

Minutes



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Date: 30 November 2022

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors D Mayer (Chair), S Cocks, P Drewett, F Hussain, J Jones, A Screen, E Stowell-Corten and K Whitehead

In Attendance: Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director for Transformation and Corporate), Tracy McKim (Head of People, Policy and Transformation), Janice Dent (Policy and Partnership Manager), Nicola Dance (Senior Policy and Partnership Officer), Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser) and Felicity Collins (Governance Officer)

Apologies: None.

1 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

2 **Gwent Public Services Board - Draft Well-being Plan 2023-2028**

Invitees:

- Rhys Cornwall – Strategic Director for Transformation and Corporate
- Tracy McKim – Head of People, Policy and Transformation
- Janice Dent – Policy and Partnership Manager
- Nicola Dance – Senior Policy and Partnership Officer

The Head of People, Policy and Transformation introduced the Policy team to the Committee and gave a brief overview of the background of the Public Services Board. The Policy and Partnership Manager discussed the seven well-being objectives and explained that the members of the PSB are a range of public bodies. From a Newport perspective, the Leader and Chief Executive are the representatives who sit on the board and ensure that they are heard at a Gwent level. The Officer assured the Committee that there is very good partnership engagement.

The Officer went over the 12 week consultation timeline for the plan, and that the final version will be presented to Council for adoption and approval in February 2023. The report will then be finalised and translated before publication in May 2023; with the new objectives coming into effect from June 2023. The One Newport Partnership is continuing its work in delivering the current Well-being plan 2019-23 and will be responsible for delivering the Gwent Well-being Objectives locally from June 2023 through a Local Action Plan.

The Committee asked the following:

- In Objective 2 of the Plan, the Committee felt that more emphasis on tackling antisocial behaviour would be welcome, including how the Gwent Public Services Board will measure and monitor improvements and progress made.

The Partnership and Policy Manager explained that is the type of information they need to feed back to the PSB to consider for the final plans, and for looking at it from a Newport perspective.

The Head of Service acknowledged that anti-social behaviour discussions are important, as it identifies issues that not a partner can solve solely. An example was mentioned where other sectors such as the housing sector, the green spaces sector all work collectively already, to support the work happening. The plan is about that work that could be for helping different bodies and looking at what can be done as a collective to help different initiatives, the partnership team's job is to identify something that is important.

- A Member felt that if the plan was a generic one with a one fits all motive then it would not work as the Gwent region is differentiated. The Member commented that they need to think about the future generations and expressed his concern in protecting the future to keep them resilient from climate change in Newport, as they face different challenges from the other regions such as the valleys.

The Policy and Partnership Manager alluded to her prior point from the presentation on how the work is spread and the needs assessment carried out across Gwent is going to be fed into the themes. The local needs to spread into the well-being plan and assured the Committee that the partners are looking at how the objectives have fed into the well-being plan.

- The Member asked the officers to locate where the overall plan is with the flood scheme.

The Policy and Partnership Manager directed Committee to objective 3 in combating climate change. It was explained that it is an overarching theme that has been fed in from Newport and that they need to be more specific in how they respond to that need as everyone is affected by climate change differently. The individual plans will look at that but it is fed in from the other agents so it works both ways. The council has a rounded regional and local plan which meets the needs of each of the Local Authority areas.

The Head of Service appreciated that it is difficult to see local needs being met in a regional plan but explained that as they are in a regional set up, their job is to ensure they are seen and heard. It was noted that does not remove the important work of NLW. The discussions are still positive but they discuss what else they can do together facing cuts.

- The Committee asked the Partners to highlight Professor Marmot's previous work that has been successful.

The Policy and Partnership Manager confirmed that there have been positive results in the Greater Manchester Area and the Cheshire area. They have outcomes that the partners and officers are learning from. They have slightly tweaked the work so it could meet the requirements in the region and highlighted how the Leader of the Council is heavily involved in the project. The Head of Service added that they feel that the Marmot principles benefit Newport; it considers how poverty impacts well-being, health and as it is evidence led it helps them in their work.

- A Member noted the two levels; regional and local, and asked if the general objectives which need action, would those tasks be undertaken by the local authority service area departments, such as education.

The Policy and Partnership Manager confirmed in some they would and that the PSB has overarching governance on the Gwent PSB. But noted that the councils are still accountable for local delivery with local scrutiny.

- A Committee Member expressed his concern over the monetary action plan being shared amongst a wider area and asked how One Newport sits in the group, for instance in discussion if they take a lean in discussions, if they are vocal and queried if there would be more constraints on Newport.

The Policy and Partnership Manager confirmed that there is not a budget for the Regional PSB and that everything they have stays within Newport. One Newport is vocal and every Local Authority has equal status to the PSB. In One Newport, they have their own work but that is just one part of the Gwent work and assured Members that there are other agreements.

The Officer went on to highlight the benefit of the Gwent PSB, that they have an overarching body where conversations are ongoing how effective the regional partnership is. It was stressed they have open conversations on where they may not agree on some points but they bring it to a consensus which is lead on a collaborative basis.

- A Committee Member noted how a lot of local issues need immediate action rather than discussions around strategies. The Member went on to ask if there is a crisis mechanism built in, and if not, if it could be built in.

The Policy and Partnership Manager noted they keep it moving forward with their own well-being plan as they are developing the regional plan. Over the last couple of months, the cost of the living summit was ran by the Leader for instance, and officers undertaking road shows in Newport in partnership to see how they can support the residents. Members were assured that nothing has stopped as they support the local plan with lots of work going on. There are task and finish groups and community events which have all been included because of the situation with future planning and what the council can do at the moment.

- The Committee Member felt that a lot of residents relying on the council could be in great deprivation and that it may be unlikely for them to complete the consultation questionnaire. The Member asked the partners what their plans are for consulting the hard to reach groups.

The Policy and Partnership Manager mentioned that there has been a communication and engagement group alongside this work with communities; where officers are involved. For an example, in summer when Play in the Park was organised, the team supported people to fill out face to face consultation for collation. There is an engagement plan that discusses methods of engaging with all communities they struggle on getting feedback from.

- A Member went on to ask the officers to what extent do they expect good practice to be shared.

The Policy and Partnership Manager highlighted that the main ambition for the collaborative joint work is to share resources and be effective with the resources they have. It was noted how that is the whole ethos of the Gwent PSB and that the partners agreed to go regional with that.

- A Committee Member noted how it is natural for human nature to compare to others. When looking at other areas, Newport is much different from other areas for a range of reasons and felt that the Council should highlight the benefits of the

partnership to the people of Newport. As residents could look inwards on what Newport is giving out rather than what they are gaining from the work.

The Head of People, Policy and Transformation recognised that it is another problem that Newport is very difficult from the other areas in Gwent as other areas have more similarities in comparison to Newport.

- A Committee Member wished to commend the partnership work on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal which has attracted a lot of people. That work can be mirrored across other areas and help people see the work going on.

Conclusions

- The Committee wished to thank the Officers for their attendance and the detailed presentation, which provided a good understanding about how the Gwent Public Service Board will work.
- In Objective 2 of the Plan, the Committee felt that more emphasis on tackling anti-social behaviour would be welcome, including how the Gwent Public Services Board will measure and monitor improvements and progress made.
- In Objective 3, although the report references the impacts of a changing climate including more extreme weather events, the Committee felt that there should be more mention of flood risk and response to this kind of emergency event as this is an area which would particularly affect Newport.
- Members of the Committee explored the benefits of the partnership arrangement in terms of outcomes and sharing resources and best practice, and sought clarification from Officers on the funding arrangements underpinning this, and hopes that it will be fair and transparent.
- The Committee asked if examples of sharing good practice could be provided in future to evidence this positive output of partnership working.
- Whilst appreciating that the Wellbeing Plan has been created based on a Needs Assessment for Newport and the other areas, Members commented that Newport has different demographics and geography when compared with the other areas in the Board, and that Newport's requirements must be adequately and fairly represented. The Committee conveyed their expectation that the Council needs to maintain a local level of planning and scrutiny through governance arrangements.
- The Committee were pleased to hear about the level of consultation that the Partnership Team undertake with the residents of Newport. Members wished to promote consultation that is inclusive of all Newport residents. The report gave a questionnaire as an example of the consultation process, and Members prompted Officers to clarify the other channels through which views and feedback were sought. Members felt that some groups may be more difficult to engage and less likely to complete an online questionnaire- Members wished to emphasise the need for inclusive consultation that seeks to actively engage with residents who may be less heard in digital engagement.
- The Committee noted the content of the survey and confirmed they were happy with the objectives and steps.

- Members queried how it was decided that Blaenau Gwent would be the first leading local authority, and how the Gwent Public Service Board would decide the next lead authority.

3 Development of a Regional Scrutiny Committee for the Gwent Public Services Board

Invitees:

- Rhys Cornwall – Strategic Director for Transformation
- Tracy McKim – Head of People, Policy and Transformation
- Janice Dent – Policy and Partnership Manager
- Nicola Dance – Senior Policy and Partnership Officer

The Policy and Partnership Manager introduced the report to the Committee and explained the timeline leading up to it being published in May 2023 and expressed hope for it to be discussed in Full Council taking place in February 2023. The Committee was asked to receive and note the development of a new regional scrutiny committee to take forward the duties under Section 35 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and to recommend adoption and agreement by full Council.

Once Regional Scrutiny Committee is established, Members will need to consider the terms of reference for Partnerships Scrutiny, including Safer Newport, Newport's Community Safety Partnership. Members were directed to pages 23-26 for the terms of reference and were reminded that One Newport is still the local delivery group as scrutiny is required a local level as well as the regional level of the PSB. If agreed to take to full council for adoption, two members would be nominated to sit on the committee. Members were informed their role would be considering how confident they feel that the Gwent membership is helpful to Newport.

Members asked the following:

- - The Chair felt it would be useful to observe what work is going on regionally and for officers to bring it back to committee for information.

The Head of Service wished to highlight that it gives the Committee an opportunity to rethink the terms of reference and dis-entangle community safety partnerships that may sit under an umbrella and look at other local matters.

- A Committee Member sought to clarify if the representation would be rotated for Newport in the regional meetings.

The Head of Service confirmed that if any Member has a view, that within the current meeting would be the time to put that forward. Members were advised that would be a Council decision so all Members could decide.

Further on this point, the Member appreciated that it is time sensitive and that they have to be open minded on where the meeting would be held to which the Head of Service agreed that it is important on where the meeting would be held

- Members commented that if there is a rotation on the board, to prevent long journeys, they suggested if it could be done on Microsoft Teams but were mindful if that would be efficient or not.

The Committee Members thanked all officers for their time and presentation.

Conclusions

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- The Committee noted the development of the Regional Scrutiny Committee, and agreed for it to go to Full Council in February 2023 for adoption, and agreed to the Terms of Reference. Members wished to include in the Terms of Reference that all meetings should at least be offered via Hybrid on Teams, so that Members from different Local Authorities can attend the meeting if they cannot travel. The Committee felt that this supported the climate change agenda as well as supporting the maximum participation from Regional Scrutiny Committee Members.
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- The Committee advised that the regional scrutiny committee should have a clear focus on the effectiveness of the overall plan and the input of each in supporting and enhancing the effectiveness of local delivery.

4 **Scrutiny Adviser Reports**

Invitee:

- Neil Barnett – Scrutiny Adviser

a) Forward Work Programme Update (Appendix 1)

The Scrutiny Adviser gave details of the upcoming agenda items coming to the Committee for the next two meetings:

Wednesday 7 December 4.30pm

- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Update
- Shared Resource Services Monitoring Update

Wednesday 8 February 2023 5pm

- Education Achievement Service Business Plan
- One Newport Quarter 2 Performance Report

b) Actions Plan (Appendix 2)

The Scrutiny Adviser informed the Committee that there are certain ongoing actions with Roxanne Green and Sally Anne Jenkins as the officer is waiting for information from them.

5 **Minutes of the previous meetings held on 26 October 2022 and 9 November 2022**

The Members approved and accepted the minutes of both meetings held on 26 October 2022 and 9 November 2022 as an accurate record of the meeting.

The meeting terminated at 6.40 pm