

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board

Council Chamber, County Hall, Worcester

Tuesday, 19 December 2023, 10.00 am

Present:

Cllr Tom Wells (Chairman), Cllr James Stanley (Vice Chairman),
Cllr Alastair Adams, Cllr David Chambers, Cllr Brandon Clayton,
Cllr Matt Dormer, Cllr Emma Stokes, Cllr Shirley Webb and Cllr Richard Udall

Also attended:

Cllr Karen May, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing
Cllr Steve Mackay, Cabinet Member for Children and Families
Sue Harris, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
Sonja Upton, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
Anne Marie Dolan, Herefordshire and Worcetsreshire Integrated Care Board
Lisa McNally, Director of Public Health
Liz Altay, Public Health Consultant
Adam Johnston, Director of Child Protection and Through Care,
Worcestershire Children First
Samantha Morris, Interim Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager
Alison Spall, 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 October 2023 (previously circulated).

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

1346 Apologies and Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Tim Reid (Co-opted Church Representative for Education matters) and Tina Russell, Director of Children's Services/Chief Executive, Worcestershire Children First.

1347 Declaration of Interest and of any Party Whip

Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board Tuesday, 19 December 2023
Date of Issue: 16 January 2024

None.

1348 Public Participation

None.

1349 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 October 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

1350 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) - Update on Scrutiny Recommendations

In attendance for this item:

Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Health and Wellbeing, CMR (HWB)
Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families, CMR (C&F)
Director of Public Health
Public Health Consultant
Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (H&WHCT)
Associate Director Children, Young People and Families and specialist primary care, H&WHCT
Senior Manager, Children and Young People's Mental Health, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
Director of Child Protection and Through Care, Worcestershire Children First (WCF).

The Board had requested an update on the progress made following the recommendations agreed by Cabinet in March 2023 in respect of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Scrutiny Task Group report.

The Cabinet Member (HWB) made some opening comments thanking the Scrutiny Task Group for their work and highlighting that the recommendations agreed by Cabinet had now been grouped under 4 headings as part of an Action Plan for progressing the actions.

By way of background, the Cabinet Member (C&F), explained that in his previous role (Chairman of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel) he had been the Lead Member of the CAMHS Task Group. The CMR (C&F) gave a brief overview of some of the key findings and issues identified by the Task Group which had led to their recommendations.

The Director of Strategy and Partnerships explained that there was some misunderstanding of CAMHS, and the work of the Task Group had proved to be a key learning piece for taking things forward. The consolidation of the recommendations into 4 workstreams, each with clear leadership and a governance route, was important and issues had been woven into next year's planning for the Integrated Care System to ensure that issues would be

developed. The Senior Manager (ICB) commented that the Scrutiny work had been a comprehensive stocktake as to where the services were set against the national post Covid situation. In recognition of the different levels of need and help required, there was a move away from the focus being on the 'CAMHS' identity towards an emphasis on the availability of the wider emotional health and wellbeing provision.

The Board was informed that the road map referred to in Action 1 was complete and available on the website. With regard to Action 2 (increasing the provision of early help services), it was highlighted that this had also been identified by the ICB. In the past 6 months, the Mental Health Collaborative had been developing services and funding had been identified to procure a service for targeted intervention support, with a likely start date of September 2024. The specification was currently being completed through multi partner working, following which it would be put out to tender. Members were also informed that the ICB was developing a neurodivergent pathway.

In response to Members questions, the following points were made:

- Additional resources had not yet been put in place to match the increased demand for services post Covid. It was explained that the 2018 Plan had increased access points for mental health support, but there was currently a reset of national long-term planning, with services for CYP being given priority, with ringfenced funding. Details of what funds would be made available to the County was awaited.
- It was clarified that the ICB was the commissioner of services and the H&WHCT was the service provider.
- The Chairman asked whether there was currently a cohort of CYP waiting for an assessment. The Board was assured that the CYP at highest risk were being seen first, and that there were also plans to increase staffing to support this. Work was also ongoing to help meet a child's needs without a diagnosis, for instance by adapting the school environment to be inclusive to all.
- The Associate Director (H&WHCT) explained the development of the emotional needs of CYP, and the effect of adverse childhood experiences. She stressed the need for the whole system to provide support to a CYP and highlighted the way in which the pandemic had impacted this. She highlighted that whilst the recent increased awareness of CYP emotional needs was a positive development, it had also led to a further increase on demand for services.
- The issue of timely support was raised. It was anticipated that in a years' time, access to services would have improved, demand would have reduced, and more support would be available. In the meantime, staff needed to be upskilled for instance in school settings, youth clubs and GP surgeries to be able to respond effectively at the earliest opportunity.
- It was confirmed that the ICB was aware of the gaps in provision and the mental health long term plan had made resources available to increase services, as well as contracts being brought together under an umbrella of targeted services.

- The CAMHS Wellbeing and Emotional Support Teams in schools (WESTs) were providing support in some schools to fill the known gap and were allocated on the basis of deprivation factors. A decision was awaited from the Government about the availability of further funding to expand the WEST service, with coverage anticipated to be 50% of schools. It was highlighted that the procurement process would ensure that there was access to similar provision to the WEST service for all schools and CYP in the county.
- In response to a question about how GPs accessed support for CYP, the Director of Strategy and Partnerships explained that all GPs had access to the TeamNet system which enabled them to access treatment pathways.
- Questions were raised about what mental health services were currently provided in schools and how they were funded. The Board was informed that ICB received the funding for WEST and then distributed to schools accordingly. In addition, the voluntary and community sector (VCS), including Action for Children and Onside delivered similar style interventions in some schools not covered by WEST. There were also other programmes offering support on an individual, group and whole school basis.
- The Public Health Consultant highlighted the range of preventative work taking place in Public Health to support CYP, including the school nurse service available in every school, youth services provision, screening for Year 9 pupils and support from the VCS. The Director of Public Health explained that there was also a proposal to award Public Health grants to schools to deliver any strengths- based work which they thought was a priority for CYP health and wellbeing. Proposals received had included a therapy dog programme and skills development of their CYP.
- It was requested that details be provided of the 50% of schools able to access the WEST programme, and for the remaining 50% specific details of what support they could currently access.
- In response to a question about staff shortages, it was highlighted that recruitment of specialist CAMHS staff was a national problem, and that NHS England currently had a national training programme to help train and develop staff. It was explained that the rise in waiting lists was partly due to staff shortages, but also due to an increased awareness and demand for services. It was highlighted that there were some CAMHS services, such as the Eating Disorders team and Kooth that were meeting their targets.
- In response to a Member's request, the Associate Director CYP agreed to provide details of the timeframe that CYP waited for support following an assessment, if they were not deemed to be high risk.
- At lower levels of intervention, it was acknowledged that the capture of data was complex as many interactions were informal, but with regard to CYP within the system, it was agreed to provide data on a range of issues including the numbers of CYP waiting to be assessed, the outcomes of assessments and the numbers not meeting the threshold for intervention.
- A Member requested details of the cost of the tendering process for the Child Engagement Officer.

- The CMR (C&F) suggested that the measure of the outcome for Action 4 needed to be expanded so that trends could be seen in full, and it be made clear the levels of service being received by each CYP on their journey.
- A Member suggested that it would be helpful to hear the experiences of service users when future discussions were taking place. It was confirmed that this could be taken forward and the Board was informed of the type of involvement that CYP currently have to engage with the service including through a Youth Board which recently organised 'Reach Out' sessions. It was stressed that any support that could be offered to promote these events would be welcomed.
- In response to a Members question, it was confirmed that the roadmap of services referred to in Action 1 was being taken forward by the Mental Health Collaborative which was a partnership across all agencies. The Public Health Consultant advised that the roadmap would be developed through the virtual family hub and the 9 physical family hubs.
- In summing up, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution to the meeting. He acknowledged that mental health was a multi layered issue and that prevention was a key issue. He accepted that work was currently progressing and looked forward to the next update in Summer 2024, to provide an update on outcomes achieved. It was agreed that the ICB and CMR (HWB) would be provided with a summary of the key issues covered at today's meeting.

1351 Scrutiny Chairmen (and Lead Member) Update, Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Plan

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

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

The Panel's last meeting had included an item on how the Council works with Carers and this discussion had benefitted from the input of the Worcestershire Association of Carers and 2 individual carers who had shared their experiences.

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Cllr David Chambers)

The Chairman provided feedback from the Panel's most recent meeting which had included an update from the West Mercia Youth Justice Service, the progress on SEND and the Home to School Transport Budget position. The Panel had suggested the 'Use of Agency staff' as a possible Scrutiny Task Group topic for the Board to consider.

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

At the Panel's last meeting items had included an update on the Libraries Unlocked Programme, for which a public speaker had attended to express the

concerns of local residents. An overview of the Council's Contractual and Pay inflation had also been received and detailed questioning had taken place.

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Meeting (Cllr Alastair Adams)

The Chairman advised that the Panel's recent meeting had included an update on the Net Zero Carbon Plan. In relation to this, the Chairman was keen to receive examples of the feasibility/impact of carbon capture technology. In respect of DRT (Malvern) considered by the September Panel, the Panel had requested to be informed of the publicity that was taking place in line with the Communication Plan.

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Cllr Brandon Clayton)

The Chairman provided feedback from the Committee's recent monthly meetings and activity. At the last meeting HOSC considered a report on improving patient flow. Members had also carried out site visits to mental health units in Worcester and Redditch as part of scrutinising future proposals for the Hill Crest Ward, Redditch. New members of the Committee had also benefitted from Induction on the role of each partner Health system.

Crime and Disorder (Cllr Richard Udall)

Cllr Udall advised that he was meeting with the Police Federation in the new year.

Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Plan

It was agreed that an update on the progress of the Developer Funded Highways Infrastructure Scrutiny Task Group report would be scheduled for May or June 2024 meeting.

The Chairman expressed concern as to what impact the Board could have on the Budget given the short time period between the Board receiving Budget details at the end of January and the Cabinet meeting. The Interim Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager advised that the Panels had already been looking at some of the key issues in detail, and these comments along with feedback from the January Panels would be available to the Board in January. The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive would be invited to attend the Board meeting.

It was highlighted that the current Forward Plan only included key decisions to be taken up to 1 February 2024. The Board requested that the Forward Plan should provide earlier notice of decisions to improve the opportunity for a more effective scrutiny process, with a 3-month period being suggested.

Task Groups

The Board agreed to have an informal discussion following their next meeting to review the possible options for the next Scrutiny Task Group.

In the meantime, the list of possible items would be circulated to Board Members for consideration in advance.

The Use of Agency Staff item raised by the Chairman of the Children and Families O&S Panel would be added to the list under the broader heading 'Non-employed staff'. A breakdown of costs per Directorate under this heading would be sought as background information in advance of the meeting.

The meeting ended at 12.55 pm

Chairman