

**MINUTES of the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Friday 30 September 2011 at 10.00 am**

**Present:** Councillor H Bramer (Chairman)  
Councillor A Seldon (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: PL Bettington, WLS Bowen, MJK Cooper, PGH Cutter, EPJ Harvey, MAF Hubbard, RC Hunt, JLV Kenyon, JW Millar, R Preece, SJ Robertson, P Rone and PJ Watts

**Statutory Co-optees** Miss E Lowenstein

**In attendance:** None

**13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors AM Atkinson, RC Hunt, TM James and from Mr P Sell.

**14. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

There were none.

**15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**16. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 July be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**17. SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY**

A member of the public suggested that the Council's consultation processes were flawed, exposing the Council's decisions to the risk of challenge, and the processes should therefore be reviewed by the Committee.

**18. SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDRENS HEART SURGERY IN ENGLAND**

The Committee considered its response to a consultation on the proposed options for reconfiguration of paediatric cardiac surgery centres in England.

The Associate Director/Head of Service (Health) presented the report. He informed the Committee that Option B, set out in the report, was the clinicians preferred option.

It was reported that a meeting of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees for the West Midlands Region had concluded that the proposals had no detrimental effect on the West Midlands.

Members tested various aspects of the proposals, concluding that Option B was the preferred option.

**RESOLVED: That authority be granted for a response to the consultation to be submitted following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee and the Vice-Chairman (Health and Wellbeing), based on Option B, as set out in the report, being the preferred option.**

## **19. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered its draft work programme.

The programme had been developed based on discussions at an informal workshop for Members of the Committee.

A question on the work programme had been submitted in advance of the meeting and the question and answer, as appended, was circulated at the meeting.

In discussion the following principal points were made:

- A proposal was made that the programme should include a review of the Council's consultation processes and how the Council could ensure the findings of consultation exercises were representative.
- Some Members questioned how, with the transition to a new model of scrutiny working, scrutiny of the work of Directorates and the Council's performance could be accommodated within the work programme and how Cabinet Members and Directors should be held to account.

It was emphasised that it was for the Committee to determine its work programme and proposed that a report be submitted to the Committee setting out some options for considering these issues.

- It was confirmed that the work programme retained the flexibility to enable the Committee to respond to events and could be amended as the Committee saw fit.
- Some Members expressed concern about the content of the Council's published statutory Forward Plan considering that it gave too little notice to the Committee of the Executive's plans and therefore did not afford the Committee the opportunity to consider how it might wish to be involved in scrutinising the plans or contribute to policy development. It was noted that Cabinet had been advised of the intention to develop a broader Cabinet work programme. It was requested that officers should be advised of the Committee's wish that this work be progressed.
- The Chairman requested that as a starting point all the Vice-Chairmen should arrange regular meetings with the relevant Cabinet Members.
- It was requested that informal meetings such as those of the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and their meetings with the Cabinet should be included in the work programme.

**RESOLVED:**

**That (a) the work programme as appended to the report be approved; and**

- (b) **a report be made to the Committee setting out options for how the Committee might consider the work of Directorates, the Council's performance and hold Cabinet Members and Directors to account.**

*(Councillor WLS Bowen abstained from voting and requested that his abstention be recorded.)*

The meeting ended at 11.30 am

**CHAIRMAN**