

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 20 September 2012 at 9.30 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Meirick Davies, Richard Davies, Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Colin Hughes (Chair), Dewi Owens, Arwel Roberts and Gareth Sandilands

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Barbara Smith

Head of Business Planning and Performance (AS), Corporate Improvement Manager (TW), Democratic Services Manager (SP), Scrutiny Coordinator (RhE) and Democratic Services Officer (RH)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Geraint Lloyd-Williams and Peter Owen

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No interests were declared.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters were raised.

4 CORPORATE PLAN 2012-2017

The Head of Business Planning and Performance (HBPP) introduced a report that had been previously circulated. He advised that the development of a Corporate Plan for 2012 – 2017 had begun before this year's election so it had been particularly important to engage with the new Council and the new councillors. The HBPP reminded the committee that a draft set of corporate priorities had been agreed by members on the 31 July 2012.

The HBPP advised that officers had then considered the actions and a 5 year financial strategy needed to support delivery of the priorities. He added that the conspicuous alignment of the corporate priorities and a supporting financial strategy within the Corporate Plan was a significant and innovative approach that few local authorities had been able to do.

The Corporate Improvement Manager (CIM) referred to the financial strategy and the anticipated capital investment of £134 million that was thought should be invested over the 5 years covered by the Plan. He advised that he expected an additional £5 million of revenue funding would be moved to support the priorities, which would leave less money available for areas not identified as a priority.

The CIM replied to queries by outlining that the early years of the Plan would see work being done to develop activities that would deliver the priorities and actual spending would peak in years 3 and 4 as the planned activities were delivered. The HBPP confirmed that an annual delivery document would be produced each financial year providing specific details of what was expected to be delivered that year.

Councillor Colin Hughes queried how manageable it would be to scrutinise 7 corporate priorities, noting that the previous plan had only 4. He was advised that councillors and relevant officers would need to finalise the performance measures and the monitoring and reporting arrangements that would be used, but that experience learnt from developing the previous Corporate Plan would result in an improved and simpler system overall. The HBPP did acknowledge that some of the priorities and outcomes still needed to be better defined.

The Committee also discussed the following issues:

- An agreement to refer in the Corporate Plan to some benefits of the Plan being realised after the term of this Council and this Corporate Plan
- An acknowledgement that the new town plans should be developed further in consultation with local councillors and communities
- Effective engagement with residents about the aims and impact of the Corporate Plan would be essential
- The CIM agreed to examine the financial information in the draft Plan to ensure that it was consistent.
- An agreement to amend the Extra Care Housing wording to reflect an aim to develop up to 3 Extra Care Housing units across Denbighshire.
- Councillor Dewi Owens requested a copy of the Cefndy Enterprises business plan
- The outcome relating to adapting homes to meet the needs of disable residents should have a timescale and be more clearly defined
- The priorities around modernising the Council and developing the economy in particular needed further clarity in terms of activities and performance measures
- The wording used in the Plan to describe aims and outcomes should be scrutinised to aid communication and manage expectations. Examples included “we think we can” being changed to “we anticipate” etc.
- An agreement that any comments from members on the Corporate Plan Equality Impact Assessment tabled at the meeting should be sent directly to the CIM

RESOLVED that, subject to the issues agreed above, the draft Corporate Plan 2012 – 2017 be recommended to Council for approval