

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 18 January 2022

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 M Roberts.

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive,
Deputy Chief Executive,
Director of Social Services (item 4),
Director of Education, Skills and Young People (item 4),
Safeguarding and Quality Service Manager (AH) (item 4),
Senior Manager – Welfare (GMH) (item 4),
Legal Services Manager (RJ),
Scrutiny Manager,
Committee Officer (MEH).

APOLOGIES: Mr Keith Roberts (The Roman Catholic Church).

Interim Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer.

ALSO PRESENT: Leader of the Council – Councillor Llinos M Huws (item 4),
Councillor R Meirion Jones – Portfolio Holder – Education,
Libraries, Culture and Young People,
Councillor Alun Mummery – Portfolio Holder – Housing and
Supporting Communities,
Councillor Dafydd R Thomas – Portfolio Holder – Corporate.

Ms Daron Owens – Implementation and Projects Officer (item 5).

The Chair congratulated Mr Dylan Williams on his appointment as Chief Executive and wished him well.

1 APOLOGIES

As noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 November, 2021 were confirmed as correct.

4 CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

Submitted – a report by the Director of Social Services in respect of an overview of the work of the Corporate Safeguarding Board.

The Leader of the Council said that Corporate Safeguarding is the responsibility of all services of the Council. To support the implementation of the Safeguarding Action Plan an Operational Corporate Safeguarding Board was established with a membership of safeguarding champions from all services of the Council. She further said that this report is to assure the Elected Members of the effectiveness of the Council's safeguarding arrangements.

The Director of Social Services reported that the Authority has established a Strategic and Operational Corporate Safeguarding Boards which has a robust agenda in place which include important data which is shared with the Boards. He accepted that the report contains extensive information and that there is a need to summarise the information in the next report to this Committee. The Director of Social Services further said that there are other partnership and governance arrangements in place such as North Wales Regional Safeguarding Boards for Children and Adults, for dealing with specialist safeguarding matters. The Council has a duty to contribute to the operation of these Boards on a regional basis. There is a Regional Contest Board and the Deputy Chief Executive, Mr Dylan Williams is the representative of this Authority. The Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safeguarding Partnership has responsibility for overseeing Prevent programmes within the partnership's services. The Regional Vulnerabilities and Exploitation Board has oversight in respect of Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and the Safeguarding and Quality Service Manager Represents this Authority on this board.

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

- Questions were raised as to whether the partner organisations are in agreement as to the priorities with the safeguarding arrangements and whether they share information. The Director of Social Services referred to Domestic Abuse and noted that North Wales Police share information between partner organisations across North Wales; this allows for lessons to be learnt if a specific areas sees a rise in Domestic Abuse figures and as to address the issue and to put services in place to tackle the issue. Multi-agency response is undertaken and discussions are also undertaken within the Vulnerability and Exploitation Board as regards to Domestic Abuse. He noted that this Authority has an 'one front door' service in relation to domestic abuse referrals that allows for low level Domestic Abuse cases up to high level; cases are addressed at an early intervention to alleviate potential issues reaching a high level of abuse and also as regards to placing children into care if the situation escalates. The Director of Social Services also said that this Authority has employees that specifically deals with families where domestic abuse is present and there is also a good working relationship with

Gorwel who provides support for people who suffer domestic abuse or support for people at risk of losing their homes and prevent homelessness;

- Questions were raised as to whether any service needs to be prioritised within the Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan. The Director of Social Services said that lessons have been learnt as regards to the pandemic and there is a need to focus and prioritise the demand lead services that have been affected by the pandemic. He said that priorities within the previous Action Plan could have been too ambitious as safeguarding will need to be reviewed on a continuous basis to address factors that will arise as the needs of people change;
- Questions were raised as to whether each service is prioritising the training of staff. Reference was made to the data within the report with regard to the education service with 52% afforded training as regard to cyber security. The Director of Social Services responded that when staff are able to return to the Council Offices it is hoped that the training session can be convened in group that can focus on safeguarding. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People said that the Education Service work closely with the Social Services Department as regards to safeguarding but schools also has a structure in place as regards to safeguarding. He noted that safeguarding is a priority within Estyn's visits to schools to make sure that safeguarding structures are in place to protect the children and young people;
- Reference was made to the CIW inspection of the Adults' and Children and Families Services in June 2021 with comments received as regards to the National recruitment issues and specifically within Adults' Services on Anglesey. Questions were raised as to whether recruitment issues continue and whether it is a risk factor for the service. The Chair said that recruitment issues within the Care Sector has been a problem for a number of years and he questioned as to whether it was the salary of these posts is a factor in attracting young people to apply for such posts. The Director of Social Services responded that salary for such posts is not always an issue when recruiting for staff. He noted that it requires caring support workers that are able to afford support and personal care to vulnerable people which can be challenging at times. He further said that affording good working conditions is also important factor when recruiting care staff; the Authority has been working in partnership with Coleg Menai to afford work experience within Care Homes;
- Questions were raised as to the risk assessments decline within the Children's and Adults' Services. The Safeguarding and Quality Service Manager clarified that this related to a self-assurance exercise not to a decline in undertaking risk assessments to ensure a safe workforce. The Safeguarding and Quality Service Manager explained that each service should have a process for undertaking risk assessments if there was an issue or concern in relation to an employee. Services also need to have processes in place to assure themselves that they were compliant with the Local Authority's Corporate Safeguarding Policy. However, the Action Plan also include two assurance activities per year to be conducted by each service and reported on a corporate basis. The current plan included an assurance activity in relation to the risk assessment requirement in relation to employees in some situations. It was this assurance that was not completed within the planned timescale.

It was RESOLVED to note the arrangements that are in place, as well as the areas that the Strategic Corporate Safeguarding Board are driving to ensure that the Authority meets the statutory duties in this field.

ACTION : As noted above.

5 ANNUAL REPORT - COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP GWYNEDD AND YNYS MÔN

Submitted – the Annual Report of the Community Safety Partnership Gwynedd and Ynys Môn.

The Portfolio Holder – Housing and Supporting Communities said that he was pleased that since the meetings have been held virtually the attendance at the meeting has improved and in depth discussions has undertaken within the Committees.

The Chair referred that there is a statutory duty on Local Authorities in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and subsequent amendments because of the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2002 and 2006, to work in partnership with the Police, the Health Service, the Probation Service and the Fire and Rescue Service, to address the local community safety agenda.

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that the Community Safety Partnership has now been in place for 22 years, latterly, as a joint county partnership between Gwynedd and Ynys Môn. He noted that the areas of responsibility remain to be:-

- Crime and Disorder;
- Substance Misuse;
- Reducing re-offending;
- Delivering a strategic assessment to identify priorities (work that is now undertaken on a regional basis);
- Putting plans in place to deal with these priorities (a plan now exists on a regional and local basis)

Working between partners is fundamental to community safety and has enabled the Community Safety Partnership to share data and good practice. The Deputy Chief Executive further reported that the Domestic Abuse continues to be a focus by the Community Safety Partnership. Partners agreed that in addition to the monthly MARACs (Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference) weekly virtual meetings would also be held, so the heightened risk factors could be dealt with quickly. The Partnership has also had an input into the Prevent Plan which is a plan to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The North Wales Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy was launched in March 2020 and the Community Safety Partnership has supported the delivery of the strategy in Anglesey by attending the regional meetings and keeping up to date with priorities and relevant actions as they arise. Cyber Crime has also increased due to use of virtual activities and training sessions

have been afforded by North Wales Police as fraud has been identified by the Partnership.

Ms Daron Owens, the Implementation and Projects Officer reported that the Community Safety Partnership has faced many changes over the years and some of the main changes are the loss of local grants and the loss of local co-ordinators; however the Partnership is focused in maintaining close and purposeful membership of the regional groups, and is confident that local needs are embedded in all regional plans and activity. She further reported that the Partnership works to an Annual Plan and seven priorities have been identified by Community Safety Partnership which is noted within the report. These priorities are based on a regional strategic assessment, the Police and Crime Commissioner's Plan and the regional Safer Communities Plan. The Police looks at crime figures constantly, and reviews all changes on a regional and local basis. Problem areas will then be reviewed with Policing plans put in place to tackle the issues. The Partnership receives data on crime levels on a quarterly basis. Most recent crime data for Anglesey for January 2022 was included within the report to the Committee. During the early part of last year, due to the lockdown situation, all crime reported to the Police reduced in numbers. However, Domestic Abuse figures has risen across the North Wales Police area and these cases are considered via MARAC as was noted previously by the Deputy Chief Executive. Anti-social behaviour in Anglesey has also seen an increase in the first half of 2021/22 which has been seen across North Wales. Nationally increase in youth related Anti-social behaviour since the end of lockdown and similar increases have been noted in the monthly Anti-social behaviour multi-agency tasking groups across North Wales. The Implementation and Projects Officer further said that some of the activities within the 2020/21 Plan have not been achieved due to the pandemic and this has resulted in 5 out of the 28 actions being incomplete at the end of the year.

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

- Questions were raised as to whether the loss of grants has affected the efficiency of the Community Safety Board. The Implementation and Projects Officer responded that the loss of grants has not had a substantial effect on the activities of the Board as the financial allocation has now been afforded regionally;
- Reference was made that the Partnership works to an Annual Plan and has seven priorities which has been identified by Community Safety Partnership. Questions were raised whether the Board reviews their priorities and especially during the pandemic where there has been a rise in Domestic Abuse. The Implementation and Projects Officer responded that the Board's priorities are driven by the Strategic Review by North Wales Police and the Safer North Wales Regional Board, PCB and the Beating Crime Plan by Welsh Government;
- Questions were raised as to the extent does the partner organisations within the Board agree as regards to the priorities which are based on the local needs assessment process and whether there are other matters which need to be prioritised. The Deputy Chief Executive responded that he believed that the partner organisations are in agreement with the priorities identified as the strategic data is driven by these priorities. He noted that partner organisations

are focus to work in partnership and no changes occur to the priorities during the current year. However, the focus and activities can change if data shows the need to priorities a particular rise in a specific crime in communities;

- Questions were raised as to the situation as regards to County lines drug trafficking problems within local communities. The Deputy Chief Executive responded that North Wales Police is working to reduce the County lines issues and there has been considerable success recently in tackling the problem of drug trafficking. He noted that at the recent meeting of the Community Safety Board it was reported that there is no County lines drug trafficking operation on the Island at present which is to be welcomed.

The Deputy Chief Executive wishes it to be noted that whilst the data figures within the report are currently red, however, it must be realised that the data need to be compared in respect of 2019 data figures on an 'year on year' basis as there has been a period of lockdown due to the pandemic and people will be returning to their usual pattern of working and socialising. He also referred that data figures should be evaluated to population figures in the summer and the winter on the Island due to the influx of visitors.

It was RESOLVED to note the contents of the report and to support the priorities and future direction of the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

ACTON : As noted above.

6 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Submitted – a report by the Scrutiny Manager.

The Scrutiny Manager said that the Chair has agreed that the meeting scheduled to be convened on 8 February, 2022 will be cancelled due to lack of items for discussion.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To agree the current version of the forward work programme for 2021/2022;**
- **To note the progress thus far in implementing the forward work programme.**

The meeting concluded at 3.30 pm

**COUNCILLOR GWILYM O JONES
CHAIR**