

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 9 November 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Gwilym O Jones (Chair)
Councillor Glyn Haynes (Vice-Chair)

Councillors T LI Hughes MBE, K P Hughes, Vaughan Hughes,
R LI Jones, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts and
Margaret Murley Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive,
Director of Education, Skills and Young People (item 4),
Head of Regulation and Economic Development (item 5),
Head of Democratic Services,
Chief Planning Officer (DFJ) (item 5),
Policy and Welsh Language Manager (FO) (item 4),
Senior Manager – Primary (item 4).

APOLOGIES: None

ALSO PRESENT: Leader of the Council – Councillor Llinos M Huws;
Councillor Richard A Dew – Portfolio Holder – Planning (in respect
of item 5);
Councillor R Meirion Jones – Portfolio Holder – Education,
Libraries, Culture and Youth (in respect of item 4);
Councillor Ieuan Williams – Portfolio Holder – Welsh Language (for
item 4).
Planning Policy Manager (RJ) (in respect of item 5).

1 APOLOGIES

None.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September, 2021 were confirmed as correct.

4 WELSH LANGUAGE

- **Language Strategy**

Submitted – a report by the Head of Democratic Services in relation to the above.

The Portfolio Holder – Welsh Language said that the report incorporates both the Welsh Language Strategy 2016 – 2021 (Assessment report) and the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2021-2026. He said that it is important to note that the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2021-2026 is a draft promotion strategy and it is challenging to prepare such a document due to the lack of current data on the state of the Welsh language on Anglesey. He further noted that the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2021-2026 (draft) builds on the foundations of the first strategy and adopts a consistent target and priority areas i.e. Children, young people and the family; the workplace, Welsh language services and the infrastructure; the Community. The Portfolio Holder – Welsh Language further said that statistics have shown that Welsh speakers on the Island has fallen but the figures also show that around 38,000 residents on the Island are Welsh speakers a figure which has remained stable since 1950's.

The Policy and Welsh Language Manager reported that in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Council is required to prepare a Welsh language promotion strategy. The implementation period of the Council's first promotion strategy ended in 2021. The document has been prepared as an interim strategy to bridge the period from the end of 2021 to the full publication of Census data during 2023 and the purpose of the Strategy is to outline how the Council intends to promote the language and facilitate its wider use on Anglesey. She further said that when the first strategy was published in 2016 and the target was to reverse the fall in the number of Welsh speakers on the Island according to the 2011 Census. Work has been undertaken with key partner organisations through the Anglesey Welsh Language Forum and the Forum will take responsibility to monitor the progress as regards to the implementation plans on a yearly basis.

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

- Questions raised as to whether there are any particular risks or concerns regarding the state of the Welsh language on Anglesey. The Policy and Welsh Language Manager responded that the pandemic has had an effect on the Welsh language due to influx of people coming to live on the Island whilst data is not available at present to confirm the effect; monitoring of the situation needs to be undertaken to ascertain the effects on local communities and to respond to the challenges that result from the influx of people coming to live on the Island. The Portfolio Holder – Welsh Language said that it is important to promote the Welsh language as there is a percentage of people born on the Island who tend to speak English in the home rather than speaking in Welsh;
- Comments were made that it is a challenge to scrutinise the Strategy and to provide comments as to whether it will be successful or otherwise due to the lack of current data being available. The Portfolio Holder – Welsh Language responded that he considered that it is possible to scrutinise and to come to a general perception as to the reasons why the percentage of Welsh

speakers has reduced on the Island. He said that an Implementation Plan has been produced with a requirement to enhance the Welsh language within the Authority's schools, workplace (the Council encourages and supports staff to use of the Welsh language) and the community;

- Questions were raised as to whether the Strategy could incorporate the use/encourage the use of the Welsh language in the private sector. The Policy and Welsh Language Manager responded that the Implementation Plan is a working document and there is scope to be including collaboration with partner organisations as has been discussed in the Anglesey Welsh Language Forum. She further said that the County Council can influence, support and lead the work done to encourage the use of the Welsh language;
- Concerns were expressed that the percentage of Welsh speakers on the Island has fallen and continues to be at a level since the 1950's and the effect it could have on the community and the future of the Welsh language. The Portfolio Holder – Welsh language responded that in 1970's the Welsh language was spoken on the schools yard but this has changed over the years and this is why such a Welsh Language Promotion Strategy is important to promote the language and facilitate its wider use on Anglesey. He noted that it is encouraging especially in South Wales that the percentage of Welsh speakers is increasing and especially in schools with non-Welsh speaking parents sending their children to Welsh medium schools. Members of the Committee also considered that outside activities afforded to school children should also be promoting and using the Welsh language. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People said that promoting the Welsh language is a priority in every school on the Island but he expressed that it is a challenge to encourage children and young people to use the Welsh language outside the classroom.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to the Executive:-

- **the publication of the Welsh Language Strategy 2016-2021 : Assessment report (draft) on the corporate website;**
- **to approve the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2021-2026 (draft) and authorise the relevant officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to undertake any further revision of the draft strategy.**

ACTION : As noted above.

- **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan**

Submitted – a report by the Director of Education, Skills and Young People in relation to the above.

The Portfolio Holder for Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth said that Section 84 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires local authorities to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 is a ten year plan and the purpose is to improve opportunities for local authorities to plan Welsh-medium education provision in order to support the current and future expectation for growth in

Welsh-medium education. Improving the planning of Welsh-medium education will also support the long-term national ambition for the Welsh language as set out in Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh speaker's strategy. He further said that it will be a challenge to reach the national ambition of one million Welsh speaker's by 2050 but by accepting this Strategy it will hopefully improve the standards of Welsh-medium education.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People reported that Anglesey is starting a new chapter in how it plans Welsh in education and implementing the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan over the next 10 years, will help to get to the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. The Strategic Plan must contain:-

- A local authority's proposals on how it will carry out its education functions to improve the planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh in its areas and improve the standards of Welsh-medium education and of the teaching of Welsh in its areas;
- The local authority's targets for improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in its area and for improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh in its areas;
- Report on the annual progress made to meet the targets contained in the previous Plan or previous revised Plan.

He further said that the Council has produced a 10 year WESP in collaboration with stakeholders across the sector. An 8 week consultation period will be undertaken with all consultees which include Estyn and the local schools. Thereafter, the comments received after the consultation period will be incorporated into the Strategic Plan if required and will be submitted to Welsh Government by the end of January 2022.

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

- Questions were raised as to whether the WEP can be adapted as it is a 10 year Plan. The Senior Manager – Primary responded that a structure and collaboration process will be put in place. The Terms of Reference Group will meet every school term together with the Outcome Group (which has a representation across different sectors) to analyse the data and it will be appropriate to respond to any outcome on an annual basis and an Annual Report will be published. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People said that this matter has been raised with Welsh Government as the Plan is a 10 year plan and will need to be adapted and reviewed;
- Reference was made that there are challenges within the Secondary sector to attract teachers to be able to teach subjects through the Welsh language and concerns expressed that the percentage of subject taught through the medium of Welsh was 34.8%. Questions were raised as to whether the Authority is in contact with the Universities to encourage and enable more students to become high quality Welsh medium teachers. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that there is joint working with Bangor University and CABAN (the partnership across North Wales) who support perspective and new teachers. The Senior Manager said that Leaders from the University are in contact with the Secondary Strategic Group and Head

- teachers will have access to the cohort of teachers that are training at present. Work is undertaken with GwE and Canolfan Bedwyr to raise awareness of teaching opportunities through the medium of Welsh;
- Questions were raised as to what are the main challenges in the future in terms of the position of the Welsh language within education on a local level. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that it is evident that the pandemic has affected pupils the use of the Welsh language and other languages. He further said that it is a challenge to encourage pupils from an early age and through their education to speak the Welsh language;

It was RESOLVED to recommend to the Executive the approval of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 : Definition of the role of catchment language co-ordinators (draft) and authorisation of the relevant officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to complete any further reviews of the draft strategy.

ACTION: As noted above.

5 JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN - REVIEW REPORT

Submitted – a report by the Head of Regulation and Economic Development in relation to the above.

The Portfolio Holder – Planning said that the Joint Local Development Plan was adopted on 31 July, 2017 in accordance with statutory requirement date for initiating the review process was 31 July, 2021 and consultation period will be undertaken on the review report.

The Head of Regulation and Economic Development reported that the current Joint Local Development Plan provides a local policy structure for land use. The current Joint Local Development Plan is in place until 2025 but needs to be reviewed every 4 years. The consultation process is currently in process and a final report will be submitted to the full Council in March 2022.

The Planning Policy Manager reported that the review report gauges the performance of the Joint Local Development Plan since its adoption in 2017. The review report contains 6 parts as outlined in the report:-

- Part 1 – Introduction
- Part 2 – Relevant information and issues
- Part 3 – LDP Review and possible changes
- Part 4 – Evidence base review requirement
- Part 5 – Joint working and preparation of a Joint Local Development Plan
- Part 6 – Conclusions and next steps

The Planning Policy Manager further reported that the consultation process on the Review Report will end on 20 December, 2021.

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

- Questions were raised as to whether there any additional issues that need to be addressed as part of the review process either nationally, regionally or local level. The Planning Policy Manager responded that there are concerns on a regional level regarding the work on the Strategic Development Plan that will be required in addition to possible changes in national legislation that is unable to be foreseen; resources will need to be put in place to carry out work on the Strategic Development Plan i.e. extra funding and staffing. She further said that Welsh Government are currently discussing the holiday homes, second homes issues at present and further work may result from such discussions;
- Reference was made that Welsh Government has set a timetable of three and a half years to undertake a full review of the Local Development Plan and concerns were expressed that change to the Development Plan needs to be undertaken at present. Questions were raised whether the policies within the Plan could be reviewed in stages. The Planning Policy Manager responded that once the Delivery Agreement is in place and agreed by Welsh Government the timetable set by the Government is three and a half years to complete the work. She noted that policies within the Plan will be unable to be reviewed in stages as the policies integrate with each other;
- Questions were raised as to the effect the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC's) will have on the local planning authorities. The Portfolio Holder – Planning responded that additional pressures will be enforced on local authorities with the implementation of the CJC's as current funding and staff will not be sufficient to carry out the work. The Chief Executive said that she will ask for a high level update on the CJC's to the Elected Members in due course;
- Questions were raised as to whether the current planning policies are resilient enough to enable people to remain within their local communities. The Planning Policy Manager responded that the current Joint Local Development Plan ensures and promotes that homes are built for local people and local needs. However, as the result of the pandemic issues have come to light as regards to concerns of homes been bought as holiday and second homes within local communities. She noted that Welsh Government will need to change legislation to address these issues.
- Questions were raised as to whether the local needs of the Island is considered as each county has different priorities and local needs. The Head of Regulation and Economic Development responded that it is imperative that the Authority has a strong regional status and the voice of the local communities are addressed.

It was RESOLVED to note:-

- **The changes in the national and local context;**
- **The findings of the Annual Monitoring Reports in Part 2;**
- **The matters that will need to be addressed in preparing a Revised Plan in Part 3;**
- **The conclusions set out in Part 6 of the Review Report.**

ACTION : As noted above.

6 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Submitted – a report by the Scrutiny Manager.

It was RESOLVED:-

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

ACTION : As noted above.

7 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The following items were for information only:-

- Public Services Board – Governance Arrangements
- North Wales Economic Ambition Board Quarter 2 : 2021/2022 Progress Review

The meeting concluded at 4.00 pm

**COUNCILLOR GWILYM O JONES
CHAIR**