

PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 22 June 2017 at 9.30 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones (Chair), Gareth Davies, Tony Flynn, Huw Jones, Pat Jones, Christine Marston, Andrew Thomas, Rhys Thomas and Huw Williams

Cabinet Lead Member – Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill attended for agenda item no. 6

Observers – Councillors Meirick Davies, Arwel Roberts, Emrys Wynne and Mark Young

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director: Communities (NS), Head of Planning and Public Protection (GB), Public Protection Manager (EJ), Head of Community Support Services (PG), Commissioning Officer (CW), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Committee Administrator (KEJ)

1 APOLOGIES

Councillor Melvyn Mile

Cabinet Lead Member – Councillor Bobby Feeley

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declaration of personal or prejudicial interest had been raised.

3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Given that the membership of Cabinet had yet to be finalised and would likely have implications for membership of scrutiny committees, it was suggested that the appointment of Vice Chair be deferred.

RESOLVED that the appointment of Vice Chair be deferred to the next meeting of the committee.

4 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters had been raised.

5 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held on 6 April 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2017 be received and approved as a correct record.

6 DENBIGHSHIRE CCTV PARTNERSHIP

Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets introduced the report and confidential appendix (previously circulated) and briefed the Committee on the background to the Council's decision to withdraw from delivering its own CCTV service and transferring the service's delivery to the Denbighshire CCTV Partnership.

Councillor Thompson-Hill confirmed that –

- although the full-time CCTV Co-ordinator was employed by the Council, the post was funded by the Partnership
- despite the fact that the footage was no longer monitored 24 hours a day there had not been a demonstrable increase in incidents of crime and disorder
- whilst the CCTV Partnership Board, which oversaw the Partnership's work in delivering the CCTV service, was satisfied with the service delivered it acknowledged that the arrangements for the delivery of the current service were not sustainable in the long run due to the age of the ICT server and camera maintenance requirements
- the Board had examined a number of potential delivery models for the service. Following careful consideration the Board had opted to start work with Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWCC) for them to take responsibility for the day to day management of the service in future.

Responding to members' questions the Lead Member, Head of Planning and Public Protection, and the Public Protection Manager –

- outlined the cost of the CCTV Service when the Council operated it and the decision taken as part of the Freedoms and Flexibilities budget exercise to withdraw from providing it as it was a non-statutory service. Nevertheless the Council acknowledged the service's importance and therefore agreed to work with all partners who were willing to work together to deliver a CCTV service
- advised that whilst Denbighshire County Council corporately no longer contributed towards the cost of the CCTV Service certain services within the Council did contribute a financial amount, i.e. Parking Services, Planning and Public Protection
- confirmed that the CCTV Partnership delivered a static public space CCTV camera service to the towns of Prestatyn, Rhuddlan and Rhyl. Other county towns had their own private arrangements for their CCTV services
- advised that the Police had mobile CCTV which were deployed in known crime and disorder hotspots. The Council also had a mobile camera which could record images, but did not beam the picture into a control room
- explained the proposed formula for each of the three towns (contained in the confidential appendix) for the provision of a CCTV Service from the Partnership which included a guaranteed minimum number of cameras for each of the towns. The report also detailed the proposed maintenance agreement for the

cameras already in situ and the approach that would be taken when any camera failed or came to the end of its serviceable life

- emphasised that under the new agreement there would be a guarantee on the minimum number of cameras in operation in each town at any time, although the number of cameras actually active in Prestatyn and Rhyl would be considerably higher than the guaranteed minimum. The amount contributed by each town council would guarantee the minimum amount of operational cameras
- that North Wales Police contributed £16k to all county area CCTV services across the region
- confirmed that the CCTV Partnership Board considered five potential operators for the service's delivery, including other local authorities in North Wales. Nevertheless, having evaluated the bids and visited all operators' control rooms to assess the type of service that could be delivered it became apparent that the service which CWCC could offer in the long-run was far superior. They already worked closely with North Wales Police and could provide the Partnership with a 24 hour, 7 day a week, reactive monitoring service, which was more than the Partnership itself delivered at present
- advised that the maintenance contract currently in place with a company to service and repair the cameras would continue. If and when a camera was deemed to have come to the end of its serviceable life a decision would be taken, based on a risk assessment, whether to replace the camera with one from a low risk area
- confirmed that North Wales Police and individual Council services had all committed to contribute the set amounts towards the service for the length of the contract period. The three town councils were also being asked to give the same commitment, as this would safeguard the future of the service for the contract period with CWCC. Once all parties had agreed a Service Level Agreement (SLA) would be drawn up which would commit all partners to financially contribute to the Service for a specified period time
- advised that the possibility of leasing public space CCTV cameras was not an option. Enquiries had been made in relation to this but camera manufacturing companies had advised that leasing was not the best option
- confirmed that once the service with CWCC had been established enquiries would be made with other city, town and community councils in the county on whether they would be interested in joining and contributing towards the Partnership's work. The feasibility of allowing individual businesses to contribute towards the system could also be explored.

Councillor Arwel Roberts, in his capacity as a Rhuddlan Town Councillor and a member of the CCTV Partnership Board, confirmed that he had been part of the evaluation process for the proposed new service. He was wholeheartedly supportive of the long term approach for the Service's delivery and felt that the CWCC option would safeguard the service for the future.

Whilst the CCTV Partnership Board had agreed in principle to entering into an agreement with CWCC no actual start date for the contract had yet been agreed. It was anticipated that the new service would commence before the end of the current calendar year. The Committee therefore –

RESOLVED that subject to the above observations –

- (a) *to support the Council's role within the Partnership;*
- (b) *to continue to support retention of the Partnership, and*
- (c) *that a further report be presented to the Committee in twelve months' time detailing the progress made with the establishment of the new arrangements between the Denbighshire CCTV Partnership and Cheshire West and Chester Council, its effectiveness in delivering a CCTV Service for the north Denbighshire area and outlining any potential options available for extending the service to other areas of the county.*

7 DENBIGHSHIRE CARERS STRATEGY 2016 - 19

The Head of Community Support Services and the Commissioning Officer for Carers introduced the report, Strategy Action Plan and Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA) (previously circulated). In their introduction they advised members that the North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) had recently received notification that they had been successful in their bid for Lottery funding. This was good news for carers in Denbighshire as NEWCIS would be able to offer respite for carers in the county's extra-care housing scheme. In relation to actions still registering as 'red' on the action plan NEWCIS' successful application included funding for an element of counselling services for carers, whilst discussions on the adoption of the Family Conference model for situations within adult services would now commence in January 2018.

Responding to members' questions officers advised that –

- officers and partner organisations did their utmost to promote the services available to all carers within the county, be they young or old, living in rural or urban areas, i.e. Single Point of Access (SPoA) and Talking Point staff were trained to identify carer issues and needs and to raise their awareness of services available to support them, third sector organisations commissioned by the Council and Health Board visited various outlets including supermarkets and GP surgeries etc., to raise awareness and promote services for carers
- carer roadshows and promotional events were drawn to members' attention on a regular basis and would continue to be publicised so, as councillors were welcome to attend
- not all individuals recognised themselves as carers, particularly within family situations. They tended to view caring duties as an integral part of their relationships
- the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (SSWBA) 2014 had a particular focus on carers, the promotion of independence and how local authorities would support services aimed at building resilience among communities
- the Council was aware that there were in the region of 3000 carers actively seeking support in Denbighshire. However, this figure was estimated to be around a third of the actual number of carers in the county
- it was estimated that 8% of children below 18 years of age in Denbighshire were carers

- not all carers wanted to receive formal support from the Council or other organisations. For example, carers in rural areas tended to be very resilient and received support from within their communities
- unclaimed benefits was a complex area, whilst the monetary value of 'unclaimed benefits' in Denbighshire as reported in the media seemed relatively high the rules relating to household entitlements and overlapping benefits meant that individuals could not claim all benefits to which they had entitlement. Denbighshire Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) which delivered benefits advice on the Council's behalf had developed a holistic approach to benefits advice, with a view to ensuring that households could claim their maximum permitted entitlement
- both the SPoA Service and the CAB were very proactive in signposting carers to services which may be available to them; including referral for benefit checks
- the 'What Matters' conversation which social care staff had with service-users was also a useful tool to identify carers and sign post them to potential support available
- some of the outreach work undertaken to support young carers across the county did include taking groups of them to use Leisure Service facilities. The Commissioning Officer for Carers Services undertook to discuss with both Children's Services and Leisure Services the feasibility of issuing Leisure Centre cards for young carers to use in their own time as part of the support provided to them
- the North Wales Regional Partnership Board (NWRPB) for health and social services would be undertaking a review of the work undertaken in recent years, and financed using the transitional funding allocated for the financial years 2016-17 and 2017-18, in order to evaluate the outcomes and use them as the basis for a new Regional Business Plan for carers' services from April 2018 onwards.

Officers acknowledged that, whilst a lot of work was being done to support carers across the county, the Council could not be complacent. It would continue to work with others to develop services for carers of all ages. At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee –

RESOLVED that subject to the above comments and observations –

- to endorse how partners in Denbighshire are continuing to work together to further develop support to Carers in Denbighshire, within the context of increasing demand, new legislation and demographic changes;*
- to continue to support and promote the achievements of the Carers Strategy in order for Denbighshire Community Support Service (CSS) to meet its statutory obligations in regard to Carers, in partnership with statutory and third sector partners;*
- to confirm that it had read, understood and taken account of the Well-being Impact Assessment (Appendix 3) as part of its consideration;*

- (d) *to request that officers arrange a training event on 'social care' for all councillors, including a visit to social care establishments such as Extra Care accommodation, and*
- (e) *that a progress report on the implementation of the Carers Strategy Action Plan 2016-19 be presented to the Committee in December 2017.*

8 DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2016 - 2017

The Corporate Director: Communities, in her capacity as the Council's Statutory Director of Social Services, introduced the Director's draft Annual Report 2016-17. She advised that the report, which summarised her evaluation of Services' effectiveness during the preceding year and identified the priorities for improvement during the current year, was presented to the Committee for its observations on its contents prior to its submission to the regulator, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) by the statutory deadline. In introducing the report the Director advised Committee members that following her evaluation of the services provided by both adult and social care services she had concluded that the services provided were effective in both sectors. Nevertheless, there would always be room for improvement and new challenges to tackle, therefore there was no room for complacency.

Responding to members' questions on the Report's contents the Director advised –

- the issue of homelessness was dealt with under specific legislation whilst housing, including social housing, was governed by different legislative frameworks. Officers were hoping to bring the new Homelessness Strategy before members when available
- confirmed that the SPoA service was in the main a telephone signposting service to other services. Face to face services were provided through the Talking Points initiative, Talking Point services were available in various locations around the county and were advertised both on the Council's website and at community locations. If a person was unable to attend a Talking Point event visits could be arranged, but unfortunately the Council did not have sufficient resources to arrange home visits as a matter of course
- Talking Points was an effective way of communicating with residents and drawing services to their attention as they had access to a wide-range of professional experts to assist with the 'What Matters' conversation with residents
- decisions on whether to undertake home visits to service-users or potential service-users were undertaken based on professional expertise.

The Committee congratulated the Director and the Service on their positive and proactive response to the new Welsh Language Standards and the 'Mwy Na Geiriau/More Than Words' framework. Members were of the view that adopting the 'Active Offer' approach was to be commended. Members also commended the quality of social care service provision for children in the county.

Having considered the report and the responses received to questions raised at the meeting the Committee –

RESOLVED that –

- (a) *it provided a clear account of the Service's performance in 2016-17, and;*
- (b) *a Council Briefing session be arranged for all county councillors on all housing, single access route to housing (SARTH), homeless and homelessness related matters.*

9 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Coordinator submitted a report (previously circulated) seeking members' review of the Committee's work programme and provided an update on relevant issues.

During the ensuing discussion –

- in response to suggestions for potential items for future scrutiny the Scrutiny Coordinator explained the current process and drew attention to the member proposal form for completion for submission to the Chairs and Vice Chair's Group
- agreed to invite the relevant Cabinet Lead Members to future meetings of the committee for items pertinent to their portfolios
- considered and discussed nominations for appointment to the Service Challenge Groups and Strategic Investment Group.

RESOLVED that –

- (a) *subject to the addition of the items agreed during the meeting, the work programme as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be approved;*
- (b) *the following members be appointed as the committee's representatives on the Service Challenge Groups –*

*Education and Children's Services – Councillor Rhys Thomas
Community Support Services – Councillor Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones
Planning and Public Protection – Councillor Christine Marston, and*

- (c) *the Scrutiny Coordinator email all members of the committee seeking expressions of interest for the remaining vacancies and the matter be given further consideration at the next meeting.*

The meeting concluded at 12.40 p.m.