

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2015

- PRESENT:** Councillor Derlwyn Rees Hughes (Chair)
Councillor Alun Wyn Mummery (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors John Griffith, R LI Jones, Richard Owain Jones and Dylan Rees
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Corporate Director (Community),
Head of Children's Services (In respect of Items 5 & 6),
Head of Adult's Services (In respect of Items 5 & 6),
Scrutiny Officer (GR),
Committee Officer (MEH).
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors William Thomas Hughes, Carwyn Jones, Dafydd Rhys Thomas.
Mr. Keith Roberts (The Roman Catholic Church).
Mr. Gerallt LI. Jones (Managing Director – Menter Môn).
- ALSO PRESENT:** Leader of the Council (Item 4),
Portfolio Holder (Social Services & Housing),
Shadow Portfolio Holder (Social Services & Housing),
Senior Partnership Manager (Gwynedd & Môn) (AD) (Item 4),
Ms. Vicky Poole – Regional Director – North Wales (CSSIW) (Item 5),
Mr. Mark Roberts – CSSIW (Item 5).
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1 APOLOGIES

Apologies as noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Ann Griffith declared a personal interest in respect of Item 6.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November, 2014 were confirmed.

4 PROPOSED JOINT LOCAL SERVICE BOARD SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

Submitted – a joint report by the Senior Partnership Manager, Gwynedd and Anglesey, Democratic Services Manager, Gwynedd Council and the Scrutiny Officer in relation to the above.

The Scrutiny Officer reported that a joint report had been published by the WLGA and CfPS in 2010 entitled 'Scrutiny of Multi-Agency Partnerships' outlining some of the lessons learned from the development of scrutiny arrangements of Local Services Boards and identified some important points to bear in mind when developing arrangements. These were outlined within the report.

In order to be in a position to advise Members on possible options to scrutinise the Gwynedd and Anglesey LSB, a multi-agency Task and Finish Project Group had been established. Membership included representatives from the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, North Wales Police, Snowdonia National Park and Scrutiny Officers from both Councils. In order to obtain an independent perspective the Centre for Public Scrutiny was also invited to comment and input to the range of options for consideration by the Elected Members of both Local Authorities. The Task and Finish Group had also sought the views of both Medrwn Môn and Mantell Gwynedd as the umbrella organisations representing the interests of the Third Sector. In light of its deliberations, the multi-agency Task and Finish Group and Centre for Public Scrutiny proposed that there were three options for Elected Member consideration which can summarised as :-

Option A – Maintain existing scrutiny committee arrangements in both Isle of Anglesey County Council and Gwynedd Council.

Option B – Establish a Joint Gwynedd and Anglesey LSB Scrutiny Panel.

Option C – Establish a Joint Gwynedd and Anglesey LSB Scrutiny Committee.

Although each option had its own advantages and disadvantages, the multi-agency Task and Finish Group were of the unanimous view that Option B be proposed as the preferred option for consideration by Elected Members of both Gwynedd Council and the Isle of Anglesey County Council.

Dependent upon which option was supported by Elected Members of both Councils, the next step would be for the multi-agency Task and Finish Group to reconvene in order to consider practical arrangements as to membership of the joint scrutiny forum, implementation and training arrangements, meeting schedule and venue etc. The Centre for Public Scrutiny would continue to provide support and mentoring.

The Officers stated that 3 Members of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee would need to be nominated on the LSB Scrutiny Panel.

Issues raised by Members:-

- Members supported Option B which was to establish a Joint Gwynedd and Anglesey LSB Scrutiny Panel with the membership referred to at Appendix 2. However it was considered that the interests of Community Voices Gwynedd & Anglesey should be represented on the Panel. The Officers responded that it was considered that 3rd Sector representation on the proposed Panel would address this issue.

- Questions were raised as regards who would administrate the LSB Scrutiny Panel. The Officers responded that the matter would need to be discussed at the first meeting of the LSB Scrutiny Panel.
- Members deliberated regarding the propriety of also nominating a substitute Elected Member on the LSB Scrutiny Panel.

Officers advised that this report would be considered by Gwynedd Council's Corporate Scrutiny Committee at its meeting to be convened on 15th January, 2015.

RESOLVED:-

- **Proceed with Option B – to establish a Joint Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Services Board Scrutiny Panel and request Officers to progress the practical arrangements, meetings schedule and venue.**
- **Nominate the following Members as representatives of Anglesey County Council on the Local Services Board Scrutiny Panel :-**

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Partnership & Regeneration Committee Councillor John Griffith
Councillor Dylan Rees – Substitute Member

ACTION: An update report be submitted to a future meeting of this Scrutiny Committee.

5 ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORTING FRAMEWORK (ARCF) LOCAL AUTHORITY SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTION EVALUATION & REVIEW

The Chair welcomed Ms. Vicky Poole, Regional Director (North Wales) CSSIW and Mr. Mark Roberts from CSSIW to the meeting.

Submitted – a report by the Corporate Director (Community) in relation to the above.

The Corporate Director (Community) reported that the Annual Council Reporting Framework is an agreed framework within Wales in order to evaluate, in public and transparent manner, the performance of the Social Services functions within each Local Authority. The letter acknowledges the progress made by the Authority whilst highlighting the need to maintain commitment and progress with the required changes. CCIW makes reference to the ongoing potential risks identified by the Inspectorate.

Specific reference is made to the issues of capacity and the challenge of a small authority addressing the scale of change required in transforming social care services. Performance improvements in Children's Services have been maintained nevertheless risks remain given the comparative inexperience of the workforce and management structure. The letter also notes that there is little reference to the actions required by the Authority in readiness to the implementation of the Social

Services and Wellbeing Act (April 2016). In response it is maintained that this forms part of a national implementation programme where the authority is appropriately engaged. Additionally the work programme adopted by the Service and Council is in accord with the ambitions and principles of the Act. The letter acknowledges the financial pressures and the challenges faced by the Council in meeting its statutory planning and service delivery responsibilities for Social Services. This requires a continued focus on delivering safe and effective services whilst progressing the required change agenda arising from the transformation programme. The actions and requirements arising from the letter have been incorporated within the business processes and priority programmes within the Council's Transformation Programme and the individual service business plans.

The Corporate Director stated that she considered that the training in specific Social Services matters to newly appointed Members and current Members was essential to highlight the service priorities and pressures on Social Services. She considered that the seminar to Elected Members in respect of Residential Homes was highly beneficial.

Mr. Mark Roberts (CSSIW) stated the Performance Evaluation Report 2013/14 is attached to the Corporate Director's report. He noted that the County Council is in the early stages of implementing an ambitious transformation programme for both adults and children's services. These are significant change and development programmes for a small council and the pace of change is hampered by a lack of capacity. At the same time, a new council has been elected, a third of which are newly appointed members. This has also affected the pace of change as it has been important for officers to invest time in ensuring elected members fully understand the transformation programme. Despite these constraints, there is evidence of steady progress underpinned by political support particularly in relation to service for older adults. Performance has improved in core areas, predominantly in relation to Children's Services although the relative inexperience of the workforce in Children's Services means that risks remains and continued vigilance is required. In Adult Services, the focus given to services to older people has resulted in a lack of focus on services for younger adults including people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health needs. The Council has been open about what they have achieved and recognise where it is behind schedule. There remains much to do; the Heads of Service reports highlight 50 priorities for action for Adults Services and 23 for Children's Services during 2014/15.

Whilst the Council's Transformation Programme is in line with intentions of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act, there is little specific reference to it in the Director's report. Whilst the more detailed Head of Service's reports do outline development in areas aligned to the requirements of the Act, these links are not explicit. The Council has a strong platform to build upon in relation to integration of services with the Health Board having developed Model Môn over a number of years. This has enabled them to establish an Integrated Delivery Board in partnership with Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board and which is being used as a pilot for the region as a whole in the context of North Wales Statement of Intent for Integration for delivering integrated health and social care for older people with complex needs.

The report highlighted the response to last year's areas of improvement in detail and areas for follow up by CSSIW in the coming year.

Main issues raised by Members :-

- Concerns raised in respect of the areas of improvement within the CSSIW report i.e. Review of the application of DoLS thresholds. Mr. Mark Roberts CSSIW responded that areas of improvement have been noted and there is need to raise awareness and improve practice in relation to DoLS. There is also a need to the development of quality monitoring framework across adults and children's services.
- The Shadow Portfolio Holder considered that there is a priority to include Young Vulnerable Adults with Mental Health problems or learning difficulties on the list of scrutiny in the near future. The Shadow Portfolio Holder further raised that the Social Services and Wellbeing Act is not visible enough for the citizens and she questioned how the Social Services Department will deal with the matter. The Corporate Director (Community) responded that the service will be focusing on Young Vulnerable Adults. She further referred to the matter raised in respect of the Wellbeing Act and noted that as a Corporate Director she considered that this was not a contentious issue within the CSSIW 2013/14 report.
- Questions raised in respect of potential cuts in funding to the Voluntary Sector and the effect on services to the local residents. The Corporate Director (Community) responded that correspondence has been sent to the 3rd Sector on the obligations of a 5% cuts in funding and they have been asked to response to the County Council by next week to highlight the impact of the cuts would have on the services they provide.
- Comments were made in respect of elderly people requesting support from Social Services due to loneliness. The Corporate Director Community responded that AgeWell organise activities for the elderly and she further noted that she and the Head of Adults' Services will be discussing this matter in the near future.

RESOLVED to accept the report and the comments as noted above.

6 CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING (CHILDREN)

Submitted – a report by the Head of Children's Services in relation to the above.

The Head of Children's Services reported that the Local Authority is required, on an Annual basis, to undertake a self-evaluation of its safeguarding children arrangements, and to report its findings to the Regional Safeguarding Board. Appendix 1 contains this report. The report identifies the agreed objectives, progress against these objectives and further areas that require attention. The report includes an analysis of the authority's contribution to the multi-agency context and to the work of the Regional Safeguarding Children Board, the Local Delivery Group and associated regional sub groups. The Head of Children's Services wished it to be recorded that the Regional North Wales Safeguarding Board discussed the report at its meeting held earlier today. The Board welcomed the report and will consider the recommendations contained therein.

The Authority has achieved improvements in both its Children Services and its Education services, and is currently moving to a phase of developing and improving safeguarding arrangements more generally. The County Council has a Corporate Safeguarding Board in place whose role is to ensure that the Local Authority's key duties in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are being adequately discharged. The Local Authority's policy on safeguarding and the associated safeguarding action plan has been adopted. Whilst progress on the action plan has suffered some delays against original target dates, some key actions have been achieved. The key actions were listed within the report to the Committee.

The Head of Service further reported that there are a number of arrangements in place to ensure that the organisation has services in place to discharge their safeguarding duties – an annual appraisal of each school using a standard safeguarding report card and at a Children's Services level comprising the reporting of statutory performance indicators. This needs to be rolled out on a corporate basis. Therefor for 2015/16 each Heads of Service will set safeguarding objectives and measures and this will be accompanied by the setting up of a Corporate Safeguarding Scorecard. Achieving the objectives of the Safeguarding Policy and Action Plan will help introduce a more effective scrutiny of safeguarding issues.

Main issues raised by Members :-

- The Shadow Portfolio stated that she was pleased to learn that the County Council were at the forefront of the IFSS service. She stated that a short briefing session to Elected Members would be advantageous.
- Questions raised in respect of the turnover of staff within the Social Service Department and especially within the Children's Services. The Head of Children's Services responded that the turnover of staff within the service stabilised over the last year (13/14).

RESOLVED :-

- **That the Committee notes the corporate arrangements to implement its Safeguarding Policy.**
- **That the Committee notes the conclusion of the self-evaluation presented to the Regional Safeguarding Board and the proposed actions.**
- **That the Committee notes the establishment of the Corporate Safeguarding Board.**
- **That the Committee scrutinise the corporate safeguarding arrangements on an Annual basis.**
- **That the Committee notes that the Authority awaits the final report of the Wales Audit Office review of the Councils' assurance and accountability**

arrangements for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and are being adhered to.

7 UPDATE BY THE CHAIR OR VICE-CHAIR

The Chair stated that a Scrutiny Open Forum with Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs was held on 18th December, 2014. Two of the Community Councils expressed importance of the Council communicating better with Town/Community Councils. The concern raised was that Town and Community Councils were not aware of proposed decisions to be taken by the Executive.

8 WORK PROGRAMME

Submitted - the draft Work Programme.

The Scrutiny Officer stated that the following items have been requested to be place on the Committee's Work Programme for the next meeting :-

Community Safety

Upgrading the highway to Wylfa Newydd – Contract with County Council and Horizon UK

RESOLVED to note the draft Work Programme and to approve the extra two items on the Agenda of the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 4.00 pm

**COUNCILLOR D R HUGHES
CHAIR**