

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

**County Hall, Worcester**

**Tuesday, 26 April 2022, 2.00 pm**

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### **Present:**

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

### **Also attended:**

Cllr Simon Geraghty, Leader of the Council

Andrew Spice, Strategic Director of Commercial and Change  
Hannah Perrott, Assistant Director for Communities  
Sheena Jones, Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager  
Samantha Morris, Overview and Scrutiny Manager

### **Available Papers**

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 March 2022 (previously circulated).

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

### **1243 Apologies and Welcome**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mike Rouse and Paul Robinson  
(Chief Executive).

### **1244 Declaration of Interest and of any Party Whip**

None.

### **1245 Public Participation**

None.

## **1246 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **1247 Corporate Plan**

The Board received a report on the development of the refreshed Corporate Plan 2022-27.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report, highlighting that the four key themes of Open for Business, Children and Families, the Environment and Health and Wellbeing remained the same as the previous plan. Each section of the Plan had been updated and One Worcestershire was embedded throughout the document.

During the discussion, the following main points were made:

- The Leader advised that although there had been no formal consultation, the Cabinet Members and Directors had reviewed the current priorities. Further discussions would take place with District Councils and there would also be some resident roadshows in the community to discuss the Plan after publication.
- The Council was working with the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) to increase the focus on higher skilled and better paid jobs in Worcestershire to increase Gross Value Added (GVA).
- There would be a continued focus on key industrial developments in Worcestershire eg the Shrub Hill Quarter which had been identified as a possibility for large scale growth.
- A Member questioned whether there had been any risk analysis on the delivery of the key areas in light of the replacement of the European Fund and the delegation of UK Shared Prosperity Fund to District Councils. The Leader explained that this was a challenge, as resources would reduce and it would be important to work with District Councils to support businesses. In addition, the Open for Business Fund could also provide support.
- The refreshed Plan had been written following discussion with the Council's Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet Members, Officers in Business Support, Research and Intelligence and other relevant partners.
- Minor tweaks could be made to the Plan, however material changes would not be appropriate at this stage of its development.
- The reference to One Worcestershire was about how all partners worked together to deliver a shared 'Vision'.
- Although child and adolescent mental health wasn't specified as an individual priority, it was incumbent in the Health and Wellbeing priority vision and objectives.
- A Member questioned how the voice of the children and families had been included in the development of Plan. The Leader confirmed that there would be opportunities through service delivery for this to happen.

- In response to the request for clarification that the measure relating to 'Our Children's Services rated Good by Ofsted' related to all Children's Services, the Leader confirmed that the measure was written with the four yearly Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care Services in mind. However, given the importance of all Children's Services being rated as 'Good' by Ofsted, further thought would be given to expanding the measure.
- In response to the suggestion that the Children and Families measure stating that at least four out of five schools should be rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted should be a more ambitious target as 4 out of 5 schools were already rated 'good' or 'outstanding'. The Leader acknowledged the sentiment of the point made but explained that schools would need to continue to drive improvement to maintain these grades.
- Given that the Corporate Plan was a strategic document, it had been decided that reference to various Government papers would not be included as the Plan would quickly become out of date.
- It was agreed that consideration would be given to including a number against the measure relating to the '% of children getting their first preference school'.
- It was suggested that the Plan should be ambitious and give a target date for Worcestershire becoming a 2 Tier school system – the Leader confirmed that there wasn't a target date for this to happen.
- The WLEP were working on promoting the skills shortage in the employment market in Worcestershire with schools and colleges etc.
- One of the themes in the Resilience Transport Network of the Plan was that "Worcestershire aspires to deliver better local bus routes with ultra-low and zero emission buses in the County.....A Member asked whether an extra measure relating to community transport provision could be included in the Plan. The Leader confirmed that he didn't have the jurisdiction to change the agreed measures, that was a matter for Council.
- Part of the investment in technology to enable people to live healthily and independently in their own homes included a Pilot of 5G and the associated healthcare benefits.
- The Leader confirmed that there would be a continued investment in public rights of way, walking and cycling routes to help support people's physical and mental health.
- Although it would have been good to have seen a separate priority for Adult Social Care rather than it being included as part of Health and Wellbeing priority, the focus on independent living was welcomed.
- The Leader agreed to consider adding a separate reference in the Plan about the quality of life issues relating to crime and disorder matters such as reduction of hate crime, reduction of dependence on drugs and alcohol and support for victims and perpetrators of crime.
- A Member suggested that the measures relating to Health and Wellbeing should include qualitative measures as well as quantitative measures.
- It was suggested that 'How we will judge progress:' (page 17 of the Agenda Report) should be replaced with 'How we will measure this:'. This would provide consistency throughout the Report.

- It was questioned how seeking to adopt new ways of working including co-location and shared service to embrace a joined up approach to service delivery fitted with the Council's Organisational Re-design. In response, it was confirmed that the Council was looking at the best ways to work, optimise working in partnership and the best way to share the physical space.
- With regard to the One Public Estate, there was access to a small amount of funding for some analysis of the collective estate. In due course, as plans developed they would be shared through the democratic process.
- The measures in the Plan would be monitored via a twice yearly report on achievement of targets against Plan which would include Scrutiny.
- The Leader confirmed that all councillors would be involved in the roadshows which would take place in the community (there would be at least one roadshow per district area).
- Consideration would be given to introducing an incentivised staff suggestion scheme for commercial/cost saving ideas.

The main points from the discussion would be included in the Agenda Report of 19 May meeting of Council.

The Board agreed to invite the Leader and Chief Executive to provide an annual update on the Corporate Plan (including risk analysis and delivery plans).

## **1248 Update on the Worcestershire Response to Invasion of Ukraine**

The Board considered an update in respect of Worcestershire's Response to the invasion of Ukraine.

At its last meeting on 23 March, the Board considered the 24 March Cabinet Report about the Worcestershire Response to the Invasion of Ukraine. Following which the Chairman of OSPB attended Cabinet on 24 March to present the Board's comments.

The Assistant Director for Communities introduced the Report, highlighting that the County Council, District Councils and partners had unanimously pledged to do all they could to support families and individuals arriving in Worcestershire from Ukraine as part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and the Ukraine Family Scheme. People arriving from Ukraine would be able to live and work in the UK for up to three years, access healthcare, benefits, employment support, education, and English language tuition. Most guests would be women, children and older people, as able-bodied men aged 18 to 60 were not generally being allowed to leave Ukraine at present.

The situation was changing on a daily basis. At the date of this meeting, there were 267 host properties, 652 guests of which approximately 50% were children in respect of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

During the discussion, the following main points were made:

- In response to a question about whether there were any current concerns about the situation, the Assistant Director advised that at the current time there was uncertainty about the level of need, health, skills, education and longer term housing requirements of the guests.
- A small number of guests had moved in with hosts and Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) and housing checks were outstanding.
- There were government guidelines in respect of housing checks, which were essentially common sense.
- The number of guests that Worcestershire would receive was accessed from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities database.
- There was a Welcome Group approach for guests arriving in Worcestershire, which included the Here2Help Service.
- If a sponsor didn't wish to accept the £300 'thank you' payment, the Council would be advised.
- The Assistant Director was unsure how many guests were in the Ukraine Family Scheme but thought that the numbers were unlikely to exceed those of the Local Sponsorship Scheme.
- In response to the Chairman's question about how many guests were likely to be children, the Assistant Director advised that it was unknown at this stage. The Chairman asked for a rough calculation and was advised with caution that hypothetically, it could be up to 3000.
- To ensure that guests were not exploited, it was confirmed that the same support would be provided to guests as afforded to UK citizens including DBS checks, access to benefits, doctors and schools.
- It was envisaged that the school places needed would be made available in the district areas where guests were living, however this couldn't be confirmed until the level of demand was known.
- Applying for a school place would be the same process for guests as Worcestershire residents. In response to a Member's suggestion that this approach was inappropriate, the Assistant Director advised that sponsors were expected to provide support to their guests to enable them to do this. The weblink to the process would be shared with Councillors.
- Schools which were accepting guests would be supported by Worcestershire Children First.
- A concern was expressed about whether there would be sufficient mental health support available to guests should they need it, particularly for children needing the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) which was a service that was already under extreme pressure.
- Members requested that the regular Education Bulletins provided to them included an update on the Ukraine situation.
- The NHS had launched a guide on how guests could register with GP's.
- It was confirmed that the funding to support the Local Sponsorship Scheme had not yet been received from central government.

## **1249 Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Task Group Report on Ambulance Hospital Handover Delays**

The Chairman of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) introduced the Scrutiny Task Group Report on Ambulance Hospital Handover Delays. The Report had been considered by HOSC at its meeting on 9 March and a further update would be provided at its meeting on 9 May.

During the discussion, the following main points were made:

- A number of the recommendations made in the report had already been implemented by Health partners.
- Recommendation 1 – Discharge of Medically Fit Patients by 10am was considered to be the most important recommendation. Discharging patients who were medically fit for discharge earlier in the day would free up much needed bed space and improve patient flow.
- It was suggested that the demand for hospital services was outstripping the supply.
- A Member suggested that more use could be made of the Community First Responders who could often be quickly on scene to provide support.
- It was confirmed that since the time of writing the report, improvements had been made to the 111 Service.
- It was questioned whether the Emergency Department would carry out a mental health assessment in the case of a mental health crisis – the Chairman of HOSC agreed to seek a response to this question.

## **1250 Member Update, Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Plan**

The Board discussed the Member Update, Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Plan.

### Member Update

**Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Task Group (TG)** – Cllr Daisley updated the Board on the progress of the TG. Members were starting to identify some emerging themes and had met with a young person.

**Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)** – the membership for this TG was in the process of being identified.

**Developer Funded Highways Infrastructure Scrutiny Task Group** – Cllr Adams updated the Board on the progress of this TG which it was envisaged would be able to report to the Board in September.

**Crime and Disorder:** Cllr Udall advised the Board that he had been focussing on rural, animal and environmental crime and was in the process of gathering data and would report back to the Board in due course.

### Work Programme

To ensure a full discussion of the Work Programme at the May Scrutiny Panels, the Chairman suggested that it should be the first item on the Agenda.

It was agreed that following the recent unsuccessful Worcestershire bid to secure government funding to improve bus networks, the Board wished to discuss the current position and the plans for the Worcestershire Bus Improvement Strategy going forward at the 25 May meeting.

The meeting ended at 4.55 pm

Chairman .....