

# **PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 17 October 2023**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Dylan Rees (Chair)  
Councillor Gwilym O Jones (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Non Dafydd, Jeff M Evans, John Ifan Jones, Euryr Morris, Pip O'Neill, Margaret Murley Roberts, Ken Taylor and Sonia Williams

### **Portfolio Members**

Councillor Carwyn Jones – Portfolio Member for Corporate and Customer Experience (for item 6);  
Councillor Gary Pritchard – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services (for item 5);  
Councillor Alun Roberts – Portfolio Member for Adults' Services (for item 5).

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive,  
Deputy Chief Executive,  
Director of Social Services (for item 5),  
Head of Profession (Human Resources) & Transformation (for item 6),  
Head of Democracy,  
Executive Manager (Leadership Team) (SOJ) (for item 4),  
Programme Manager (EB) (for item 6),  
Scrutiny Manager (AD),  
Committee Officer (MEH)

### **APOLOGIES:**

Leader of the Council – Councillor Llinos Medi.

Councillor Derek Owen.

Director of Education, Skills and Young People

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

#### **Portfolio Members**

Councillor Neville Evans – Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism and Maritime;  
Councillor Nicola Roberts – Portfolio Member for Planning, Public Protection and Climate Change;  
Councillor Dafydd R Thomas – Portfolio Member for Highways, Property and Waste.

Ms Helen Kilgannon (Regional Manager – North Wales Council's Regional Emergency Planning Service) (for item 4).

Mr Jon Zalot (Regional Emergency Planning Officer – North Wales Council’s Regional Emergency Planning Service (for item 4).

Ms Catrin Roberts – Head of Regional Collaboration (for item 5).

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**1 APOLOGIES**

As noted above.

**2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor Eurnyn Morris declared a personal interest in respect of Item 5 – Regional Partnership Board – Annual Report : 2022/2023.

**3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September, 2023 were confirmed as correct.

**4 REGIONAL EMERGENCY PLANNING SERVICE - ANNUAL REPORT : 2022/2023**

Submitted – a report by the Chief Executive for consideration by the Committee.

The Chief Executive reported that the Council has emergency planning and response duties under the Civil Contingencies Acts 2004. The Council is a principal responder and meets its obligations by collaborating with the North Wales Local Authorities through the North Wales Councils Regional Emergency Planning Service. He said that following consultation and ratification through the political process in each Local Authority, Emergency Planning functions for all 6 local authorities in North Wales were amalgamated into one service under an inter-authority agreement since 2014. He further referred that as an Island, with two bridges over the Menai Straits, it is important that this Council is fully committed within Regional Emergency Planning Service so that it addresses any emergency that may occur on the Island, and that the emergency services are able to attend. The Chief Executive referred to the Annual Report and noted that it gives assurance that the Regional Emergency Planning Service is resilience service, and this Council engages fully within the service.

In considering the report, the Committee discussed the following main matters:-

- Questions were raised as to the key risks facing the Island and to preparedness of the Council as regards to future emergencies. The Executive Manager (Leadership Team) responded that risks are identified and managed effectively during discussions within a Resilience Forum which the Authority is represented. She noted that there is a National Risk Register and the Regional Emergency Planning Service and the Council contribute to identify any potential

risks. She further referred that the main key risk are power cuts, storms, cyber security, and effects on the resilience of both the Menai Suspension bridge and the Britannia bridge. The Chief Executive said that he considered that the Authority is ready for any eventually, as the governance and participation levels are in place, however, it is dependent on the support of other emergency organisations. He expressed that the main concerns are the resilience of the two bridges and the potential of both bridges been closed at the same time could cause major problems if an emergency was to occur on the Island. He said that it is important to continue to put pressure on Welsh Government to recognize the reliability and resilience of both bridges.

- Reference was made to the risk of wildfires at Newborough Forest due to dry weather conditions as there is only one highway through and out of the village of Newborough and only one car park in the vicinity. Questions were raised as to what arrangements are in place to support the emergency planning arrangements to address potential wildfires in the area and to what extent has consultation been undertaken with external partners. The Chief Executive responded that National Resources Wales are the responsible authority for Newborough Forest, and they have an emergency response plan in place. He noted that the Council has not been part of any emergency exercise with NRW. The Local Member for Newborough expressed that he had concerns that the Local Authority is not part of any emergency exercise process with NRW as regards to Newborough Forest. The Chair expressed that the Fire & Rescue Service should also be aware of potential wildfires. The Chief Executive said that the matter will be referred for discussion with NRW in due course.
- Reference was made to the guidance for Elected Members attached to the report. Questions were raised as to the plans are in place to make sure that Members are aware of their role. The Executive Manager (Leadership Team) responded that an e-learning course is available through the learning pool for Elected Members to view. She noted that Briefing Session with Elected Members can be made available if required. The Vice-Chair said that there is reference within the Elected Members Handbook to the Council's headquarters phone number when a member of the public wishes to call during an emergency. He expressed that residents have been complaining that they are unable to receive an answer when phoning the Council's headquarters phone number. The Chief Executive responded that he accepted the frustration when people are unable to receive an answer whilst phoning the Council. He stressed the importance that elected members refer any such complaints regarding the phone system immediately to relevant officers as per guidance previously provided. He expressed that the Council is currently in the process of procuring a new telephone system which is hoped that will improve the management and monitoring of calls. He acknowledged that there are peaks in the demand in certain services within the Council i.e. Housing Benefits and Housing Services. He further said that when an emergency occurs the Emergency Services would most likely lead on any emergency and the Authority would be part of the response process through the Emergency Planning Service. The ability of the Council to respond to any emergency would not be affected by the current phone system.

- Reference was made to the recent discussions as to the relocation of the Wales Air Ambulance Service. Questions were raised as to whether the Wales Air Ambulance Service is part of the North Wales Regional Emergency Planning Service and especially when discussion have been undertaken at this meeting to the resilience of the bridges. The Regional Manager – North Wales Council’s Regional Emergency Planning Service responded that the Wales Air Ambulance Service is a health lead service and they discuss as to how they respond to any emergency where there is a need for an Air Ambulance. The Portfolio Member for Adults’ Services said that during meetings with the Health Board the Wales Air Ambulance Service is discussed but due to adverse weather conditions it must be considered that the Air Ambulance is unable to afford their services. Questions were raised as to whether the Penrhos Stanley and Cefni Hospitals are included within any emergency processes if both bridges are closed and the unavailability of the Air Ambulance Service if a major incident was to occur on the Island. Reference was also made that the number Cruise Ships that visit the Island has increased and it is anticipated that 92 Cruise Ships will be visiting next Summer. The Chief Executive noted that the Holyhead Port Authority would lead on any emergency within the Port as part of their emergency plans. The Regional Manager – North Wales Council’s Regional Emergency Planning Services responded that processes are in place to train and exercise with multi-agency partners in respect of a scenario of any emergency on the Island. The Chief Executive said that the Ambulance Service, Health Board and Wales Air Ambulance Service decide as to when an Air Ambulance is required due to any emergency. Questions were raised as to whether contact has been made with RAF Valley for their assistance if an emergency occurred on the Island. The Regional Manager responded that discussion is undertaken within the Regional Emergency Planning Services as regards to RAF bases, but she was unaware that RAF Valley would have any provision to assist if an emergency situation arose. The Chief Executive said that any element of use of the Armed Forces/RAF would need support and permission by Welsh Government/UK Government (with a dedicated process to be followed).
- Reference was made that additional local information needs to be included within the Annual Report as the reports focuses on a regional perspective; there is a need include specific issues relating to Anglesey and that this Committee can view as to how the Authority is responding to any emergency that arises. The Regional Manager – North Wales Council’s Regional Emergency Planning Service responded that information as regards to the Authority’s emergency response can be incorporated within future reports so that this Committee can compare with the rest of the Region.

**It was RESOLVED to note the progress of the North Wales Council’s Regional Emergency Planning Service work 2022/23.**

**ACTIONS :**

- **That a Briefing Session for Elected Members be arranged as to their Role within the Emergency Planning.**

Submitted – a report by the Director of Social Services for consideration by the Committee.

The Portfolio Member for Adults' Services said that the aim of the North Wales Partnership Board is to work collaboratively across health and the six social care services to help support resilient communities and ensure a seamless service for individuals that require care and support. He noted that this is the Annual Report of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board for 2022/23 as is required within 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 Director of Social Services reported that the report is set out in accordance with guidance for the completion of the Annual Report by Welsh Government. The Annual Report highlights the work that has been achieved regionally and sub-regionally with the Area Plan which notes the Autistic Plan, Carers Plan, Young Carers Plan, Children and Young People Plan and Learning Difficulties strategy. He noted that focus has also been made to the needs of children and young people in North Wales and on Anglesey. The capital funding process was highlighted to the Committee.

In considering the report, the Committee discussed the following main matters:-

- Questions were raised as to the role and purpose of the Regional Partnership Board. The Director of Social Services responded that the governance process is complex within the Regional Partnership Board. He noted that the role and purpose of the Regional Partnership Board could be explained within a Briefing Session for Elected Members.
- Questions were raised as to the relationship between the Regional Partnership Board's Annual Report and the Statutory Director of Social Services' Annual Report. The Director of Social Services responded that both reports are incorporated within each other as the capital funding to fund many projects within Social Services is regionally funded.
- Questions were raised as to the role of the Regional Partnership Board in facilitating the situation of a high number of patients unable to be discharged from Ysbyty Gwynedd to their permanent residence due to the lack of Care provision available. The Director of Social Services responded following an assessment of a patient that requires a Care package the Local Authority must address the needs of the patients with the Care providers. He noted that there is a close working relationship between the Health Board and the Social Services Department on Anglesey to provide care provision within Residential Homes before a patient is able to return to their main residence and also to conduct a dialogue with the families of the patients to ascertain whether they could assist to allow the patient to be cared for by the family before a Care package can be put in place. He expressed that there is a national recruitment issue within the Care sector as the pay provision is not attractive for people to apply for roles within the care sector. He said that unless Welsh Government addresses this issue

continued problems of patients unable to be discharged from hospitals will continue.

- Questions were raised as to the extent the Regional Partnership Board has achieved its key priorities during 2022/2023 and what are the Board's key priorities for 2023/2024. The Head of Regional Collaboration responded that she was confident that the Regional Partnership Board had achieved its key priorities during 2022/2023 and she highlighted the governance processes as regards to the capital funding received towards the projects within the Board to the Committee. She expressed that she considered that the children's services have not had the priority by the Board over the previous years as it should have been. She further said this Authority has undertaken considerable work within the children's services in raising the profile and the importance of the provisions for children across North Wales. The Board has afforded over £7 million towards children's services across North Wales and examples of the work were included within the report. The Board has also published a Market Stability Report and Regional Area Plan to shape the work across North Wales. The Vice-Chair questioned whether there has been a weakness within the current process of the Board as to the scrutiny role of the within different Local Authorities. He noted that this Authority has established a Social Services Scrutiny Panel. The Head of Regional Collaboration responded that the Regional Partnership Board in North Wales is the largest of the Partnership Board in Wales with 6 Local Authorities and the largest Heath Board in Wales' but she accepted that there is scope for improvements as regards to the Scrutiny role. The Vice-Chair referred to Adults' Services and said that this Authority has established a Community Resources Team. He questioned whether other Local Authorities in North Wales has a similar project within their Authorities. The Director of Social Services responded that the other Local Authorities has also similar projects within their Authorities and good practises are shared between the 6 Local Authorities in North Wales.

**It was RESOLVED:-**

- **That the Committee confirms that it has understood and taken into account the work that is required to be undertaken by the Regional Partnership Board.**
- **That the Committee notes the work and progress in 2022/23 on the work areas that are being taken forward through the North Wales Regional Partnership Board.**

**ACTION : That a Briefing Session for Elected Members be arranged to outline the role and purpose of the Regional Partnership Board.**

## **6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY : 2023/2028**

Submitted – a report by the Head of Profession (Human Resources) & Transformation for consideration by the Committee.

The Portfolio Member for Corporate and Customer Experience said that under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, local authorities in Wales must produce a Participation Strategy which notes how local people are encouraged to

take part in the Council's decision-making process. The strategy aims to encourage people to take part in the Council's business and build on success that the Council has achieved in engaging with residents as recognised by Audit Wales. A consultation exercise was undertaken with Council Officers for a four-week period. A high percentage of respondents agreed with the content of the Strategy which shows support for the Strategy and the intention to review it regularly. It was recognised that improvement is required as regards increased participation by children and young people in the Council's decisions, looking at new methods of gathering and presenting feedback digitally and considering ways of reporting successes/lack of successes in terms of participation. He noted that the Public Participation Strategy will be submitted to the Executive at its meeting to be held on 24 October, 2023 and thereafter to the full Council on 26 October, 2023 for ratification.

In considering the report, the Committee discussed the following main matters:-

- Questions were raised as to what the additional arrangements and processes are proposed to be put in place to ensure full compliance with the new requirements. The Programme Manager responded that participation and responses to consultations needs to be improved especially as responses to the consultations are lower within the 16 to 24 age group. The Children's and Young People Forum is to be re-established to attract responses from the younger generation to the work of the Council. Re-establishment of the Engagement and Consultation Board needs to be undertaken to ensure compliance with the Public Participation Strategy. He further said that work needs to be undertaken to assess different ways to gather digital responses to consultations. Demographic factors need to be considered due to the ageing population on Anglesey; in some cases, the older population do not use the digital platform to respond to consultations and would rather respond in the traditional methods.
- Reference was made that youth participating needs to be encouraged within the democratic functions of the Council. The Vice-Chair said that children from Valley Primary School were invited by the Leader recently to view the democratic functions and explanations of the work of the departments within the Council. The Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services said that the voice of children and young people is paramount to the Local Authority's services which impact their daily lives. Reference was made that Secondary School pupils should also be encouraged and invited to the Council and they have a strong opinion as to what they would like to happen within their communities. Questions were raised as to whether Work Experience opportunities are afforded by the Council and whether the schools and local agencies who work with young people are aware of work experience opportunities. The Head of Profession (Human Resources) & Transformation responded that as the largest employer on Anglesey work experience opportunities are afforded to young people and work is undertaken with Llandrillo Menai College to attract students to work in residential homes. The Human Resources Team work closely with schools in offering information as to the employment opportunities within the Council.
- Questions were raised as to the financial implication of realising the proposed Participation Strategy. The Chief Executive responded that it is not anticipated that there will be any additional financial costs as regards to the Strategy as it is a statutory requirement. He expressed that it is important to take advantage of

digital technology to allow people the opportunity to engage, consult and to get more local residents to respond to public consultations. However, opportunity should also be given to people who prefer not to use the digital platform available. The Chief Executive further said that working with the third sector partners is paramount in their engagement with the residents of the Island and thereafter the Council can take advantage of their mapping exercise.

- Reference was made that the headings of consultations needs to be more visible in their contents. It was noted that some residents are unaware that they can participate in consultation on different issues within the Council. An example was given that people are unaware that they can attend the Council's Committee and the Town and Community Council meetings and especially if a local issue of concerns to residents within local areas are discussed. The Chief Executive agreed that it is important that the heading of consultation needs to be more visible in their contents to attract public consultation. He agreed that as part of the democracy process it is important that people have access to Town and Community Council meetings and the matter could be raised within the Standards Committee and the Town and Community Councils forum on a community based level.

**It was RESOLVED :-**

- **To note the Public Participation Strategy for 2023/2028;**
- **To recommend that the Executive approves the Isle of Anglesey County Council's Public Participation Strategy, that the full Council adopts the Public Participation Strategy, that it is a live document, and it will be reviewed and updated regularly and will continue to build on our successes thus far;**
- **To authorise the Head of Profession HR and Transformation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder - Corporate and Customer Experience to prepare the final document in accordance with the corporate format before uploading the document on the Council's website.**

**ACTION :- To Invite the Town and Community Council Forum to discuss the role, purpose and contribution of town a community councils in promoting the engagement and contribution of the public when the Council is consulting on specific matters.**

## **7 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The report of the Scrutiny Manager setting out the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee's indicative Forward Work Programme for 2023/2024 was presented for consideration.

**It was RESOLVED:-**

- **To agree the current version of the forward work programme for 2023/2024;**
- **To note the progress thus far in implementing the forward work programme.**



**COUNCILLOR DYLAN REES  
CHAIR**