

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board

County Hall, Worcester

Monday, 27 February 2023, 10.00 am

Present:

Cllr Tom Wells (Chairman), Cllr Alan Amos (Vice Chairman),
Cllr Alastair Adams, Cllr Steve Mackay, Cllr Emma Stokes, Cllr Shirley Webb
and Cllr Richard Udall

Also attended:

Cllr John Gallagher, Malvern Hills District Council (and Member of the Child
and Adolescent Mental Health Services Task Group)

Samantha Morris, Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Sheena Jones, Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager

Available Papers

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 January 2023 (previously
circulated).

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

1301 Apologies and Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Councillors Brandon Clayton, Matt Dormer, Tim
Reid (Church Representative) and Mark Hughes (Parent Governor
Representative).

1302 Declaration of Interest and of any Party Whip

None.

1303 Public Participation

None.

1304 Draft Scrutiny Reports: (i) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (ii) Developer-Funded Highways Infrastructure

The Board was asked to consider and approve the draft scrutiny report on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) (Item (ii) Report of the Developer Funded Highways Infrastructure Task Group was not considered at this meeting as it had been withdrawn).

The Lead Member of the CAMHS Task Group introduced the Report and in doing so explained that in 2019, the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel had identified services supporting the mental health of children and adolescents in the County as a priority for scrutiny. In December 2019, OSPB agreed that a Scrutiny Task Group should be set up to look into this area. Unfortunately, this work was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic and was restarted in December 2021. The Terms of Reference for the scrutiny exercise was 'to investigate access to and the availability of appropriate mental health services for children and adolescents'.

It was important to note that although in Worcestershire, CAMHS referred to specific services for children and young people from Tier 3 level of need, the term 'CAMHS' was often used generically by the wider public to refer to all services supporting young people's emotional and mental wellbeing. The Task Group had looked at all services across all levels of need.

The Lead Member thanked all of the Members of the Task Group and the Officers who supported this Scrutiny for their hard work and commitment.

Councillor John Gallagher (Malvern District Council) added that the Scrutiny had been very illuminating. There were many professionals supporting the services but there were challenges around good communication, continuity of treatment and cross county support. It would be good to see the Worcestershire model being a totally integrated and joined up service.

During the opportunity for questions, the following main points were made:

- It was important in terms of communication, not only to update referrers but parents and where age appropriate, young people too.
- A Member expressed concern about waiting list times which was the main reason that constituents contacted councillors to ask for help; long waits could be detrimental to a young person's health.
- Recommendation 2 of the Report recommended that all services to support children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing in Worcestershire should be badged under a common name. This may be CAMHS or an alternative name, as appropriate. A Member suggested that as CAMHS was instantly recognisable as the provider of mental health services for children and young people, it seemed sensible for this to be the overarching badge for all services rather than choosing an alternative name.

- In response to a question about whether the task group had engaged with schools, the Lead Member explained that the Group had and gave examples of the services available in schools as detailed in the report such as the Wellbeing and Emotional Support Teams and Act on It Programme.
- A question was asked about whether the Task Group had explored autism in girls as part of its investigation and was advised that unfortunately this was outside of the remit of the Scrutiny.

The Board approved the report which would be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 30 March and also by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board for a formal response. The Board requested an update on progress against recommendations in 6 month's time.

1305 Substitute Members at Scrutiny meetings

The Board considered a report about substitute Members at Scrutiny meetings. The Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager introduced the report and reminded members that this issue had been added to the Board's work programme in November 2022, following discussion about the varying member attendance at some Panel meetings.

Currently, the Council's Constitution included the ability for members to appoint a substitute to attend meetings in their place. However, this did not include members on the OSPB nor on the various Scrutiny Panels. Paragraph 3.6 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules stated that 'There shall be no substitution on the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, an Overview and Scrutiny Panel or any Scrutiny Task Group'.

Members of the Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of substitutes being allowed at Scrutiny meetings. All Members of the Board gave their views and the following main points were made:

- Substitutes at OSPB, HOSC and Task Groups shouldn't be allowed and there should only be named substitutes for Panel meetings.
- It was noted that there were approximately 5/6 meeting for each Scrutiny Panel per year.
- It was suggested that there was good reason for the current arrangements: substitutes would not be accountable and would not work for meetings of OSPB. Scrutiny work was not self-contained, knowledge needed to be built up and if substitutes were permissible for Scrutiny Panels, there could be a lack of continuity in attendance and the lack of opportunity to build knowledge and expertise in a specific area.
- Although all meetings took place in the daytime, Members were fully aware of this when they became councillors and if member attendance was an issue, it should be dealt with appropriately.
- Member attendance at the Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel was an issue. However, attendance at the Cabinet

Member Briefing was not an issue and the briefings were becoming more like mini Scrutiny Panel meetings, which was not appropriate.

- Group Leaders shouldn't appoint Members to Scrutiny Panels who were likely to struggle with attendance, due to other commitments.
- It was questioned whether appointing substitutes would strengthen Scrutiny.
- Substitutes would be reasonable in terms of achieving a quorum.
- A Member suggested that if substitutes were allowed, perhaps it should be that only Members of the OSPB should be allowed to substitute on Scrutiny Panels thus maintaining some expertise.
- Substitutes would definitely not be appropriate for task group work where detailed evidence was gathered in order to produce an evidence based report.
- If substitutes were allowed, they should be given a time limit within which to register as attending the meeting eg a week before, so that there was sufficient time to prepare for a meeting.
- It was noted that on the front of Scrutiny Agendas, all councillors were invited to attend Scrutiny meetings and Chairman would always allow them to ask a question.
- In the case where a Vice-Chairman had chaired a Scrutiny meeting, they were invited to attend OSPB to provide any update reports needed.
- Substitutes added a layer of complication.

Following the discussion, it was agreed by the Board that a report would be sent to the Annual Meeting of Council (in May 2023) recommending that a change to the Constitution be considered to allow Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board only to substitute at Scrutiny Panel and HOSC meetings (not OSPB or Task Groups).

1306 Scrutiny Chairmen (and Lead Member) Update, Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Plan

The Scrutiny Panel Chairmen/Lead Members provided an update on recent Scrutiny meetings and activities.

Adult Care and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Cllr Shirley Webb)

No update to report as the Panel had not met since the last meeting of OSPB.

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Cllr Steve Mackay, Chairman of the Panel)

No update to report as the Panel had not met since the last meeting of OSPB.

Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Cllr Emma Stokes)

The Chairman advised that at the March meeting, the Scrutiny Panel was hoping to try out Power-Bi to look at the quarterly performance monitoring information and had requested bikeability data to be included in this

information. The recent CMR Briefing which the Panel Chairman had attended was also mentioned.

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Meeting (Cllr Alastair Adams)

The Chairman advised that at the March meeting, the Panel would be receiving an annual update on flooding in Worcestershire. The Chairman would also be attending the March meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the home to school transport discussion.

The Vice-Chairman of the Board asked if any information had been received about the Council's lane pricing policy. The Chairman of the Panel agreed to follow this up with the Strategic Director for Economy and Infrastructure.

In response to members' queries, the Panel Chairman advised that Road Diversion Signs was scheduled for the 25 May meeting of the Panel.

Developer Funded Highways Infrastructure Scrutiny Task Group

The draft report for this Scrutiny was being finalised and would be presented to the Board shortly.

Crime and Disorder (Cllr Richard Udall)

The Lead member for Crime and Disorder discussed concerns relating to the trafficking, grooming and safety of sex workers in Worcestershire. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the Annual Crime and Disorder meeting in October 2023.

The Chairman of the OSPB reminded members of the Board that if they were giving apologies to any meeting to provide a written update on their panel's activities before the meeting.

Work Programme

The following issues were discussed:

- The report on the Worcestershire Response to the Invasion of Ukraine scheduled for the 29 March meeting should include an update on the housing situation.
- In terms of planning the process for Budget Scrutiny for 2023/24, the Vice-Chairman would lead on the planning process to ensure earlier involvement from Scrutiny.
- Arrangements would be made for the Board to conduct an annual review of Scrutiny.

Cabinet Forward Plan

The Democratic Services and Governance Manager advised that an updated Cabinet Forward Plan had been published after the Agenda despatch for this meeting and the following items had been added:

- Continuation of Funding for Worcester City Libraries (CMR decision)
- Household Support Fund.

The meeting ended at 12.00 pm

Chairman