opportunity to enhance Public Safety and Community Resilience across the three counties, within current resources, at a time when funding was more likely to be further squeezed than increased. The effect would be to strengthen the long-term resilience of police and fire services in a rural region where maintaining local services was challenging. It would create potential efficiency gains of £4m per year plus.

If the proposals were approved, it would mean that the PCC would take on governance of both Shropshire and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Services, there

would be no changes to front line police and fire crews as a result of the changes to governance. If there were objections to the proposals and one of the local authorities didn't support the proposals, the Secretary of State would arrange for an independent review.

The Deputy PCC stated that no decision had been made and that the good work of the Fire Authorities were not being called into question. However, she suggested that it was an opportunity for one person to be fully sighted on both organisations by single governance and striving for a better more efficient service for the public.

In summary, the main points made during the discussion were:

- Paragraph 6.7.5 which stated "*Thereafter, from April 2019, the PFCC would be expected to review the senior command and leadership teams, to begin to release any redundant posts and deliver the transformation plan*" gave the impression that it was first step towards joint operations for a West Mercia Fire and West Mercia Police. The Deputy PCC advised that the Business Case was about the governance of the fire and rescue services and that Beckford Consulting had perhaps taken a step further to say, that in future there may be further joint collaborative working. This however, would be a matter to be determined at the time. The current proposal did not relate to any chief officer posts but savings from sharing the enabling services
- It was suggested that Business Case was not strong or clear enough and didn't evidence how £6.5m savings would be made. The Deputy PCC advised that if the initial Business Case was agreed, a further more detailed Case would be developed involving consultation with the staff in the enabling service areas
- In response to the suggestion that the implications of the electoral complexity had not been taken into account, the Deputy PCC advised that currently, local councillors who sat on the two fire authorities, although all elected, were only elected to represent their divisions. They were not directly elected to the fire authorities but nominated by councils without consulting the public. If the changes were to go ahead, in 2020 residents would have the chance to directly elect a local Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner with every voter having an equal say and thus increasing

democratic accountability

- It was envisaged that the Police, Crime and Fire Commissioner would be scrutinised and held to account in the same way as the PCC was now held to account, by expanding the role of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel. Further guidance from Government was awaited
- Both fire services would still exist as individual organisations, as would West Mercia Police. The same local police and fire teams would be responding to incidents as now. Their names and branding etc. would not be affected and they would still serve the same communities. Two separate precepts for police and fire would also remain
- It was acknowledged that Beckford Consultants should have spoken to the current Chairman of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel to inform the Report
- Confirmation was given that the proposal would not have a direct impact on the West Mercia and Warwickshire Policing Alliance
- Although the legislation addressed all blue light services, there was no reference to the West Midlands Ambulance Service in the Business Case. The Deputy PCC suggested that as it was intrinsically linked to health services it was considered a 'step too far' at this stage, but may be looked at in the future
- a member asked how joint governance could improve Hereford and Worcester Fire Service, when there were already examples of the Service working collaboratively and proactively. The Deputy PCC suggested that it was more about whether the current governance arrangements were as effective as joint governance arrangements would be with a single body overseeing all three organisations
- It was suggested that the Business Case was lacking in detail and it was not possible to understand whether it was viable or not. The tone of the Case was 'leading'; the timescale too fast and it didn't include the Ambulance Service. The Deputy PCC reiterated that this was an outline Business Case, with a standard 3 month consultation and that the timeline had been set by Government. Any comments made as part of the Consultation would be included in the enhanced Business Case
- It was suggested that as the Fire and Police Services were already working collaboratively, the

£4m savings from back office efficiencies could be made anyway without the need for joint governance

- As the public perception of the Police and Fire Services was very different, it was felt that the Business Case was about gauging public reaction. The Deputy PCC firmly believed that joint governance would be beneficial to the public and whilst acknowledging the difference in brand between the two services, joint governance would allow for a strategic overview of both services, which in turn would enhance the service for the public
- It was confirmed that the Beckford Consultants Report cost in the region of £30,000 which was paid for by central Government
- It was suggested on a number of occasions, that a significant advantage of the services working collaboratively was that the Fire Service would have a broader role in helping to identify those families and vulnerable people in need of help. It was, however important to be mindful about right of entry to people's homes and that it may not be possible for the role to be as broad as envisaged
- The capacity of the PCC to take on the expanded role of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner if the proposal went ahead was also mentioned as a concern
- There was very little financial information or information on the operational savings to be made and a feeling that the changes were heading towards being one organisation eventually. The PCC pointed out that a number of options were considered and the Business Case was giving a flavour of what could be achieved if the Joint Governance option was adopted.

It was agreed that a summary of the discussion would be prepared for the 14 September Meeting of Council.

The Chairman thanked the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and the Officers from the Office of the PCC for attending the meeting.

Thanks and gratitude were also recorded to front line staff in the Fire and Police service.

The Board was asked to consider the reports from Panel Chairmen on Panels' discussions of potential Work Programme topics and determine its Scrutiny Work Programme for 2017/18 to be considered by full Council.

Each of the Panels' suggested Work Programmes were agreed as detailed below, including any additions discussed and 'Standing items' such as Performance Management, Quality Assurance, Budget Scrutiny and Safeguarding (Adults and Children's):

### **Adult Care and Well-Being Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

- Three Conversation model (new model for social work)
- Outcome-based Commissioning – homecare and care providers
- Staffing – sickness, recruitment, retention and agency spend
- Isolation (including social isolation)
- Prevention work and its success in keeping people independent – possible task group
- Technology in care?
- Better Care Plans

### **Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

The main focus of the Panel's work would be to follow up to the Ofsted report and the implementation of the Service Improvement Plan, and this would be a standing item on all agendas. An additional meeting had been arranged for 14 August to include an initial discussion on this issue. In this context, Panel Members had highlighted the following particular concerns:

- The workload of social workers (including travel time and key workers); and
- The need to consider comparative figures in relation to performance of agency staff, recruitment and retention, and caseloads.

The other issues to be included on the Programme were:

- Child employment and labour
- Education at home
- 0-19 service (Children's Centres)
- Alternative provision (including Babcock Prime and migrant children)
- The performance of Babcock Prime (with a particular focus on performance at KS2)
- Assistive Technology

## **Corporate and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

- Worcestershire County Council - Property (Place Partnership)
- Worcestershire County Council Workforce – including cultural change to support transformation
- What can WCC do to maximise income generation?
- How can WCC support Local Business?
- Culture: How can we utilise the culture of Worcestershire to maximise the benefit to the County?
- Information sharing with District Councils.
- Councillor IT
- Road safety (particularly around schools)
- Commissioning – How do we manage and ensure value for money and quality service?
- Communications – How do we ensure residents have easy access and we communicate service levels? WCC brand and the postal service
- The Council's role in post-Brexit subsidy mechanisms for rural activities.

## **Economy and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

- Footways
- Cycle paths
- Highways development control – improving joined-up working and include Highway's Engineers capacity (task group?)
- Worcestershire LEP
- How to improve getting around the county
- Local Transport Plan 4 – how plans are implemented
- Cleaning programme for gulleys and drains
- Asset management
- Transport and access to hospitals
- Buses (task group?)
- Evesham's Abbey Bridge – lessons learned
- Budget scrutiny (mini task group of panel members)
- Flood risk management
- Broadband update
- Relationship with Highway's England
- Residents zonal parking schemes and additional car parks

## **Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)**

The Chairman of HOSC advised that a discussion of the Work Programme would take place at its meeting on 19 July 2017, following which he would submit the details to be included in the Work Programme.

The substantive issues being discussed at the meeting were the Future of Acute Hospital Services in Worcestershire and the Quality of Acute Hospital Services in Worcestershire.

It was likely that the 'Better use of Community Hospitals' would feature in the future Work Programme.

It was agreed that the Mental Health Provision in Worcestershire (including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services CAMH's) should be included on the Work Programme.

## **Transitions**

On 21 June a joint meeting of the Adult Care and Well-being O&S Panel and the Children and Families O&S Panel was held to discuss issues relating to the transition between Children's and Adult Services. Following the meeting, Members expressed an interest in setting up a scrutiny task group to investigate further. The Chairmen of both Panels had met with Officers to start the scoping process.

## **Crime and Disorder**

The Lead Member for Crime and Disorder updated the Board on the plans for the annual Crime and Disorder Scrutiny meeting on Thursday 7 September 2017(10am).

As in previous years, the Board would be considering ongoing Community Safety work across the County, but this year there would be a specific focus on some emerging areas of concern, which were:

- Prevent/Cohesion
- Sexual Violence
- Modern Day Slavery and Trafficking
- Cyber Crime



**Sexual violence and rape**

The Board were reminded that at its meeting on 16 September 2016, it was agreed that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Lead Member for Crime and Disorder and the Chairman of HOSC would consider what if any further scrutiny was required in respect of support services in relation to Sexual Violence and Rape.

As requested, the Lead Member had considered this and acknowledged that Sexual Violence and Rape was horrendous for the victims, their family and the community as a whole and that it was important that there was appropriate support for victims and rehabilitation of perpetrators.

Taking the agreed criteria for determining the Work Programme into account, it was confirmed that this was not a priority for Scrutiny for the County Council. This was however, disappointing and it was agreed that OSPB would consider the issue as part of its Annual Worcestershire County Council Community Safety Report in September 2017.

It was agreed that a copy of the complete Work Programme would be circulated to the Board.

The meeting ended at 12.20 pm

Chairman .....