

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2018

- PRESENT:** Councillor Gwilym O Jones (Chair)
Councillor Robert Llewelyn Jones (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors K P Hughes, Vaughan Hughes, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts, Margaret M Roberts and Nicola Roberts.
- Mrs Anest Fraser – The Church in Wales,
Mr Keith Roberts – The Roman Catholic Church.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,
Assistant Chief Executive (Partnership, Community & Service Improvements),
Head of Learning (for item 6),
Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, Commissioning & Policy (EL) (for item 5),
Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager (ET) (for item 6),
Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Service Board Programme Manager (NH) (for item 7),
Scrutiny Manager (AD),
Scrutiny Officer (GR),
Committee Officer (MEH).
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor Glyn Haynes.
Mrs Wendy Hughes – Chief Executive, Digartref Cyf. (for item 5)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Social Services (for item 7),
Councillor Alun Mummery - Portfolio Holder for Housing and Supporting Communities (for item 5),
Councillor R Meirion Jones – Portfolio Holder for Education, Libraries, Culture & Youth (for item 6).

1 APOLOGIES

As noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings were confirmed as follows :-

- Minutes of the meeting held on 24 September, 2018.

Arising Thereon

The Chair referred to the recommendation of the meeting held on 24 September, 2018 to send a letter on behalf of this Committee to the Home Office expressing concerns as to the decrease of Police Officers and the need to increase the Police Authorities budgets to enable recruitment of additional Police Officers. He noted that a response has been received dated 1 November, 2018 by Rt. Hon. Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State for Policing. The Chair read out the correspondence to the Committee.

- Minutes of the special meeting held on 15 October, 2018.

4 NOMINATION TO THE FINANCE SCRUTINY PANEL

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.

It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Alun Roberts on the Finance Scrutiny Panel.

ACTION : As above.

5 HOMELESSNESS REGIONAL STRATEGY

Submitted – a report by the Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, Commissioning & Policy in relation to the above.

The Scrutiny Officer said that an invitation had been sent to Mrs Wendy Hughes, Chief Executive, Digartref Cyf., to the meeting but due to illness Mrs Hughes was unable to attend.

The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy reported that the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, Part 2 places a statutory duty on each local authority in Wales to carry out a homelessness review and adopts a homelessness strategy in 2018. A homelessness strategy, under section 50 of the Act, is a strategy for achieving the following objectives in the local housing authority's area:-

- The prevention of homelessness;
- That suitable accommodation is and will be available for people who are or may become homeless;
- That satisfactory support is available for people who are or may become homeless.

The Homelessness Regional Strategy is currently out for public consultation until 20th November, 2018 and thereafter will be submitted to the Executive for adoption.

The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy further reported that the six North Wales local authorities have worked jointly to establish a Homelessness Strategy and to share information and experiences. The Chartered Institute of Housing has also afforded additional resource and support in creating the Strategy. She noted that a Project Development Workshop Ltd (PDW) was commissioned to undertake a local review for Anglesey. Data for the period April to October showed that 377 people have had contact with the Homelessness Service either by way of a pre-arranged meeting or by visiting the Council Offices to inform staff that they are at risk of becoming homeless or are homeless. The reasons given for being homeless were i.e. breakdown of a relationship, family or parent not able to offer accommodation or leaving prison.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Supporting Communities that he was satisfied with the joint working that has taken place in producing a Homelessness Strategy across the region and thanked the staff for their work.

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

- Clarification was sought as to how the Homelessness Strategy will be monitored. The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy responded that a Regional Homelessness Delivery Group has been established with Housing Strategy Officers across the six North Wales authorities sharing information and working to the Homelessness Strategy with the support of the Chartered Institute of Housing. She noted that on a local level monitoring reports will be submitted to the Senior Leadership Team and updated information can be shared with this Scrutiny Committee;
- Reference was made that Gwynedd Council has outsourced its Housing Stock and questions were raised whether it would affect the joint working as regards to the Homelessness Strategy. The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy responded that Homelessness is a statutory function on each local authority. Gwynedd Council and this Council has a general letting policy and priority is measured within that policy when a person becomes homeless and it was not considered that there are barriers when a local authority has outsourced its housing stock;
- Members referred that statistic/data needs to be afforded within the strategy which is relevant to this Authority. The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy responded that as the Homelessness Strategy is currently out for public consultation; it is timely to be able to modify the strategy and include local data for Anglesey if the Committee so wished;
- Reference was made that the report noted that 50% of persons that have been approached have stated that staff within local authorities have been unhelpful and have not been courteous when dealing with problematic situations people find themselves in. Members considered that this matter has not been dealt with within the Homelessness Strategy and suggested that this Authority can lead on potential training requirement for staff within the six local authorities in North Wales in dealing with sensitive situations as regards to homelessness;
- Clarification was sought as to whether this Council is able to meet the needs of homelessness persons when they approach the Authority. The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy responded that managing

- expectations is a challenge. The Council needs to assess the persons situation and a set criteria within the homelessness legislation needs to be adhered to;
- Reference was made to the Lighthouse Homeless Centre at Holyhead and the facilities offered by Digartref Cyf. Questions were raised whether there is a facility on Anglesey which may be afforded for homeless persons to be able to be accommodated overnight during the winter months. The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy responded that this Authority does not have a centre for homeless persons to be accommodated overnight. She noted that the Authority has a protocol as regards to extreme weather conditions when homeless persons sleep outside and bed and breakfast accommodation may be afforded;
 - Reference was made within the report that 75% of homeless persons needs one bedroom accommodation. Members referred that some homeless persons are being put in bedsits and bed and breakfast accommodation which sometime are not up to required standard and can be costly to the Authority. The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy responded that the Authority would be in breach of Welsh Government guidelines if they placed a homeless person in an unsuitable accommodation. Discussions are undertaken with private landlords and they must be registered with the ‘Rent Smart Wales’ and comply with the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. Bed and breakfast accommodation must also be adequate for people to be accommodated;
 - Reference was made to the increase of persons with Mental Health illness. Questions were raised as to how persons with Mental Health illness is accommodated within the Homelessness Strategy. The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy responded that this Authority has established a Mental Health pathway when relevant agencies (i.e. Health Authority and Hafal Mental Health Charity) meet to assist persons with Mental Health issues and to discuss how this Authority is able to help and accommodate these persons;
 - Members raised that potential major developments will be coming to Anglesey in the future which may affect the private landlord accommodation with rents being increased and people unable to afford to pay higher rents. Reference was also made that the Universal Credit scheme is to be introduced in Anglesey at the end of this year which could affect people been unable to pay their rents and finding themselves being homeless. The Service Manager – Housing, Strategy, and Commissioning & Policy said that the Housing Services has contributed extensively to the Development Consent Order (DCO) as regards to the Wylfa Newydd project and have raised questions as to the possible effects on the availability of homes on the Island and the effects of local people in private rented accommodation. She noted that this Authority will be building extra social housing within the next 3 to 4 years and it is imperative that such housing stock is ready to meet local demand. The Officer also referred to the roll out of the Universal Credit scheme on Anglesey in December and noted that extensive training has been afforded to staff within the Council and different agencies together with roadshows across the Island to raise awareness of Universal Credit and potential problems which may be faced by tenants within the Councils Housing Service and private landlords.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to the Executive that it approves the Regional Homelessness Strategy and Local Action Plan.

ACTION : As noted above.

6 ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS – GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY

Submitted – a report by the Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager in relation to the above.

The Portfolio Holder for Education, Libraries, Culture & Youth presented the report to the Committee and expressed his appreciation to the Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Service for the progress to date within the service.

The Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager reported that the new Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Service (ALN & I) was established in September 2017 and this reports highlights the progress of pupils over the past year in all services offered to ensure an effective and efficient service to the Gwynedd and Anglesey Education Authority partnership. She noted that the previous SEN Service main weaknesses was the lack of core data availability to show what the service was achieving and to monitor the pupils' progress.

The Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager reported in detail the services afforded by the Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Service and the progress to date, as noted within the report, as follows :-

- **Interaction and Communication Service**
- **Sensory and Medical Service**
- **Specific Learning Needs Service**
- **Educational Psychologist Service**
- **Behaviour Support Service**
- **Welfare Service**
- **Gwynedd and Anglesey ALN & I Service Training Provision**
- **Developing Friendly SLN Schools**

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

- Reference was made to the three main concerns within schools has been literacy and spelling problems, language and autism and behaviour problems. Members referred that it is now reported that the figures for these service has decreased substantially and questions were raised as to why this has occurred. The Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager responded that due to increase in staffing in the new ALN & I Service the pupils are now able to receive help sooner. Referrals from the schools is referred to a Forum of Specialist which enables speeder implementation of specialist support to the child which required attention. Questions were raised as to how the service was performing in Anglesey compared with the service in Gwynedd. The Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager responded that the ALN & I Service has responded effectively to the requirements within Anglesey schools as is similar to Gwynedd schools. She noted that if a situation was to arise when a need for more ALN service on Anglesey the service is able to be flexible to afford such facility;

- Reference was made to the difficulties facing schools in appointing Teaching Assistants (SEN). Questions were raised as to how the ALN & I Service was able to assist in training and recruiting Teaching Assistants (SEN). The Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager responded that employment of Teaching Assistants (SEN) within schools is a matter for the schools and the Teaching Assistants attached to the ALN & I Service is employed by that service. The ALN & I Service affords training programmes for Teaching Assistants (SEN) to make sure they are able to support children with specific needs;
- Concerns were expressed that some parents are still complaining that the feedback from the ALN & I Service is taking a considerable period of time as regards to their child condition and needs of their child. The Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager responded that some parents are uneasy with having to face that their child has a problem and it can take time as to whom will be giving the diagnosis i.e. Health Service or Educational Psychologist;
- Questions were raised as to the risks and weakness the ALN & I Service is facing at the present time. The Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager responded that the main weakness that the ALN & I Service faced was that it did not have an electronic Personal Development Plan in place and it took time to administer correspondence to parents;
- Reference was made that some children receive their education within their home environment. Questions were raised as to the legislation that the children who are educated at home only receive one visit from the Education Service to monitor their progress. The Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager responded that the proportion of children educated at home on Anglesey is low compared to other part in Wales. She noted that as regards to the Home Schooling Legislation the Education Service is responding to the statutory requirements that one home visit is undertaken.

The Head of Learning thanked the Additional Learning Needs Senior Manager for her report. He said that Head Teachers have been given an opportunity to respond to the service provided by the ALN & I service and to give feedback on matters that have or need to be addressed further within the service. He expressed that he was concerned that when the Additional Learning Needs & Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 will be published, local authorities will be responsible for a child/young person with special needs until they are 25 years old; this could have potential financial challenge for the local authorities.

It was RESOLVED to accept the report.

ACTION : NONE

7 THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS OF THE GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD

Submitted – a report by the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board Programme Manager.

The Leader of the Council reported that the Isle of Anglesey County Council is committed to the principles within the Well-being and Future Generations (Wales)

Act 2015. The Council provides a range of service which will fulfil its individual well-being objectives, as well as contributing to supporting the well-being of the Public Services Board. She noted that the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board was established in 2016, in accordance with the Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The decision was made by the Executive to establish a Public Services Board for Anglesey in collaboration with the Gwynedd. The Public Services Board Well-being Assessment for the Anglesey well-being areas was published in May 2017 and following a series of engagement and consultation sessions, the Well-being Plan was published in 2018. The Public Services Board agreed to six priority fields to deliver the objectives of the Board which is outlined within the report. Five Sub-Groups have been established to address the priority fields and Members of the Public Services Boards have been nominated as Leaders of the Sub-Groups. The Sub-Groups are :-

- The Welsh Language Sub-Group;
- Homes for Local People Sub-Group
- The Effect of Poverty on the Well-being of our Communities Sub-Group;
- The Effect of Climate Change on the Well-being of Communities;
- Health and Care Sub-Group

The Leader of the Council referred to the key scrutiny questions set out within the report and reported as follows :-

- **How does the Board manage its Forward Work Programme?** - The Public Services Board has established Sub-Groups and Action Plans needs to be put in place before a Forward Work Programme can be produced;
- **Can you outline how the Board makes decisions as a strategic partnership?** – An example was given that The Welsh Language Sub-Group has submitted a bid to Welsh Government for resource to fund a collaborative project with the aim of developing the skills and confidence of Welsh speakers in the workplace, and changing the linguistic habit (to using Welsh);
- **How does the Board manage the performance of the delivery Sub-Groups?** - The Public Service Board will be challenging the decision taken by the Sub-Groups in accordance with the Sub-Groups Action Plan and the Board's Work Programme;
- **Are there any specific risks or barriers in the delivery of the work programme, in the current financial climate? Does the Member representing the Council have any observations on the delivery of the Board's work programme?** – All the partner organisations within the Public Services Board are facing financial cuts within their services. The Board is aiming to establishing a better work ethos in achieving their work programme and also in accordance with Social Services and Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

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

- Clarification was sought as to the whether an upgraded website was be afforded by the Public Services Board; at present the information about the Board's work is limited. The Leader of the Council responded that the establishment of a

Public Services Board has been a challenge in trying to get all the partner organisations in place. She was pleased to report that the partner organisations within the Board are now in agreement with the objectives of the Board and information will be included on the Public Services Board website in due course;

- Reference was made that a joint Scrutiny Panel between Gwynedd and Anglesey is to be established and the Committee sought clarification as to the work of such a Panel. The Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board Programme Manager responded that it was an intention to create a joint Scrutiny Panel when the Public Services Board was established. A meeting of the Public Services Board is to be held in December and discussion will be undertaken as regard to this matter.

It was RESOLVED to note :-

- **the governance structure of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board;**
- **the delivery arrangements of the Public Services Board at specific stages.**

ACTION : As noted above.

8 WORK PROGRAMME

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

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

ACTION : As above.

**COUNCILLOR GWILYM O JONES
CHAIR**