

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 28 June 2021

- PRESENT:** Councillor Gwilym O Jones (Chair)
Councillor Glyn Haynes (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors T LI Hughes MBE, K P Hughes, Vaughan Hughes, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts and Margaret Murley Roberts.
- Leader of the Council – Councillor Llinos M Huws
Councillor Carwyn Jones – Portfolio Holder for Major Projects and Economic Development.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,
Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Social Services (for item 3),
Head of Democratic Services,
Scrutiny Officer (SR),
Committee Officer (MEH)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors R LI Jones and Nicola Roberts.
- ALSO PRESENT:** Ms Catrin Roberts – Head of Regional Collaboration (in respect of item 3);
Ms Nonn Hughes – Programme Manager Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board (in respect of item 4);
Ms Alwen Williams and Mr Hedd Williams – North Wales Economic Ambition Board (in respect of item 5).
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1 APOLOGIES

As noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

3 ANNUAL REPORT: NORTH WALES REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD (PART 9: HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES) 2020/21

Submitted – a report by the Director of Social Services in relation to the above.

The Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Social Services said that it is a requirement within the Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 that each Regional Partnership Board prepares, publishes and submits its

Annual Report to Welsh Government. The Act requires that local authorities make arrangements to promote co-operation with their relevant partners and others, in relation to adults with needs for care and support, carers and children. It places a duty on relevant partners to co-operate with, and provide information to, the local authorities for the purposes of their social services function. She expressed that whilst the Authority participates within the Partnership Board it also take advantage of the opportunities which have resulted from Board.

The Head of the Regional Collaboration reported that whilst the pandemic has affected the planned projects of the Partnership Board it continued to meet virtually on a monthly basis. The Board continues to review the main principles within the Act and makes sure that the priorities of the Board is sustainable and addresses the requirement in relation to care and support of children and adults. She noted that the purpose of Part 9 of the Act is to improve outcomes and well-being of people, as well as improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. The key aims of co-operation, partnership and integration relates to:

- To improve care and support, ensuring people have more say and control;
- To improve outcomes and health and wellbeing;
- Provide co-ordinated, person centred care and support;
- Make more effective use of resources, skills and expertise.

The Head of the Regional Collaboration further said that Welsh Government has issued an updated Part 9 Statutory Guidance in January 2020 and the North Wales Regional Partnership Board is working in line with this Guidance. The main changes relate to additional membership, additional focus on outcomes for children and young people and further focus on integration of services. She referred to the pilot work stream undertaken by the Isle of Anglesey County Council as regard to 'pooled budget and Welsh Government have welcomed the project undertaken as it is the first Regional Partnership Board in Wales in successfully rolling out the 'pooled budget' scheme; it is anticipated that Welsh Government will be rolling out the 'pooled budget' scheme to other Regional Partnership Boards as good practise. A total of £3.4m has been sourced from ICF funding towards 40 projects on the Island.

The Committee considered that report and maid the following points:-

- Questions were raised as to the location the 40 projects which have received ICF funding on the Island. The Director of Social Services responded that the projects are provided across the Island as regards to specific needs i.e. Cartrefi Clyd which are located within communities where buildings are available within schools catchment areas. He further said that other projects have incorporated the third sector where funding has been undertaken i.e. Mencap Môn (as there is a shortfall of support for new parents with children with special educational needs). He noted that such a pilot scheme may be rolled out across North Wales in the future. ICF funding has also supported adult services projects across the Island;
- Questions were raised as to what extent does the Partnership Board consider that the Community Resources Team achieve the vision of the Action Plan of integrating services between health and social services regionally. The Director of Social Services responded that the Community Resources Team has a high

level vision with 3 projects teams incorporated within the Authority. A plan is in place to monitor as to how efficient the 3 projects teams have performed. He further said that a joint group with the health board and social services has been established to enable the people not having to contact a range of services providers for the assistance;

- Reference was made to the last meeting of this Committee when the Chief Executive of the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board addressed the meeting and referred to the transition measures of improvement the Health Board is undertaking and especially in Mental Health. Questions were raised as to how the Partnership Board was supporting the Health Board with regard to the transition measures. The Head of the Regional Collaboration responded that meetings are to be undertaken with the Health Board in the near future to discuss as to how the Partnership Board is able to support the transition measures. She noted that it is imperative that the work of the Partnership Board does not impair or duplicate the work of the Health Board;
- Questions were raised as to which ways will the work programmes of the Regional Partnership Board need to be amended and prioritised as a result of covid-19, and what role will it play during the recovery period. The Head of the Regional Collaboration responded that the pandemic has affected the work streams of the Partnership Board and especially most of the partner organisations. Work has been developed to increase staffing capacity within Social Care and within Care Homes.

It was RESOLVED to note the work and progress in 2020/21 on the work areas that are being taken forward regionally through the North Wales Regional Partnership Board.

ACTION : As noted above.

4 PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Submitted – a report by the Programme Manager, Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board in relation to the above.

The Programme Manager, Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Service Board reported that the work of the Public Service Board has been affected by the pandemic and also priorities of the partnership organisations having to be changed. However, the partner organisations have worked closely together to support the local communities during the global health crisis. She noted that the report is structured to refer to the progress of the work of the four sub-groups of the Board. The leaders of the Board's sub-groups are members of the Public Services Board, and it has been their responsibility to report on progress during the period 2020/21. They reported that progress had slowed as responding to the crisis and addressing the recovery of local communities has taken priority. The Board established four operational sub-groups :-

- Climate Change - the Sub-Group was established to encourage collaboration among public organisations on mitigating the impact of climate change, and in particular the impact of coastal and inland flooding on communities. Discussions were undertaken within the Public Service Board to the need to

work closely with communities to hold necessary conversations about what is important in relation to climate change and flooding in particular. In addition, Natural Resources Wales and both Gwynedd and the Isle of Anglesey County Council need to discuss their priorities in respect of climate change whilst it must be considered that the local authorities have their own climate change priorities and there will be a need to avoid duplication in the work undertaken and to ensure that the work of the Climate Change Sub-Group add value and supports the climate change programme.

- Homes for local people – the Sub-Group was originally asked to establish a joint working regime in the housing sector and to develop more suitable and affordable homes in the right places. A number of the Board's partners already had plans to develop affordable housing but one benefit of working together was to achieve economies of scale – namely joint housing development to reduce development costs and to be able to focus on developing innovative housing. She said the Homes Sub-Group has considered and agreed that their work is coming to an end as there is no further value that they could add to work already being undertaken in housing by individual organisations. The Board will therefore need to reconsider this priority and agree the way forward.
- Integrated Health and Social Care – the Sub-Group work in the health and social care field proved to be key importance during the pandemic and as especially to the work carried out for the recovery of local communities thereafter. New ways of working have been developed virtually which have been of benefit to the multi-disciplinary teams. Weekly meetings were also arranged among partners during the emergency period to discuss the most pressured services and to offer joint responses. A willingness to work together and adapt to challenging working circumstances has been demonstrated. Work has now re-commenced in the following work streams Mental Health, Adults and Children.
- The Welsh language – the Sub-Group and the Board understands the important of the Welsh language to the local communities across Gwynedd and Anglesey and being able to live their lives through the medium of Welsh and access community services and activities in Welsh is important. The pandemic has presented significant challenges for organisations in trying to ensure the continuity of services. The work of the Sub-Group has been delayed during 2020/21 as relevant staff were diverted to be doing different work or had to change their priorities and therefore the Sub-Group was unable to meet regularly to drive the work programme forward. However, the Sub-Group is committed to improving the Welsh language and the Board are currently reviewing the original project proposal to change the way the public communicates with public organisations and any change in the role of reception areas. The objective of the project is to encourage the use of the Welsh language whilst engaging with public organisations.

The Programme Manger further reported that every 5 years, and as one of the statutory requirements introduced by the Future Generations Wellbeing Act (2015), the Public Services Boards must prepare and publish an assessment of the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing in their areas. Gwynedd and

Anglesey Public Services Board have started the process of revising the Wellbeing Assessment. It was noted that a workshop was held in September 2020 to discuss the recovery programme in respect of the pandemic and discussions in respect of the wellbeing of the local communities in Gwynedd an Anglesey. The Board resolved to carry on with the work streams through the established Sub-Groups whilst undertaken an overview of issues raised i.e., Tourism influx, Second Homes and unemployment.

The Committee considered the report and raised the following main points:-

- Reference was made to the engagement process undertaken during the last round of the wellbeing assessments. It was noted that attendance at these engagement events arranged by the Public Services Board last time were not well attended. Questions were raised as to how the Board intended to promote and raise the interest of the public to attend these events in the future and whether there is evidence that the residents of the Island have benefited from the activities of the Public Services Board. Reference was also made to the role of the Board in responding to the pandemic. The Programme Manager responded that the Board has learnt lessons from the last round of wellbeing assessments. Consideration will also be given to what partner organisations have achieved, especially during the pandemic. She noted that work undertaken by Medrwn Môn in partnership with this Authority to engage with the local communities during the pandemic will contribute towards the assessments. She further said that it is important that engagement with all groups of residents is paramount within the local communities. It was further said that from a regional perspective, reference was made to the collaboration between the four PSB's to support engagement and the potential to commission engagement with harder to reach and seldom heard of group living in North Wales. The Programme Manager further said that to Board engages, support and develop the priorities of the partner organisations across the spectrum of the services afforded by these organisations.
- Reference was made to the Climate Change mapping of coastlines that are in danger of been eroded and questions arose as to how the Board is going to address such issue. The Leader of the Council responded that it must be considered that there is no financial support for the Public Services Board and that it has been established as part of the Wellbeing and Generations Act to ensure collaborations between local authorities and organisations. She noted that the role of the Board is to response to issues that arise such as climate change and erosion of coastal area and there will be a requirement by both the Welsh Government and UK Government to invest considerable sums of money to address such issue.
- Questions were raised as to the effectiveness of the Board and whether there is a requirement to review the structure of the Board as it seems there is duplication of services provided. The Programme Manager responded that the Scrutiny Committee of both local authorities are afforded an Annual Report by the Public Services Board and also the opportunity to scrutinise the governance arrangements of the Board on an annual basis. She noted that the Board established a number of Sub-Groups at the onset of the establishment of the Public Services Board but these sub-groups have been reduced if it was

considered that they did not add value to the subject matter that they had been established to address.

It was RESOLVED to note the progress of the Public Service Board.

ACTION : As noted above.

5 NORTH WALES ECONOMIC AMBITION BOARD ANNUAL REPORT AND QUARTER 4 GROWTH DEAL REPORT

Submitted – a report by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board Portfolio Director in relation to the above.

The Portfolio Holder for Major Projects and Economic Development said that the North Wales Economic Ambition Board is an opportunity to regenerate the economy of North Wales after the pandemic and Brexit.

The Leader of the Council said that she wishes to see the Growth Bid for North Wales being successful and that the projects are delivered to take advantage of the funding available. She expressed that the Island has innovative projects as part of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board growth bids.

The North Wales Economic Ambition Board Portfolio Director gave a brief slide presentation to the Committee as follows:-

The Growth Bid Portfolio

- **Spending Objectives over the next 15 years** - to create between 3,400 and 4,200 net new jobs in North Wales.
- **GVA** – to support a net additional GVA uplift of between £2 billion and £2.4 billion for the North Wales economy through the Growth Bid Deal by 2036.
- **Investment** – to deliver a total investment of up to £1.1 billion in the North Wales Economy through the Growth Bid Deal by 2036.

The intention of the Growth Bid is to build a thriving and sustainable economy in North Wales with the main aim of having an inclusive sustainable growth which is part of the Future Generations Act.

The Programmes

- **Digital Programme** – deliver a step change in digital connectivity needed to ensure North Wales is able to satisfy user demand, maintain pace with the rest of the UK, unlock the growth potential of priority sectors and site and underpins the flourishing innovation ecosystems. Create up to 380 jobs by 2036.
Total investment £41.7m
- **Land and Property Programme** – to address the shortage of suitable land and properties for business growth and to bring forward sites for housing development. To deliver improvement that stimulate investment in sites and

premises in the Port of Holyhead and the wider region. Create 2,280 jobs by 2036.

Total investment £355.4m

- **Low Carbon Energy Programme** – to unlock the economic benefits of transformational low carbon energy projects and position North Wales as a leading UK location for low carbon energy generation, innovation and supply chain investment. Create 980 jobs by 2036.

Total investment £668.5m

- **Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programme** – to consolidate North Wales position as a powerful and innovative high value manufacturing cluster, building on existing specialism and leading expertise to create a higher value, more diverse economic base that supports the transition to a low carbon energy. Creates 180 jobs by 2036

Total investment £39.5m

- **Agrifood and Tourism Programme** – the aim is to build a more sustainable, vibrant and resilient foundation economy within the region, optimising opportunities for employment and prosperity through our environment and landscape. Creates 380 jobs by 2036.

Total investment £41.3m

Mr Hedd Williams gave a report on the Quarter 4 Performance Report to the Committee. He noted that the focus this quarter has been moving to the delivery phase with work started in January 2021 with a baseline review of all projects to re-confirm timetables for business case development and delivery. During Quarter 4, a significant number of workshops have taken place, in line with the Better Business Case guidance, to support the development of the project business cases. First two projects completed the Gateway Reviews and are now working to address the recommendations made before submitting revised business cases for consideration. The two projects are Morlais project, led by Menter Môn and Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre project, led by Wrexham Glyndwr University. He noted that two projects currently reporting as 'Red' are the Strategic Bodelwyddan Site due to outline planning permission expiring and Holyhead Gateway due to escalating costs and a need to review the scope of the project. A number of projects are reporting as 'Amber' due to business development, assurance and approval process taking longer than anticipated. Having signed the Grant Award Letter and submitted the required documentation the first instalment of £16 million has been received from Governments in March, 2021. This funding will enable project delivery to commence during the next financial year, when it is expected to consider and make a decision on the first tranche of project business cases.

Mr Williams gave an overview of the Annual Report to the Committee. The Annual Report was attached to the report.

The Committee considered the report and raised the main points:-

- Questions were raised as to whether there are risk to major projects not materialising within the Economic Ambition Board due to the tensions reported recently between both UK and Welsh Governments on decisions made in respect of many issues. Reference was made to Holyhead as the UK Government having specific ideas of 'free port' whilst Welsh Government disagrees. The Portfolio Director responded that as with any programme it is important to manage any risk that arises as part of the programme management structure. She noted that she works closely with Officers of both UK and Welsh Governments and as a partnership it will enable prosperity of the North Wales economy. Regular meetings are undertaken and costs of resources, construction costs has been raised as regards to the projects put forward to take advantage of the Growth Bid. She emphasised that both Governments wants to see the projects succeeding within the Growth Bid.
- Reference was made to the arguments as regards to trade deals in respect of agriculture with Australia recently and the effect it could have on agriculture in North Wales. Questions were raised as to whether the Economic Ambition Board has considered this matter. The Portfolio Director responded that the Board is looking at innovation within agriculture in terms of decarbonisation and the Boards decisions has not shifted due to Brexit. The Board continues to consider that there is a need to support green businesses;
- Questions were raised whether the Trade Unions have been consulted as regards to creating 3,400 to 4,000 new jobs within the projects developments attached to the Growth Bid. The Portfolio Director responded that she was unaware that there had been meetings or engagement with the Trade Unions but she would need to discuss the matter further within the Ambition Board.
- Questions were raised as regards to the details of the Holyhead Gateway projects. The Portfolio Director responded that the project has a range of scheme i.e Holyhead Breakwater (a joint investment with Stena for necessary improvement the Breakwater); investment in the Port of Holyhead with regard to land and property that has potential for development and the ability to create employment to support the economy of North Wales. Further questions were raised as to the ownership of the Holyhead Breakwater. The Deputy Chief Executive responded that it is understood that Stena is responsible for the Holyhead Breakwater but both UK and Welsh Government identified the importance of the Breakwater to the Port of Holyhead for the prosperity for the Town of Holyhead.
- Questions were raised as to how private funding is to be secure within the Growth Deal. The Portfolio Director responded there is an ability to attract private investment within the project but they would need security that the project are viable for them to invest within these projects. She noted that further engagement is required with the private sector to understand as to the opportunities they are looking into to invest such as growth sectors, higher level manufacturing sectors and low carbon energy sectors.
- Questions were raised as to the challenges or additional opportunities are anticipated in trying to deliver the projects as a result of the pandemic, and how does the Board intend to address these. The Portfolio Director responded that it is evident that the economy has been greatly affected by the pandemic. She noted that the Ambition Board has considered whether the investment within the Growth Bid is still appropriate for the North Wales economy and the pandemic has shown the need for digital connectivity. The Portfolio Director

further said that revenue funding is required for employability skills and to create awareness of employment opportunities and to lead young people within schools and colleges towards these projects.

It was RESOLVED to approve the North Wales Economic Ambition Boards Annual Report for 2020/21 and the Quarter 4 Performance Report and to note the progress made.

ACTION : As noted above.

6 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Submitted – a report by the Scrutiny Officer.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To agree the current version of the forward work programme for 2021/22;**
- **To note progress thus far in implementing the forward work programme.**

The meeting concluded at 3.00 pm

**COUNCILLOR G O JONES
CHAIR**