

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 8 March 2022

- PRESENT:** Councillor Gwilym O Jones (Chair)
Councillor Glyn Haynes (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors T LI Hughes MBE, Vaughan Hughes, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts and Margaret Murley Roberts
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,
Deputy Chief Executive,
Head of Adult's Services (in respect of item 5),
Business Manager (in respect of item 5),
Policy and Welsh Language Manager (FO) (in respect of item 4),
Policy Officer (RWJ) (in respect of item 4),
Executive Manager (Strategic Leadership Team) (SOJ),
Legal Services Manager (RJ),
Scrutiny Manager (AD),
Committee Officer (MEH).
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor Kenneth P Hughes, Councillor Robert Llewelyn Jones and Councillor Nicola Roberts.
- Councillors Alun Mummery, Dafydd R Thomas and Robin Williams.
- ALSO PRESENT:** Leader of the Council – Councillor Llinos M Huws
Councillor R Meirion Jones – Portfolio Holder (Education, Libraries, Culture and Young People)
Councillor Bob Parry – Portfolio Holder (Highways, Property and Waste Management)
- Mrs Sandra Thomas - Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board Programme Manager (in respect of item 6)
- Ms Helen Kilgannon – Regional Manager North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service (in respect of item 7)
- Mr Jon Zalot - Regional Emergency Planning Officer North Wales Councils (in respect of item 7)

The Chair and Members of the Committee extended their best wishes to Mrs Annwen Morgan, Chief Executive on her retirement.

1 APOLOGIES

As noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January, 2022 were confirmed as correct.

4 ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT - 2020/2021

Submitted – the Annual Equality Report 2020/21 for consideration by the Committee.

The Leader of the Council said that the Annual Equality Report demonstrates the Council's commitment to mainstreaming equality into the work of the Authority. This includes an outline of progress against work related to the Council's priority to establish an effective corporate process to ensure the ongoing assessment of impact across services.

The Policy and Welsh Language Manager reported that the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires that all public authorities covered under the Equality Act 2010 Statutory Duties (Wales) Regulations 2011 must publish an annual equality report by 31 March in the year following each reporting period. The Welsh Government introduced specific duties to help public bodies in Wales to meet the general duty. These specific duties include a requirement to develop and publish equality objectives and Strategic Equality Plans at least once every four years. The purpose of the Annual Equalities Report is to demonstrate how the Council has met the general and specific equality duties. She further said that the employment data within the report covers the period from 1 April, 2020 to 31 March, 2021.

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

- Questions were raised as to whether the Annual Report could be adapted to be accessible and written in a way that is easier to understand. The Policy and Welsh Language Manager responded that the documentation can be adapted but the specific data and information needs to be included. However, she emphasised that the main messages in respect of equalities needs to be addressed and consideration will be given as to how to present the information within the report so as due reflection is addressed within the framework imposed;
- Reference was made to the employment information graphs within the report and concerns were raised that individuals might object to being labelled by protected characteristic. The Leader of the Council responded that whilst accepting the comments made, the data is expected by Welsh Government;
- Questions were raised as to what steps have been put in place to ensure that children and vulnerable people do not experience inequality as a result of the pandemic. The Leader of the Council responded that as can be seen within the report as to the way the Education Department has responded during the pandemic with Cromebooks afforded to the children and internet access secured so as to be able the children to be able to their receive education whilst at home.

She further said that the Education Service and Social Services have worked to identify vulnerable children with joint plans and Welfare Officers working together to address their needs. All schools have received the 'Carlam Cymru' grant so as to facilitate the schools to address the challenges identified in their schools;

- Questions were raised as to whether the Council has achieved the equality objectives. The Leader of the Council responded that the Authority has achieved its equality aims as far as possible, whilst the pandemic has been challenging with people having to self-isolate and unable to socialise. The equality objective is an integral part of the Council's work and progress is measured over an extended period rather than a twelve-month period;
- Questions raised as to how it is intended to ensure that the socio-economic duty becomes an integral part of the Council's work. The Leader of the Council responded that discussions have been undertaken in the 'elected members briefing sessions' to raise awareness of the socio-economic duty of the Council. She noted that the socio-economic duty has been raised at the North Wales Ambition Board so as to be able to make a difference to local communities when potential developers invest in the local areas of the Island;
- Reference was made that poverty within communities can affect education. It was stressed that it is crucial for children and young people to have the opportunity to reach their full potential and enable them to be able to apply for employment opportunities. The Leader of the Council responded that the opening of the new schools on the Island in deprived areas will encourage and develop children and young people to be able to reach their full potential.

It was RESOLVED to accept the Annual Equality Report 2020/21.

ACTION : As noted above.

5 POPULATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT : SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING (WALES) ACT 2014

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

The Leader of the Council said that the overview of the North Wales Population Needs Assessment 2022 is produced as a requirement of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. She said that consultation has been undertaken with partner organisations and service users to identify strategic needs for care and support.

The Head of Adult's Services reported that the population needs assessment report was an engagement lead as has been noted by the Leader of the Council. The report provides an evidence base to support organisations and services across the region, specifically it is to be used for strategic planning cycles underpinning the integration of services and support partnership arrangements. The next phase of the project will involve using the population assessment to develop an Area Plan for the region. Future work on the area plan may involve further research and consultation to explore priority areas in more depth before agreeing which areas to prioritise for regional work. The Area Plan is to be developed and published in 2023.

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

- Questions were raised as to whether needs of Anglesey has been addressed within the assessment as specifically to the Welsh language. The Head of Adult's Services referred to the appendix attached to the report which refers to Anglesey and the consultation process that has been undertaken during the difficult period of the pandemic. He noted that the assessment set a framework of the direction the Authority can undertake and to share expertise with other organisations. The Leader of the Council said that the assessment gives an opportunity for this Authority to influence the needs of the Welsh language to other partner organisations across the region where the Welsh language may not be as strong as it is on Anglesey;
- The Chair referred to parents of autistic children having to await over two years for their children to be assessed. He said that this issue needs to be addressed with the relevant agencies to improve the service. The Leader of the Council responded that regional funding has been used to create a regional autistic service. She noted that the Health Board has been having difficulties recruiting into this important service and it also take time to train and develop the workforce. The Leader assured the Committee that discussions are undertaken with the Health Board to discuss the caps and weaknesses in the service.

It was RESOLVED to support the North Wales Population Needs Assessment 2022.

ACTION : As noted above.

6 PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD - SCRUTINY OF PROGRESS AND DELIVERY OF THE WELLBEING PLAN/DRAFT WELLBEING ASSESSMENT FOR ANGLESEY

Submitted – a report by the Chief Executive in respect of the above.

The Leader of the Council said that the report highlights the progress on completing the Well-being Plan, the Well-being Assessments and an update on the work of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board. She wished to welcomed Mrs Sandra Thomas, the newly appointed Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board Programme Manager to address the Committee.

The Programme Manager reported that the Assessments will draw together a range of information as regards to communities of Anglesey and Gwynedd. Research, data and engagement with local residents has been undertaken to ascertain as to the requirements of local communities and which aspect needs to be improved. It is also an opportunity to consider the challenges and opportunities facing communities. She further said that timetable for completing the Well-being Assessments is set out in Table 1 of the report and a 12 week consultation period will be undertaken until 15 March, 2022.

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

- Questions were raised that following the public consultation period, what will be the process and timetable for completing the final well-being assessment for the County. The Programme Manager responded that the Well-being Assessments will be published by the end of May 2022 and adaptations will be made when additional information is received. Thereafter, a report will be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration before input into the Well-Being Plan in 2023;
- Questions were raised as to what extent is the information gathered to date about the 6 area a fair reflection of the state of well-being on Anglesey. Reference was made to the Seiriol Alliance and the work undertaken in the area over the last two years. The Programme Manager responded that the data across the Communities needs to be improved; it is hoped that the data as regards to the work undertaken in the local communities during the pandemic can also be inputted into the Well-being Plan;
- Questions were raised as regards to progress of 'place shaping' programme within local communities. The Leader of the Council responded that the 'place shaping programme', is dependent on the commitment and the needs of local communities will be different in each area. She noted that the principle of the 'place shaping' has worked well in with Medrwn Môn and especially over the last two years of the pandemic. The Chief Executive said that during the pandemic a number of areas have established the 'Tro Da' scheme. The Executive Manager within the Chief Executive's Department will be leading on the 'place shaping' programme. Members expressed that the ward areas of the communities needs to be reviewed and especially following the local government elections in May. The Deputy Chief Executive said that lessons needs to be learnt as to how the pandemic has affected the local communities and the data and mapping needs to be undertaken, in the first instance, so as to allow the volunteers within the communities to come together and to identify the priorities which will shape the work programme. He further said that having an established community hub/centres in town and communities is an advantage for volunteers to be able to support their local communities.

It was RESOLVED :-

- **To accept the proposed timetable to create the new Well-being Plan which is to be published in May 2023;**
- **To accept the Anglesey Draft Well-being Assessments.**

ACTION : As noted above.

7 REGIONAL EMERGENCY PLANNING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT: 2020/21

Submitted – a report by the Deputy Chief Executive in relation to the above.

The Leader of the Council said that the Council has duties for emergency planning and response under the Civil Contingencies Acts 2004, the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001, and the Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996. The Council is a principal responder and meets its obligations by collaborating with the North Wales Local Authorities through the North Wales Council's Regional Emergency Planning Service.

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that North Wales is the first region in Wales to form a fully integrated service to support all Councils to fulfil their duties. It is supported by an Executive Board of all six Councils. This is underpinned by a Service Level Agreement and an Inter-Authority Agreement. Within the Council, responsibilities for emergency planning and response are shared across services and nominated service representatives are identified within the Emergency Management Response Team structure. He further said that working in partnership with the emergency services, local authorities and Welsh Government is fundamental to address any emergency that arise. The Deputy Chief Executive said that it is hoped that emergency measures as regards to the pandemic will ease and it is timely for the Emergency Planning Services to review the procedures and to learn and improve any future emergency procedures due to the pandemic.

The Regional Manager – North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service reported that during the pandemic the Regional Emergency Planning Service were able to conform with its statutory duties. The Service supported local authorities and the health services in identifying vaccination centres, attending local resilience group and strategic co-ordinating groups on behalf of the local authorities. Multi-agency working continued and surge testing plan was put in place due to the high levels of covid identified in certain areas.

The Regional Emergency Planning Officer reported that the Regional Emergency Planning Service has worked jointly with the local authority and other agencies during the recent storms. The Service has also supported the local authorities with the Bus strike and fuel crisis that emerged at the end of last year.

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

- The Chair questioned whether companies on the Island have their own emergency procedures in place as was similar at the Wylfa Nuclear Power station when emergency exercises were undertaken. The Deputy Chief Executive responded that the companies on the Island are aware of their statutory duty and they conduct emergency exercises and training procedures. The organisations that would respond to any incident are part of these exercises and to make sure that the response process is as robust as it is possible. The Regional Manager said that the Emergency Planning Service are part of the emergency exercise with other emergency organisations. This allows for the joint agencies to build a good working relationship with each other to address any emergency that may arise;
- Reference was made that the recent storms affected many areas of the UK with the loss of electricity for a number of days. Questions were raised as to whether there is provision in place by the Regional Emergency Service to address such loss of electricity on the Island. The Regional Emergency Planning Officer responded that each agency would collaborate in such an emergency with the loss of power due to storms. Collaborating is taking place with Scottish Power to address their role;
- Reference was made to the recent serious road traffic accident on the Beaumaris road and the congestion of traffic was of concerns. Questions were raised whether communications with the public is sufficient. The Deputy Chief

Executive responded that such incidents need to be alerted to motorist travelling in the area as soon as possible. However, whilst social media can be of an advantage, internet connections can be affected due to storm damage and there is a need of back up processes to be put in place.

It was RESOLVED to note the progress of the North Wales Council's Regional Emergency Planning Service work to date.

ACTION : As noted above.

8 ITEM FOR INFORMATION

The following item was for information only :-

North Wales Economic Ambition Board – Quarter 3 Progress Report : 2021/22.

The meeting concluded at 3.30 pm

**COUNCILLOR GWILYM O JONES
CHAIR**