

Minutes



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Date: 7 October 2020

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors J Clarke (Chair), M Spencer, S Marshall, G Berry and K Whitehead

In Attendance: Tracy McKim (Policy Partnership and Involvement Officer), Emma Wakeham (Senior Policy and Partnership Officer), Ceri Davies (Public Service Board Lead for Green and Safe Spaces – Natural Resources Wales), Ceri Doyle (Public Service Board Lead for Sustainable Travel – RSLs), William Beer (Public Services Board Lead) and Gareth Price (Head of Law and Regulation)

Apologies: Councillors J Hughes and T Suller

1 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

2 **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 February 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2020 are accepted as a true and accurate record.

3 **Public Services Board - Well-being Plan Annual Report 2019-20**

Attendees:

- **Tracy McKim, Partnership Policy and Involvement Officer** (NCC);
- **Emma Wakeham, Senior Policy and Partnership Officer** (NCC);
- **Ceri Davies, Vice Chair of the PSB and Intervention Lead for Green and Safe Spaces** (Natural Resources Wales);
- **Ceri Doyle, PSB Intervention Lead for Sustainable Travel** (RSLs)
- **William Beer, PSB Lead**

The Policy Partnership and Involvement Manager introduced the partners from the Public Service Board to the committee, who are representing the whole of the PSB which was established by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Its key role is the delivery of the Well-being Plan, which report is subject to an annual report which will be signed off by the PSB, then reviewed by Scrutiny.

The Lead for Green and Safe Spaces then gave an overview of the content of the report. The PSB members firstly extended their thanks to the Policy Manager, Emma and their team for pulling together the report, which the partners feel is a good document that highlights specific work that demonstrates delivery, cross-cutting and collaborative nature of the work that is being done, and shows that the citizens of Newport are put at the forefront of the work that is being done is meeting their needs.

The report will be bilingual and available on Sway so it is accessible to more people. We are in very difficult times with the pandemic and all services have been stretched and some

things have been delayed, but partners felt that it remained important to capture the work during the year leading up to the pandemic. The Lead also wished to flag that what is difficult to demonstrate in the report is the maturing relationship of the PSB membership and how this came to the fore when dealing with the pandemic. The teams were very quick to work together to undertake both our distinct roles but to also support each other and work together for the greater good to protect the communities of Newport. The Lead then wished to remind of the context in which we're working as a PSB, the Annual Report is produced every year following the well-being plans implementation and the overview that is provided gives the opportunity for the public services board to review progress against each of our four well-being objectives by identifying areas of good practice and using the following framework what we've tried to set out in the plan is a description of the case study. The Lead for Sustainable Transport introduced herself to the committee. Information was then given specifically in relation to sustainable traffic, transport and active travel.

Members asked the following:

- Members understood the current issues with Covid, but asked what are the timescales for implementation?
- It was advised that the specific details aren't available currently but these can be information can be passed onto the committee as it will be one of the individual partners of the PSB that will be leading on this piece of work
- Members queried a chart on page 75 in relation to performance of Local conditions and safety which has been in the red since 2018, 19 and 20. Is there any particular reason?

The Lead for Green and Safe Spaces advised that colleagues from Gwent Police lead on this activity through the resilient Communities priority. But having sat on the PSB for a number of years, the priorities that partners have faced in relation to safety have changed as the years have gone on. Example was given that after the Brexit vote, there was a rise of hate crime and activity in areas like Pill, where there was a combined response from the Public Services Board. This was not a sustained response and now we're seeing a spike in that area again in some of those activities. It was added that although she would like to suggest that work on the resilient communities priority have seen progress on a project basis, regrettably those statistics overall has not really budged. But this doesn't detract from the individual work that has been done on specific programs.

- Has Covid affected partners creating the report, and has the working relationships with partners grown?

The Lead for Green and Safe Spaces advised that the last meeting, which was chaired by the Leader of the Council with Ceri Davies as the Vice Chair, there was a detailed discussion regarding the impact that Covid has had on the partnership, but unfortunately don't have the data to demonstrate to the committee of the impact that it has had across the partnership. Working together through the PSB has enabled us to respond when issues arose. Example was given for dealing with homelessness, there was collective work taken with the Council, Housing Associations, the Health Board and the Police.

Members were then advised that some work and meetings of the PSB were delayed during Covid, and partners had to get used to the new way of working via Zoom and

Microsoft Teams, which has kept up engagement. Members were assured that partners remain confident that they are still on track with the Well-being Plan. The Lead for Green and Safe Spaces added that partners look at performance measures each year and whilst partners wish to test themselves, they identify the right actions in each of the interventions. Partners are hopeful that they will start to show measures turning around but there is a lag period between the work and the measure. The Lead then wished to commend the work that has been led by Gwent Police around serious and organised crime.

- Members were given insight on the Green and Safe Spaces intervention –Work that has been completed was focussed on developing the local green spaces so people have somewhere locally to go and visit which is free of crime and non-threatening. With the pandemic, green spaces have become even more important. An example was given with the local lockdown in Newport, it was important for people to know that there are some really good quality facilities and green spaces locally that people and families can meet up in a Covid compliant way and remain safe from anti-social behaviour and organised crime.
- Members were advised that partners are not losing sight of the red measures at the back of the report, and are working on improving on the green measures that had declined over that period. Members were then told that even though this had happened, a huge amount of work had taken place with the network of volunteers across Newport on the green measures.
- The Lead for Green and Safe Spaces advised the committee of some of the projects being carried out across Newport. An example was given of participatory budgeting which puts decision making back into the community so local residents can have their say on things that they think are important and how public money should be spent. Members were also advised on novel ways of engagement, such as world café style events so rather than responding to surveys, people can come in and informally have their say about the things that matter to them.
- The committee was asked to note that there was a reflective review undertaken on the kind of maturity of the PSB which was taken back in 2019 and facilitated through Academi Wales, which helped further develop the relationship of the partners.
- Is there a plan to deal with the impact of Covid, and are partners prepared for the additional workload that has been created?

Members were advised that workforce has been stretched under the pandemic. All partners are keen to prioritise the work to help recover from the pandemic and deliver the Well-being Plan and original aims and objectives. Natural Resources Wales are prioritising to recover and not to lose things. Some things are having to be de-prioritised to make space for other areas. NRW have tried to accelerate the work currently being done to ensure that the facilities being offered are safe, such as social distancing, information around walking routes so there isn't a large groups amassing in key points and keeping facilities clean regularly. NRW are also looking to provide an easily accessible map of what is available to people in their local area.

Members were also advised that the local authority, together through Welsh Local Government Association and the Chair of NRW are looking at a Green Recovery to Covid and to look at things public bodies as well as a public services board can do to

help in the situation, such as finding ways that young people who have been affected in terms of their economic and job prospects

- Comment was made about the positive performance of the Eco Star Scheme, where went 47 organisations signed up from a target of 30. Are the partnership approaching organisations to sign up? Also, the report states that Newport is the only area in Wales to offer this scheme. Is it known if other areas are looking at this scheme and possibly be using this as a template?

Members were advised that Newport City Homes had to delay the rollout and renewal of freight activities for around six months from the advice given by Eco Stars. Whilst there is a long way to go in getting into the position where we are utilising ultra low electric vehicles, the scheme enables to challenge how you are running your business and your association, as well as the policies that have been put in place for staff. Members were then advised that after a slow start, the figures this year have been better, and there is a genuine ability to contribute to the greening economy. Both Monmouth and Cardiff have approached on the benefits of the scheme, and we have involved a number of the partners in the review of the Sustainable and Active Travel priority.

Members were lastly reminded of the success of Newport Buses introducing their sustainable vehicles, and the partners eventually want to be a position that Newport is seen as the go to area for this theme. Word of mouth and the committed work of the PSB has enabled us to get to this point.

The Policy Partnership and Involvement Manager wished to add that partners are also working on developing an Active Travel Charter. This is a concept that started in Cardiff. The PSB are working with colleagues across the whole of the public sector and PSB's across Gwent. It was also advised that Walk to Work, Cycle to Work and remote working is also being encouraged.

- The Lead for Public Health Wales commented that the Office of National Statistic reported that in the pandemic there was a significant drop in pollution levels, 70% at one stage. With the known link between long-term exposure to air pollution and public health, this can be built on in terms of the recovery phase. The impact of mental health was brought up, with many people being socially isolated, losing jobs and getting into debt as a result of the national and local lockdowns. This is something that the PSB need to think about to reconnect people in a covert, safe future, which chimes in with the Well-being objectives.
The Lead then commented on the acts of kindness that has been seen throughout the pandemic, such as people helping vulnerable neighbours with shopping and collect prescriptions. This is something that partners could also build on in the future.
- Members were pleased with the presentation of the report and felt well informed. They also praised the positive work in challenging times. Do partners see this as a positive report for the year and are you confident that this is something that partners can build on?

The Lead for Green and Safe Spaces advised that partners were keen to produce the report with no delay, as the pandemic had not stopped the really good work that had occurred through the run up to the pandemic. It was also felt that it was really important to report to keep people linked in, and the important work that was being completed had become even more important as it could trigger people to look at what

they can do in their locality, where they can go and how they can volunteer. It was appreciated that the report is a long document especially with examples and case studies. Previous years partners had looked at ways to get the message across, such as videos but partners are looking at more accessible and interactive ways to report the good work that is being done.

- Members commended the hard work that has been completed over the last couple of years with the Armed Forces veterans within Newport. Comment what made that there is little mention of the work that had been carried out with the Armed Forces veterans other than there were stalls in the Jobs Fair last year. Members then asked what the partners are doing about the Armed Forces Covenant and would like for it to have more of an emphasis in future.

Members were advised that there had been a PSB meeting held at the Barracks the previous year and a presentation was shown on the Armed Forces and the Armed Forces Covenant. Members were assured that the PSB work with partners on the Armed Forces Covenant and would take the comment on board to express the work more within the report.

- Comment was made of the great work of homeless citizens being placed in accommodation during lockdown. Members expressed interest in finding out if any of those who were homeless were asked if they were Armed Forces veterans and if so, how many.

The Lead of Sustainable Transport advised that a lot of detail is collected on all of the homeless individuals that are being provided with direct support through schemes such as Housing First, where the first priority in dealing with someone who is a rough sleeper or homeless is to ensure that they have secured accommodation in order to provide the support that they need. All Housing Associations are committed to signing up to the Armed Forces Covenant, so they can work with veterans and veterans organisations particularly in looking at employment issues and ensuring that we understand the unique circumstances that veterans are sometimes faced with, such as consequences of PTSD. Members were then advised that additional information will be sent to the committee.

- Do the partners feel that the performance measures and targets are challenging enough?

Members were advised that partners considered this and is mentioned in Chapter 5 of the report. During the second year of implementation, the partners continued to identify appropriate performance measures so they can measure real progress and outcomes. A snapshot of these are included in the report but don't always show the full picture. The data from the Thriving Places Wales Index comes from Data Country, which is an attempt from them to support this kind of work and progress with Wales wide data. Members were then advised that it is too early to see the long term impact of the Well-being Plan, so partners can take the Thriving Places Index and see if things are improving or are partners targeting their energy in the right place. Partners also use the national indicators for Wales which are published by Welsh Government to support wider performance monitoring to assess the well-being of the community. Partners continue to self reflect.

The Lead of Green and Safe Spaces advised the committee that partners have a Lead PSB member who is responsible for board development which is on the agenda at times. A workshop has also been completed with Academy Wales which is a Wales

government organisation to develop the board membership and the way the partnership work. Feedback has also been taken from Audit Wales, and the board itself has a separate development plan for itself. The Lead believed that the Covid pandemic had accelerated the effectiveness of the board as the nature of a crisis brought the partnership together. Partners continue to self reflect.

The Lead for Green and Safe Spaces advised in terms of legislation barriers that need to be addressed, work has now started on this but not as quickly as partners would have liked as a result of Covid. One area that partners are looking at is to see how as partners come together with funding streams that we have. Partners each give various amounts of money to good causes and community activities. All partners at the highest levels aim to follow the requirements in managing public money. Partners also have separate requirements that have been developed in their organisations. The partners are also looking at the funding streams that they have and see whether they can be streamlined to partners can come up with a common set of agreed core requirements.

- The Lead for Public Health Wales advised that from a Public Health point of view, some of the population outcomes as long term, so there will be a latency period between any interventions that are put in place now and those outcomes. The Lead believed that they need to be looking at how these interventions are being delivered and being implemented. Members were told they need to be evidence based so that what is being done has a good theoretical chance of working. The intervention also needs to be seen if it can be delivered at the necessary scale to have an impact. Thirdly, the intervention needs sufficient community involvement. This is believed to be the way that impact of the plan can be measured.
- Members were keen to hear about how successful the Newport offer has been, that has been advertised on the website. Members also asked if the website had attracted a large amount of visitors to the website.

Members were advised that this particular strategic theme now rests with colleagues in the Council. The information of number of visitors that have visited the website can be circulated to the committee. Members were then advised that from an inward investment perspective, the last six months have been tricky for everyone. Partners were involved in a meeting with the Business Improvement District as a part of the Resilient Efforts that the Council are leading on and to prepare the city for the post-Covid operating environment. Newport doesn't appear to have been impacted as badly as some other major cities.

- The Policy Partnership and Involvement Manager gave the committee information on the Community Impact Assessment. This will not be a standing document, it will be done as part of one of the interventions to develop projects with communities that have been impacted. Partners would expect that to evolve, as would the plan interventions which will also be reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate going forward. The officer advised once this has been done the committee will be notified.
- How do partners see the report moving forward in terms of having an impact at the population level and for people to understand what One Newport is?

Members were advised that the partners need to make sure that the interventions that are being made and supported have the opportunity to be scaled up so they have a population level impact. In the Green and Safe theme, there is an example of the successful work which has been done on green infrastructure. These actions have

now led to the work on the scaling up the frameworks and supplementary guidance to ensure they have there at the beginning of big population scale changes.

The Chair then thanked the invitees for attending and for the positive reporting in these testing times.

Conclusions:

1. The Committee **noted** the Public Services Board Well-being Plan Annual Report 2019-20.
2. The Committee **agreed** to forward the Minutes to the Public Services Board as a summary of the issues raised and in particular wished to make the following comments to the Public Services Board:
 - The presentation of the report was very positively received by the Committee and felt well informed. They also praised the positive work in challenging times and wished to commend all those involved for their hard work.
 - A Member commented that in the report he would like to see more of a plan on what work partners would be doing, how they would reach their targets and how would other partners be able to help if there are any gaps in achieving targets.
 - Members would like to know what partners are doing about the Armed Forces Covenant, and would like for it to have more of an emphasis in future.
 - Do the partners feel that the performance measures and targets are challenging enough?
 - The committee are keen to hear about how successful the Newport offer have been that is advertised on the website, as well as if it had attracted a large amount of visitors to the website.
 - The committee requested more information about Community Impact assessments that were carried out in relation to Covid-19 and some community based projects that the partnership were planning.

4 **Annual Forward Work Programme**

Invitees

- Gareth Price – Head of Law and Regulation

The Head of Law and Regulation advised that as a Scrutiny committee, they can decide whether there are any partnership reviews or items that they would like to bring forward.

Members asked the following:

- Members suggested that updates on the progress of the Shared Resource Service and the Education Achievement Service could be added to the work programme. The officer advised the committee that these annual business plans normally come to the committee, so will be added to the work programme.

- It was suggested that from comments made in previous meetings, issues involving the Newport Norse joint venture could be brought forward in terms of Covid recovery and response. Newport Live was then suggested as another item.
- Members voiced the important of having updates on the Fostering and Adoption Services. This would be another item to be added to the work programme.

The meeting terminated at 6.22 pm