

## **Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board**

**County Hall, Worcester**

**Thursday, 21 October 2021, 10.00 am**

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### **Present:**

Cllr Tom Wells (Chairman), Cllr Richard Morris (Vice Chairman),  
Cllr Alastair Adams, Cllr Brandon Clayton, Cllr Kyle Daisley, Cllr Mike Rouse  
and Cllr Richard Udall

### **Also attended:**

Cllr Karen May, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Health and Wellbeing  
Superintendent Steph Brighton, West Mercia Police  
Superintendent Mark Colquhoun, West Mercia Police  
Lloyd Griffiths, South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership  
Tracey Onslow, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia  
Police  
Becca Youngs, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioners Office

Dr Kathryn Cobain, Director of Public Health  
Tony Mercer, Public Health Consultant  
Paul Kinsella, Public Health Practitioner  
Sheena Jones, Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager  
Samantha Morris, Scrutiny Co-ordinator

### **Available Papers**

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 September 2021 (previously circulated).

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

## **1210 Apologies and Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

Councillor Mike Rouse paid tribute Sir David Amess, who tragically and shockingly lost his life whilst holding a constituents' surgery recently. Condolences were paid to his family, friends and everyone who knew him. One minute's silence was held in his memory.

Apologies were received from Cllr Shirley Webb and Mark Hughes (Parent Governor Representative).

**1211 Declaration of Interest and of any Party Whip**

None.

**1212 Public Participation**

None.

**1213 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 September 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**1214 Worcestershire County Council Community Safety Update Report**

Attending for this item:

Dr Kathryn Cobain, Director of Public Health  
Tony Mercer, Public Health Consultant  
Paul Kinsella, Advanced Public Health Practitioner  
Karen May, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Health and Wellbeing  
Lloyd Griffiths, Chair – South Worcester Community Safety Partnership  
Superintendent Steph Brighton (South Worcestershire Police)  
Superintendent Mark Colquhoun (North Worcestershire Police)  
Tracey Onslow, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner West Mercia Police  
Becca Youngs, Commissioning Officer, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioners Office

The Board was asked to consider the Annual Update on developments in relation to Community Safety in Worcestershire; and the update on the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Cllr Udall (Lead member for Crime and Disorder) explained that the areas that had been identified as crime and disorder priorities for the Board were: drugs and alcohol abuse, rape, domestic abuse, sexual violence, anti-social behaviour, hate crime, wildlife, rural crime and speeding (which would be discussed at the November Board meeting).

The Advanced Public Health Practitioner introduced the Report and reminded the Board of the Council's statutory responsibilities (as detailed in the Agenda Report).

[The Annual Update on developments in relation to Community Safety in Worcestershire](#)

The main discussion points were:

- Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's) were made up of representatives from the Police, Local Authorities, Fire and Rescue authorities, Health and Probation Services (the 'responsible authorities'). The responsible authorities worked together to protect their local communities from crime and to help people feel safer. In Worcestershire, there were 2 CSP's with North Worcestershire CSP incorporating the 3 district authority areas of Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove and Redditch, and South Worcestershire CSP incorporating Worcester City, Malvern Hills and Wychavon. Across the Worcestershire CSPs, the local delivery of Community safety priorities was overseen by district based operational groups. There were currently 4 strategic priorities for Community Safety work across Worcestershire, these were set out in the Community Safety Agreement and were:
  - Reducing Re-Offending
  - Harm Reduction (including Anti-Social Behaviour, Safeguarding, Hate Crime, Community Cohesion and Preventing Violent Extremism)
  - Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
  - Drugs and Alcohol.
- It was noted that some of the funding received from the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), was used to support Data Analysts.
- The variety of partners who were part of the CSP made for a very productive partnership. Sometimes attendance at meetings could be challenging and on occasions, there could be some duplication when other Groups across Worcestershire had similar priorities
- The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) explained that the PCC allocated £260k funding per year to CSPs (and was one of the top 5 funding allocations in the Country). The CSP's could allocate funding to the priorities as they saw fit. The PCC also provided service of Data Analysts to collate and analyse data and attended each quarterly CSP meeting.
- Previously, the PCC had been able to allocate funding for a 2 year period and he would look to review this when the current election term was confirmed.
- CSP's received early notification of the budget allocation which was helpful in being able to plan which projects could be developed.
- Moving to online meetings during the Covid pandemic had been helpful in terms of better attendance at meetings. The biggest challenge was around clarity of the priorities of the various groups and partnerships in order to avoid duplication.
- It was agreed that the Board would be supplied with a list of the projects funded over the last 12 months through the North and South Worcestershire CSP's.
- The DPCC added that the PCC also allocated funding of £65k per CSP for CCTV (capital funding for cameras). Partners also worked together to access other funding for example through the Safer Streets Funding.

- It was noted that funding for domestic homicide reviews was a cost that CSP couldn't plan for, as the number of reviews couldn't be predicted and it may therefore result in a cost pressure.
- It was confirmed that CSP's were strategic and the tactical elements sat beneath them.
- A Member suggested that if attendance at meetings was a challenge, perhaps consideration could be given to the timings of the meetings. It was agreed that this could be looked at.
- The Director of Public Health (also the Chair of the Safer Communities Board) explained that the County Council had a duty under Public Health Ring Fenced Grant to fund services for substance misuse and £4m was allocated to this. The Drugs and Alcohol misuse contract service had been recommissioned and was working well. The 3 indicators measured (which had all improved) were the % of people who had successfully completed treatment (which was better than the national average), the % proportion of drug related deaths (which had risen with the national trend but the rates lower than national and regional averages) and the proportion of adults with alcohol or drug related needs following prison release (where the proportion was lower than regional and national averages). One year's funding had also been allocated to an in-reach prison service to provide continuity of care in the community.
- It was agreed that the Board would be provided a breakdown of how the £4m (PHRFG) was spent on the Drugs and Alcohol Service.
- Work was underway on developing a new 5 year Alcohol and Drugs and Strategy due for completion early 2022. This would feed into the Health and Wellbeing Strategy approved by the Health and Well-being Board and would co-ordinate the activities of partners (Substance Misuse Oversight Group (SMOG)) providing a 5 year vision and including a performance framework.
- A Member stressed the importance of including feedback from service users in the Strategy and also linking with Mental Health Strategies. The Director of Public Health acknowledged the importance of this and agreed to take it into account
- The SMOG was a conduit for any links to Serious and Organised Crime.
- In response to a question about the length of waiting lists to access help for drugs and alcohol abuse, it was agreed that the Board would be provided with data relating to this.
- County lines in Worcestershire was a very complex picture, it was a priority for West Mercia Police and was supported by a dedicated Team.
- The nighttime economy in Worcestershire was starting to return to pre-Covid levels. The PCC had allocated funds for problem solving hubs which targeted areas of concern eg working with licensees to help them manage their premises.

- Whilst understanding the reasons for Councillors not being able to access statistics relating to Prevent, a Member suggested that it did create a democratic deficit. In response, the CMR advised that Prevent and Protect were of utmost importance to communities. Due to security reasons, the CMR was unaware of data in this area and thought that it wasn't appropriate for her to receive this data. She had been provided with relevant briefings and was assured that the relevant Strategy and framework was in place for Worcestershire. The Board were assured that there was an Annual Risk Assessment for Worcestershire which was considered and acted upon as appropriate.
- A Member suggested that all councillors were vulnerable in carrying out their role and it was agreed that Training for all Councillors on personal safety issues to be added to the Member Development Programme.
- In response to a Member concern about the redeployment of Public Health staff from their substantive roles during the initial stages of Covid (particularly the Advanced Public Health Practitioner liaising with school safeguarding leads), the Board was reassured that the Public Health staff had now returned to their substantive roles and where appropriate, staff had been engaged to support ongoing Covid issues.
- It was confirmed training relating to Prevent was mandatory for Staff but this didn't apply to members. A Member suggested that this should be mandatory for Councillors too. The CMR acknowledged the importance of this and suggested that a briefing should be arranged on Prevent for all Councillors.
- It was confirmed that Community Police Officers received adequate training (which was regularly refreshed) in Prevent in order to carry out their role effectively. In addition, the Safer Neighbourhood Teams also had Prevent Ambassadors within their Teams.
- It was agreed that data would be circulate relating to reducing reoffending.
- It was confirmed finding suitable accommodation for prisoners when they were released from prison (particularly on a Friday) was a challenge. The Board was advised about the Prison Leavers Programme (renamed Worcestershire Criminal Justice Housing Pathway) which was a whole system review of the housing and health needs of offenders across Worcestershire.
- It was noted that Mental Health professionals from across West Mercia were engaged in work to establish a West Mercia Criminal Justice Mental Health team, led by the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Performance and Standards Group. A number of different potential intervention pathways had been identified and a gap analysis was being undertaken. This would strengthen the links between criminal justice referrals and mental health provision.
- A Member expressed concern about people released from custody on bail and the support available to them. It was confirmed that appropriate risk assessments were carried out and the Police would signpost to help, where needed.
- It was noted that an updated GET SAFE Strategy was currently being developed and the Exploitation Training Schedule was still progressing.

- It was agreed that a breakdown for Redditch and Bromsgrove of the 39% of referrals to the Climb Program (Para 34 of the Agenda) would be provided to the Board.
- It was noted that in terms of the night-time economy in Worcestershire, there were street pastors in Worcester.
- A Councillor suggested that he was aware of other areas that had blue streetlights which had reduced crime and suicide and suggested that this could be considered by Worcestershire. The Advance public Health Practitioner advised that it was an initiative he was aware of, which had been looked at, but the evidence was not that compelling.
- The Director of Public Health advised that there was lots of work around suicide prevention being carried out by the Suicide Prevention Team, examples of focus were suicide in younger and middle aged men.
- In response to a Councillors question about partners' resilience to react to emerging threats quickly, it was suggested that a flexible but cautious approach was needed and that it was important to balance media hype with reality and priorities.

### Domestic Abuse

- In response to a Councillor's question about rates of domestic abuse in Worcestershire, it was noted that Police data had shown that in Worcestershire there had been a reduction in incidents year on year, but numbers were statistically small. Women's Aid had received a total of 7,231 calls to its helpline services in 2020/21, with a recognition of increasing numbers of callers highlighting deteriorating mental health problems.
- The CMR confirmed that funding from the County Council for West Mercia Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre had been allocated and the waiting lists would be re-opened in November. A joint needs assessment was currently being carried out to support the Service to be sustainable in the long term.
- The Board was advised that Worcestershire County Council and the PCC were one of the first areas to deliver perpetrator programmes through Cranstoun. It was agreed that a Councillor Briefing on the two programmes, Drive and Male and Masculinity Programmes would be arranged for Councillors.
- A Member highlighted the Neighbourhood Matters Scheme, which was a Scheme for residents to keep up to date with local policing news in the West Mercia Police area. The details of the Scheme would be shared with all Councillors.
- Safe accommodation was being reviewed across Worcestershire to identify the requirement and the gaps.
- The Director of Public Health acknowledged the importance of supporting the Voluntary and Community Sector with the initiatives being developed to support communities eg the development of Well-being Hubs.
- It was confirmed that a needs assessment was being carried out and work was being undertaken with District Councils, to look at the Youth Provision in Worcestershire.

- The CMR explained her aspiration was to have asset based community development which was built up from the roots to enable community stability and resilience.

The meeting was adjourned from 12.05pm -12.15pm.

In summary it was agreed that:

- The period of PCC funding for CSP's would be clarified
- A list projects funded by the CSP's over the last 12 months through the North and South Worcestershire CSP would be provided to the Board
- Data relating to the waiting lists for support with drug and alcohol abuse would be provided to the Board
- A breakdown of how the £4m (PHRFG) was spent on the Drugs and Alcohol Service would be provided to the Board
- Training would be arranged for all Councillors on personal safety issues and would be added to the Member Development Programme
- A Briefing would be arranged for all Councillors on Prevent
- Data relating to reducing reoffending would be circulated
- A breakdown for Redditch and Bromsgrove of the 39% of referrals to the Climb Program (Para 34 of the Agenda) would be provided to the Board
- The Neighbourhood Matters website details would be circulated to all councillors
- A Councillor Briefing on the Drive and Male and Masculinity Programmes for all Councillors would be arranged
- Officers would be advised that for future reports there should be less acronyms and more relevant data included. The report should also be structured in themes and finished to an earlier deadline
- Scrutiny of CSP's should be added to the Work Programme and District Council's advised accordingly.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

## **1215 Member Update, Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Plan**

### Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) (Cllr Brandon Clayton)

The Board was advised that an additional meeting of HOSC was held on 18 October to look at the Strategy in relation to community ambulance stations and also how the residents of Worcestershire were able to access appointments with GPs following the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the discussion on Community Ambulance Stations, HOSC was advised by West Midlands Ambulance Service Trust that handover delays at hospitals was as an area of concern and in particular, regular and significant delays at Worcestershire Royal Hospital. The HOSC had therefore agreed to look at this as soon as possible via task group session of HOSC (not in public) with all system partners.

### Work Programme

It was agreed that Scrutiny of Community Safety Partnerships would be added to the Work programme.

It was noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board had written to the Leader of the Council to ask if there were any particular areas of Budget that Scrutiny could assist with for Budget Scrutiny 2022/23.

### Task Groups

It was noted that the Developer-funded Highways infrastructure & Section 278 Technical Approval Task Group would have its first meeting that afternoon

Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Budget Task Group – Councillor Adams reported on the progress of this Task Group.

In response to the suggestion, that all Scrutiny meetings should be webcast, the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager advised that this was being considered.

The meeting ended at 12.55 pm

Chairman .....