

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Gwilym O Jones (Chair)
Councillor Robert Llewelyn Jones (Vice-Chair)

Councillors John Griffith, K P Hughes, Vaughan Hughes,
Dafydd Roberts, Margaret Murley Roberts and Nicola Roberts.

Mr Keith Roberts – The Roman Catholic Church

Elected Members invited as regard to Item 5

Councillors Lewis Davies, Richard Griffiths, Aled Morris Jones,
R O Jones.

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive,
Assistant Chief Executive (Partnerships, Community and Service
Improvements),
Head of Democratic Services,
Service Manager (Housing, Strategy, Commissioning & Policy) (for
Item 4),
Regeneration Manager (DL) (for Item 5),
Scrutiny Manager (AD) (for Item 6),
Senior Standards & Inclusions Manager (GMH) (for Item 7),
Scrutiny Officer (GR),
Committee Officer (MEH).

APOLOGIES: Councillors Glyn Haynes and Alun Roberts

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs Rita Lyon – Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities
Forward)

The Chair welcomed Councillor John Griffith as a member of the Scrutiny Meeting following his role as Portfolio Holder for Finance.

The Chair extended his best wishes to Councillor Robin Williams, a previous member of this Committee, who has taken over the role of Portfolio Holder for Finance.

1 APOLOGIES

As noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the following meeting were confirmed :-

- Minutes of the meeting held on 10 April, 2018.
- Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May, 2018.

4 COMMUNITIES FIRST - ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted – a report by the Head of Housing Services in relation the Communities First activities and performance during 2017/18 and outline plans for 2018/19.

The Service Manager (Housing, Strategy, Commissioning & Policy) reported that the Annual Report highlights the funding Communities First receives from both this Authority and Welsh Government. One of the main programmes funded by Welsh Government is Tackling Poverty Programme, Communities for Work Programme and LIFT Programme which aims at improving the prospects of people living in the most disadvantaged communities across Wales. She noted that historically Communities First has worked in partnership with the Housing Services to drive forward their programmes. The Communities First was first set up to deliver support to the most deprived wards in Anglesey however since the announcement in February 2017, by the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children that the Communities First Programme would be phased out by March 2017, Môn Communities Forward now delivers support and advice across most ward across the Island.

Mrs Rita Lyon – Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) said that Communities First has now been rebranded to Môn Communities Forward. She noted that Môn Communities Forward has secured funding from Wales European Funding Office (WEFO) to provide an 'In Work Support Programme' targeting people who are in employment but are underemployed i.e. people who are in part-time employment or those seeking to improve their employment. Môn Communities Forward are opening a new office in Menai Bridge this month to afford support and services to the Seiriol area. The Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) wished to amend the report before the Committee which such read that 'Communities for Work Programme' – 72 people engaged with the project and 18 people into employment.

The Committee considered the report and raised the following matters :-

- Clarification was sought as to the achievement of the LIFT programme offered by Communities First. The Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) responded that the LIFT was a Welsh Government pilot programme for a period of 3 years. Anglesey was one of 9 Communities First Cluster areas identified aimed at people who are temporarily out of work; people who have spent more than six months out of work or training; people who face the greatest barriers to

becoming employable i.e. young single parents, adults with few or no formal qualifications, people with poor employment records and individuals with disabilities. The LIFT programme on Anglesey has worked with 402 individuals and moved 144 people back into employment over the period of the scheme which came to an end in March 2018. She noted that the scheme has now been replaced by the Communities to Work Plus which is funded through WEFO. Further clarification was sought as to how many people stay in employment and whether Môn Communities Forward are able to monitor and support these individuals. The Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) responded that monitoring of people who have been returned to work through the Môn Communities Forward are monitored every six months and individuals who fall out of the scheme are returned for support to Môn Communities Forward. She noted that these people have been out of work for a long period and adjusting to the working environment can be difficult.

- Due to Môn Communities Forward expanding to other communities within Anglesey, it was suggested that data on people within the specific wards and areas that has taken advantage of the facilities offered by Môn Communities Forward should be included within the Annual Report for 2018/19. Questions were raised as to whether Môn Communities Forward could offer mobile surgeries in rural areas. The Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) responded that it is a matter that Môn Communities Forward are considering but as it is only since April that the organisation is able to afford facilities across wards on the Island it will take time to arrange such a facility as mobile surgeries.
- Members referred to Môn Communities Forward returning to Amlwch to afford services, training and support to get people back into the working environment. Comments were made that the local community of Amlwch seem to be unaware of Môn Communities Forward and the services they afford. The Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) said that Amlwch is one of Môn Communities First success with a good working relationship with the Job Centre and Parys Training. She said that she would afford the local members for Amlwch statistics of the uptake of training course attended by residents.
- Questions were raised whether Môn Communities Forward has adequate funding to enable them to deliver services across the Island. The Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) responded that the budget forecast for 2018/19 is £1.1m of which Welsh Government funding afforded via the Local Authority. She said that as the Chief Executive Officer of Môn Communities Forward she is confident that funding has been secured until 2021 to enable the organisation to function. Members referred to the uncertainties as regard to Brexit and possible effects on grant funding to organisations such as Môn Communities Forward. The Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) responded that uncertainties on grant funding due to Brexit is faced by all organisations who depend on EU funding.
- Concerns were expressed as to the vacant shops on the Island's Towns and specifically at Holyhead. The Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) responded that Communities First in 2012 had an initiative, with the support of the Local Authority, to enable people to open small business which were rent free and a reduction in business rates for a period in Holyhead. She noted that at present 8% of shops are vacant in Holyhead.

- Questions were raised as to the risk the Authority is undertaking to work in partnership with Môn Communities Forward to deliver Communities for Work Plus, Communities for Work and the Legacy Funding. The Chief Executive Officer (Môn Communities Forward) responded that she was confident that there is no risks for the Local Authority to work in partnership with Môn Communities First. She noted that the organisation over the years has been able to perform and has been able to afford services to people in conjunction with the objective of the Council's Plan to support residents to reach their full potential and improve the quality of their lives and their wellbeing.

The Chair raised the question as to whether the Committee wished to continue to receive the Annual Report following the closure of the Communities First Programme by Welsh Government. The Committee were in agreement that Môn Communities Forward should present their report to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

It was RESOLVED :-

- **To acknowledge the performance of Môn Communities Forward during 2017/18 in the delivery of the final year of Communities First;**
- **That Môn Communities Forward shall continue to report to the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.**

ACTION : As noted above.

5 REGENERATION PLANS FOR AMLWCH AND BEAUMARIS

(Local Members for the Twrcelyn and Seiriol Wards were invited to the Committee in respect of this item).

Submitted – a report by the Head of Economic Development and Regulation in relation to the above.

The Regeneration Manager reported that the County Council's aspirations is to drive community regeneration through developing holistic town and community plans for the Island's main settlements. He noted that Anglesey's five recognised towns have different characteristics and this has impacted on the level of public sector regeneration investment in each town. Key characteristics that can impact on such investments were highlighted within the report to the Committee. He further noted that all five towns have benefited from past capital regeneration investment such as that secured by the Council from the Welsh Development Agency and Welsh Government 'Môn a Menai' programme. Welsh Government (WG) main capital regeneration funding has been subject to greater levels of geographic targeting in recent years, with WG increasingly requiring a prioritization of its reducing resources on a smaller number of more strategic settlements. Holyhead and Llangefni have recently attracted significant levels of capital investment through WG, European Union and Lottery funds, but it is proving more difficult for the Council to secure similar funding for projects in smaller and less deprived towns. The Officer noted that the Executive Committee recently agreed that Officers should lobby for regeneration funds to be made available for small

towns and rural areas. EU rural funding programmes continue to provide scope for investment in smaller settlements, but these generally have more limited budgets e.g. LEADER, Rural Community Development Fund (RCDF) and Tourism Amenity Infrastructure Scheme (TAIS). A table listing some key projects/issues that are underway or under consideration in Amlwch and Beaumaris were listed within the report before the Committee.

- Questions raised by the local Elected members for the Twrcelyn Ward :-

Matter raised as to why the Amlwch area is not prioritised for regeneration projects similar to other Towns on the Island with similar population. The Members referred specifically to the Rhosgoch site, land near Maes Mona, Amlwch Leisure Centre, Amlwch Harbour (potential use for EU fisheries funds for fishing harbor facilities improvements), Empty Buildings i.e. Octel site and Council owned facilities (Amlwch Port) that require dire funding to allow the town of Amlwch to attract employment opportunities and tourist to the area. Concerns were expressed that no funding has been sourced towards regeneration projects within the Amlwch area and neighbouring villages. The Local Members said that no timeframe has been noted for capital investments in Amlwch.

The Regeneration Manager responded that as regard to the level of investment in Amlwch the aim of the Amlwch Area Regeneration Plan is to provide a visually engaging document that identifies deliverable improvements for the Amlwch area based on engagement with local communities about their priorities. He noted that whilst Llangefni has a similar population and similar figures of unemployment and benefit claimant, the Tudur Ward in Llangefni has been identified as a highly deprived area and is able to secure funding for projects within that Ward. He further said that to secure EU funding developments need to have match-funding for projects to materialise. He referred that some of the site mentioned by the local members which are in private ownership i.e. Rhosgoch and Octel site. He noted that the authority is able to support and negotiate as regard to employment potential within these sites.

The Local Members stated that the Rhosgoch site has been designated as an Enterprise Zone and grant funding for potential projects on such sites can be sourced. It was also expressed that the Town of Amlwch and local villages need to be able to take advantage of the Wylfa Newydd project and regeneration opportunities such a development may afford.

The Regeneration Manager referred to Amlwch Harbour and the potential of EU fisheries funding. He noted that the EU funding is targeted towards fishing boats and not pleasure boats as has been suggested by the local community. He referred to the Amlwch Leisure Centre and noted that an improvement plan is being considered for improvements at the Centre.

- Questions raised by the local Elected Member for the Seiriol Ward :-

Councillor Lewis Davies expressed that there has been a lack of investment in the town of Beaumaris over the years compared to larger towns on the Island. He noted that the main high street in Beaumaris has a number of empty shops and the infrastructure of the town is deteriorating. The proportion of holiday homes within the town has increased and the lack of rented and social housing is of concern. He noted that the Town Council were supportive of social housing on the local primary school site but the Executive decided to place Extra Care facility on the site. He further expressed that the town of Beaumaris has seen the most services available to residents transferred to volunteers which are limited in number. Councillor Davies referred to the landslip on the A545 route from Menai Bridge to Beaumaris which entailed residents and visitors having to travel on minor roads to gain access to the town. The Regeneration Manager responded that Welsh Government funding has been secured to strengthen part of the A545 route to Beaumaris.

Councillor Lewis Davies further said that he had deep concerns that the report states that staff capacity and resources are currently unavailable to develop a regeneration plans for the area in the near future. He questioned the purposes of the report if no resources and capacity is available to regenerate the Town of Beaumaris. The Regeneration Officer responded that work is currently been undertaken at the north of the Island and it is anticipated that resources will be available to undertake work in the Beaumaris area in due course. The Officer further said that work will be undertaken to discuss the potential for the empty Lairds site.

The Regeneration Officer further said that unemployment and the lack of social housing is a problem in communities and especially when a high proportion of holiday homes are not available for rented accommodation to local young people. He expressed that whilst social housing and rented accommodation is a matter for Housing Services work has been undertaken to consider the local Community Club, which has been empty for a number of years, as a potential site for building social housing in the town of Beaumaris.

The Chief Executive said that there has been investment in the town of Beaumaris with work undertaken on the sea wall, moorings, pier and the funding secured for work to the A545 road. He said that he agreed that the old Lairds site needs to be developed but for a number of reasons the site was not incorporated within the Joint Local Development Plan.

The Committee considered the report and it was considered that the report before the Committee was premature and that a further report needs to be submitted to this Committee within six months when plans are in place so that some of the projects referred to within the report are able to be implemented.

It was RESOLVED :-

- **That a regeneration plan for the Amlwch area be prepared;**
- **To note the existence of several plans and issues under consideration for Amlwch and Beaumaris;**

- **That a further report be submitted to this Committee within six months when plans are in place to allow some projects noted within the report to be implemented.**

ACTION : As noted above.

6 SCRUTINY OF PARTNERSHIPS

Submitted – a report by the Scrutiny Manager in relation to the above.

The Scrutiny Manager reported that working in partnership has become an important part of the Authority's working practices, providing additional resilience to the Authority's service delivery capacity. A number of reports over the past few years have drawn attention to the need for improvement and strengthened scrutiny of partnership arrangements in public services. She further said that the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 highlights the need to strengthen scrutiny of partnerships and puts long-term sustainability at the forefront of how public services are designed and delivered and also places emphasis on public bodies working in partnership to ensure better outcomes now and in the future. The Scrutiny Manager further said that the County Council has extensive experience of working in partnership at local, regional and national level. With increasing pressure on public finances, the Council has clear guidelines in place for determining when to establish partnerships, which service(s) and the outcomes expected of them and for the sound management of the relationship. She noted that the Executive at its meeting held on 14th March, 2016 approved a Corporate Partnerships Policy document as a foundation for the authority's partnership working and also as a framework to guide partnership monitoring arrangements. She further noted that the Council maintains a Register of all key partnerships which is reviewed on a regular basis.

The Scrutiny Manager referred to the 2018/19 Forward Work Programme and noted that the task of scrutinising partnerships needs to be done in a managed way focusing on key strategic partnerships which enable the Council to deliver on its objectives and priorities. A list of the main partnership working was included within paragraph 5.9 of the report.

The Committee considered the report and raised the following matters :-

- Questions raised whether there are important organisations which have not been included within the 'Register of Partnerships'. The Assistant Chief Executive (Partnerships, Community and Service Improvements) responded that it is important not to duplicate work as regard to these organisations. She noted that other departments within the Council deal and support some organisations i.e. Educational and Social Services organisations. She further said that the list of 'Register of Partnerships' should include the main partnerships that receive funding from the authority;
- Clarification was sought as to the amount of funding these organisations receive from this authority. The Scrutiny Manager responded that once this Committee has decided as to the main partnerships to be included on the 'Register' the

information as regard to funding, which should include 'staff capacity and availability', will be afforded to the Committee in due course;

- Clarification was sought as to how the Authority intends to monitor these partnerships that it supports. The Scrutiny Manager responded that this Authority has a framework to monitor partnership working with organisation; a contract is signed between the organisation, which is dependent on the nature of the partnership, and this Authority. She expressed that some partnerships with the Authority do not receive funding from the Council but the association is paramount for the Council to achieve its aims. The Assistant Chief Executive (Partnerships, Community and Service Improvements) said that the structure of the partnership working is essential within the monitoring process.

It was RESOLVED to note and support :-

- **Scrutiny of key partnerships undertaken during 2017/18.**
- **Characteristics of effective partnership scrutiny (discussed within paragraph 5.6 of the report) as a foundation to further develop our local scrutiny arrangements;**
- **Key partnerships identified (in paragraph 5.9 of the report) to be prioritised in the forward plan of the Committee, over a 2-3 year period;**
- **Proposed next steps as detailed in paragraph 5.9 of the report.**
- **That the structure of partnership working is essential within the monitoring process.**

ACTION : As noted above.

7 SCRUTINY PANEL - SCHOOLS PROGRESS REVIEW

Submitted – a progress report by the Chair of the Schools Progress Review Scrutiny Panel and Supporting Officers in relation to the above.

The Chair as the Chair of the Schools Progress Review Scrutiny Panel reported that since the last progress report submitted to this meeting on the 6 February, 2018, the Panel has met on 5 occasions. It was expressed that the Panel considers it appropriate that it monitors the Learning Services Delivery/Improvement Plan and it is considered that its Terms of Reference will need to be strengthened.

The Senior Standards & Inclusions Manager reported that the Scrutiny Panel has focused on the following since 6th February, 2018 :-

- Four primary schools and one secondary school has been before the Panel at various dates;
- Before every meeting, the Panel are given school's performance data and a written summery report from the Senior Standards and Inclusion Officer. The Panel also makes good use of information received by GwE's Officer who is available at each meeting to discuss the support given to the schools to address underperformance.
- On 9th February, the Panel received essential updates regarding WG policy on the development of Welsh throughout the Education system. The Panel

received an overview of challenges facing certain schools, together with summary of steps taken to meet the department Welsh in Education Action Plan 2017 – 2021.

- On 20th April, the Panel considered challenges and lessons to be learnt in opening new schools.
- On 8th June, the Panel reviewed improvements of a school that was first seen in October 2017. The Panel was reassured that the school was on track to make good progress against the six recommendations identified by Estyn.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Partnerships, Community and Service Improvements) said that the work of the Schools Progress Review : Scrutiny Panel is paramount to the challenge and improve standards within the Island schools. The examination results from the authority's secondary schools will gauge the improvements within education so as to comply with Estyn's expected criteria.

The Portfolio Holder for Education reiterated that the work of the Schools Progress Review Scrutiny Panel has been paramount to challenge and improvement of schools. He noted that one school has been before the Panel on two occasions. He expressed that schools have not been completing honest and accurate self-appraisals to GwE's expectations. The Portfolio Holder for Education said that Welsh Charter has come a long way to ensure that Welsh becomes the everyday language of choice; the Welsh Government Policy expects that all schools follow the Welsh First Language Curriculum and that Second Language Welsh qualification will not be available in future years.

The Committee considered the report and raised the following matters :-

- The role of School Governors as well as the Schools Progress Review Scrutiny Panel is paramount for improvements in education on the Island. The Portfolio Holder for Education totally agreed that the role of elected members as School Governors is essential;
- Clarification was sought as to whether Head Teachers receive support and guidance when they are brought before the Schools Progress Review Scrutiny Panel. The Senior Standards & Inclusions Manager responded that the Scrutiny Panel has matured within the elements of understanding the strengths and weaknesses within specific areas within schools and as to how they are able to challenge individuals when they are called before the Panel. She noted that the aspirations of the Authority, GwE and schools on the Island is to be able to afford the best possible opportunities for pupils.

It was RESOLVED :-

- **To note and to thank the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Panel : School Progress Review;**
- **To approve the amended Panel's Terms of Reference (as shown in Appendix 1 of the report);**
- **To approve that the key messages within the report be brought to the attention of the Portfolio Holder (Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth) and the Head of Learning.**

ACTION : As noted above.

8 NOMINATIONS TO THE FINANCE SCRUTINY PANEL AND THE EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION BOARD

Submitted – a report by the Scrutiny Officer with regard to nomination of one Member of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to serve on the Finance Scrutiny Panel and the Education Transformation Board.

The Scrutiny Officer reported that due to the appointment of Councillor Robin Williams as the new Portfolio Holder for Finance the Committee needs to nominate a new Member to replace Councillor Williams on the Panel and the Board.

It was RESOLVED to nominate :-

- **Councillor John Griffith on the Finance Scrutiny Panel;**
- **Councillor Margaret M Roberts on the Education Transformation Board.**

ACTION : As noted above.

9 WORK PROGRAMME

Submitted – a report by the Scrutiny Officer on the Committee's Work Programme to June 2019.

The Scrutiny Officer said that a special meeting of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee is to be held on the 9th July, 2018 to consider the Anti-Poverty Strategy.

It was RESOLVED to note the Work Programme to June 2019.

ACTION : As noted above.

**COUNCILLOR GWILYM O JONES
CHAIR**