
Review of Health and Wellbeing Board Meetings

Report being considered by: Health and Wellbeing Board

On: 24 September 2020

Report Author: Gordon Oliver

Item for: Decision

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposal to revise the meeting schedule for Health and Wellbeing Board, which would increase the annual number of public meetings to five, with no regular meetings to be held in private. It is proposed that board meetings would still be preceded by Steering Group meetings, to be held in private as they are now. The Steering Group meetings would be used to agree the agendas for Board meetings and to discuss operational issues. It is also proposed to have two or three themed workshops each year and an annual conference.

2. Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board:

- endorses the proposal to increase the number of public meetings from three to five per year with no regular meetings in private; and
- refers the revised meeting schedule to the Council meeting on 3 December so the meetings can be integrated into West Berkshire Council's municipal calendar for 2021/22.

3. How the Health and Wellbeing Board can help

- 3.1 The Board is asked to endorse the revised frequency of public meetings of Health and Wellbeing Board so these can be incorporated into next year's municipal calendar.

Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Executive for final determination?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
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4. Background

- 4.1 It is proposed to vary the meeting schedule for the Health and Wellbeing Board to increase the number of public meetings and to stop holding regular meetings in private from 1 April 2021.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 Currently, the Health and Wellbeing Board holds public meetings three times a year, in May, September and January, with three private meetings of the Board in between the public meetings.

- 5.2 The Health and Wellbeing Board is a sub-committee of West Berkshire Council's Executive and so the Executive Rules of Procedure apply to all public meetings as set out in the Council's Constitution. This includes provision for:
- submission of petitions;
 - submission of public questions;
 - submission of members' written questions;
 - order of business;
 - decision making;
 - admission / exclusion of press and public.
- 5.3 Health and Wellbeing Board meetings are supplemented by Steering Group meetings where the agenda for the public meetings are signed off, as well as dealing with other operational matters. As an informal body, the Steering Group is not subject to the Executive Rules of Procedure.
- 5.4 In addition to the above meetings, there are generally two or three workshops each year and an annual conference to discuss key local health and wellbeing issues, and to develop suitable approaches for addressing these.
- 5.5 Recently, it has become apparent that the Health and Wellbeing Board is not operating as efficiently or effectively as it could. For example, papers presented to the private meetings often need to be brought back to the next public meeting for formal consideration. It is therefore questioned whether the private meetings are still necessary.
- 5.6 Also, the low frequency of the public meetings means that their agendas can become crowded, resulting in overly long meetings, particularly with the additional pressures of reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic and the recovery process.
- 5.7 In addition, there is greater interest from members of the public in the planning and delivery of health and care services and in public health issues generally. As a result, there is a need for the Board to increase its public profile and to present additional opportunities to communicate and engage with members of the public. This is consistent with the recommendations of the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge report around improving communications and governance.

6. Options for Consideration

- 6.1 Options have been considered as outlined below:
- (1) From 1 April 2021, increase the number of public meetings to somewhere between four and six meetings per year, while retaining Steering Group meetings, workshops and the conference as now. This would eliminate the inefficient private Board meetings, improve public engagement and relieve pressure on the public Board meetings.

- (2) Make the proposed changes to the meeting schedule from 1 October 2020.

7. Proposal(s)

- 7.1 It is proposed to go with Option 1, increasing the number of public meetings to five per year, with the new arrangements commencing in April 2021, since meetings can more easily be planned and coordinated with other council meetings.
- 7.2 It should be noted that Part 2 items could be included on Board meeting agendas if the press and public need to be excluded in order to permit discussion of confidential information.
- 7.3 It is proposed that Steering Group meetings would still be held around three weeks before each Board meeting to agree the agenda for the upcoming Board meeting and to discuss operational issues. These would remain private / informal meetings as now.
- 7.4 It is proposed that workshops would be arranged as and when needed to respond to emerging issues, but as a minimum, there would be two workshops per year. At least one Health and Wellbeing Conference would be organised per year, to provide opportunities for dissemination of best practice, networking beyond the Health and Wellbeing Board partners and to engage with members of the public.
- 7.5 A draft programme of meetings is set out in Appendix A. It should be noted that dates and times may be subject to amendments in order to coordinate with other Council meetings.

8. Conclusion(s)

- 8.1 The above proposal would achieve the objectives of making meetings more efficient and effective, while increasing public engagement, but without increasing pressure on Health and Wellbeing Board members.

9. Consultation and Engagement

- 9.1 The following parties have been consulted:
- Howard Woollaston, Executive Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture
 - Matt Pearce, Head of Public Health
 - Moira Fraser, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
 - Catalin Bogos, Performance Research and Consultation Manager

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Programme of Meetings for 2021/22

Background Papers:

None

Health and Wellbeing Priorities 2019/20 Supported:

- ☒ Give every child the best start in life
- ☒ Primary Care Networks

Health and Wellbeing Strategic Aims Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Health and Wellbeing Strategy aim(s):

- ☒ Give every child the best start in life
- ☒ Support mental health and wellbeing throughout life
- ☒ Reduce premature mortality by helping people lead healthier lives
- ☒ Build a thriving and sustainable environment in which communities can flourish
- ☒ Help older people maintain a healthy, independent life for as long as possible

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Health and Wellbeing Strategy aims by making the Health and Wellbeing Board more efficient and effective.

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Appendix A

Draft Programme of Meetings for 2021/22

Meeting Type	Meeting Date	Time
HWBB Annual Conference	01 April 2021	9.30am - 12.30pm
Health and Wellbeing Steering Group	29 April 2021	10am - 12.30pm
Health and Wellbeing Board (public meeting)	20 May 2021	9.30am - 11.30am
Health and Wellbeing Steering Group	24 June 2021	10am - 12.30pm
Health and Wellbeing Board (public meeting)	15 July 2021	9.30am - 11.30am
Health and Wellbeing Steering Group	09 September 2021	10am - 12.30pm
Health and Wellbeing Board (public meeting)	30 September 2021	9.30am - 11.30am
Workshop	21 October 2021	9.30am - 12.30pm
Health and Wellbeing Steering Group	18 November 2021	10am - 12.30pm
Health and Wellbeing Board (public meeting)	09 December 2021	9.30am - 11.30am
Workshop	13 January 2022	9.30am - 12.30pm
Health and Wellbeing Steering Group	27 January 2022	10am - 12.30pm
Health and Wellbeing Board (public meeting)	17 February 2022	9.30am - 11.30am