

Draft Minutes



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Date: 9 October 2019

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors M Rahman (Chair), D Davies, J Hughes, S Marshall, R Mogford and T Suller

Meryl Lawrence (Scrutiny Adviser), Tracy McKim (Partnership Policy & Involvement Manager), Mark Bleazard (Digital Services Manager), Dominic Gibbons (Digital Projects Manager) and Chris Humphrey (Interim Strategic Director - People)

In Attendance: M Lewis, Bevan-Seymour, C Barnard, M Doverman, A Drew, Green and Warren

Apologies: Councillors C Jenkins, M Spencer and K Whitehead

1 Declarations of Interest

None.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 June 2019 were **approved** as a true and accurate record, subject to the following amendment:

- On page 8, in the discussion about Sustainable Travel, the inclusion of the following comment regarding travel in rural areas: "A Member commented upon the importance of having a sustainable bus service in rural areas."

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 July 2019 were **approved** as a true and accurate record.

3 Shared Resource Service

Attendees:

- Matt Lewis (Chief Officer, Shared Resource Service)
- Kath Beavan-Seymour (Assistant Director, Shared Resource Service)
- Cath Barnard (Service Manager Education Services, Shared Resource Service)
- Mike Doverman (User Support Manager, Shared Resource Service)
- Annette Drew (Business Manager, Shared Resource Service)
- Tracy McKim (Interim Head of People and Business Support)
- Mark Bleazard (Digital Services Manager)
- Dominic Gibbons (Digital Projects Manager)

The Chief Officer presented a brief overview to the Committee and highlighted the key areas for consideration. Members' attention was drawn to the finance section of the report, and the savings options provided to the Finance and Governance Board for review. He

advised that the SRS was on budget and had delivered the savings requested. Partners were now in a single category agreement with Microsoft. The largest increase in costs were due to the Office 365 migration and Microsoft agreement and based upon need.

He referred to the previous report to the Committee, when Members had asked about timescales for ICT for Education and advised that a Strategy Group had been set up and had met twice.

Capital drawdown had greatly reduced. Application Support was a pressure, queries had reduced as one person returned, and services were down to just one person. However, SRS are in process of moving to a different platform. Papers would be considered by the strategic board the following week, of which Newport's Cabinet Member is a member. A key meeting would be taking place the following week relating to consumption models and cloud services.

Ten recommendations had been given from the strategic board and there were updates taking place on a quarterly basis, but there was some overlap. A copy of the Recommendations and Next Steps paper could be circulated to Members of the Committee. It was also advised that there had been a lot of positive feedback.

Members asked the following:

- A Member referred commented that SRS received £2.2 million but that it wasn't clear what Welsh Government wanted the money to be spent on, e.g. broadband. Not all schools had bought into the Service Level Agreement, so how could the Partners ensure that those schools will get a provision. The Officer advised the Committee that the money had originally needed to be spent within 7 categories, now 6 categories and details could be circulated to Committee Members. There were 6 layers, that schools had to work up and there needed to be a standard of infrastructure that schools need to hit the next level. Every school would benefit, although an example was given that it would be likely that a school with everything in place already would receive less money than a school who had little in place. Partners were committed to delivering the SLA in Newport.
- A Member raised confidence of teaching staff being able to teach using devices and asked if Welsh Government was providing supporting guidance on the way forward regularly. Members were advised that the SRS had brought together delivery authorities to peer review plans and discuss what they were doing. EAS were part of that discussion to make sure parties were talking to each other. Members were also advised of the Welsh Government push to drive down the cost per device, but there were lots of challenges in this project.
- Concern was raised about the challenge of being able to engage with schools. Members were advised that the Chief Education Officer was working on this alongside the SRS Service Manager (Education Services).
- Members spoke of the cost to buy into the SLA, and schools in deficit were being attracted by cheaper providers and schools needed to be confident that the SLA would be affordable and deliverable. The Officer advised the Committee that the build of budget for the SLA would be straightforward. A number of Headteachers had asked if they could try out the services for six months, but this was difficult as if they stepped out, other schools would then see an increase in costs. Schools needed to work together. SRS has a limited set of resources, and could bring in people to rebuild the timeline but it was dependent upon when schools could make things available e.g. Primary schools asked for work to take place in the summer holidays.
- Members discussed Headteachers coming together to discuss items at forums and asked what challenges the SRS foresaw to Headteachers buying in. Members were advised that they had financial and time pressures, that may mean freeing up a

morning for SRS may be difficult or not so important to them, so SRS might have to find a different way to engage. Some success had been achieved in Monmouth and Torfaen. There was a roughly 50% split in SLA and non-SLA schools. SRS needed to make schools understand the agreed timeline, as Welsh Government would move onto other projects with the funding. The Officer advised that there had been a better attendance in the second meeting. Headteachers would begin to realise how it would effect all of their schools within or out of the SLA.

- A Member referred to School Governors not all being proficient in the use computers of and other technology. It was thought that governing bodies had not been engaged. SRS had been called into governors meetings when something was not working. The relationship with school governors would need to be improved, as they were the decision-makers. A regional governors meeting would be better for engagement.

It was added that with the Blaenau Gwent migration, it had been open to Headteachers to invite SRS to governor meetings and 12 schools turned up who were advised what SRS are doing and why, which was well received.

Members replied that if possible SRS could link Governors to attend if Headteachers could not attend. SRS work with EAS for training staff and this could be ideal opportunity to see partnership working between the different partners.

- A Member queried the thinking behind the strategic board decision for 5-year extension to 2026, although the positives could be seen. The Officer advised this came from the drive for commitment to SRS.
- There is a lot of spending on hardware and did the partnership envision a point where costs come down, or is it just the cycle of upgrading. The Officer advised that revenue costs go up but the capital costs go down. Example was given of renting from Microsoft you'll always be in budget. It is important for SRS to make sure Newport are in a sustainable position. Its not likely to reduce and no authorities plan that sustainability. Example was given that when you get to the end of 3-5 years, the partnership looks at if they can make things last another year.
- Query was made about the Overtime Review (25% reduction) and why wouldn't this be reflected in the budget. Members were advised that the budget shown in the report was the updated budget. Members then queried with regards to specifications on laptops, did the partnership go for optimum or overspend for future proofing. It was advised that they worked closely with partners but did not go for premium packages, they got the best performance for the best price.
- If migrating to the cloud, would that save money on licences, and would the Council have to pay up to a certain amount of storage space on the server. Members were advised that for desktops there would still be the need for a licence. Example was given that in May, Newport migrated to Office 360, so some licences were no longer required, but were still needed for other things. In regards to storage, it was advised that it would be far and beyond what Councils would need.
- Is there a long-term contract with SRS's suppliers, and could it be terminated if equipment became too expensive. Members were advised that partners had seen a decrease in the price of equipment as it had recently been assessed. Regular meetings were held with the suppliers and as a part of the contract, SRS had put in a six monthly review on pricing and could break the contract at any time.
- Does SRS go to schools to provide training when there is new technology available. Members were advised that for any new applications or software EAS picked up the

training, as SRS did not provide a training service to schools. However, SRS ensure that they are on a supported software package e.g. Windows 10 is supported by Microsoft.

- Comment was made about all performance measures being Green and that the service had improved. It was however difficult to judge comparatively to other local authorities, so how did Newport measure against other local authorities? Members were advised that the same measures were in place for the 4 partners. Every month a meeting is held which is replicated across all partners with figures given. These could be circulated to the Committee.
- Members were advised that the digital and strategic aspirations for schools is school owned items, they need to tell SRS how to do things and what they want. SRS role is to deliver the strategy. Schools need a template of sorts from somewhere that has done this properly. All authorities are dealing with that currently, Newport's digital strategy needs to come from Newport.
- Can local authorities work in partnership to improve, and is there any work that can be done in forums? Members were advised that a meeting had taken place yesterday, we can have a group share of the strategies that schools currently have. A sub-group could possibly be put in the Digital Strategy to create a template of a good strategy guide for schools. It was then said that it would be a lot easier if schools had the same strategy.
- Members were advised that there had been a customer satisfaction score of 97%.

The Chair thanked the Invitees for attending.

4 Integrated Care Fund

Attendee:

- Roxanne Green (Regional Partnership Board Regional Team)
- James Harris (Strategic Director - People)
- Chris Humphrey (Head of Adult and Community Services)

The Head of Service presented a brief overview to the Committee and highlighted they key areas for consideration. It was advised that the Integrated Care Fund was now in its 5th year, and is a grant that comes from Welsh Government to support the development of services across the shared services. Every regional board bids for the grant. There are a number of different grants, and the requirements for the grants are that they cannot be used to support care services. The grant had been used in the past in Adult Services to provide step down beds in Parklands, upgrade respite facilities at Centrica Lodge. Live proposals for Children's Services are to provide more in house care facilities rather than send children further away. Over the last few years the Council has benefited from this money. It underpins our prevention and early prevention services. It is also used to bolster layers so people don't have to move into more complex care services.

The Officer gave context to the Members as outlined in appendix 1 in the report. It was advised that the services are provided by three funding streams. Partners have to utilise funding by providing Welsh Government with a robust plan, who make a final decision. This has brought up challenges and delays with the CPA investment plan. Newport currently have projects in ten programmes. Newport's allocation for revenue is 16%. It was then advised that partners were not expecting £19.4 million to the region. All strategic partners had to work hard to understand the financial plan. Newport is leading the way developing children structures.

Members asked the following:

- Members thanked the officers for the helpful introduction. Comment was made that it would be useful to see how Newport benefits has partners, as well as outcomes and benefits that residents have seen. Members were advised that officers have to provide quarterly updates on every project. In terms of residents benefiting, officers have people's feedback and stories. Example was then given of Step Up, Step Down outcomes 95%, being one of the highest. Members advised it would be useful to see more information in future papers. Officers replied that they are currently doing last quarter's information, Members will have a clear picture of the prospective project. Officers can feedback these projects back to the committee.
- What lessons have been learnt whilst working together, and have there been any challenges? Members were advised that a factor in this was how money was best used, the partners have learnt from which projects have worked and been effective and which haven't. Projects are agreed collaboratively across Gwent and then tested as a pilot. If successful they are then scaled up throughout Gwent. Example was given that hospital discharges and delayed transfers of care have decreased considerably over the last four to five years. Further examples were given that Monmouth started working with people with learning disabilities to give more social connections for a scheme – My Mates. This was piloted in Monmouth and is now being rolled out to the whole of Gwent. Comment was then made that they work closely with partners to make sure that money is dispersed to 3rd sector partners to add value to some things they can do.
It was also advised that there is a real maturity in the partnership, they actually align with regional work. There is a real appetite for partnership work, and no resistance to work together across Wales, so everyone is in a real fortunate position to be involved in a mature partnership.
- Are there any challenges for the future? The officer replied that a challenge would be sustainability of services. They have a £16million revenue in Gwent, with a 31st March 2021 end date for funding (?) Partners will evaluate what projects have worked well to explore financial stability. Risk can be highlighted to Welsh Government which would have a massive impact to health and social care system.
The Strategic Director advised that they look at improving outcomes, there had been a little bit of weakness at the end of project, but the partners look at how things have gone, has it made a difference to service users, and how can service users be involved. Partners also look at what services do service users need and starting the services. Issue is that partners aren't seeing much of how we are doing this. There is a concern about allocation of project money.
- The committee were advised that the carers support service are getting additional support, with set events taking place for carers and community co-ordinators helping to work alongside. It also allows carers to be able to access their community support activities and to attend drop in sessions. The Strategic Director added that investment in community co-ordinators still requires people to signpost to services.
It was then advised that all of the partners were responsible for the carers support plan. This is the main role of the carers support network. It was noted that some carers so not want to have assessments but still want information. Members were advised that the number of carers have grown from 300,000 to 1.1 million.

- Examples of how funds had been allocated were advised, which included the ICF Dementia fund which had a short term five month trial in place. Engagement included dementia sufferers, carers and housing colleagues. It was then advised that the timeline to respond to the Welsh Government funding window can sometimes be within six weeks.
- Members were advised that Welsh Government have expected partners to work in a collaborative integrated way. Services are also expected to be seamless for citizens and patients.
- Members asked when service users are discharged from hospitals, does the doctor work alongside the hospital social worker for the assessment. Members were advised that this is in the Reach model. Previously the hospital ward would refer everyone for a social work assessment whether it was needed or not which resulted in staff being overworked. Lots of people didn't need any intervention. Now, service users are visited in the mornings to see who needs intervention and support or who doesn't in order to make sure that those service. It was important to note however that this doesn't mean decision making is being taken away from doctors, it is about finding the most effective working in a challenging environment.
- When the evaluation process kicks in, how will this help partners? Members were advised that the evaluation process comes in November 2019. Each partner sits under partnership board will sign off evaluation work. The feedback and outcome of the evaluation will be shared for best practice and how to take things forward, including the risks involved. It will be an ongoing process, and will focus on one programme at a time. These would be a 15 month timeframe.

The Chair thanked the officers for attending.

5 Transformation Programme

Attendees:

- Emily Warren (Regional Partnership Board Regional Team)
- Chris Humphrey (Head of Adult and Community Services)
- James Harris (Strategic Director - People)

The Head of Service presented a brief overview to the Committee and highlighted the key areas for consideration. It was explained that this is another Welsh Government funding stream and is fairly new. The Head of Service has worked collaboratively and Newport are the host authority for Home First, which are a part of the hospital discharge team. They work at two sites: Royal Gwent Hospital and Neville Hall. This scheme is making sure that people being admitted to A&E are the ones that really need to be.

The Officer gave context to the committee, and advised that the Head of Planning in ABHB wanted to work towards a more seamless system in care. The Healthier Wales policy was published in June 2018 and was cost neutral. £100million was gathered over a period of two years of delivering transportation. The sooner you put in an offer the sooner you can get the funding. Some of the questions Welsh Government ask include "Do you work in partnership?" A small leadership Group was set up to see what could be delivered in 14 months that benefits social care and health and in which they had confidence.

Consultations had been taken with CIT representatives in four challenge support sessions, and discussed networking, what is out there in the committee, what you might go to a GP for

and to access Mental Health services. Five well-being co-ordinators have been funded in areas so they can signpost people for advice.

During the sessions there had been some great suggestions. Examples were given such as transformation of primary care services, training and supporting GPs, and also putting in a multi-disciplinary team to make sure when patients access primary care services they can be navigated. They are trying to test the principles, if this work is how we should deliver, and where can we bring in additional people? The Home First model was then advised, where families can access adult mental health services. The whole school approach also equips schools to signpost and identify work with families.

A significant portion of the money had gone into training staff. In terms of outcomes, this is very early programme, which had only started in January 2019. There had been 792 calls as of the end of June so it can be seen how it could make a difference, which is already being seen to struggling families. Home First has had over 1000 assessments, and 30% for admissions.

Members asked the following:

- Members praised the programme as impressive and exciting. It was then asked in what context would Brexit effect the programme. Members were advised about an underspend in two projects which are being funded from the sustainable funding stream. This was planned so it could be rolled over it next year, and the projects are ready to be delivered in April 2020. Often you cannot roll over, but any underspent funds are in risk of being taken from the Brexit war chest. Partners are putting in a second offer in.
- Would this cause an internal disruption? It was advised that it could disrupt GP services generally. Lots of people feel they don't get the support needed because things are rushed. Members were then advised of an element of support being offered via compassionate communities exchange service being held in surgeries. Sometimes seeing a GP is only one point. In the new model of primary care if you can free up GP time a service user could have more time with them. If a GP was visited for anxiety, further information could be given to the patient, as the GP is not the right person to see.

It was added that 40% of people seeing a GP did not need to see them, so it is important to make sure resources are being used in the best way. Phone conferences had been used as a pilot, trying to work in collaboration in a joint was to manage some people with challenging problems

- Comment was made that some doctors just give patient drugs to combat mental health problems and offer no extra support. There has to be other routes open to patients that are not medicine based. It was advised that partners need to support GPs to give them knowledge to signpost. There is a real challenge from the health board to better equip GPs. There is a lot of work to change culture.
- Members commented that we have to make sure services are in place, and voiced concerns about hospital discharges that families aren't being consulted well enough, with some people going home with severe mental health problems which haven't been identified. It needs to make sure that the right support services are there and carers are receiving integrative services as well as been seen as part of the service.
- How many agencies are currently on board? A definite number could not be advised however there are 100s. There is an appointed lead in each authority area whose job is to work with teams and third sector agencies. There is a big challenge to get information out to the public and accessing it. The Neighbourhood Care Network in Blaenau Gwent was mentioned, with lots of activities taking place such was walks and events in libraries.

The Strategic Director then advised that all carers wish to be involved in the decision-making process, but they need the information. It would be useful if they knew where to go and had a responsible person to go to and get signposted. It works really well as a model. Not all carers wanted to have a carer's assessment.

- Comment was made that people should have access to bereavement services to give them access and information to what happens next. Members were advised that there is an initiative from the National Dementia Project and Cruise support families in grieving. There are also support networks that can be tapped into so carers who have previously lost someone can help others.
- Members commented on the various cultures in Wales and how the harmonising approach across Wales must be challenging, with the border between England and Wales. It was when asked how much divergence was between Wales and England. Members advised that there were lots; Wales have a different funding arrangements, thresholds and different structures. Wales is more generous in many ways with social care. Welsh Government want partnership working,

The officer advised that Wales do not commission like England, who are driven by commissioning and contracting. It seems easier in Wales with block budgets, resource sharing. Our job drive is to improve outcomes, which is challenging but very much outcome focussed.

The Chair thanked the Invitees for attending.

6 Scrutiny Adviser Reports

Attendee:

- Meryl Lawrence (Scrutiny Adviser)

a) Forward Work Programme Update

The Scrutiny Adviser presented the Forward Work Programme, and advised the Committee of the topics scheduled for the next two Committee meetings:

Wednesday 4 December 2019:

- National and Regional Adoption Service
- Update upon Developing Regional Fostering Arrangements

Wednesday 5 February 2020:

- Education Achievement Service – Business Plan
- Well-being Plan Mid-Year Update

She also advised of the list of Briefings the Committee had requested. Following discussion, the Committee requested arrangements be made for a visit to the Wastesavers Recycling Facility on Wednesday 20th November 2019 at 3pm, followed by a presentation of an Overview of the partnership arrangements.

b) Action Sheet

The Scrutiny Adviser informed the Committee of the Actions from the Minutes held on 26 June and 10 July 2019, as listed on Page 121.

c) Information Reports

The Scrutiny Adviser informed the Committee that there were no Information Reports to bring to the Committee's attention.

d) Scrutiny Letters / Public Services Board Minutes.

The Scrutiny Adviser informed the Committee that a Scrutiny Letter had been sent to the Public Services Board scheduled for 4 October, submitting the comments that the Committee had made upon the Well-being Plan Annual Report 2018-19 at the 26 June Meeting. The Minutes of the Public Services Board meeting on 4 October would be circulated to the Committee.

The meeting terminated at 8.10 pm