

## PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held in the Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2011 at 9.30 a.m.

### PRESENT

Councillors J. Cahill, P.C. Duffy, M.J. Eckersley, G.C. Evans, R.L. Feeley, I.A. Gunning, C. Hughes, H.LI. Jones, D. Lee and L.M. Morris.

Councillors M.LI. Davies and P.A. Dobb attended as Observers.

### ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director: Business Transformation and Regeneration (BJ), Head of Business Planning and Performance (AS), Head of Leisure, Libraries and Community Development (JG), Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management (IB), Corporate Improvement Manager (TW), Director Ruthin Craft Centre (PH), Business Planning and Performance Officer (IM), Democratic Services Manager (SP) and Administrative Officer (CIW).

### 37 APOLOGIES

None

### 38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

*RESOLVED – that no Members declared any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.*

### 39 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Members considered the written statements submitted by Councillors R.L. Feeley, I.A. Gunning and C. Hughes, and following a secret ballot it was:-

*RESOLVED – that Councillor R.L. Feeley be appointed Chair for the ensuing year.*

### 40 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

*RESOLVED – that Councillor H. LI Jones be appointed Vice Chair for the ensuing year.*

### 41 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No items were raised which in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

### 42 BUSINESS PLANNING / PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

A copy of a report by the Head of Business Planning and Performance, which considered the options for scrutinising service plans, and monitoring performance, under the new Scrutiny arrangements, was circulated at the meeting.

The Head of Business Planning and Performance explained that 14 Service Plans had been produced annually and an assurance would be required that the Plans were appropriate and robust. The Performance Scrutiny Training Workshop, held on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2011, had suggested a way of making the process more manageable by allocating particular services to individual Committee Members. Members would engage with the service and become involved in the development and scrutiny of the Service Plan by focusing on the crucial issues within Service Plans.

It was explained that the Council currently collected a large amount of performance information, through the Ffynnon system, which would need to be made available for the Performance Scrutiny Committee, and the Committee would need to focus on a manageable amount of information in order to facilitate a meaningful discussion.

The Corporate Improvement Manager explained that the Corporate Business Planning and Performance Management Framework had been based on delivering Outcomes. It had been recommended that the Committee focus on outcomes which appeared to be in jeopardy, based on the range of associated performance information, particular reference being made to the significance of the Outcome Agreement with the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) in ensuring the continued receipt of grants. A number of sets of Indicators and Performance Measures had been developed by Services and these would reflect the delivery of a particular outcome. It would therefore be more meaningful to base discussions on the delivery of outcomes, rather than component indicators or performance measures.

The importance of being able to access information was highlighted by the Head of Business Planning and Performance. He explained that all performance information required by the Scrutiny Committee, in relation to the Corporate and Service Plans, would be housed with the Ffynnon Performance Management System, and that the Corporate Improvement Team could provide assistance to the Committee in the following ways:

- Developing a Ffynnon dashboard to signpost the Committee to all relevant performance information.
- Developing specific Ffynnon dashboard reports based on specific outcomes or areas that the Committee decide to focus attention on.
- Provision of training on the Corporate Service Planning methodology; performance management issues, such as target setting, and the use of Ffynnon.

Members were informed that a robust process for scrutinising Service Plans would be necessary to assist the Council to understand whether it was working toward the correct outcomes for its communities, and whether it was on track to successfully deliver positive outcomes. Details pertaining to the processes adopted for reporting information to the Committee were outlined by the officers, and Members were assured that training would be provided.

The Corporate Director: Business Transformation and Regeneration provided the following details in respect of the Performance Scrutiny Service Leads as selected and agreed by Members at the meeting:-

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Adult & Business Services -                    | Cllr R.L. Feeley          |
| 2. Business Planning & Performance -              |                           |
| 3. Customer Services -                            | Cllrs D. Lee & G.C. Evans |
| 4. Corporate Governance -                         |                           |
| 5. Strategic HR -                                 |                           |
| 6. Children & Family Services -                   | Cllr J. Cahill            |
| 7. Environment Services -                         | Cllrs L.M. Morris &       |
| 8. Planning, Regeneration & Regulatory Services - | M.J. Eckersley            |
| 9. Finance & Assets -                             | Cllr H.LI. Jones          |
| 10. Highways & Infrastructure -                   | Cllr T.R. Hughes          |
| 11. Housing Services -                            | Cllr P.C. Duffy           |
| 12. Leisure, Libraries & Community Development -  | Cllr I.A. Gunning         |
| 13. Modernising Education -                       | Cllr C. Hughes            |
| 14. School Improvement & Inclusion -              |                           |

The Corporate Director: Business Transformation and Regeneration explained that the respective Heads of Service would be informed of Members appointments. Dates of the Performance Reviews were circulated at the meeting and confirmation provided that invitations and the papers for the

meetings would be circulated to the respective Members. The Committee agreed that Substitute Members, from the Performance Scrutiny Committee, could be nominated to attend if required.

In response to concerns raised by Members regarding the importance of the provision of Member training, particular reference being made to the need for Members to understand how to access and fully utilise the Ffynnon Performance Management System, the Head of Business Planning and Performance assured Members that the necessary training would be provided during the forthcoming month.

Following further discussion, it was:-

**RESOLVED** – that the Performance Scrutiny Committee agrees:-

- (a) a manageable mechanism for scrutinising Service Plans.
- (b) the Performance Scrutiny Service Leads as selected and agreed by Members.
- (c) the use of dashboard reports within the Ffynnon Performance Management System to identify areas of performance that require scrutiny, and
- (d) to committing to participating in a programme of training, to be delivered by the Corporate Improvement Team.

#### **43 RUTHIN CRAFT CENTRE**

A copy of a joint report by the Director: Ruthin Craft Centre and Lead Officer: Libraries, Archives and Arts, which updated the Committee on the Ruthin Craft Centre and provide information on its financial position in going forward, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

It was explained by the Head of Leisure, Libraries and Community Development that Scrutiny Members had requested a presentation on the Council's future funding proposals for the Ruthin Craft Centre, information on the measures taken to improve the offer available at the gateway to the Centre and clarity on certain aspects such as the Interpretation Centre and the garden. Members were informed that the Arts Council of Wales (ACW) had confirmed its uplift grant of £400,000 per annum to the Ruthin Craft Centre for three years from April 2011, and had recognised the Ruthin Craft Centre as a strategically important centre for the crafts in Wales and a centre of excellence.

The Head of Leisure, Libraries and Community Development summarised the report which provided details pertaining to the following issues and aspects relating to the Ruthin Craft Centre:-

- Redevelopment of Ruthin Craft Centre
- Exhibitions
- Treasures of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Appointment of an Education Officer
- Occupancy of the 6 Studios
- Details of the Grounds
- Cultural Gateway and Tourist Information Point (TIP)
- Revenue Funding and Arts Council of Wales investment
- Denbighshire's Efficiency Agenda
- Centre of Excellence
- Extract from The Arts Council of Wales' Annual Review 2009

Members were informed that Denbighshire's Efficiency Plan had identified year on year reductions for the Ruthin Craft Centre, with the 2011/12 budget reduced by £20,000. Discussions were taking place with the ACW regarding the impact of the future budget reductions and this would require careful management, respecting the ACW's significant prior investment into Denbighshire to develop this major new facility. The officers assured the Committee that not only could the current service provision be continued, but were confident that it could be enhanced. The Head of Leisure, Libraries and Community Development stressed that it was important to note that there were currently no poor performance issues in respect of the Ruthin Craft Centre. He explained that there was now only one Business Plan for the Leisure, Youth and Culture portfolio, together with, Performance Indicators for the Craft Centre and respective Theatres, which would be monitored through the Ffynnon Performance Management System.

In reply to questions from Members, the Director: Ruthin Craft Centre confirmed that the Gallery at Ruthin Craft Centre attracted in the region of 90,000 visitors each year with in excess of that number visiting the Craft Centre itself. He provided details of the number of full and part-time staff employed, directly and indirectly, at the Craft Centre and of the planning arrangements for future exhibitions and events. He outlined the work being undertaken within the local community and explained that visitors to the Ruthin Craft Centre also visited other attractions and businesses in the locality and utilised local accommodation. Funding for the previously staffed Tourist Information Centre (TIC) had been withdrawn in 2006, however, the Tourist Information Point (TIP) offered a free telephone to the staffed TICs at Llangollen and Rhyl, and North Wales Tourism's list of approved accommodation was regularly updated and available in the TIP.

The officers responded to questions from Members and provided details of Denbighshire's, the ACW's and other stake holders investment and commitment to funding in respect of Ruthin Craft Centre. Confirmation was provided that work had been undertaken with the Lifelong Learning Directorate and reference was made to the appointment of an Education Officer, the Princes Trust Start programme, the sixth form initiative and the performance event scheduled for June and July, 2011 which involved 11 local schools. The Head of Leisure, Libraries and Community Development highlighted the departmental collaborative working approach adopted in respect of the provision of educational services, and confirmed that a review was currently being undertaken on how the offer of services could be made more efficient.

The Head of Business Planning and Performance explained that information relating to service performance would be available in the Position Statement and Performance Challenges, and a good working relationship would be developed with the assigned Member, with future reports being presented on an exceptions basis. The Committee agreed with the proposal put forward by the Head of Leisure, Libraries and Community Development that for a period of three to four months a briefing circular, or news letter, be distributed to Members outlining the performance details in respect of the Craft Centre.

Following further discussion, it was:-

**RESOLVED** – *that the Performance Scrutiny Committee:-*

- (a) *receives the report noting the comments expressed by Members, and*
- (b) *notes the increased level of Arts Council for Wales investment in Denbighshire via the Ruthin Craft Centre, as a centre for excellence for the presentation of contemporary applied arts in Wales.*

#### **44 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

A copy of a report by the Democratic Services Manager, which reviewed the future work programme for the Performance Scrutiny Committee and provided an update on the relevant issues, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. A copy of the latest Cabinet Work Programme had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Democratic Services Manager explained that this was the first report to the new Scrutiny Committee and it contained the Forward Work Programme inherited by the Committee from the previous Scrutiny Committees (Appendix 1), together with issues relevant to the Committee's business.

It had been recommended that Members review the issues listed in the draft Forward Work Programme. The Head of Business Planning and Performance referred to the training session held with Members on the 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2011, and Members having highlighted the importance of focusing and identifying issues for consideration in respect of topic selection. A copy of the Outcome of the Session, which outlined the following issues and key areas identified by Members, was circulated at the meeting:-

- Budget
- 'Hot Potatoes'

- Service Performance
- Communication
- Policy Development
- Service Plans
- Quality of Service
- Delivery of Corporate Priorities/Corporate Plan

Members had highlighted practical considerations which included issues pertaining to Cabinet, Officers, Information available and public involvement. The Forward Work Programme had been considered by Members and a list of suggested topics, which differed from the original Work Programme, had been included in the report.

The Committee considered the Forward Work Programme as included as Appendix 1 to the report, and the Forward Work Programme suggested at the Training Session, and the following matters were raised and issues considered:-

- In reply to concerns raised by Councillor C. Hughes regarding the importance of the need to monitor external examination results, the Head of Business Planning and Performance explained that any issues in respect of this matter would be presented to the Committee by the nominated Performance Scrutiny Service Lead Member representative.

- The Corporate Director: Business Transformation and Regeneration supported the view expressed by the Chair that the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting, scheduled for the 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2011, be convened as an informal session or meeting to discuss the Committee's future objectives and Forward Work Programme. It was agreed that the interactive session be utilised to provide the opportunity for consideration in respect of the following issues and matters:-

- Consideration of the Forward Work Programme.
- Performance Data.
- Presentation on the delivery of the Corporate Plan/Corporate Priorities.
- Performance Monitoring.
- Improved Communication (Members and officers).
- Financial Summary (revenue and capital).
- Quality of Service Provision (impact on the Community).
- Area Member Group Links.
- Position Statements on most service areas.
- Provision of Member training (particular reference to the Ffynnon Performance Management System)

Members agreed a maximum of 4 agenda items for each meeting, together with the Committee's work programme report, the Corporate Director: Business Transformation and Regeneration confirmed that additional special meetings could be arranged if necessitated by the Committee's work load. Councillor L.M. Morris highlighted the importance of focusing on high risk areas when setting agendas for meetings, and to ensure that only items which merited consideration were included on the agenda. The Committee agreed that unless required all meetings of the Performance Scrutiny Committee be held in County Hall, Ruthin.

The Committee endorsed the continued use of the Proposal Form, Appendix 2 to the report in order to provide Members with relevant information about the contents and purpose of reports suggested by officers to deliver a member-led agenda, and noted officers' comments that some modifications could be made to the form in future.

In response to the view expressed by Councillor G.C. Evans that it would be beneficial if the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees attended Cabinet meetings, the Chair confirmed that she did anticipate attending Cabinet meetings and would be reporting any relevant information back to the Scrutiny Committee.

Following further discussion, it was:-

**RESOLVED** – that the Performance Scrutiny Committee:-

- (a) *agrees that the meeting, scheduled for the 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2011, be convened as an informal session to consider the issues identified by Members.*
- (b) *confirms a maximum of 4 report items, plus the Committee's work programme, with additional special meetings if necessitated by the Committee's work load, and*
- (c) *Agrees the continued use of the Proposal Form, Appendix 2 to the report in order to provide Members with relevant information about the contents and purpose of reports suggested by officers to deliver a member-led agenda.*

#### **45 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**

A copy of a report, and confidential Appendix, by the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management, which provided information from the latest Corporate Risk Register, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management explained that the Council's Corporate Risk Register was developed from the risk registers produced by each service and by Corporate Executive Team (CET). However, this process had not been fully completed during 2010/11, as CET would be reviewing its strategic risk register as part of a corporate review of risk management which was about to commence.

It was confirmed that the Corporate Risk Register circulated with the report only contained those key risks identified by services, and the Register would be fully up-dated over the next couple of months following the completion of the risk management review.

Members were informed by the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management that robust and effective risk management would contribute to good corporate governance and service delivery and to the delivery of all corporate priorities. Consultations in respect of the Corporate Risk Register had been undertaken with CET and the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Group, and the report had also been presented to the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee in April, 2011.

Confirmation was provided by the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management that risks and actions had been included in the Corporate Risk Register. He also explained that the Internal Audit Strategy for 2011/12 would ensure that all high risks were reviewed to ensure that they were being managed effectively.

The Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management provided a brief summary of the Corporate Risk Register and the following issues were raised and responses provided:-

No 6. Deterioration of the Highways Network – In reply to a question from Councillor T.R. Hughes regarding the accuracy of the capital budget figure of £4.4 million, the Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management explained that the Corporate Risk Register was currently being updated.

No 9. Fatalities or serious injuries caused through non-compliance with Health and Safety legislation – Reference was made to the risk identified at Prestatyn Library, in respect of the possible dangers emanating from an open staircase leading to the first floor of the building. Members agreed that information in respect of the risks identified at Prestatyn Library, be circulated to members of the Performance Scrutiny Committee. The Chair confirmed that she would also liaise with the Head of Leisure, Libraries and Community Development in respect of this matter.

A number of Committee Members supported the view expressed that the Performance Scrutiny Committee receives regular up-date reports in respect of the Corporate Risk Register.

Following further discussion, it was:-

**RESOLVED** – that the Performance Scrutiny Committee:-

- (a) receives the report.
- (b) requests the receipt of information in respect of the risks identified by the Service at Prestatyn Library, and
- (c) receives regular up-date reports in respect of the Corporate Risk Register.

Meeting ended at 12.10 p.m.

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