Peer
Support
Programme

Worcestershire Safer Communities Board

Peer Review of Partnership Governance Arrangements

Peer Support Programme
October 2015

Peer Review Team:

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Background

Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership Arrangements

2.1   There are two statutory Community Safety Partnerships covering Worcestershire: North Worcestershire Partnership and South Worcestershire Partnerships. They are responsible for compliance with the statutory duties and responsibilities set out in the Crime and Disorder Act, the Police and Justice Act, Policing and Crime Act and the Health and Social Care Act.

2.2   At the County level there is the Worcestershire Safer Communities Board. The function of this Board is set out under Statutory Instrument 2007 no. 1830: For each county area there shall be a county strategic group whose function shall be to prepare a community safety agreement for the county area on behalf of the responsible authorities in that county area.

Peer Support Programme

3.1   The Peer Support Programme (PSP) provides support to community safety and CONTEST partnerships, partners and professionals in the West Midlands. Established in 2007 with financial support from the Home Office it now operates as a regional partnership. It trains peer reviewers to undertake commissioned peer reviews and more recently began training project managers in self evaluation techniques. The PSP was commissioned by the Worcestershire Safer Communities Board to undertake a peer review of their partnership governance arrangements. This report sets out the review findings.

3.2   We would like to thank all of the partners who contributed to the review. The review team was able to spend time with a wide range of partners who bring a significant wealth of expertise to the Partnership.

The Peer review

4.1   The purpose of the review was to review current partnerships and governance arrangements (Community Safety Partnerships and County level strategic partnerships) on behalf of the Responsible Authorities and key stakeholders, to ensure that they operate and function efficiently and effectively in a rapidly changing environment.

4.2   The review team undertook a desk top review of key partnership documents prior to the facilitated workshop and interview stages and used this to shape the questioning in line with the agreed terms of reference. Annexe 3 is a list of documents reviewed.

4.3   The Workshop took place on 9 September involving 25 people from across the partnerships. In addition to detailed notes being taken throughout the workshop, delegates were invited to submit confidential comments via email. One delegate took this opportunity providing very detailed and constructive comments. A list of attendees is provided in Annexe 1

4.4   Interviews took place on 15th-16th September 2015 in Pershore and Kidderminster with a further 2 being undertaken on 9 September following the workshop and a further 3 on 30 September. A total of 13 individuals were interviewed.

4.5   Each of the semi-structured interviews was conducted by PSP team members. Interviews were conducted with the understanding that the information provided would be treated in confidence and the findings anonymised for inclusion in the report. The information contained in this report and the findings presented are therefore based on the information provided during the interviews, discussions held at the workshop and the documents presented.

4.6   The report structure mirrors the Terms of Reference of the review commissioned by the Worcestershire Safer Communities Board and identifies a number of strengths, together with areas for future development. It therefore reflects what the partnerships have told us and what members believe is required moving forward. How the partnerships moves forward is a matter for the organisations involved and this report seeks to provide a starting point for discussions.

Key Findings

5.1   The Team were impressed with the commitment, of those interviewed, to working in partnership. Relationships were generally observed to be good between organisations involved in the partnership.

5.2   There have been some significant changes to the community safety landscape following the introduction of the Police and Crime Commissioner and changes to the model of distributing resources.

5.3   Some interviewed considered the governance arrangements had evolved over time and hadn't taken into account the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Also there have been changes to key partners, for example the Probation Service.

5.4   There was some support for a refresh of the delivery model based on local safer community groups although there is a need for more robust challenge within the various partnership groups, especially the NWP and SWP.

5.5   There were strong views expressed both for and against the merger of the NWP and SWP into one Partnership

5.6   Questions were raised over whether there was a role for the WSCB and if it were to continue there is a need for greater clarity over its function.

5.7   How the NWP and SWP related to the County wide partnerships was less clear. Some of those interviewed sat on numerous partnership bodies which provide opportunities for them to champion the cause of community safety and work to integrate strategies more effectively. However, this shouldn't solely be reliant upon the personalities involved and should be strengthened by process and inter-board relationships/protocols.

5.8   Communication between the two CSPs could be strengthened to raise awareness of activity and the sharing of emerging practise. Some County agencies highlighted some difficulties in transferring initiatives from one local area to another. Are there 'economies of scale' to be achieved through more joined up working?

5.9   Some interviewed suggested there was limited performance management as it was unclear who was holding the tasking group to account. Current structure and volume of meetings is not sustainable and requires stream lining in order to ensure sufficient appropriate representation is maintained.

5.10   A small number of people interviewed were aware of resources being allocated to projects; they indicated that there was no expectation of the projects to report on the success or impact of their activity.

5.11   There was a strong view from many interviewed and at the workshop that local delivery was the preferred model. However there is recognition that there is also a need to consider developing a model of shared services, especially between tasking groups.

5.12   How projects are performance managed is less clear with examples given at the interviews where project money was allocated for a specific activity with no expectation of a project report or evaluation Limited accountability and no clarity around who is accountable to whom.

5.13   Responsibility for Performance Monitoring rests with the NWCSP and SWCSP with the WSCB overseeing county-wide issues. In line with interviewee comments about some lack of challenge at Partnership meetings there is a view that performance monitoring could be more robust.

5.14   There was a very strong sense of optimism for the future and that any changes to the current structure would be built upon the existing sound foundations.

5.15   Some interviewed were of the view that more could be achieved from Partnership Analysts. They could undertake problem solving analysis offering the SCGs potential solutions to emerging threats, rather than purely supplying data.

Areas for development

6.1 The interviews demonstrated a strong desire to build upon what are good partnerships. Discussions during the interviews led the team to highlight the following potential areas for development, beginning with Board level discussions.

6.2 The WSCB Terms of Reference needs to be refreshed, outlining responsibilities of Board chair, vice chair and members including any champion role members are expected to fulfil. Some suggested that the role could include performance management, evaluation of projects, sharing good practise and ensuring effective communications exist across the partnerships.

6.3 The WSCB is well placed to champion community safety across the County and especially other strategic groups such as Safeguarding and Health and Wellbeing.

6.4 Many of those interviewed were strongly of the view that the tasking groups were key to delivery, although there is less clarity on how these groups are held to account.

6.5 There are differing views on the role of the NWCSP and SWCSP including whether they should be merged. With a strong desire for local delivery there is a need for a debate as to what the added value the two Partnerships bring.

6.6 Similarly some interviewed felt the current model is unsustainable and that there is a need for streamlining through shared services. There is a need for an agreed understanding of what shared services covers. The review team understanding is that it covers all community safety activity including, partnership boards, delivery groups, staffing and projects or services funded from community safety resources.

6.7 The relationship between the partnerships and Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has developed with many feeling his influence over the partnerships is increasing. Funding has been somewhat ad hoc although the PCC is developing a commissioning framework.

6.8 Neither partnership has a commissioning strategy commenting they don't commission services. There is evidence of grant giving to projects although no clarity on how this is undertaken. Some interviewed indicated that resources belonged to the Partnership not individual managers. How resources are allocated could be included in revised Partnership TOR in order to ensure there is a partnership approach to commissioning and services thus supported deliver against shared priorities and ambitions

6.9 Communication across the partnerships needs to be addressed. There is currently a Countywide Domestic Abuse newsletter which seems well received. A quarterly update highlighting project activity, performance against objectives and emerging good practise could be a role for the WSCB. This could be done 'virtually' or through events i.e. an annual Partnerships event?

6.10 A brief induction pack may be beneficial, initially for Board members proving Terms of Reference for all the Partnerships giving them a wider understanding of Community Safety activity across the county. This should include details of how the Partnership delivery groups share good practise and the expectations placed upon them as Board members i.e. attendance, participation, submission of reports. It should also outline the importance of robust challenge within the partnership as a means of ensuing effective delivery.

6.11 Board members of the three Partnerships should be encouraged to champion the community safety partnership and its strategic objectives across their own organisation.

6.12 Some of those interviewed were concerned about the general lack of project management for funded projects so it may be beneficial to have an agreed cross Partnership project management model that includes a robust evaluation process. Following and agreed model would also provide a good information base for the production of a newsletter or other form of communication between partners. (6.8)

6.13 Although there is a view that there is a role for the County Policy and Commissioning Group the Boards may consider the group could be reconstituted to undertake a performance management role and ensure effective communication across the Partnerships. An alternative view was to close this county group placing the responsibility with the WSCB, perhaps meeting quarterly.

6.14 There is a need for a greater awareness of methods of evaluation throughout the work of the partnership. Assessing the impact of activity will increase the partnerships capacity to promote evidence based practice. Strategic Priorities should be impact-driven.

6.15 In line with improved awareness of evaluation there seems a need to embed problem solving across the partnerships, especially at local delivery level. There is a view that the analysts could do more assisting with problem solving.

6.16 There is scope for the structure of the partnership as a whole to be reviewed, in order to be leaner and sharper, and to address cross-cutting themes across the Strategic Priorities, identifying how these fit with the Safer Communities Groups.

Do the current governance and working arrangements work?

7.1   There was a certain amount of confusion over the relationship between the Worcestershire Safer Communities Board (WSCB) and the two Community Safety Partnerships.

7.2   Although the organisational chart indicates that the North Worcestershire Partnership (NWCSP) and the South Worcestershire Partnership (SWCSP) reported to the WSCB most of those interviewed considered the two partnerships operated independently and were certainly not accountable to the WSCB.

7.3   Each of the partnerships have operational and tasking groups at a local level which some interviewed questioned, as this generates too many meetings which are impossible for reducing services to support. This indicates a need for some streamlining.

7.4   Some interviewed considered the governance arrangements had evolved over time and hadn't taken into account the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Also there have been changes to key partners, for example the National Probation Service.

7.5   There was some support for a refresh of the delivery model based on local safer community groups although there is a need for a more robust challenge within the various partnership groups, especially the NWCSP and SWCSP.

7.6   Questions were raised over whether there was a role for the WSCB and if it were to continue there is a need for greater clarity over its function. What is really meant by providing strategic leadership and to whom is it provided?

7.7   Similarly the role of the WSCB Policy and Commissioning Group is unclear with a number of those interviewed questioning whether the group was required.

7.8   There were strong views expressed both for and against the merger of the NWCSP and SWCSP into one Partnership.

7.9   There was an emerging view that the three Partnerships could benefit from a more robust challenge of community safety activity and performance.

7.10   Communication between the two CSPs could be strengthened to raise awareness of activity and the sharing of emerging practise. Some County agencies described experiencing difficulties in transferring initiatives from one local area to another

How effectively do the Community Safety Partnerships integrate their work with other Partnerships – Safeguarding Boards, Health and Wellbeing Board and the Police and Crime Commissioner?

8.1   At the County level there are 4 key Strategic Boards covering Community Safety, Wellbeing, Adult and Children's Safeguarding and there is a view that these operate in isolation. Those interviewed were clear that this needs to change with some suggesting the chairs of the respective Boards should meet and agree protocols for future integrated working.

8.2   There was also recognition that a silo mentality was in existence across the partnerships and the safer communities groups.

8.3   Similarly responsibility for delivery of the Integrated Offender Management Strategy sits outside the Community Safety Partnership structure although some interviewed suggested that there was a 'dotted line ' between the Worcestershire IOM Strategy group and the NWCSP and SWCSP. Reducing reoffending should underpin all strategic priorities

8.4   PCC now a significant player and relationship with Partnerships is still evolving. His role is crucial to the Partnerships as Central Government resources previously distributed via the County Council are now under the PCCs control. There are also proposals around the expansion of this role to encompass other public services relevant to the community safety agenda.

8.5   An example of his ability to exert control was highlighted in the documentation where additional priorities, not identified in the Strategic Assessment, were added to partnership priorities as funding was given to tackle Rural Crime and Business Crime. Those interviewed accepted that this was the case but added they would not reject the opportunity of additional resources.

8.6   How the NWCSP and SWCSP related to the County wide partnerships was less clear. Some of those interviewed sat on numerous partnership bodies which provides an opportunity for them to Champion the cause of community safety and work to integrate strategies more effectively

8.7   Communications between Partnerships could be stronger and some considered any refresh of the WSCB could see the development of a communication strategy to ensure better links, especially between the NWCSP and SWCSP.

8.8   Some suggested that the structure could be leaner and sharper and thought the number of meetings could be reduced.

Does the current structure ensure effective delivery of the Partnerships Strategies?

9.1   Those interviewed were of the view that delivery occurred at local level through the tasking groups and that they were successful. Some were able to provide practical examples although were not able to demonstrate effectiveness or impact.

9.2   There is a view from the interviewees that the Safer Communities Groups, whilst working hard on delivery tended to work in isolation with only limited sharing of experience.

9.3   Strategic assessments were undertaken by both NWCSP and SWCSP which allowed for each partnership to set its priorities. These were then added to by the PCC offer or financial resources to tackle his emerging priorities of rural crime and business crime.

9.4   Some interviewed suggested there was limited performance management and it was unclear who was holding the tasking groups to account.

9.5   A small number of people interviewed who were aware of resources being allocated to projects indicated that there was no expectation of the projects to report on the success or impact of their activity.

9.6   There is a desire for greater clarity of how the Strategic objectives are delivered and which should be dealt with by the WSCB, the NWCSP/SWCSP or at tasking group level.

9.7   Whilst some clear programme evaluation was undertaken within the work of the partnership, few were able to provide examples of evaluated projects where impact was measured.

How do the Partnerships ensure their key strategic priorities are aligned across the county thereby ensuring maximum delivery benefits?

10.1   A small number of interviewees indicated a need for some clarity of the Strategic direction what's county and what's local?

10.2   Delivering the Partnership priorities is the responsibility of the locally based Safer Community groups. How these groups are held to account is less clear so ensuring maximum benefit and value for money is achieved is difficult to assess.

10.3   Some interviewed indicated that there is a need for greater challenge at both the NWCSP and SWCSP in an effort to maximize the benefit of modest resources

10.4   Individual comments like 'the money belongs to the partnership' and ' we need to challenge each other more' is an indication that the Partnerships may need to a take a more robust and challenging role in overseeing delivery.

10.5   Similarly at the WSCB a role of challenging the NWCSP/SWCSP on their delivery of community safety activity across the county is required? This may also support the sharing of good practice across the SCGs

10.6   There was a strong view from many interviewed and at the workshop that local delivery was the preferred model. However there is a recognition that there is also a need to consider developing a model of shared services, especially between tasking groups.

10.7   Some suggested that the current model was not sustainable due to resource constraints

Is the commissioning of community safety services managed in an effective manner? How can it be made more efficient?

11.1   Many of those attending the workshop and those interviewed were of the view that the Partnerships didn't commission services. They do however distribute resources for projects and it isn't clear whether there is a consistent model used across the Partnerships.

11.2   The PCC is currently developing a commissioning framework which many considered to be a positive step. Some however observed that the Partnerships should have a clear model for the distribution of funding.

11.3   There is a desire for non- ring fenced funding giving the Partnerships maximum flexibility in ensuring delivery against priorities.

11.4   There were concerns raised by some interviewed that the resources were seen as 'belonging' to community safety staff rather than the Partnerships.

11.5   Some interviewed were keen for there to be greater clarity over how resources are distributed by the Partnership indicating their desire for a commissioning/funding framework.

11.6   How projects are performance managed is less clear with examples given at the interviews where project money was allocated for a specific activity with no expectation of a project report or evaluation.

Are the information sharing protocols effective enabling the production of high quality strategic assessments and what performance monitoring systems are in place?

12.1   Information sharing protocols are in place and the general consensus is that these are operating effectively. There is a recognition that the success of information sharing is often based on individual's willingness to share.

12.2   There was a strong view that better communication is required across the partnerships and to the wider community of Worcestershire

12.3   Some interviewed were of the view that more could be achieved from Partnership Analysts. They could undertake problem solving analysis offering the tasking groups, potential solutions to emerging threats, rather than purely supplying data.

12.4   Responsibility for Performance Monitoring rests with the NWCSP and SWCSP with the WSCB overseeing county-wide issues. In line with interviewee comments about some lack of challenge at Partnership meetings there is a view that performance monitoring could be more robust.

12.5   There was limited evidence of any project evaluation or project management at County level in evaluation and overseeing projects. Some interviewed suggested that this may be a role that the WSCB could fulfill with an additional responsibility of sharing good practice

Are there any points you wish to raise that would make the delivery of community safety across Worcestershire more effective?

13.1   Whilst most of those interviewed considered the partnerships were successful there is a strong view that improvements could be made. Some of the ideas are listed below:

13.2   Greater clarity over how performance was measured and who had lead responsibility.

13.3   Production of an Induction Pack covering the partnership arrangements from County to local including roles and responsibilities for Board members and community safety staff.

13.4   The development of an ongoing training programme for Board members and Community safety staff covering key issues such as: Understanding Section 17, Programme and project management and evaluation.

13.5   Raising awareness through celebrating success would ensure partners had a better understanding as to the effectiveness of the Partnership.

13.6   Streamlining the current structure and reduce the number of meetings.

Facilitated Workshop Attendees:

Name	Organisation	Role
Sue Hanley	R&B Council	Deputy Chief Exec
Bev Houghton	R&B council	Com. Safety Manager
Linda Collis	WFDC	
Kathryn Washington	WFDC	Com. Safety Manager
Jack Hegarty	WDC	Chief Exec
Dave Hemming	WDC	Com. Safety Manager
Jude Langton	Worcs City Council	
Rob Rich	MHDC	Malvern Hills Community Safety
Frances Howie	WCC	Head of Service
Tim Rice	WCC	Health and Wellbeing Manager
Ruth Pawsey	WCC	Strategic Development Officer

Barrie Sheldon	OPCC	
Susanah Stennett	WMWCRC	
Lorraine Preece	Worcestershire Voices Board	
Mark Preece	HW Fire and Rescue	Head of Community Risk
Lucy Noon	CCG	
Alex Franklin Smith	WMP	
Margaret Sherrey	R & B portfolio holder	Member
Gerry O'Donnell	Wychavon DC	Member
Andy Roberts	Worcester City Portfolio holder	Member
Yvonne Smith	Redditch Portfolio holder	Member
Lynne Taylor	WCC	Adult safeguarding
Martin Lakeman	WCC	DA Co-ordinator
Mark Kay	WRS	
Edd Williams	WMP	

Annexe 2

Interviews

Name	Position	Organisation
Sue Hanley	Deputy Chief Executive	Redditch and Bromsgrove Council
Tim Rice	Health and Wellbeing Manager	Worcestershire County Council
Susanah Stennett	Head of Service	Probation Service
David Cookson		National Probation Service
Sue Hadden		Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board
Jack Hegarty	Chief Executive	Wychavon and Malvern Council
Ian Miller	Chief Executive	Wyre Forest Council
Chris Jenson		Office of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner
Lee Davenport	Chief Superintendent	Warwickshire and West Mercia Police
Adrian Elliott		Hereford and Worcester Fire Service
Helena Barnet	Chief Inspector	Warwickshire and West Mercia Police
Kevin Purcell	Superintendent	Warwickshire and West Mercia Police
Becky Love	Chief Inspector	Warwickshire and West Mercia Police

Annexe 3

Documents Reviewed

- Worcestershire Safer Communities Board – Terms of Reference and Working arrangements

- North Worcestershire Strategic Assessment.

- South Worcestershire Strategic Assessment

- The partnership structure delivery chart

- North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013-16 Refresh 2014/15

- North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership – minutes of meeting 10 June 2015

- South Worcestershire Partnership – minutes of meeting 22 January 2015

- Worcestershire Safer Communities Board – minutes of meeting 11 May 2015.