

PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, Russell House, Rhyl on Thursday, 14 January 2016 at 9.30 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Raymond Bartley (Vice-Chair), Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones (Chair), Meirick Davies, Pat Jones and Bill Tasker.

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director: Communities (NS), Head of Planning and Public Protection (GB), Strategic Planning and Performance Officer (LG), Public Protection Manager (EJ), Democratic Services Manager (SP), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Administrative Officer (CIW).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Martyn Holland, Dewi Owens, Pete Prendergast and Arwel Roberts

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No Members declared any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at the meeting.

3 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.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 26th November, 2015 were submitted.

Accuracy:-

Councillor M.LI. Davies explained that with regard to Business Item 5, North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, he had been in attendance as Chairman of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

Matters arising:-

Item 5, North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority - The Scrutiny Coordinator confirmed that a copy of the letter sent to the North Wales Fire and Rescue

Authority, in response to the consultation, had been included in the Information Brief circulated to Members.

RESOLVED – *that, subject to the above, the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.*

5 PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

A copy of a report by the Strategic Planning and Performance Officer (SPPO), on the arrangements for establishing the statutory Public Services Board, also including potential options for scrutinising the new PSB, in line with requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Strategic Planning and Performance Manager (SPPM) introduced the report and explained that the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, which would come into force on the 1st April 2016, would have wide-ranging implications for the Council as well as other public organisations in Wales.

Communities Scrutiny Committee, at its next meeting in February, would be looking in greater detail at the Act's implications for the Council. One of the Act's provisions was to change the present Local Service Boards (LSBs) into Public Services Boards (PSBs) and in doing so placing the new PSBs on a statutory footing. Consequently the PSBs must be subject to more intense scrutiny activity from local authorities. Denbighshire currently operated a joint LSB with Conwy County Borough Council and other partner organisations.

At its September, 2015 meeting the joint LSB had decided that its desired approach from April, 2016 would be to operate as a Joint PSB, unless the Welsh Government (WG) determined that the new local government structure in the area would be different going forward. The Joint LSB also expressed the intention for the new Joint PSB to have a single long-term partnership Well-being Plan for the Conwy Denbighshire area from 2017 onwards, at present the LSB manages two separate single integrated plans (SIPs). If the production of a single Well-being Plan could be brought into fruition it would then be more appropriate to scrutinise it on a joint basis, to avoid duplication and to make better use of limited resources.

Whilst work was already underway with respect to planning for a joint Wellbeing Plan, it was being undertaken in such a way that if the WG agreed a different configuration for local government in North Wales, the work done to date would not have been in vain as it could be used for Denbighshire and Conwy as separate entities, or for any other potential configurations.

The Democratic Services Manager outlined all potential scrutiny options for the proposed Joint PSB as detailed in appendix 2 to the report, explaining that Option 4 - joint informal scrutiny arrangements – seemed at present the most appropriate model to adopt once the Joint PSB was operational.

Responding to members' questions officers advised that:-

- With respect to other potential local government reorganisation configurations, these had not been explored with respect to the establishment of a joint PSB. The reason being that Conwy and Denbighshire had for some time operated a joint LSB, and until such time as either authority was told that this would definitely not be the future local government structure for the area, it seemed logical to proceed down the joint route for the new PSB;
- Bearing in mind that current LSB partner members i.e. Police, Health and Fire and Rescue Service, also configured their sub-regional structures into three areas based on the local authority counties in north-west, north-east and central North Wales, it was logical and reasonable for the joint LSB to propose the establishment of a joint PSB for Conwy and Denbighshire;
- Whether at the conclusion of the process there was either a single or a joint PSB its remit would be to serve the needs of its residents to the best of its abilities;
- Until the end of March, 2016 the WG was meeting the administrative costs of the LSBs via grant funding. However, from 1 April and the introduction of the PSBs, each local authority would be expected to fund the administrative costs for each PSB. To accommodate these costs going forward corporate business planning processes as well as consultation and engagement methods were being streamlined with a view to each process being utilised to realise maximum benefit for the organisation;
- The new draft Local Government (Wales) Bill, currently out for consultation, which proposed fundamental changes to local government structures and methods of working, would present challenges for everyone involved, including local government. Members were encouraged to get involved with the consultation on this particular Bill because of its wide-ranging implications.

Members requested that a report on the draft Local Government (Wales) Bill and its implications be presented to all councillors prior to the consultation closing date in February 2016.

At the conclusion of the discussion it was:-

RESOLVED – *that the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee support:-*

- the proposal of Conwy and Denbighshire continuing with their joint arrangement and merge to become the Conwy and Denbighshire Public Services Board under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act (subject to proposals continuing for Conwy and Denbighshire to merge under a future local government reorganisation);*
- the proposal of Conwy and Denbighshire having a single Well-being Plan for both counties;*
- working towards a target publication date of November 2017 for the joint Conwy and Denbighshire Wellbeing Plan; and*
- the continuation of the existing scrutiny arrangements for the LSB/PSB and, subject to a decision on local government reorganisation, to introduce Joint Informal Arrangements as outlined in Option 4 of Appendix 2 from May 2017.*

A copy of a joint report by the Head of Planning and Public Protection (HPPP) and the Public Protection Manager (PPM) which provided an update on the implications of the Council's decision, as part of the freedoms and flexibilities exercise to remove funding from the CCTV function for 2016/17, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

Whilst the CCTV Service was not a statutory function of the Council, there had been some concern from residents and other stakeholders with respect to the Council's decision not to continue with the Service and as a result a Working Group had been established to look at alternative models for delivering a CCTV Service.

In conjunction with North Wales Police, Prestatyn, Rhuddlan and Rhyl Town Councils, and the relevant Member Area Groups (MAGs) a model had been drawn up and agreed which would see all current CCTV cameras remaining in operation and recording on a twenty four hour basis throughout the year. The only difference being that they would not be monitored on a 24 hour basis. This way footage would be available to those who required it upon request.

The CCTV Co-ordinator would be contracted to maintain the service and be the point of contact and co-ordinator between all partner organisations. Agreement had been received in principle from all town councils involved in the project on their financial contributions towards the service and from the other parties involved in the project.

The estimated cost of the Service was £62K and to date assurances had been received with respect to £61K funding. Responding to Members' questions officers advised that:-

- The standalone service would initially be a 12 month trial service to establish its viability to continue for future years;
- The Working Group was due to meet again on 25 January to examine the Service's legal agreement and other legal matters, as well as the proposed governance arrangements for the Board;
- From 1 April 2016, the date that the standalone service would come into being, the present Working Group would become the CCTV Service Board and would be responsible for the Service's governance and operational arrangements;
- The table in paragraph 4.11 of the report detailed which individual/companies were responsible for the service and its equipment and the associated costs of each element of the work;
- Once the Board was established it could explore funding sources such as Police and Crime Commissioner grant funding and other anti-social behaviour (ASB), community safety funding streams with a view to maximising the income for the Service. Some research work had already been undertaken by the working group into funding sources. They may also wish to visit Barmouth and Llangefnï, as suggested by members, to see for themselves the CCTV systems installed there recently;
- They were hopeful that the current £1K shortfall between service costs and expenditure could be covered via contract negotiation and/or charges levied on Council or external users.

Prior to concluding the discussion the Committee thanked the Working Group and officers for their endeavours in ensuring that an alternative method for delivering CCTV Services had been designed, albeit on an initial 12 month trial basis, and they wished all concerned well with the venture. They also asked that future reports on the Service use less jargon terminology for the benefit of the general public.

The Committee having considered the information and the clarification provided on the terminology:

RESOLVED – *that subject to the above observations to:-*

- (a) receive the report and support the work done by officers in delivering the identified savings and developing a new partnership model for CCTV provision starting on 1 April 2016; and*
- (b) request that a further report be submitted in six months' time detailing the governance arrangements for the CCTV partnership, outlining the partnership's effectiveness in delivering the service and the impact it was having on crime in the area it served.*

7 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

A copy of a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (SC), which requested the Committee to review and agree its Forward Work Programme and provided an update on relevant issues, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

A copy of the 'Member's proposal form' template had been included at Appendix 2, Cabinet's Forward Work Programme had been included as Appendix 3, and a table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising on progress with their implementation had been attached at Appendix 4.

The Committee considered its draft Forward Work Programme for future meetings, Appendix 1, and the following amendments and additions were agreed:-

25th February, 2016:-

The Committee agreed the inclusion of the two business items listed in the forward work programme for the February, 2016 meeting. Members requested that the item relating to the Future Development of a Community Hospital in Rhyl be listed first on the agenda. In response to concerns raised by Members, the SC informed the Committee that the BCUHB had provided an assurance that they would be attending the February meeting of the Committee to discuss this matter. Members agreed that the Lead Member, Councillor R.L. Feeley, be invited to attend the meeting, and that a pre-meeting be held for Members of the Committee at 9.00 a.m. Members discussed informally the issues which might be considered at the meeting.

14th April, 2016:-

Independence of Older People – At the request of the Committee, the SC agreed to seek the availability of a meeting room at the Brighton Road Offices, Rhyl, to coincide with the SPoA visit.

Members agreed that an invitation be extended to Councillors S.A. Davies and T.R. Hughes, with a view to visiting sites of interest in the Rhyl area. The Chair agreed to make arrangements for the provision of lunch.

In reply to a question from Councillor M.LI. Davies regarding the closure of the cafe at the Ruthin Craft Centre, the SC explained this matter had been discussed at the Ruthin Member Area Group. The SC agreed to pursue the outcome of the discussions.

Following further discussion, it was:-

RESOLVED – *that, subject to the above, the Work Programme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.*

8 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

No reports were received from Committee representatives.

Meeting ended at 11.35 a.m.