

Minutes of the Cabinet

County Hall

Thursday, 26 May 2022, 10.00 am

Present:

Cllr Simon Geraghty (Chairman), Cllr Marc Bayliss, Cllr Adrian Hardman, Cllr Marcus Hart (Vice Chairman), Cllr Adam Kent, Cllr Karen May, Cllr Richard Morris, Cllr Tracey Onslow, Cllr Andy Roberts and Cllr Mike Rouse

Also attended:

Cllr Mel Allcott

2094 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

None

Chairman's Comment

The Chairman welcomed Richard Morris, Tracey Onslow and Mike Rouse to the Cabinet and stated that he looked forward to working with them. He also recorded his thanks to Alan Amos, Matt Dormer and Tony Miller for their service on Cabinet over an extended period.

2095 Public Participation

None

2096 Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 April 2022, were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

2097 Worcestershire Adult Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2020-2021

Professor Keith Brown, Chairman of the Worcestershire Adult Safeguarding Board introduced the Board's Annual Report for 2020-21. He was the Chair of the NHS England National Safeguarding Network and was the Lead for national research into financial fraud and scams and advised the Ministry of Justice regarding mental capacity. The Worcestershire Adult Safeguarding

Board had a statutory duty to seek and provide assurance that Adults in Worcestershire were safeguarded from abuse and neglect. The duty was shared between the organisations who were members of the Board; the Police, the County Council, Health and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

The wicked issues which were currently being considered were rough sleeping, exploitation and self-neglect. In cases of exploitation it was often difficult to fully understand what was going on behind the scenes and with cases of self-neglect it was important to understand the mental capacity of the individual, but it could be complex to understand what people were capable of in different areas of their lives.

He believed Worcestershire should be proud of its staff who dealt with safeguarding and he was encouraging some of them to be nominated to the Health Services Journal Patient Safety Award under safeguarding for their work around exploitation.

Professor Brown felt that the major risk in the health and care sector was to do with staffing and recruitment but felt that there was an opportunity in the development of the Integrated Care Board, which could help to build bridges with health and social care.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care felt that they had been on a considerable journey since the Safeguarding Board had been set up and considerable progress had been made in the area of exploitation, and by working with District Councils, some progress was being made on homelessness. He did however feel that it could be difficult to identify self harm or neglect. The Council was concerned about staffing and it was believed that thousands more care and finance staff would be required in future to cope with Government changes and it was right to boost the pay received by domiciliary care staff.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing believed the work of the Safeguarding Board was very important in protecting the most vulnerable in the county and enabling them to live more fulfilling lives and she agreed there was capacity issues with carers.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- In response to a query about what a section 42 criteria was, and why it increased by 27%, it was clarified that it meant whether people met the criteria for significant needs for the Board to investigate. Professor Brown believed that people now understood the criteria better about whether there was a need for a safeguarding review,
- It was believed that society needed to value carers and recognise that it was a worthwhile and honourable career and which gave people a sense of purpose and a communication strategy was required to promote caring as a career. It could take years to recruit and train staff so in the short term a possible solution was offering staff good pay, terms and conditions so that staff choose to work in Worcestershire rather than elsewhere, and actions should be taken to ensure that

experienced workers did not get burnt out and choose to leave their jobs, perhaps by looking at coaching and mentoring

- The good work in communities was recognised, especially throughout the pandemic and it was suggested such work was harnessed by celebrating it and recognising the goodness in people helping each other
- Cyber security was a major concern because if old people lose their savings they did not have any way to replace it and the impact on the individual and their families was enormous. They would then need the Council to fund and support them. Criminals put a huge amount of resources into fraud and were very sophisticated but due to embarrassment and a feeling that nothing can be done to correct the situation many did not report the crime. It was estimated that only around 5% of fraud was reported. Professor Brown was publishing an All Party Parliamentary Report in July looking at coercion and fraud. More effort was needed to ensure that people were comfortable having conversations about fraud.
- It was recognised that safeguarding needed to be a proportionate response and it was a fine line between keeping people safe but allowing them to have freedom of choice. Advance care planning was difficult but necessary and it was important to find out what a person wanted and what was in their best interest, with no exploitation going on, rather than what officers thought was best for them. Having officers who were professionally curious and willing to keep asking questions was important
- Exploitation training had been introduced by the police for people who came into contact with young people and it was asked whether the Safeguarding Board had considered similar training for workers who came into contact with old people, such as gardeners, podiatrists or hairdressers. It was acknowledged that resources were a problem for the Board and it was suggested that it was something organisations who were members of the Board should be considering. The huge range of resources in the Voluntary and Community sector needed to be considered and could help to think more generally about safeguarding. The Chairman suggested that the ideas behind the Get Safe Programme for young people could be extended to cover adults
- It was good that the domestic abuse agenda had been expanded to cover parents and children, rather than just partners
- The County Council were already taking some actions which could be further expanded: for example encouraging apprenticeships in the caring professions; working with District Collaboratives on identifying all older people and checking they were registered with GPs and looking to train staff to identify exploitation and cyber security issues. It was suggested that some of this work could be picked up by the Health and Wellbeing Board
- It was hoped that in future Professor Brown could run a session for County and District Councillors on cyber fraud and What is Safe.
- Professor Brown concluded by asking how the media could be engaged and suggested a series of programmes or events could be organised with himself and relevant Council Leaders to give helpful suggestions and advice.

The Chairman thanked all staff working in this challenging area and felt the good practice they displayed should be celebrated.

RESOLVED that Cabinet received and considered the Adult Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2020-2021 and any actions resulting from it.

2098 Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan

Marc Bayliss, Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills introduced the report on the Minerals Local Plan, explaining that the plan would replace plans which had been in place since 1997 when they covered the County of Hereford and Worcester. The plan was a 15-year vision which covered plans for each type of mineral. The plan had gone through 4 stages of consultation and following an examination in public, the document was found to be sound as long as some modifications from the Inspectors were accepted. The document did not contain detailed site allocations which would be developed as a next stage.

Tribute was paid to all the Cabinet Members and Officers who had been involved with the development of the plan and it was explained that following Cabinet consideration the plan would need to be considered by Council for adoption.

Members of Cabinet welcomed the plan which meant the County would not be vulnerable to speculative applications and were pleased that the importance of restoration had been recognised and environmental targets were being included. The emphasis was on planning authorities to get restoration right and see restoration done on a phased basis rather than it being done at the end of the project.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approved the Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan and Policies Map for recommendation to Council for adoption, with the main modifications recommended by the Inspectors and the additional modifications which are necessary to clarify the plan but which do not materially affect its policies.

The meeting ended at 11.00am

Chairman