

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
4 JUNE 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Monday 4 April 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Clive Carver (Chairman)

Councillors: Haydn Bateman, Patrick Heesom, Andrew Holgate, Dave Hughes, Paul Johnson, Richard Jones, Mike Lowe, Hilary McGuill, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Andy Williams and Arnold Woolley

SUBSTITUTES: Councillor Joe Johnson (for Paul Cunningham)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Bob Connah

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Marion Bateman attended as an observer

CONTRIBUTORS:

Councillor Billy Mullin, Cabinet Member for Corporate Management; Interim Chief Officer (Education & Youth) and Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer

IN ATTENDANCE:

Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Support Officer

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were no declarations of interest.

13. COUNCIL PLAN 2018/19

The Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer commenced the presentation and referred Members to the Council Plan and Targets Review sheets which had been circulated. This document outlined the suggestions made by Members at the Workshop held on the 29th May in Part 1 and the targets for excelling, improvement or maintaining within the Council Plan were referred to in Part 2.

Councillor Richard Jones welcomed the revised version of the strategic approach to regenerating and supporting town centres, as circulated at the meeting but remained concerned around whether the Council had adequate resources to drive through the ambition. The Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer explained that the developed approach to regenerate and support town centres would be carried out in partnership with Town Councils.

Councillor Jones also asked why the performance target for affordable homes had been removed. In response to the explanation from the Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer that the target would have been removed as a national performance measure, Councillor Jones suggested that the target be continued as a local measure in 2018/19. Councillor Patrick

Heesom agreed with this suggestion and comments on the concerns around developers finding loopholes in the legislation to provide an adequate number of affordable housing.

Councillor Heesom also raised concerns around the lack of youth provision across the County and that the vast majority of residents across the county were not able to access the Communities First programme and therefore would not benefit from the services including encouraging access to work etc. The Interim Chief Officer (Education & Youth) said that these comments had been taken on board.

Councillor Hilary McGuill referred to the Council Plan Theme, 'Green Council', and said that during the Member workshop she had suggested that the Council work with fast food outlets to ask them to introduce a scheme where the registration number of a vehicle was printed on the food packaging in order to reduce litter across the County. The Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer suggested that this be added to the Forward Work Programme of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider available options.

Councillor McGuill also asked that Carers' satisfaction continue to be monitored.

In response to comments around school admissions, the Interim Chief Officer explained the Council's School Admission Policy and the appeal process which was open to parents if they had not been initially successful in gaining a place at their first school of choice.

Councillor Joe Johnson asked if information on the location of the transient Traveller sites could be provided. He also asked if the Town Centre Investment Plans would be shared equitable across the County. The Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer confirmed that the location of the transient Traveller sites was yet to be decided.

Councillor Paul Johnson suggested that the Heritage Strategy, which included important sites like Greenfield Valley, would be more relevant if it moved to the 'Ambitious Council' Council Plan Theme, especially from a tourism and economic opportunity perspective.

In response to a question and concerns raised around the quality of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), the Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer responded that the development of a Policy document would ensure improvement in quality in the future. Welsh Government (WG) do not currently have a policy on this.

In response to a number of questions around street cleanliness and the cleanliness survey, the Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer explained that an independent survey was carried out across all 22 Local Authorities in Wales. She suggested that this be added to the Forward Work Programme of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider at a future meeting, including information on how the independent survey was funded.

The Chairman thanked Members for their comments and explained that their comments would be presented to Cabinet to consider for the final content of the Council Plan 2018/19.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee support the content of the notes and responses from the Member Workshop held on 28 May, as circulated at the meeting, to be presented to Cabinet, together with the comments made by Members during the meeting, to consider for the final content of the Council Plan 2018/19.

14. PERFORMANCE OUT-TURN 2017/18

The Interim Chief Officer (Education & Youth) presented the Council's performance overview for 2017-18, taking into account the locally identified performance measures and the nationally benchmarked measures, known as Public Accountability Measures (PAMs).

Overall performance in both documents was positive, with the majority of measures showing achievement of target and an improving trend during the year. However, it was important that the Council remained focused and there continued to be a level of scrutiny on priority performance areas during 2018/19.

The report provided details on performance measures which had showed a decline in performance, had not met target by a significant margin or were nationally in the bottom 2 benchmarking quartiles. Agreed measures in these categories would be monitored for future review and oversight.

Councillor Patrick Heesom raised a number of concerns around the number of red indicators. He commented that the Key Stage 4 educational attainment was not high enough and that that performance for pupils receiving free school meals was not adequate. He said that improvement in these areas was needed as a matter of urgency.

Councillor Hilary McGuill commented on the performance measures for young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS) and said that they needed to be identified and tracked earlier on and not just reported at the age of 16. The Interim Chief Officer said that this was a priority for the portfolio moving forward and outlined the need for limited resources to be used for the greatest challenges.

In response to concerns raised around Aura Leisure, the Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer explained that the Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee would continue to receive update reports on the performance of Aura Leisure.

Councillor Richard Jones asked if a document could be provided to Members which showed the changes between the 2017/18 Council Plan and the 2018/19 Plan which would assist Members in easily identifying changes. The Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer agreed to provide this information at the next Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee

meeting. She also reported that a review of the 2018/19 Council Plan to inform the 2019/20 Plan would start earlier in October/November 2018.

Members sought clarification on the wording of the performance indicators, direction of travel and performance progress comments for the following:-

- IP1.3.4.1.MO1 – Annual reduction of domestic fuel bills for residents of Flintshire (£);
- IP6.1.2.3.MO3 – Percentage of Managers completing stress related programmes;
- IP6.1.2.4.MO4 – Percentage of employees completing stress related programmes;
- IP1.6.4.2.MO2 – the number of reported incidents of domestic abuse and Sexual Violence;
- IP1.6.4.3.MO3 – the number of domestic abuse incidents reported to North Wales Police

The Interim Chief Officer provided an explanation on Managers and employees completing stress related programmes, with the aim to ensure enough Managers were trained to identify instances of stress and provide the necessary assistance where needed. The Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer explained that whilst the target for reported incidents of domestic abuse was 0 (as it was not appropriate to set a target), the RAG status was shown as 'Green' to show an improvement in the reporting of incidents, which needed to increase, rather than remaining 'hidden'.

Members asked that the descriptions and explanations provided in future performance reports be in plain English and understandable to all. The Corporate Business and Communications Executive Officer took on board these comments and said that guidance on this was regularly provided to performance lead officers.

Councillor Patrick Heesom commented that there was a need for Members to understand any budget implications of not meeting performance targets.

Councillor Arnold Woolley suggested that the Committee invite Cabinet to publish an action plan to address under-performance where they have a RAG status of Amber, with a downturn performance trend, as well as a status of Red. This was supported by the Committee. The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator confirmed that the action plan would be submitted to the next Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the areas of corporate and service under-performance against the Council Plan and the performance measures set for 2017/18 be noted; and
- b) That the Committee invite Cabinet to publish an action plan to address any areas of under-performance where they have a RAG status as Red or Amber, with a downturn performance trend.

15. **MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE**

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.41 pm)

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Chairman