

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2017

- PRESENT:** Councillor Jim Evans (Chair)
Councillor Alun Wyn Mummery (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors Jim Evans, R LI Jones, Richard Owain Jones and Dylan Rees
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,
Head of Democratic Services,
Interim Scrutiny Manager (AD),
Scrutiny Officer (GWR),
Committee Officer (MEH).
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Trefor Lloyd Hughes MBE, Carwyn Jones Dafydd Rhys Thomas.
- Councillor Ieuan Williams – Leader of the Council
- Assistant Chief Executive (Partnerships, Community and Service Improvements).
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor K.P. Hughes (Portfolio Holder for Education)
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As this was the last meeting as an Elected Member, the Chair Councillor Jim Evans wished to thank the Members for their confidence during the last few months. He referred to the previous Chair, Mr. Derlwyn R. Hughes and paid tribute to his work as Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Committee.

The Chair thanked the Vice-Chair, Councillor Alun Mummery for his support and work as Vice-Chair of this Committee. He also thanked the Officers who support and administer this meeting.

1 APOLOGIES

As noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February, 2017 were confirmed.

4 FINANCE SCRUTINY PANEL

Submitted – the report of the Interim Scrutiny Manager in relation to the above.

The Interim Scrutiny Manager reported on the benefits of establishing a Finance Sub-Group as a sub-panel of this Committee with two elected members from both the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Partnership and Regeneration Committee. The Sub-Group is intended to run in the format of a business meeting. She noted that it is intended to develop a model of working based on a smaller group that will enable Members to engage in more in-depth scrutiny of finance discussions in the parent scrutiny committees. The proposed scope and remit of the Panel will be to scrutinise the following topics :-

- Quarterly monitoring of the Revenue and Capital Expenditure
- Forthcoming year's budget
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Debt Management
- Business Tax Relief Policy
- HRA Business Plan
- Council balances and reserve

The Committee considered the information contained within the report and raised the following matters –

- A question was raised regarding whether the role of a Finance Sub-Group would duplicate or infringe on the role of the Audit and Governance Committee. The Interim Scrutiny Manager responded that the Audit and Governance Committee's role is to monitor risks and the financial management of the Council and thus provide assurance to the Council;
- Questions were raised as to the remit of the training that will be afforded to Members of the Finance Sub-Group. The Interim Scrutiny Manager responded that it is anticipated that the Elected Members of the Sub-Group will be developed rather than training session being afforded. She noted that the Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer and his team will afford guidance for Elected Members on specific budgetary processes/themes within the Council. It is anticipated that Members will be able to scrutinise and question the budgetary process thoroughly at the parent Committee thereafter.

It was RESOLVED to :-

- **note progress made thus far in establishing robust scrutiny arrangements for financial matters;**
- **authorise the Interim Scrutiny Manager in consultation with the Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer to make arrangements to establish a Finance Scrutiny Panel.**

5 CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY PANEL

Submitted – the report of the Interim Scrutiny Manager in relation to the above.

The Interim Scrutiny Manager reported on the benefit of establishing a Children's Scrutiny Panel in response to the recommendations made by the CSSIW following its recent inspection of Children's Services on Anglesey. The recommendation focusses on the importance of continuing with strong political and corporate support for children's services in order to ensure that the service improvements needed are prioritised and the pace of improvement is accelerated and sustained. The Interim Scrutiny Manager referred to the existing cross party panel of Members which has been looking at the requirements of the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014 and overseeing the delivery of the first Children's Services Improvement Plan. She said that the report seeks to build on the foundation already provide by the cross-party panel by holding the Executive and Senior Management to account via Scrutiny to provide assurance both to the Authority and CSSIW that the improvement process is robust and sustainable.

The Officer reported on the proposed scope of the Panel with its aims and objectives as summarised in paragraph 5 of the report. In considering membership of the Panel, particular reference was made to the importance of endeavouring to ensure a degree of continuity of membership, as being a key guiding principle.

Members of the Committee welcomed the establishing of a Children's Scrutiny Panel and noted that consideration should be given to including the Leader of the Largest Opposition Group in the membership of the Panel.

It was RESOLVED to :-

- **note the progress made thus far in establishing a robust scrutiny arrangements for Children's Services.**
- **accept the scope and remit of the new Children's Panel ensuring a degree of continuity of membership should be a key guiding principle in considering the membership of the Panel;**
- **note the next step will be to complete the practical arrangements in order to establish a Children's Panel after the local government elections, by the Scrutiny Manager in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Governance & Business Process Transformation).**

6 SCHOOL PROGRESS REVIEW PANEL

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

The Scrutiny Officer reported that the School's Progress Review Panel was established in November 2012 and it is now appropriate to update the Terms of Reference of the Panel to be prepared for the new membership of the Panel following the local government elections in May.

It was RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference as noted within the report.

7 SCRUTINY OF PARTNERSHIPS

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

The Scrutiny Officer gave a detailed background report on the partnerships working with other organisations the Council undertake at present. He noted that a report was completed by the Council's Internal Audit on the governance arrangements of partnership working in December 2015 which provided a driver to progress some key development areas. It was suggested that a partnerships policy document needed to be developed and on the 14 March, 2015 the Executive approved a Corporate Partnerships Policy document as a foundation for partnership work and also as a framework to guide partnership monitoring arrangements.

He noted that the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee has an important role in ensuring that there is an appropriate level of engagement with other organisations forming any partnership. In performing the role there are a number of possible areas it should consider, to include the following matters :-

- Scrutinising governance arrangements;
- Scrutinising the Council's contribution;
- Evaluating the overall effectiveness of the partnership
- Ensuring public engagement and citizen focussed partnerships and strategies.

It is appropriate that the Committee focuses on key strategic partnerships but also the monitoring of any key operational service partnerships, as proposed by either the Senior Leadership Team or Heads of Service.

The Head of Democratic Services said that as part of the partnerships working with other organisations, it is important that Elected Members serving as representatives on outside bodies needs to be reporting back to the appropriate Committee as to the work of these organisations. He noted that a process needs to be formalised after the local government elections in May.

It was RESOLVED to note the work undertaken by the Committee in scrutinising the effectiveness of partnerships over the past 12 months and agree to build on existing scrutiny arrangements in the new municipal year.

8 WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

Submitted – the Scrutiny Officer's report on the Committee's draft Work Programme for 2017/18.

RESOLVED to note the draft Work Programme for 2017/18.

The meeting concluded at 3.10 pm

**COUNCILLOR JIM EVANS
CHAIR**