



West Midlands
Combined Authority

Wellbeing Board

Tuesday 20 July 2021 at 10.00am

Minutes

Present:

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Chair)	Portfolio Lead for Wellbeing
Lola Abudu	Public Health England
Councillor Margaret Bell	Warwickshire County Council
Councillor Karen Grinsell	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Julian Gutteridge	Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Councillor Paulette Hamilton	Birmingham City Council
Councillor Suzanne Hartwell	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Jasbir Jaspal	City of Wolverhampton Council
Matthew Ling	West Midlands Fire Service

In attendance:

Mubasshir Ajaz	West Midlands Combined Authority
Ed Cox	West Midlands Combined Authority
Jed Francique	West Midlands Combined Authority
Madeleine Freewood	City of Wolverhampton Council
Simon Hall	West Midlands Combined Authority
Matthew Hartland	NHS Black Country & West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group
Tatum Matharu	West Midlands Combined Authority
Richard Mendelsohn	Birmingham & Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group
Aqeel Rizvi	West Midlands Combined Authority
Grace Scrivens	West Midlands Combined Authority

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stephen Craddock (Walsall), Andy Hardy (NHS), Paul Jennings (NHS) and Paul Maubach (NHS).

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

3. Workshop on the Functions of the Wellbeing Board

The board held a workshop session to consider its role and purpose, along with how its members may work together more collaboratively on a common agenda. Members gathered in smaller groups to consider in more detail the knowledge they brought into meetings, the things they were good at, and those things they cared strongly about. They then considered the collaborative opportunities for the different organisations represented on the board to work together on cross-cutting issues.

The Chair thanked members for the open and reflective manner in which everyone had participated in the workshop and the recognition that there was a common agenda across a number of issues that board members were able to work more collaboratively together on in future.

4. Reconvening the Mental Health Commission

The board considered a report from the Strategic Lead for Mental Health providing an update on the work being undertaken to lay the foundations for a new Mental Health Commission.

The WMCA first convened a Mental Health Commission in 2016/17, chaired by Rt Hon Norman Lamb that was informed by a citizens' jury and involved a number of high profile local and national figures. It made 18 important, substantive recommendations with the aim of strengthening the region's response to mental health needs. A new Mental Health Commission had the potential to make a vital, timely contribution to the pursuit of a mentally healthier region by building on and 'adding value' to the local work that was being undertaken in constituent local authority areas. It was expected that the commission would make its recommendations in April 2022.

Councillor Paulette Hamilton welcomed these proposals, but stressed the importance of having the data that underpinned the review and identified those priority areas that the commission should focus on. Councillor Margaret Bell noted that local authorities were already undertaking significant work in the early and preventative stages of mental health support, and so the commission should focus on plugging gaps in service rather than seeking to duplicate provision. Councillor Karen Grinsell urged the commission to keep a tight focus on its work and target those specific areas that were identified as needing addressing.

The Head of Wellbeing & Prevention requested that board members contact him if they were able to nominate themselves or colleagues to participate in the commission, or if they had a recommendation as to who might be a suitable chair.

Resolved:

- (1) The proposal and approach to setting up the new Mental Health Commission be noted.
- (2) The proposals in respect of the Select Committee approach, shadow Young Person's Mental Health Commission, Elected Members' Advisory Group, the timelines, Chair selection, membership and Mental Health Start Awards be endorsed.
- (3) An update on the Mental Health Commission be reported to each future board meeting.

5. Wellbeing Programmes Update

(a) Physical Activity

The board considered a report from the Strategic Lead for Physical Activity & Wellbeing on the progress made in delivering the physical activity work programme.

Since the last meeting, the WMCA had been working alongside the Department of Culture, Media & Sport, Sport England and Public Health England to develop the principles and priorities for the 'Commonwealth Active Communities', which would deliver the physical activity legacy work arising out of the Commonwealth Games being held in the region during July/August 2022. The report provided details of other activity currently being undertaken, including public active space design, the West Midlands Active Travel Fund, and 'Include Me WM' which aimed for more inclusive sport and physical activity initiatives.

Resolved:

The progress made in delivering the WMCA's physical activity work programme be noted.

(b) Thrive

The board considered a report from the Interim Head of Thrive on the progress being made in delivering the Thrive work programme.

Recent work undertaken included recruiting a Thrive at Work sub-team to focus on employer engagement, raising awareness about the importance of workforce wellbeing and promoting Thrive at Work as a means to support that aim. Capacity within the accreditation sub-team had also been strengthened to help facilitate more employers through the Thrive at Work process. As of 1 July 2021, Thrive into Work was available in Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry (in addition to the Black Country, where the service was already running). This Thrive into Work service was being delivered by Prospects, part of the Shaw Trust.

Resolved:

(1) The progress of the Thrive at Work programme be noted.

(2) The progress of the Thrive into Work programme be noted.

(c) Health Inequalities and Population Health

The board considered a report from the Head of Wellbeing & Prevention on the progress being made in delivering the WMCA's health inequalities and population health objectives.

The report provided details on the activity currently being delivered, including the Cities Health Inequalities Project which was a three-year project funded by the Health Foundation that aimed to support combined authorities to accelerate their efforts to address health inequalities through a focus on the opportunities offered by devolution, particularly in relation to addressing the determinants of health. Work was also being undertaken with Public Health England to recruit a programme manager and a senior analyst to help continue the work of the health intelligence hub, specifically on the wellbeing dashboard and embedding a 'Health in all Policies' approach.

Resolved:

The progress in delivering the WMCA's Health Inequalities and Population Health work programme be noted.

8. Forward Plan

The Chair noted that the board could expect reports on the Health of the Region, an update on the Health Commission and on disability work to its next meeting.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 19 October 2021 at 10.00am

[The meeting ended at 12.00pm]