

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2024

PRESENT: Councillor Douglas Massie Fowlie (Chair)
Councillor Dyfed Wyn Jones (Vice-Chair)

Councillors R LI Jones, Jackie Lewis, Llio Angharad Owen,
Keith Roberts, Alwen Pennant Watkin, Arfon Wyn and
Sonia Williams

Co-opted Members :

Mrs Wenda Owen (The Church in Wales),
Mr John Tierney (The Catholic Church)

Portfolio Members

Councillor Robin Williams – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member
for Finance,
Councillor Neville Evans – Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism
and Maritime,
Councillor Carwyn Jones – Portfolio Member for Corporate
Business and Customer Experience,
Councillor Alun Roberts – Portfolio Member for Adults’ Services
and Community Safety,
Councillor Dafydd R Thomas – Portfolio Member for Highways,
Waste and Property.

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive,
Deputy Chief Executive,
Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer,
Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer,
Director of Education, Skills and Young People,
Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation,
Head of Democracy,
Head of Regulation and Economic Development,
Head of Housing Services,
Head of Highways, Property and Waste,
Head of Adults’ Services,
Corporate Planning Programme and Performance Manager (GP),
Chief Public Protection Officer (TO),
Scrutiny Officer (EA),
Committee Officer (MEH),
Webcasting Officer (FT).

ALSO PRESENT: None

APOLOGIES: Councillors Aled M Jones, Ieuan Williams.
Mrs Gillian Thompson – Parent Governor – Primary Schools

Sector.

Councillor Gary Pritchard – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Housing, Children and Youth Services,
Councillor Dafydd Roberts – Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language.

Scrutiny Manager (AD).

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Jackie Lewis declared a personal interest in any item that refers to Menter Môn and the economy.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 13 June, 2024 were confirmed as correct.

3 MONITORING PERFORMANCE : CORPORATE SCORECARD Q1 2024/25

The report of the Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation incorporating the Corporate Scorecard for Quarter 1 2024/2025 was presented for the Committee's consideration.

The report was presented by Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience and noted that the scorecard for the 2024/2025 is presented in its new format and portrays the Council's performance against the strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan. A number of KPI's are new, many currently do not have targets and are there to set a baseline, with some data not available until end of the year. Trends will however be monitored from Q2 during 2024/2025 with the aim of setting targets in 2024/2025. He noted that 94% of the indicators with targets monitored during the quarter performed well. He referred to two indicators that requires improvement : Freedom of Information (FOI) requests responded to within timescale and the percentage of high-risk businesses that have been inspected in accordance with the food hygiene standards. Councillor Carwyn Jones further referred that 68.46% of year 11 pupils are studying Welsh as first language which is a good achievement with an Amber indicator, and it is hoped that this will increase. He referred to the Children's Services which has seen above target levels and the Leisure Services which has seen over 130,000 people using the service compared to the target level of 115,000. The percentage of pupil's attendance in primary schools, following the pandemic has increase. Other good performance was to be found with 22 new Council home developed, and former homes purchased and brought back into Council rented homes compared to the target of 11 and 16 empty private properties brought back into use through the Empty Homes interventions. The percentage of planning enforcement cases investigated within 84 days reached a 97% performance against the target of 80% and the percentage of 86% of council business units let. He further referred that the percentage of streets that are clean have exceed the target of 96.60%

following an inspection by the Highways Department. The proportion of low carbon (electric) vehicles within the Council fleet is 12% which is good performance.

The Members noted the examples of good performances during Q1 and thanked the Officers and staff. In scrutinising the report, the following points of discussion were raised by the Committee and the Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience and Officers responded to the questions raised.

- 94% of the Authority's performance indicators with targets monitored performed well, which is a positive report at the end of Quarter 1. Questions were asked as to what assurance can be given that the remaining 2 indicators will improve.
- Food Hygiene Inspection - it was noted that a total of 22 premises have now been inspected out of the target of 31. Capacity issues enabling the inspections to be undertaken have been a problem as priority has been given to high-risk food hygiene premises. A work programme has been implemented within the service to comply with the food hygiene standards.
- Freedom of Information (FOI) requests – a total of 247 requests received within the quarter which could equate to a high proportion of questions within the FOI requests received. As was reported at the last meeting mitigation actions are being undertaken with the development of a CRM system with the aim being to create a dashboard available to each Information Manager, so that they will be able to access daily and scorecard which will show requests, timescales, progress and late responses. As noted, there was a total of 247 FOI requests during Q1 with 205 of them responded to within timescale. The Council remains committed to increasing the response rate for FOI's however due to the need to make savings, some reduction in capacity to deal with tasks within the services ensures that the target of 90% remains challenging.
- Whilst welcoming the development of Social Housing on the Island, questions were asked as to the effect on the Welsh language communities when non-Welsh speakers move into these dwellings. The Head of Housing Services responded that the House Lettings policy gives priority to a 'local' link to Anglesey for a period of 5 years when a person(s) applies for a tenancy of a Council property. However, a 'local' link does not result in all persons applying for Social Housing being Welsh speakers.
- Reference was made that 29 primary schools have eco-schools' status whilst only 2 secondary schools have the eco-school status. Questions were asked whether there are plans to support the 3 remaining secondary schools to reach the eco-schools status. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People said that work is undertaken within the primary and secondary schools across the Island with the Climate Change Officer as regards to eco-schools' status and the priorities within the net zero initiatives.
- Do the financial challenges facing local government create a risk to the Council's good performance into the future and how does the Council intend to mitigate these risks. The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer responded

that local government faces immense financial challenges in the forthcoming years. A report on the Medium-Term Financial Plan will be discussed at the next meeting of the Executive which set out the context of the financial situation. There will be a need for the Council to reduce its expenditure if there is no significant increase to fund the services currently provided. However, reducing expenditure does not always result in reducing services. The Council will need to consider providing services that are cost effective and on the same level which could result in some areas an improved performance. The targets levels should also be considered and gauged whether these targets are too high and need to be slightly reduced to achieve the required services afforded by the Council. He further said that the Council must ensure that it provides the statutory services.

- Reference was made that 6 schools are receiving support with a financial recovery plan. Questions were raised as to what assistance they are receiving. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that regular meetings and support is afforded to these schools that are receiving support through the financial recovery plan and continued monitoring is undertaken with the Finance Department. The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer said that work is undertaken to assist the individual schools and some financial recovery plans can be difficult to resolve within one year. The situation within schools can change from each year to another with additional children starting in the schools which can help some schools come out of financial situations. However, when financial cuts face an individual school, support is afforded to ensure that the impact does not have an effect on the performance of the school.
- The report includes a key performance indicator ‘the percentage of streets that are clean’. Questions were asked as to the definition of clean in the context of this performance indicator. The Head of Highways, Property and Waste responded that the performance indicator relates to the cleanliness of residential streets. The National Standards has a category of A to D as regards to the cleanliness of streets. Keep Wales Tidy also conducts a yearly review of the cleanliness of streets.
- In previous scorecard reports a section highlighting the movement of trends within each KPI’s have been included. Questions were asked whether there is an intention to include a similar section in the scorecard for the next quarter and is it possible to include a comparison with the same quarter within the previous year. The Corporate Planning Programme and Performance Manager responded that an additional section will be included in the Q2 Scorecard to monitor the trends from each quarter. He referred that the comparison with the same quarter within the previous year will be considered but additional information within the scorecard may complicate the information contained within the documentation. The process in developing the Scorecard has been discussed with the Portfolio Holders, the Executive and services to ascertain as to the additional indicators required to measure the performance of the Council. The additional indicators included in the Q1 Scorecard are based on the measure of achievement against the Council Plan. Adaptations to the scorecard may be required over the following quarters dependent on the feedback that will be received.

- The number of children who have swimming lessons via Môn Actif throughout the year within Q1 shows as 1,847 within the scorecard. Questions were asked whether this figure includes children who receive swimming lessons for one term only. The Head of Regulation and Economic Development confirmed that the number of children receiving swimming lessons within the scorecard is for one term only.
- Reference was made to the Social Care and Wellbeing indicators as regards to the number of older people (aged 65 or over) whom the authority supports in care homes. It was indicated that there is a Dementia Forum held in Holyhead for Carers and people who suffer with dementia. It was considered that the Carers do not have the recognition for the work they undertake in supporting people with dementia. Questions were raised whether there are figures indicating how many people suffer from Dementia on the Island. The Head of Adults' Services responded that the number of people with Dementia is increasing on Anglesey and other Counties. He noted that there are similar activities in other areas for people with Dementia across the Island. He said that it is recognised the importance of supporting people with Dementia and Carers within the Social Services Department, but resources are limited. However, work is undertaken with the Voluntary Sector and the Health Service to recognise individuals who have Dementia and to afford activities within local communities.

Having reviewed the Corporate Scorecard for Q1, 2024/2025 and having noted the responses of the Portfolio Member and Officers to the points of discussion raised, it was RESOLVED:-

- **To recommend the Scorecard report and mitigating measures outlined therein to the Executive.**

4 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/24

The report of the Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation incorporating the annual Performance and Wellbeing Report for 2023/2024 was presented for the Committee's consideration.

The report was presented by Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience. He said that the report presents a year of notable achievements that have contributed to several improvements and provides a firm foundation to support the Council despite the economic challenges ahead. He referred to the work undertaken by the Language Forum and noted that it was a pleasure been able to attend an event by the Forum during the Anglesey Agricultural Show held in August and the collaboration undertaken to promote the Welsh language is positive. He further referred to the Social Care and Wellbeing - projects and especially to the work undertaken by the leisure service in completing the 3D pitch in Bodedern. A third provision of the Cartrefi Clyd project has been undertaken which is a benefit for the young people to be able to live within their local communities and resulting in savings within the Council's budget. Education projects - the Curriculum for Wales is in place in all schools and systems have been developed to measure the impact of work relating to well-being, inclusion and welfare on children, young people and the workforce. Housing – work continues to

develop plans for an Extra Care Housing Development at Tyddyn Mostyn, Menai Bridge. Economy – additional business units have been completed in Llangefni and Holyhead. Climate Change – investment in buildings to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy use and reduce the Council's carbon emissions have been undertaken. He thanked the staff of the Council for their achievements and hard work over the course of the year.

In scrutinising the report, the following points of discussion were raised by the Committee and the Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience and Officers responded to the questions raised.

- The report presents a year of notable achievements which have contributed to a number of improvements on the Island. Questions were asked as to what arrangements are in place to promote and share these achievements across the organisation and beyond. The Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience responded that the Communications Unit within the Council is responsible for advertising the notable achievements attained by the Council through press releases and social media. The Corporate Planning Programme and Performance Manager said that the Annual Performance Report 2023/2024 will be considered by the full Council at its meeting at the end of this month and it is anticipated that a press release will be made to promote the achievements of the Council over the 2023/2024 period.
- Questions were asked as to what specific performance areas should be prioritised on the basis of risk during 2024/2025. The Corporate Planning Programme and Performance Manager referred to the Annual Corporate Self-Assessment 2023/2024 report that was presented to this Committee at its meeting held in July. Within the Annual Corporate Self-Assessment report, six priority areas were identified to be implemented for improvements by the Council. An update will be submitted to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee at the beginning of next year on the progress made on the actions in relation to the key areas identified within the report. The Chief Executive in response to the comments as regards to the performance areas that should be prioritised based on risks during 2024/2025. He said that financial resources within the Council's budget and demand will be a risk factor due to trends of the ageing population, children services and housing services.
- The report refers to the main reason for the delay in the launching of the Digital Tenant Portal was additional IT upgrade work required by the Housing Department. Questions were asked as to what other factors contributed to this delay and what communication updates were provided to tenants informing them of the delay to the portal launch. The Head of Housing Services responded that delays in launching the Digital Tenant's Portal resulted from prioritising the upgrade to the services systems in the first instance. An opportunity arose for the Housing Services to contribute to the Corporate CRM system which has resulted in benefits to the Housing Services systems. Communication with the Council's tenants has been undertaken within the digital Tenants Panel and the Tenants Forum to inform them on the delay to the digital tenant's portal.
- The report highlights the installation of new landing pontoons at Amlwch Port and St George's Pier has been postponed. Questions were asked as to the reasons contributed towards this decision. The Head of Regulation and

Economic Development responded that the improvements to the new landing pontoons were postponed due to increased costs that needed to be reviewed. The new pontoon at St George's Pier will be installed from the end of the financial year. In Amlwch Port consideration will need to be given to a more appropriate design due to the nature of the Port. Other sources of funding will also need to be considered as regards to future maintenance costs.

- The cost-of-living crisis has created a significant financial challenge for the Council. Questions were asked as to how this challenge has been reflected within the Annual Performance Report. The Chief Executive said that when people are in dire need the Council is the only avenue, to be able to assist them resulting in increase in demand for services which put additional financial strain on resources of the Council. He further said that the Poverty Dashboard and Corporate Scorecard will identify the trends for the increase in demand for services.
- The report highlights three areas that underperformed against set targets during 2023/2024 (FOI's, NEET and DFG's). Questions were asked as whether there are updates on these indicators to date. The Corporate Planning Programme and Performance Manager responded that it is premature at the present to gauge the performance as plans are currently being put in place to address these underperforming areas.

Having reviewed the Annual Performance Report 2023/2024 and having noted the responses of the Portfolio Member and Officers to the points of discussion raised, it was RESOLVED:-

- **To agree the content of the 2023/2024 Annual Performance Report as a fair and complete reflection of the Authority's work over the period and for further consideration by the Executive to adopt the report.**

5 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Scrutiny Manager incorporating the Committee's Forward Work Programme for 2024/2025 was presented for consideration.

It was RESOLVED to agree the current version of the Forward Work Programme for 2024/2025 as presented.

**COUNCILLOR DOUGLAS FOWLIE
CHAIR**