

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COORDINATING GROUP HELD ON 19th November 2008

Present:

Members of the Group:

Councillors: David Booth,
Ken Browne
Alan Cockburn
Richard Grant (Chair)
Mick Jones
Frank McCarney
Jerry Roodhouse
Bob Stevens

Officers: Bill Basra LLA Manager
Dave Clarke, Strategic Director Resources
Alwin McGibbon, Health Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Michelle McHugh, Interim Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Nicky Nicholls Operations Manager
Leena Pindoria, Healthy Schools Advisor
John Wright, Committee Manager

Others: Steve Bradbury, HAP
Jo Bell, HAP
Sharon Johal, HAP

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Jim Graham.

(2) Members' Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Councillor Bob Stevens declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 "Performance of LINKs and LINKs Protocols" as he was an Executive Director of NHS Warwickshire

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2008

The minutes of the 1st October 2008 meeting were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. Order Of Business

The Chair announced that he intended to take the reports on "Performance of LINKs and LINKs Protocols" and "LAA and LPSA2 Performance" as the next items of business.

3. Performance of LINKs and LINKs Protocols

The Group considered a report on an update of the changes arising from the abolition of the Patient and Public Involvements Forums and their replacement by the Local Involvement Network (LINK). The Health Advocacy Partnership (HAP) was establishing the LINK in Warwickshire.

Members were aware that progress in the development of the LINK had been slower than anticipated. Progress was being monitored by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members were informed that a meeting between the host organisation, HAP and officers, earlier in the day had agreed to the creation of two additional posts to assist the development of the LINK and of the roles the posts would perform. The Group was informed of the anticipated timescale for the implementation of LINK including a meeting on 4th December with the aim of widening the membership of the start up group to establish a governance group, develop a communications strategy and put together a work plan. Members requested that details of the meeting be circulated to all Councillors.

Following questions from members they were informed

- Of the difference between LINK and PALS
- Of the powers of LINK, relation to OS and Cabinet
- Once LINK was established there would be a co-ordination of the work programmes between LINK and Health O and S Committee.

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- A meeting would be held in the third week of January to agree the protocols for the working relationship between the Council and LINK.
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Resolved that

- (1) The report be noted.
- (2) The Adult and Community Services OSC and Children, Young People and Families OSC be asked to nominate a representative to attend the LINKs Event at Butts Park Arena, Butts Road, Coventry on 4th December 2008.
- (3) The Chairs and Spokes of the Adult and Community Services, Children, Young People and Families and Health OSCs meet with in the third week of January 2009 to discuss and agree protocol arrangements.

4. LAA and LPSA2 Performance

The Group considered a report on the progress made to date in relation to the LAA and LPSA2 targets. The report detailed the remedial actions suggested to address those measures currently forecast to miss the target.

During consideration of the report members made the following comments:

- The details of LPSA 2 indicators should be referred to the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees for their consideration as part of the overall directorate reporting. Indicators that were of a cross cutting nature could be picked up during consideration by the Co-ordinating Group.

- There was concern that the report was too detailed and could be simplified by concentrating on the areas where performance was not hitting targets however this needed to be contrasted with the need to review all targets to ensure that they were realistic and challenging.
- Members suggested that officers should give consideration to examples from other authorities of best practice in reporting LAA indicators
- Members felt they needed to be able to quickly and easily understand the areas where performance was not hitting targets. Alternative formatting was suggested.

Members received of the healthy schools project and noted that of the 241 schools in the County 237 had registered with healthy schools. Members were informed of the progress made by schools in achieving the healthy schools standard and were made aware that some schools were experiencing significant barriers which prevented them from achieving the standard. The Group were appreciative of the significant recent progress.

Resolved that the report be noted

5. Holding Portfolio Holders to Account

The Group considered a report on local and national best practice in relation to how Overview and Scrutiny Committees hold Portfolio Holders to account. The report outlined options for implementing a formal and consistent approach for Warwickshire County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees to hold Cabinet Portfolio Holders to account and proposed three options to achieve this..

In considering the report, members acknowledged that there was a need for step change in approach to the holding of portfolio holders to account. However members felt that the formal introduction of any new procedure should be delayed until the after the forthcoming County Council elections. In the meantime, each Overview and Scrutiny Chair should talk through the options with their Committees with a view to trialling which ever options each committee felt appropriate.

Resolved that

- (1) Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider trialling one or more of the options for holding portfolio holders to account.
- (2) The options outlined in the report be implemented at the start of the next municipal year

6. Overview and Scrutiny performance – 6 Month Update

The Group considered a report on the performance of the Overview and Scrutiny function during the first two quarters of 2008/09.

Resolved that the report be noted.

7. Proposals for Budget Scrutiny

The Group considered a report on a proposed agenda, format and protocol for the budget scrutiny event which would be held on 18th December. The Group approved the draft agenda subject to minor amendments. The Group considered the arrangements for the event

Resolved that.

- (1) subject to minor amendments the agenda for the budget scrutiny meeting on 18th December 2008,
- (2) in addition to the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Party spokes, the leaders and deputy leaders of each group and Councillor Kirton be invited to participate in the budget scrutiny event
- (3) the budget scrutiny protocol, which sets out principles and objectives of budget scrutiny be circulated to all members of the Council.

8. Draft Outcomes Leaflet

The Group considered a report on a mechanism for publicising the impact and outcomes of scrutiny reviews. The report proposed that a leaflet detailing such outcomes be issued for each review when impact and outcomes could be identified, the timing of this would be different for different reviews.. Members welcomed the proposal.

Resolved that the draft Outcomes Leaflet ,attached as Appendix A to the report submitted, be approved and be developed to publicise the impact of scrutiny reviews as appropriate

9. West Midlands Overview and Scrutiny Steering Group

The Group noted that the scheduled meeting West Midlands Overview and Scrutiny Steering Group had been cancelled.

10. Items for Future Items for OSCG and OSC's Work Programmes

The Group considered it's work programme.

Resolved that the work programme for the group be approved subject to the addition of a report on issues relating to overview and scrutiny arising from the CPA and the JAR reports.

11. Any Other Business

None

12. Date of Next Meeting

The Group noted that their next meeting would be held on Wednesday 19th November 2008 at 2.00 p.m.

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Chair

The Group rose at 4.05 p.m.