

SUSTAINABILITY BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd March, 2012 (11:00am)

- PRESENT:** Commissioner Gareth Jones (Chair)
- Commissioners Alex Aldridge; M.Giannasi; Councillors W.J.Chorlton; K.P.Hughes; H.Eifion Jones; B.Owen; G.O.Parry,MBE; R.G.Parry,OBE; Selwyn Williams (as Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee); Tom Jones (as Chair of the Audit Committee) Chief Executive; Corporate Director (Environment and Technical Services); Interim Corporate Director (Housing and Social Services); Interim S.151 Officer; Head of Service (Finance);
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Business Planning and Programme Manager
Committee Services Manager
Mr.John Roberts (WAO)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors B.Durkin, E.Schofield; Dr. Joanne Harvatt (Enventure Research)
- APOLOGIES:** Commissioners Byron Davies, Margaret Foster; Councillors O.Glyn Jones, T.LI.Hughes,; Mr.Doug Elliott (WAO Advisor) Human Resources Service Manager.

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None to declare

2. APOLOGIES

As above

3. MINUTES

Submitted and confirmed as a true record, the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement Board held on 26th January, 2012.

Item 6 – Improve the capacity, quality and management of corporate support services.

Councillor G.O.Parry,MBE, mentioned that he had yesterday drawn the attention of the legal officer to the fact that calls were not being answered in several departments of the Council and that main reception had a list of calls that needed to be replied to. He considered this to be a serious issue that needed to be addressed.

The Chair noted the comments and requested the Chief Executive to follow this matter up with the relevant Departments.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE – MINOR AMENDMENT

Submitted for information, a revised copy of the terms of reference for meetings of this Board. In order to be constitutionally correct, this Board was an advisory committee as opposed to being a formal committee of the County Council. It was also noted that the name of the Board had been changed from Improvement Board to Sustainability Board.

The Sustainability Board noted and accepted the minor changes to the terms of reference.

5. FINDINGS OF THE 2012 CITIZEN SURVEY

Dr. Joanne Harvatt, Research Manager, Enventure Research provided a presentation on the outcome of the 2012 Ynys Mon Citizen survey.

It was reported that the Council was updating and realigning its Corporate Plan and Service Delivery Plans and as such residents' perceptions, priorities and satisfaction formed a key part of the Council's business and performance planning. The findings of the survey would be used to shape the priorities for public service improvement and identify if there were any local differences.

Over 1,100 questionnaires were completed over the telephone with respondents given the options to speak in Welsh or English. Views were being incorporated into the revised Corporate Business Plan and key findings would be published on the Council's website.

The results had been really positive in the following areas:-

- Overall satisfaction with the way the Council operates
- Awareness of services
- Ease of getting hold of people in the Council
- Perception of access to services.

There may however, be a need to look further at the following aspects:-

- The vision and how it was linked to outcomes
- Building trust in the Council
- Regular engagement
- Raising awareness amongst the young about the Energy Island Programme training opportunities.
- Business perception of priorities.

Gathering feedback on a regular basis would lead to an increase in trust with the general public and also help address the balance, in terms of negativity about the Council.

Members were afforded the opportunity of a question and answer session.

Commissioner Mick Giannasi stated that this was the first customer survey that the Authority had undertaken for over 10 years. The evidence presented today could be relied upon as reasonably good evidence of what most people thought and could be used as a basis for reasoned decisions in order to move the Authority forward. He felt that it was important to follow this survey up with further surveys on a regular basis. If the Authority did not invest in making this a regular feature of its performance framework then one could not evaluate whether the Authority was moving forward or not. Foundations had already been set some 6 months ago with the Council approving the Community

Engagement Strategy which set out a framework for providing services to people.

The Sustainability Board noted the contents of the presentation and thanked the representative of Enventure for their detailed work in this respect..

6. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE SCORECARD – QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE

Reported by the Business Planning and Programme Manager upon the 2011/12 Quarter 3 Performance Scorecard for the Commissioners Corporate Governance Priorities together with their RAG status.

The first part of the report had already been presented to this meeting at its January meeting. Since that time, quarterly performance meetings had taken place which also provided an indication of the current position with regard to our strategic priorities in terms of developing the economy, sustainable developments, healthy and safe communities, effective and affordable services and raising the economic and social profile of the Island.

He mentioned that although most were marked amber, priorities 1 and 5 were very close to being marked green in terms of the development and work involved.

Commissioner Mick Giannasi stated that the Commissioners Quarterly reports were based on 10 key themes up to the Quarter 3 report, it showed that there was one area of concern, namely, the sustainability of central services recovery. The Quarter 3 report actually showed how far the Council was progressing which was also reflected in the WAO report before Council recently. The report showed 2 reds but was a snapshot in time. The RAG status was based on where the Commissioners thought they ought to be at a particular time and it was therefore a constantly changing picture. The Authority needed to make sure that what appeared in the Quarter 4 report was as accurate a reflection as possible.

The Sustainability Board noted the contents of the report.

7. COUNCIL'S PLAN TO MITIGATE AND RESPOND ACCORDINGLY TO THE CSSIW CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING INSPECTION

Reported by the Interim Corporate Director (Housing and Social Services) – That the Assessment of Care Management of Children in Need February 2011 indicated serious failings regarding the safeguarding of children and that consequently a further inspection was warranted. This Inspection in October 2011 examined the quality of the safeguarding service and the Council's ability to sustain and improve the service.

The report concluded the following:-

- The need to increase the pace and depth of improvement (despite a recognition of the programme of improvement in place from September 2011)
- Limited improvements to safeguarding since February 2011
- Services safeguarding children poor with ineffective management of risk
- Requirement to improve assessment, care management and decision making to safeguard children as a priority
- Leadership arrangements within the Council not sufficient to deliver the necessary improvement agenda.

Positives from the Inspection were:-

- Staff and management team more positive and motivated
- Increased staffing levels
- Other agencies reported some progress in practice and communication
- More timely and effective initial assessments undertaken

The Interim Corporate Director's presentation went on to mention the following Action Plan as the Council's response to the findings of the Inspection:-

- Key findings – Corporate responsibilities
- Policy, procedures, protocols and systems
- Assessment and case management
- Monitoring, Quality Assurance and management information systems
- Workforce, induction, training and professional development
- Progress already made
- Strategic Imperative 1 – recover then move forward
- Strategic Imperative 2 – reset vision:equip,strengthen and safeguard.

The Sustainability Board noted the contents of the report and acknowledged the steps being taken by the Service to address those failings.

8. COUNCIL'S PREPARATION FOR THE FORTHCOMING ESTYN INSPECTION

Submitted – A guidance document by Estyn setting out the way the Inspectorate would inspect local authority education services for children and young people for the 6 year inspection cycle from 2010. Each local authority would receive a core inspection in the first three years of the 6 year cycle. Anglesey would receive its core inspection on the week commencing 21st May, 2012. During the second three years of that cycle, a local authority would undergo a second inspection.

Reported by the Corporate Director (Education and Leisure) – That the Inspectors would evaluate the provision and make two overall key judgements which would derive from the judgements made on the three key indicators (How good are outcomes; how good is provision and how good are leadership and management). Each key indicator was broken down into quality indicators which had a number of aspects.

The two overall judgements, the three key questions and the quality indicators listed would be awarded a judgement of excellent, good, adequate or unsatisfactory. The report would also indicate if the local authority required any follow-up inspection activity. Local Authorities must prepare and publish an action plan within 50 days of receipt of inspection report from the inspectorate.

The Corporate Director stated that the new SLG would be eager to deal with Inspection reports and action plans on a corporate and joint responsibility basis in future as opposed to the old regime of them being treated as Service issues.

For this particular inspection, the Authority would have to produce a thorough self-assessment of its performance by the beginning of April and present it to the Inspectors. In order to couple Education with Social Services, a member of the Authority's team would be from a Social Services background. This was an inspection on an Authority wide level and would look at all aspects of the Council that supported the Education service. It would be an inspection of the services provided for children and young people and would

be much broader than just the educational provision provided at County schools.

Empty or vacant places at schools would again be an issue. However, the Authority had closed 4 schools since 2009 and there were also plans in place to deal with re-organisation at Holyhead and other rural areas.

The Sustainability Board noted the contents of the report.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT OF THE 2012-13 BUDGET

Reported by the Interim S.151 Officer – That the Finance Department had attempted to categorise all the savings plans which contributed to the 2012-13 budget, according to the risk of not being achieved in full, with red being the highest risk of not achieving and green the lowest risk. This was Finance's initial assessment which had been conducted independently of the service areas and would be followed up with a risk assessment in conjunction with services.

The figures in the table at Para 2.1 of the report represented the full amount of the savings plans but only a proportion of this was at risk of not being achieved. The main areas where there was potential risk of not achieving the full amounts of savings were detailed at para 2.2 of the report. There were also a number of Affordable Priorities Programme projects included within the 2012-13 budget which were high in terms of not being achieved in their entirety and these were referred to at para 3.1 of the report.

All of these risks represented high risk areas of the budget for 2012-13. It was therefore important that additional project and financial support be given to these areas to help to manage proposals into reality. It was also important to allocate accountability to these wide ranging corporate services to ensure that it was clear who held responsibility for delivery and that they had the authority to drive the proposals to fruition.

A number of areas would be reviewed in 2012-13 and beyond with the aim of helping to mitigate the pressures which may result from the risks identified and provide a platform for planning beyond 2012-13. These were detailed at para 4.1.1 to para 4.1.9 of the report, but were not an exhaustive list of projects that were to be reviewed to help mitigate the risks associated with the budget. There were other risks such as job evaluation, housing benefit grant, council tax benefit, homelessness, commissioners costs, sustainability of the tax base, inflation and existing corporate risks. Budgets should be reviewed regularly, through budget monitoring and other review mechanisms to ensure that the risks were mitigated.

A further risk assessment was to be undertaken, once all services had completed the plans as to how they were going to achieve the savings, which would consider recurring risks from 2011-12 and risks arising which were currently being covered in 2011-12.

The current Medium Term Financial Strategy was forecasting significant shortfalls over the next 3 years. It was therefore imperative that budget planning for 2013-14 and beyond commenced early, with strategies being developed not only to cover the current forecast gap, but to be flexible enough to cover any other situation which may arise.

Councillor H.Eifion Jones welcomed the intention of the SLG to discuss the document on a corporate basis but wished to see an accountability and action plan to see who was doing what as regards the various issues raised within the report.

The Sustainability Board noted the contents of the report and to also note the requirement to review this assessment with services and undertake a further 2012-13 budget risk assessment and report back to the Board of Commissioners once Services had completed plans as to how they were going to achieve those savings.

The meeting concluded at 1:25 p.m.

**COMMISSIONER GARETH JONES
CHAIR**