

DRAFT

Scrutiny Proposal

BACKGROUND

Topic: Worcestershire Hub Scrutiny			
Background to the issue	<p>The Worcestershire Hub is the first point of contact for the public and has a key role to play in transforming customer services.</p> <p>The topic was initiated by Council following a Notice of Motion to Council in June 2009 which stated that 'Residents are becoming increasingly frustrated at the difficulty in accessing the Hub and obtaining a response to their enquiries. The areas of concern include the length of time taken to answer calls and the lack of feedback.</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board identified the Worcestershire Hub as a priority for scrutiny at its meeting on 10 September 2009 and it was subsequently included in the scrutiny work programme, which was approved by Council on 1 October 2009.</p>		
Terms of reference of scrutiny	<p>To look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the Worcestershire Hub, including the shared service • How to make the Worcestershire Hub fit for purpose in the future • Differences in provision across Worcestershire, what they are and why they exist? • What are the gaps in provision and what are the opportunities? 		
Scrutiny Officer & Scrutiny Liaison Officer support	<p>Emma James / Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officers</p> <p>Suzanne O'Leary, Overview and Scrutiny Manager</p> <p>Scrutiny Liaison Officers across Directorates</p>		
Suitability for scrutiny. Which of the following criteria does it meet?			
<i>Is the issue a priority area for the Council?</i>	Yes	<i>Does it examine a poorly performing service?</i>	<i>Recently the service has been under strain</i>
<i>Is it a key issue for local people?</i>	Yes	<i>Has it been prompted by new Government guidance or legislation?</i>	No
Will it be practicable to implement the outcomes of the scrutiny?	Yes	<i>Will it result in improvements to the way the Council operates?</i>	Yes

<i>Are improvements for local people likely as a result?</i>	Yes	
Scope of scrutiny (what issues will it cover and what won't it cover)	<p>The Worcestershire Hub includes the county council and the six district councils. Therefore, although this scrutiny has been initiated and will be led by the county council, it is proposed that the task group will co-opt a member from each district council. This model has been selected to fully involve the districts, and keep working arrangements as simple as possible, to allow this scrutiny to progress quickly.</p> <p>The scope of the scrutiny exercise will cover:</p> <p>The whole of the Worcestershire Hub - countywide The journey of the Worcestershire Hub Worcestershire Hub Shared Service (WHSS) Performance – traditionally, currently, plans Specific services Differences across local centres and districts Future development</p>	
Advantages to conducting scrutiny & Indicators of success (ie how will you know a good scrutiny has been done?)	<p>A good scrutiny exercise will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Channel the concerns of both the county and district councils, providing a more efficient and effective method of scrutinising the Hub (a one-hit exercise) • Increase understanding of the Worcestershire Hub – what it is, what it isn't, journey of the Worcestershire Hub, where there are challenges, achievements, performance, local differences, range of services, access to information, Worcestershire Hub Shared Service, development plans, etc. • Provide clarity as to the role of the Worcestershire Hub – generally and for specific services • Recognise and understand achievements, the current position and challenges • Provide support and help shape the development of the Worcestershire Hub for the benefit of customers • Shape the performance framework and communications plans (communication with members) • Shape plans for expansion of the Worcestershire Hub Shared Service • Have potential to simplify the governance arrangements 	
Has anyone else examined the issue? Views of External Bodies on doing this scrutiny?	<p>Overview & Scrutiny of South Worcestershire Revenues and Benefits Shared Services – currently being undertaken by Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council.</p>	

<p>Any disadvantages or pitfalls to conducting this scrutiny?</p>	<p>Important to include concerns of the individual district councils.</p> <p>Keeping on track – the Hub is a large and complex topic.</p> <p>Logistics involved in liaising with all of the district councils and a larger task group, which may slow down the pace of the scrutiny.</p> <p>Overcoming common perceptions - important to make sure all task group members share the same knowledge base at the start of the scrutiny.</p> <p>Concentrate on what outcomes the scrutiny can achieve for the future, rather than focusing on the past.</p>
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INFORMATION NEEDS

<p>Key Documents, Reports & Data required</p>	<p>There is a huge amount of information available, and it is therefore important to clarify what information is needed and why.</p> <p>History / Background – partners, structure, performance, services Worcestershire Hub Business Case – 2008 Governance Joint Committee (JC) details – Legal Agreement Joint Committee Reports Performance Reports Service details Local differences Direction Development Plan (WIP)</p>
<p>Possible interviewees (who to question)</p>	<p>Worcestershire Hub Shared Service District Councils Chief Executives Heads of Service – key service areas Chair / Vice Chair of Joint Committee Worcestershire Hub Strategic Management Group Worcestershire Hub Operational Management Group</p>
<p>Site Visits (where to visit)</p>	<p>WHSS Contact Centre Customer Service Centres Are there any local authority examples of excellence?</p>
<p>Types of meeting/ consultation needed? (eg workshops/ focus groups/ public meetings/ questionnaires etc)</p>	<p>Consider how to consult the public, starting with existing practices and plans (e.g. Citizens' Panel, Compliments and Complaints data)</p> <p>Councillor questionnaire?</p>
<p>Media & publicity needs? (eg. Press releases, newspaper ads/leaflets/web features)</p>	<p>Likely to attract media interest – liaise with Member Communications Officer</p>

OUTLINE TIMETABLE

Proposal to OSPB	10 December 2009
Evidence Gathering	January 2010 – March 2010
Scrutiny Report drafting	April 2010
Scrutiny Report to OSPB	June 2010
Scrutiny Report to Cabinet	July 2010