

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 9 June 2016 at 9.30 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Raymond Bartley, Meirick Davies, Colin Hughes, Geraint Lloyd-Williams, Barry Mellor (Chair), Dewi Owens, Arwel Roberts and Gareth Sandilands

Lead Members, Councillors Bobby Feeley, Hugh Irving and Julian Thompson Hill attended at the Committee's invitation.

ALSO PRESENT

Chief Executive (MM), Corporate Director: Communities (NS), Principal Manager – Business Support (TW), Corporate Health & Safety Manager (GL), Strategic Planning Team Manager (VR), Scrutiny Co-ordinator (RE) and Committee Administrator (SLW)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joe Welch

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Nominations were sought for a Member to serve as the Committee's Vice-Chair for the 2016/17 municipal year. Councillor Raymond Bartley nominated Councillor Arwel Roberts, seconded by Councillor Gareth Sandilands. No other nominations were received and it was, therefore;

***RESOLVED** that Councillor Arwel Roberts be appointed as the Performance Scrutiny Committee's Vice-Chair for the 2016/17 municipal year.*

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No Declarations of Interest.

4 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters.

5 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 12 April, 2016 and 28 April, 2016 were submitted.

12 April, 2016

Councillor Arwel Roberts stated that the point he had raised during the meeting regarding the number of Performance Scrutiny Committee Members sitting on the Task & Finish Group had not been included within the minutes.

Councillor Gareth Sandilands requested to know when the Head of Community Support Services would be attending Performance Scrutiny Committee to provide Members with an update of the In-House Care Services.

The Chair confirmed that no date had been set but that it was likely that each residence would be presented individually.

28 April, 2016

Page 19 Item 4 Minutes of the last meeting – Primary School Transport. Councillor Arwel Roberts stated that the issue of the Rhuddlan to Ysgol Dewi Sant route was still to be resolved. Members expressed their concern and that the safety of the children was paramount.

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator confirmed that the Review of School Transport would be presented to Communities Scrutiny Committee on 30 June 2016. The Chief Executive suggested the report could also include the issue of Rhuddlan to Ysgol Dewi Sant for further discussion.

Council experts had assessed the route from Rhuddlan to Ysgol Dewi Sant and had confirmed it as a safe route. Members and local residents had disagreed with the assessment. Councillor Roberts advised that the temporary school transport arrangements to take children from Rhuddlan to the school, which he had arranged, were unsustainable in the long term.

Page 20 Item 4 BT Superfast Cymru Rollout in Denbighshire – it was agreed that the item be kept on the Forward Work Programme and that information regarding the “not spots” from the Welsh Government was awaited. The Chief Executive suggested a letter be sent to the Welsh Government from the Chair of Performance Scrutiny Committee if the “not spots” information had not been received.

RESOLVED that subject to the above, the Minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 12 April and 28 April, 2016 be received and approved as a correct record.

6 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 4 2015/16

The Lead Member for Finance, Corporate Plan and Performance, Councillor Julian Thompson Hill introduced the report (previously circulated) which provided an update on the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2012-17 as at the end of Quarter 4 2015-16.

At this juncture, the Lead Member introduced the recently appointed Strategic Planning Team Manager, Vicki Robarts and welcomed her to her first Scrutiny Committee meeting.

The Lead Member emphasised to the Committee that the improvement or decline in performance from one quarter to the next was usually minimal due to the long-term nature of the Plan. He summarised the key performance messages for Quarter 4 of 2015-16 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, advising that:

- there were three “outcomes” under the developing the Local Economy priority that were classified as “acceptable”, however, an improvement in performance in these outcomes would be required. Nevertheless, there were external factors that mitigated against improvement in these indicators at present;
- whilst the percentage of children aged 16-18 not in education, employment or training (NEET) was another area that required further improvement. It had been pleasing to note that the three year trend with respect to the number of young people classed as NEETs was downwards;
- whilst there had been an improvement (reduction) in the numbers of adults requiring residential care, there remains a need to improve performance in relation to the performance indicator relating to the percentage of the population who cannot live independently (aged 18 and over);
- the present economic situation and lack of confidence in the housing market meant that developers were not applying for planning permission for medium to large sized housing developments. This in turn had an impact on the performance indicator (PI) relating to the number of affordable housing units granted planning permission; and
- as British Gas, the Council’s energy provider had still been unable to provide a breakdown of the Council’s carbon emissions, the Council was unable to report against this PI. Since April, the Council had changed energy provider and should, therefore, in the future, be able to report against this PI.

Responding to Members’ questions, the Lead Member and Officers confirmed:

- that whilst there had been a slippage in performance with respect to the number of calendar days taken to re-let council housing stock properties, there were valid reasons for this linked to ensuring that the properties when re-let were of a high standard (a report on performance in this area was scheduled for presentation to the Committee at its meeting on 14 July 2016);
- feedback from the business community in relation to the support available to them from the Council had been generally positive. However, there had been a need to further improve performance in relation to this priority and to improve communication between the various stakeholders. There was also a need for businesses to be more shrewd e.g. adapt their opening hours to match the public’s requirements and expectations;
- that they would follow up concerns regarding street cleanliness and the delay encountered with grass cutting at the county’s lawned cemeteries due to a problem with the contractor. They would also look at how communication with local members in relation to delays or problems with public realm matters could be strengthened.

In relation to the “Modernising the Council to Deliver Efficiencies” priority, Members asked Officers to enquire on the number of problems logged from Councillors with respect to the interaction of Microsoft Outlook with their council i-pads to establish whether there was a significant issue that merited a long-term solution ahead of next year’s local authority elections and the new in-take of Councillors.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Committee:

RESOLVED *subject to the areas listed above being examined and reported back to the Committee:*

- (i) to receive the report and note the Council’s performance in delivering its Corporate Plan during Quarter 4, 2015-16, and*
- (ii) that a report on the Council’s performance in delivering its Anti-Fouling Strategy, taking enforcement action and introducing Dog Control Orders be presented to the Committee at its next meeting (the report to include information on the use and cost of utilising mobile CCTV equipment for enforcement activity).*

7 CORPORATE HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

The Lead Member for Finance, Corporate Plan and Performance, Councillor Julian Thompson Hill, introduced the report (previously circulated) to provide an annual update on Health & Safety management within DCC as seen from the perspective of the Corporate Health & Safety team.

The Corporate Health & Safety Manager outlined the various formats for the presentation of Health & Safety statistics. These various formats and the detail contained within them was extremely useful to Health & Safety Officers when undertaking their work. Responding to Members’ questions, the Lead Member and Manager advised that:

- the Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee monitored the accident statistics on a quarterly basis and any issues of concern raised at the Committee’s meetings would be explored and reported back to them at future meetings;
- Denbighshire’s statistics and incidents were similar to the majority of local authorities across the UK, but there was a national tendency to under report health & safety statistics;
- corporately, all incidents were recorded and included in the statistical reports. In schools, minor playground incidents were not reported to the corporate centre, only incidents of a more serious nature were reported;
- there were yearly trends in the number of recorded incidents as well as seasonal trends i.e. fewer incidents recorded in schools during the summer due to the school summer holidays;
- all efforts were made to mitigate against an increased risk of health & safety incidents in services which had been subject to staffing cuts by ensuring that all managers in those services were fully trained in managing health & safety related matters. There had been no increase in the number of incidents recorded in services which had been subject to staffing reductions;

- during the course of the 2016/17 year, the Service would be looking at how to improve the management of health and safety for lone workers;
- the council was still awaiting the results of the radon monitoring exercise in council owned properties. The results of the monitoring could potentially pose a problem for the council, dependent upon the outcome, because if any property recorded a radon level of 10% or above, every property within a 1 mile radius of that property would require to be monitored at a cost of approximately £30 per property.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Committee thanked the Corporate Health & Safety Manager and his team for all their diligent work, and it was:

RESOLVED that subject to the above observations, the Committee receive the annual report on the activities and observations of the Corporate Health & Safety team.

BREAK – 11.05 A.M. TO 11.15 A.M.

At this juncture, there was a change to the order of the Agenda.

8 YOUR VOICE REPORT - Q4 2015/16

The Lead Member for Customers and Libraries, Councillor Hugh Irving, introduced the report (previously circulated) to provide an overview of compliments, suggestions and complaints received by Denbighshire County Council under the Council's customer feedback policy "Your Voice" during Q4 2015/16.

The Principal Manager: Support Services, explained that the corporate target of 95% had not been met due to the complex nature of some of the complaints, details of the complexities associated with some of the complaints were summarised within the report. The target had been previously set at a high threshold with a view to ensuring that corporately the council would make every effort to meet it and strive for improving its performance and service to the residents. Responding to Members' questions, the Lead Member and Principal Manager:

- confirmed that from the beginning of the 2016/17 reporting year, complaints relating to Council delivered services and services commissioned by the Council from an external provider would be recorded separately;
- confirmed that complaints and compliments for Highways and Environmental Services were recorded as a single figure. It was not separated into departmental figures, as the Service was a single Service managed by one Head of Service;
- agreed that the number of compliments received by the council had been particularly encouraging;
- advised that the figures reported within the report related to "complaints", it did not include "service requests" received from Councillors as they were "requests" not "complaints";

- requested that Members, when making service requests on residents' behalf should direct those enquiries via the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and not contact officers directly, otherwise the statistical information on the service request numbers would be incorrect;
- advised that the council was currently exploring the best method for delivering customer services – a discussion was due to take place with the council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on proposed service delivery methods.

With respect to the forthcoming discussion on customer services delivery, Members asked whether the EMMA system could be included within the scope of the review as they felt that it was not particularly user-friendly. Whilst the concept behind it was excellent, and Members understood the need to safeguard residents' personal information, they felt it was cumbersome and time consuming to navigate in order to follow-up on queries raised.

Following an in-depth discussion, the Committee:

RESOLVED that subject to the above observations and enquiries being made with respect to the query relating to the EMMA system, to receive the report and its contents.

9 DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT: 2015/16

The Lead Member for Social Care (Adults and Children's Services), Councillor Bobby Feeley, introduced the report (previously circulated) to enable Members to scrutinise the draft report prior to it being submitted to the Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).

The Lead Member emphasised that the delivery of social care services to the county's residents, and the changes and modernisation of those services, was not solely subject to budgetary constraints. The requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014 necessitated a number of changes to the way services had historically been delivered. In future there would be greater emphasis on supporting people to live as independently as possible for as long as possible, with a more proactive, prevention and intervention approach to service delivery rather than creating a culture of dependency on residential care type services.

The Corporate Director: Communities, in her role as the Statutory Director of Social Services, detailed the contents of her report, emphasising that whilst the report was in her name, the work summarised within it was the fruits of the entire social care services. She expressed particular thanks to the recently retired Head of Children and Family Services, Leighton Rees, and the Head of Education, Karen Evans for their efforts in paving the way for the joining up of the Education and Children's Services and ensuring such a smooth transition to the new single Education and Children's Service.

Members were advised by the Director of Social Services that:

- her report for 2015/16 had been presented in a revised format in order to conform with legislative changes and accommodate the new framework for measuring social care performance;
- the Director was required to identify the Service's strengths and weaknesses within the report, and also outline plans to strengthen the identified weaknesses;
- the Welsh language was important to the Service and it was widely accepted that providing services through the language medium of the service-users choice was a central principle of a good social care service; and
- her focus was on making a difference to people's lives and keeping people independent for as long as possible. Improving the quality of lives was the ultimate aim, averting the need for statutory services for as long as possible subject to ensuring the service-users' safety.

Members congratulated the Social Services Department's work with respect of striving to provide services through the medium of Welsh for adults. However, they did have concerns with respect to similar services for children, particularly now that the funding for Tŵf had been withdrawn. Responding to these concerns the Director advised that in North Wales Tŵf now only operated in the Conwy County Borough Council area. Flying Start had been another early years project threatened by funding cuts. Nevertheless, Denbighshire was confident that its approach in bringing together Education and Children's Services would assist with the embedding of linguistic skills throughout early years education, mainstream education and youth services.

Responding to other points raised by Members, the Director advised that:

- with respect to the review of in-house adult care services, the details requested by Scrutiny and Cabinet in relation to each establishment would be presented to Scrutiny at the earliest opportunity, once the required work and analysis had been completed. It was likely that they would not be presented to Scrutiny en-bloc, but anticipated that all would be presented before the end of the calendar year;
- a balance required to be struck in the report between communicating important messages and including the appropriate level of detail i.e. information on the aim of the review of future provision of in-house adult social care services and the number of people using council run services in comparison to private/independents services. The latter information was freely available for the public in other council published documentation;
- there had been excellent co-operation on all levels during the work to bring the Education Service and the Children and Family Service together as one service. Staff in both services had been extremely positive about the merger and on a strategic level both Lead Members and the Leader were involved in regular meetings with a view to ensuring a smooth unification;
- she was aware of recent press articles in relation to an increase in the number of suicides amongst the young male population in North Wales and concerns raised by a HM Coroner with respect of individual cases. Directors of Social Services across the region also had concerns with respect of these

incidents and were establishing a board to examine access to acute mental health services. Members were advised that the Welsh Government (WG) was currently reviewing acute mental health provision across Wales and that the Director and colleagues had met with WG officials at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd recently to discuss their concerns on mental health provision in the region. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) had recently appointed a new Executive Director of Mental Health services. Initial analysis of the incidents of suicide amongst young males indicated that in a number of cases the individuals had not experienced long-term mental health problems, but that they were more likely to have experienced a “crisis” situation immediately prior to taking their own life than an enduring mental health problem;

- delayed transfer of care (DToC) from hospitals to service-users’ home tended to occur when extremely complex care packages were required due to the service users’ health and/or care needs. This problem was not unique to Denbighshire, in fact, Denbighshire had one of the lowest DToC rates in Wales;
- no specific references were included in the draft report on potential extra care provision in the Dee Valley area as extra care housing in this particular area of the county was not a feature of the current Corporate Plan. Nevertheless, if Members wished, a reference to proposed extra care facilities in the Corwen area could be included.

Prior to the conclusion of the discussion, Officers advised that going forward there was an urgent need for Social Care Services and Health Care Services to work closely together to find a solution on how to effectively integrate Health and Social Care Services. Not solely for financial purposes, but to better meet future demand, which due to demographic changes, was an ever growing demand on both services.

Members thanked the Director for her detailed report and:

RESOLVED to endorse the Director of Social Services Annual Report 2015/16 for submission to the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).

10 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

A copy of a report by the Scrutiny Co-ordinator, 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 as follows:

14 July 2016

Dog Fouling to be included.

Lead Members to be invited to attend the meeting.

29 September 2016

Affordable Homes to be deferred to the 29 September meeting.

Committee representation on Service Challenge Groups were discussed and it had been suggested that Councillor Joe Welch and the new Member, when appointed, be invited to represent the Committee on the vacant Service Challenge Groups.

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

11 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Councillors Geraint Lloyd Williams and Dewi Owens both stated they had attended the Corporate Health & Safety Committee meeting but the Committee had not been quorate.

Councillor Meirick Lloyd Davies confirmed he had attended the Highways and Planning & Public Protection service challenge meetings. Discussion had taken place regarding, Parking Charges, School Transport, Trunk Road Agency and Waste & Recycling.

Councillor Dewi Owens reported back on a recent Schools Standards Monitoring Group (SSMG) meeting which they had both attended at which representatives from schools in Llangollen had been in attendance. It seemed that there were concerns regarding a potential lack of Welsh-medium provision for pupils leaving Ysgol y Gwernant and transferring to Ysgol Dinas Brân.

RESOLVED that the feedbacks be received and noted.

The Meeting concluded at 12.30 p.m.