

Agenda



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Date: Wednesday, 30 November 2022

Time: 5.00 pm

Venue: Committee Room 1 - Civic Centre

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

Item	Wards Affected
1	<u>Apologies</u>
2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>
3	<u>Gwent Public Services Board - Draft Well-being Plan 2023-2028</u> (Pages 3 - 20)
4	<u>Development of a Regional Scrutiny Committee for the Gwent Public Services Board</u> (Pages 21 - 28)
5	<u>Conclusions of Committee Reports</u> Following the completion of the Committee reports, the Committee will be asked to formalise its conclusions, recommendations and comments on previous items for actioning.
6	<u>Scrutiny Adviser Reports</u> (Pages 29 - 38) a) Forward Work Programme Update (Appendix 1) b) Actions Plan (Appendix 2)
7	<u>Minutes of the previous meetings held on 26 October 2022 and 9 November 2022</u> (Pages 39 - 60)

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Date of Issue: Wednesday, 23 November 2022

Scrutiny Report

Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Part 1

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

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Rhys Cornwall	Strategic Director – Transformation and Corporate
Tracy McKim	Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Janice Dent	Policy and Partnership Manager

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked

1. To consider and comment on the consultation Draft Gwent Public Service’s Board Wellbeing Plan as part of the statutory consultation.

2 Context

Background

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 came into force in April 2016 and is about improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. It is designed to support and deliver a public service that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. As one of the 44 bodies named in the Act, the council must consider the Act in everything it does.

The Act mandated the creation of Public Service Boards (PSBs) for each Local Authority area in Wales. Each public services board must improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of its area by contributing to the achievement of the 7 National Well-being goals:

- 1) A prosperous Wales
- 2) A resilient Wales
- 3) A healthier Wales
- 4) A more equal Wales
- 5) A Wales of cohesive communities
- 6) A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
- 7) A globally responsible Wales



The PSB achieves this through assessing the state of economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being in its area and setting objectives that are designed to maximise its contribution to achieving these goals. These objectives must be presented as part of a Well-being Plan which must be published within one year of Local Authority Elections being held. This means that a new Plan must be published by May 2023.

2.1 Gwent Public Services Board

In October 2021 One Newport PSB merged with the PSBs for Caerphilly, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, and Monmouthshire to create a regional Gwent PSB. Discussions had been ongoing for several years about the advantages of taking a regional approach to the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act within Gwent. The One Newport Partnership is continuing its valuable work in delivering the current Wellbeing plan 2019-23 and will be responsible for delivering the Gwent Well-being Objectives locally from June 2023 through a Local Action Plan as detailed below. In its work to support the Gwent Well-being Plan, One Newport is a sub-group of the Gwent PSB.

Well-being Assessment

- 2.2 The Gwent PSB carried out a Regional Assessment of the Social, Economic, Environment and Cultural Well-being of Gwent in late 2021/early 2022. This was supported by the creation of Local Well-being Assessments for each of the five areas. The Regional and Local Well-being Assessments were published in May 2022 and are linked to in the background papers section below.

Well-being Plan

- 2.3 The Regional Well-being assessments led to the creation of potential focus areas for the Well-being objectives. These were initially assessed by members of the officer Gwent Strategic Well-being Assessment Group (GSWAG) which sits underneath the PSB and contains representatives of all organisations that constitute the PSB. Following this assessment, the PSB identified 3 areas of focus for the Well-being Plan:

- Environment (Climate and Nature emergencies)
- Health and Well-being/Inequalities
- Community Cohesion (including Community Safety and Substance Misuse)

- 2.4 A detailed analysis of these 3 areas was carried out by suitable Partner organisations and this informed the development of draft Objectives and 'Steps' which provide the framework for how these objectives will be achieved. These are as follows and are the subject of a statutory consultation which runs until December 31st, 2022:

We want to create a fair and equitable Gwent for all

- By reducing the gap in the number of years lived in good health between the most and least deprived communities in Gwent
- By ensuring that our communities feel empowered, healthy, and safe.
- By creating equitable opportunities in education and by reducing the gaps in achievement.
- By reducing the impacts of child poverty.
- By improving low and no carbon transport links that enable access to employment, education, culture, and leisure.
- By supporting the creation of meaningful employment and training opportunities that enable everyone to receive fair pay for the work they do.
- By working with housing providers and other stakeholders to ensure good quality, energy efficient and appropriate housing for all.

We want to create a Gwent that has friendly, safe, and confident communities

- By creating a safer Gwent by reducing anti-social behaviour, preventing crime as much as possible, improving road safety and enhancing our green spaces.
- By ensuring that Gwent is a welcoming, diverse, and thriving place to live and visit by being inclusive and creating cultural opportunities for all.
- By creating volunteering opportunities across the region which will empower residents to have control over their own communities.
- By creating access to good quality, healthy and affordable food with secure supply chains and opportunities for local growth.
- By reducing digital exclusion and embracing digital innovation.
- By enabling access to valuable work for everyone by enhancing skills and education opportunities and taking advantage of emerging sectors.

We want to create a Gwent where the natural environment is protected and enhanced to maximise the well-being benefits that nature provides to current and future generations.

- By reducing the environmental impact of production and consumption.
- By declaring a nature emergency in Gwent.
- By responding to the climate emergency and protecting and preparing communities for the risk associated with climate change.
- By exploring and promoting community energy projects.
- By transforming food, transport, and energy in Gwent.
- By recognising biodiversity as an asset, addressing the root causes of biodiversity loss, and better managing the pressures on natural environments

2.5 Committee members are asked to note that the Gwent PSB is working with the Institute of Health Equity, based at University College London, on the region becoming a Marmot Region. Becoming a Marmot region involved embedding activity aimed at reducing inequality and inequity between populations under eight principles. These have been linked to the Well-Being objectives in the Gwent PSB Plan.

2.6 The full consultation draft of the Gwent Well-being Plan is attached at Appendix 1 and includes an explanation of why each of the Well-being Objectives has been

chosen. As part of the consultation, Gwent PSB has published a survey questionnaire which can be found [here](#) and is also attached at Appendix 2.

- 2.7 Scrutiny Committees are statutory consultees for PSB Well-being Plans; since a Gwent Regional Scrutiny Committee is yet to be established to scrutinise the work of the Gwent PSB, local scrutiny committees for partnership work, established by local authorities, are being consulted.
- 2.8 Following the statutory 12-week consultation period the Plan will be amended and a final version will be presented to Council for adoption and approval in February 2023. All other partner organisations will also need to sign off the Plan and final sign-off from the Gwent PSB is planned for mid-April 2023. The report will then be finalised and translated before publication in May 2023; with the new objectives coming into effect from June 2023.

Local Action Plans

- 2.9 To ensure that the move to a regional PSB did not detrimentally impact on the local nature of well-being delivery that has been built up since the inception of the Act, the decision was made by the Gwent PSB to have the regional Plan underpinned by Local Action Plans for each of the 5 Gwent Regions. These Local Action Plans will serve two purposes – to identify specific actions which will contribute at a local level to the achievement of the Regional Well-being Objectives and Steps; and to identify priorities and actions which are applicable to Newport which may be relevant at a regional level. Workshops involving organisations in the wider One Newport Partnerships, including Newport City Council, are planned to develop a Draft Local Action Plan

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 Appendix 1: Draft Consultation Well-being Plan for Gwent
Appendix 2: Consultation Questionnaire for the Well-being Plan for Gwent

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

1. To consider and comment on the consultation draft of the Draft Gwent Public Service's Board Wellbeing Plan.
 2. To consider and comment on the Well-being objectives and associated steps.
- Conclusions:
 - What was the overall conclusion on the information contained within the draft Well-being Plan?
 - Is the Committee satisfied that it has had the relevant information to base a conclusion?
 - Do the Committee wish to make any Comments / Recommendations?

Suggested Lines of Enquiry

4.1 In evaluating the report, the Committee may wish to consider:

- Would achieving the objectives in the consultation improve well-being in Gwent?
- Has anything important in the Objectives and Steps been missed?
- How can any of the Objectives and/or Steps be made better?
- Do members have a view on how important each of the objectives are based on the published questionnaire at Appendix 2?
- How will the PBS know if it is doing a good job? How could overall performance be managed, reported, and escalated?

5. Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Consultation Draft Well-being Plan for Gwent 2023-28](#)
- [Consultation Questionnaire](#)
- [Regional and Local Wellbeing Assessments](#)
- [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)

Report Completed: 30th November 2022

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Consultation Draft Well-being Plan for Gwent



Welcome to the consultation draft of the first Well-being Plan for Gwent. The Public Services Board, or often called the PSB, have used the information contained in the Well-being Assessment to look at how to improve well-being across the region. We are interested to know if you think the plans we have will help to make things better for you and your community. We'd also like to know if you have any other ideas about how we can work together for the benefit of Gwent.

The plan will change and evolve over the next few weeks and months as we get more information and an even better understanding of what matters and how we can work together to make Gwent a better place to live, work and visit. That's why some of the detail around the proposed objectives and how we'll know if we're making a difference is missing.

We will be talking to people and gathering views until the 31st December so there's plenty of time for you to let us know your thoughts.

Introduction

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act established Public Services Boards, more commonly known as PSBs, for each local authority area to work together to improve well-being in their area. PSBs are made up of senior leaders from the local authority, the health board, the fire and rescue service and Natural Resources Wales. A number of other organisations are also invited to join the PSB, such as the police service, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the voluntary sector.

In September 2021, the five individual PSBs for Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Newport, Monmouthshire and Torfaen, merged to become the Gwent Public Services Board. Together the Gwent PSB developed and published the Well-being Assessment for Gwent earlier this year, which showed that inequality and deprivation in our communities and the need to take action on the climate and nature emergencies were having an impact on well-being. This draft Well-being Plan used the evidence from the assessment to inform what the PSB could do over the next five years to tackle the social, economic, environmental and cultural issues which can affect well-being in Gwent – this is the Well-being Plan.

A Well-being Plan

Must include: Local objectives – the long term vision for where we want to get to. The plan needs to explain what we want to do, why we chose the objectives, using the findings of the Well-being Assessment, and how we think the objectives can improve well-being.

Steps – the short term actions we're going to do to deliver the objectives.

Timescale – when we're going to do things by.

The Sustainable Development Principle – how we've used this in developing the steps.

Five Ways of Working

Just as when we were preparing the Well-being Assessment, we have used the five ways of working, collaboration, integration, involvement, long term and prevention, to guide our work. This means that while considering how to improve well-being in our communities now, we've also looked at how well-being could be affected in the future and how we can prevent issues becoming worse. We will need to work together to see what we're each doing in a community and how this affects what we do, individually and in partnership. Finally, but most importantly, we want our communities, professionals, businesses and others to identify the issues which are most important to them.



Figure 1: The 5 ways of working from the Well-being of Future Generations Act

This element of the plan will be developed as we work on the final plan, taking into account new information and ideas suggested during the consultation with communities and other stakeholders.

Seven Well-being Goals

The actions in the Well-being Plan must contribute to the Well-being Goals for Wales. Together they show the Wales we'd like for the future and cover all aspects of well-being. While the Plan may not do as much for one goal as another, each of the goals are as important as each other.



Figure 2: The 7 Well-being Goals from the Well-being of Future Generations Act

The Marmot Principles

Recognising the inequality that exists in our communities, identified in the Well-being Assessment, the Gwent Public Service Board has agreed to become a 'Marmot' region with the intent to implement this approach to undertake evidence-based action to reduce inequalities in Gwent.

This will re-focus and accelerate progress towards reducing the root causes of health and related inequalities across Gwent. As part of this, the PSB will use the eight Marmot Principles, alongside the Objectives and Steps, as part of the Well-being Plan.

Eight Marmot Principles

1. Give every child the best start in life
2. Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
3. Create fair employment and good work for all
4. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention
7. Tackle racism, discrimination, and their outcomes
8. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together

The Public Services Board will use the evidence base Marmot provides to inform the actions it needs to take, by working with the specialist, and vastly experienced support of Professor Marmot and the University College London Institute of Health Equity Team to further build on the evidence already gathered and develop its actions in response to the challenges faced across Gwent. This work will help to inform the development of the PSB's Well-being Plan.

Draft Well-being Objectives

Using the evidence in the Well-being Assessment, the PSB has identified three draft objectives:

- We want to create a fair and equitable Gwent for all.
- We want to create a Gwent that has friendly, safe and confident communities
- We want to create a Gwent where the natural environment is protected and enhanced to maximise the well-being benefits that nature provides to current and future generations.

For each of these objectives, the tables below give more information about why they've been chosen, what steps we are considering taking to deliver them and how they contribute to each of the Well-being Goals. As explained earlier, these will be amended and refined during the consultation period as a result of more information and people's views.

The final Well-being Plan for Gwent will be published in May 2023.

Objective 1 – What do we want to achieve?	We want to create a fair and equitable Gwent for all.
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<p>The Evidence Why did we choose this objective?</p>	<p>The latest Well-being Assessment shows that the inequalities that exists in our communities have the potential to impact on all aspects of well-being both at a personal and community level. There are also a range of challenges that could potentially widen these inequalities in the future and impact negatively on well-being. People who live in more deprived communities have fewer years of life that are free from ill health and are more likely to have shorter lives. Children from deprived households get poorer school results; limiting their opportunities and increasing the risk that poverty will be passed from one generation to the next. Some people in our communities are experiencing in-work poverty with the amount of spare money they have after paying their bills making it difficult to afford food, transport, energy and to be digitally connected – especially as costs increase. The assessment tells us that house ownership is already unaffordable for many low-income households, and as house prices rise more pressure is put on our social housing stock. Future Gwent will also need more housing stock that meets the needs of an aging population and changing family structures and is resilient to a changing climate.</p>													
<p>The Steps How will we achieve the objective?</p> <p>Page 13</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By reducing the gap in the number of years lived in good health between the most and least deprived communities in Gwent 2. By ensuring that our communities feel empowered, healthy and safe. 3. By creating equitable opportunities in education and by reducing the gaps in achievement. 4. By reducing the impacts of child poverty. 5. By improving low and no carbon transport links that enable access to employment, education, culture and leisure. 6. By supporting the creation of meaningful employment and training opportunities that enable everyone to receive fair pay for the work they do. 7. By working with housing providers and other stakeholders to ensure good quality, energy efficient and appropriate housing for all. 													
<p>Performance Management How will we know that we are making progress?</p>														
<p>Links to the 5 Ways of Working</p>	<p>Long Term</p>		<p>Integration</p>		<p>Involvement</p>		<p>Collaboration</p>		<p>Prevention</p>					
<p>Links to the 7 Wellbeing Goals</p>	<p>Prosperous</p>		<p>Resilient</p>		<p>Healthier</p>		<p>Equal</p>		<p>Cohesive</p>		<p>Culture & Language</p>		<p>Global</p>	
<p>The Marmot Principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give every child the best start in life. • Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control of their lives. • Create fair employment and good work for all. • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities • Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention 													

Objective 2 What do we want to achieve?		We want to create a Gwent that has friendly, safe and confident communities					
The Evidence Why did we choose this objective?	<p>The latest Well-being Assessment showed that our communities are strong with many people feeling connected to their neighbourhoods and proud of their surroundings. Covid-19 lockdown saw our communities come together to support the most vulnerable, their friends, family, neighbours. Despite that, many people still felt unsafe and isolated. The assessment shows how the legacy of austerity has already effected community cohesion, safety and empowerment over the past decade and introduced widening economic, health, well-being and other inequalities. The Covid-19 pandemic, the cost of living crisis, the effects of Brexit, the war in Ukraine, and the increasing impacts of climate change, make the lives, livelihoods, health, safety and wellbeing of the people of Gwent even more challenging.</p> <p>The people of Gwent are likely to experience real-terms reductions in income and living standards; inflationary pressures and disruption to supply chains of goods, services and food; and shocks to the general sustainability and resilience of the local economy for the foreseeable future. If left unaddressed, this will lead to reductions in health and well-being through increased deprivation, substance misuse, mental health problems, civil disorder and crime, and antisocial behaviour. Evidence is already showing this will impact the health and well-being of already disadvantaged people and communities the most, who will need additional focus and support.</p>						
The Steps How will we achieve the objective?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By creating a safer Gwent by reducing anti-social behaviour, preventing crime as much as possible, improving road safety and enhancing our green spaces. 2. By ensuring that Gwent is a welcoming, diverse and thriving place to live and visit by being inclusive and creating cultural opportunities for all. 3. By creating volunteering opportunities across the region which will empower residents to have control over their own communities. 4. By creating access to good quality, healthy and affordable food with secure supply chains and opportunities for local growth. 5. By reducing digital exclusion and embracing digital innovation. 6. By enabling access to valuable work for everyone by enhancing skills and education opportunities and taking advantage of emerging sectors. 						
Performance Management How will we know that we are making progress?							
Links to the 5 Ways of Working	Long Term	Integration	Involvement	Collaboration	Prevention		
Links to the 7 Wellbeing Goals	Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive	Culture & Language	Global

The Marmot Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.• Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention.• Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes.						

Objective 3 What do we want to achieve?		We want to create a Gwent where the natural environment is protected and enhanced.					
The Evidence Why did we choose this?	The latest Well-being Assessment showed that although Gwent is abundant in natural resources they are not all in a good condition and we know that many of our plants and animals are in decline. This decline is, in turn, making it more difficult to deal with challenges such as climate change, poverty and inequality. The 'green economy' could provide jobs in the industries of the future such as renewables, energy efficiency and decarbonisation and supporting good health. Many of the unsustainable approaches that are putting pressure on our natural resources are also causing the climate to change. We need Gwent's natural resources to be resilient to the impacts of a changing climate including more extreme weather events. There will also be challenges associated with transitioning to a low carbon future, and we will need to consider the whole energy system – heat, power and transport. Whilst projections of milder winters associated with a changing climate may help to reduce fuel poverty, we know that much of our housing stock has poor thermal efficiency and will be challenging to retrofit.						
The Steps How will we achieve it?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By reducing the environmental impact of production and consumption. 2. By declaring a nature emergency in Gwent. 3. By responding to the climate emergency and protecting and preparing communities for the risk associated with climate change. 4. By exploring and promoting community energy projects. 5. By transforming food transport and energy in Gwent. 6. By recognising biodiversity as an asset, addressing the root causes of biodiversity loss and better managing the pressures on natural environments. 						
Performance Management How will we know that we are making progress?							
How does this link to the 5 ways of working?	Long Term	Integration	Involvement	Collaboration	Prevention		
How does this link to the 7 wellbeing goals?	Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive	Culture & Language	Global
The Marmot Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities. • Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together. 						

Other Initiatives

In each of the local authority areas which make up the Gwent region, Local Delivery Groups (LDGs) have been set up to deliver the PSB's objectives at the local level. Their membership is similar to that of the PSB, with additional local representation. Activity to deliver the objectives may look different in different areas and the LDGs will be able to better connect with and draw on local expertise and groups to provide a local flavour. In time these groups may want to deliver their own action plans creating a link between local and regional priorities and action.

Across the Gwent region, and beyond, there are a number of other partnerships and initiatives which will make a difference to people: the Regional Partnership Board is developing work to improve services for carers, older people and others; the Cardiff Capital Region, through the City Deal is working to improve prosperity in the region. Rather than repeat what these groups are doing, the Gwent PSB will look to work with them to deliver its objectives for Gwent.

Consultation Draft Gwent Well-being Plan - Consultation Survey

Do you agree that achieving these objectives would improve well-being in Gwent?
Do you have any comments on the objectives or ideas as to how to make them better?

Objective 1 - We want to create a fair and equitable Gwent for all

Step	Very important	Quite important	Not important	Not sure
Reducing the gap in the number of years lived in good health between the most and least deprived communities in Gwent				
Ensuring that our communities feel empowered, healthy and safe				
creating equitable opportunities in education and by reducing attainment gaps				
Reducing the impacts of child poverty				
Improving low and no carbon transport links that enable access to employment, education, culture and leisure				
Supporting the creation of meaningful employment and training opportunities that enable everyone to receive fair pay for the work they do				
Working with housing providers and other stakeholders to ensure good quality, efficient and appropriate housing for all				

Have we missed anything in the steps or objective that is important to you?
How will we know if we are doing a good job? What could we measure?

Objective 2 - We want to create a Gwent that has friendly, safe and confident communities.

Step	Very important	Quite important	Not important	Not sure
Creating a safer Gwent through reducing anti-social behaviour, preventing crime as much as possible, improving road safety and enhancing our green spaces.				
Ensuring that Gwent is a welcoming, diverse and thriving place to live and visit by being inclusive and creating cultural opportunities for all				

Appendix 2 – Gwent Wellbeing Plan consultation

Creating volunteering opportunities across the region which will empower residents to have control over their own communities.				
Creating access to good quality, healthy and affordable food with secure supply chains and opportunities for local growth				
Reducing digital exclusion and embracing digital innovation				
Enabling access for everyone to valuable work through enhancing skills and education opportunities and taking advantage of emerging sectors				

Have we missed anything in the steps or objective that is important to you?
How will we know if we are doing a good job? What could we measure?

Objective 3 - We want to create a Gwent where the natural environment is protected and enhanced.

Step	Very important	Quite important	Not important	Not sure
Reducing the environmental impact of production and consumption				
Declaring a nature emergency in Gwent				
Responding to the climate emergency and protecting and preparing communities for the risks associated with climate change				
Exploring and promoting community energy projects				
Transforming food, transport and energy in Gwent				
Recognising biodiversity as an asset, addressing the root causes of biodiversity loss and better managing the pressures on natural environments				

Have we missed anything in the steps or objective that is important to you?
How will we know if we are doing a good job? What could we measure?
Any other comments?



Scrutiny Report

Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Part 1

Date: 30th November 2022

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

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Rhys Cornwall	Strategic Director – Transformation and Corporate
Tracy McKim	Head of People, Policy and Transformation
Janice Dent	Policy and Partnership Manager

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to 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
- 1.2 The Committee is asked to recommend the Terms of Reference for the new regional scrutiny and for 2 representatives to be agreed by full Council

- 2.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 came into force in April 2016 and is about improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. It is designed to support and deliver a public service that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. As one of the 44 bodies named in the Act, the council must consider the Act in everything it does.
- 2.2 Appended to this report is a report prepared by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and presented to the Gwent PSB on the 29th of September 2022. It sets out the direction of travel towards a regional scrutiny committee to scrutinise the work of the Gwent PSB.
- 2.3 The Gwent PSB accepted all the recommendations in the report. The Scrutiny Managers in the five constituent local authorities are taking forward with a view to the regional committee being operational from January 2023.

2.4 Scrutiny Arrangements

Section 35 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 stipulates that there must be a local authority overview and scrutiny committee in place to:

- Review or scrutinise decisions made by the PSB
- Make reports of recommendations to the PSB with respect to the PSB's functions or governance
- Consider such matters relating to the PSB that Welsh Ministers may refer to it
- Carry out such other functions that are imposed by the Act

- 2.5 This function has been carried out in the five local authorities in the region. With the creation of a regional PSB, scrutiny arrangements need to be in place to ensure that the above functions are carried out. It has been determined that the most effective way to do this, avoiding duplications and recognising the regional nature of the Gwent PSB, its plan and subsequent delivery is to create a new regional scrutiny committee. The work will be taken forward by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and the appended report describes the proposed arrangements in more detail.
- 2.6 OneNewport as a Local Delivery Group will continue the delivery of the existing Newport well-being plan, until 2023. Thereafter, OneNewport will be responsible for any local activity and actions under the Gwent well-being plan and any contribution to regional PSB activity.
- 2.7 As noted in the background section, consultation is currently taking place on the Gwent Well-being Plan with public sector organisations, the third sector and the general public; and workshops with Partners and public consultation are both planned to support the development of the Local Action Plans.
- 2.8 The Scrutiny Committee is therefore 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.
- 2.9 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.

Background Papers

[Consultation Draft Well-being Plan for Gwent 2023-28](#)
[Regional and Local Wellbeing Assessments](#)
[Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)

Dated: 30th November 2022



SUBJECT: Establishment of a Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee

Report written and submitted by: GSWAG Sub Group (led by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council)

Author: Sarah King, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Consultees: Gwent PSB Partners (following June 22 GPSB meeting), GSWAG Partners and Local Authority Scrutiny Officers). This paper builds on the paper brought to Gwent PSB meeting on June 2022.

1	Areas Affected
1.1	The full Gwent PSB will be impacted by the establishment of a Regional Scrutiny Committee and all areas of Gwent represented.
2	Purpose of Report
2.1	The purpose of the report is to outline progress on the establishment of a Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee, and seek approval of recommendations to progress approach.
3	Background
3.1	The PSB has agreed to establish regional scrutiny arrangements to review and scrutinise the work of the Gwent PSB.
3.2	In June 22, the PSB received a paper outlining a series of recommendations for consideration for establishing regional scrutiny (appendix 1), taking into account the precedent already set by established arrangements of other joint committees such as: CCRCD / CJC; Regional Partnership Board; Cardiff and the Vale Partnership Board; and Cwm Taf Public Services Board Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
3.3	The PSB discussed the recommendations and agreed further work was required between meetings where partner organisations would establish an appropriate pathway and consider practicalities to operate the arrangements.
4	Recommendation to the PSB
4.1	<u>Recommendation 1 – Operating Organisation</u> That Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is identified as the lead organisation to facilitate committee support, with each other statutory partner organisation to identify a liaison Single Point of Conduct (SPOC) to interact with lead organisation.

	<p>Action: Subject to approval of recommendations, BGCBC will begin planning the implementation for regional scrutiny in-line with Terms of Reference and noted meeting arrangements outlined in June 2022 paper.</p> <p>Action: Each statutory partner organisation identifies a SPOC to liaise with lead organisation.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Recommendation 2 – Resourcing Committee Support</u></p> <p>That each statutory partner organisation (excluding the lead organisation, BGCBC, who will provide support in-kind) provides a nominal financial contribution to support the development and operation of the scrutiny committee.</p> <p>It is anticipated the costs will be £15,000 and should be shared equally by the seven remaining organisations (i.e. Caerphilly County Borough Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Newport City Council, Torfaen County Borough Council, South Wales Fire and Rescue, Natural Resources Wales, and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board). The cost is based on existing models in place for CCRCD scrutiny processes, hosted by RCTCBC.</p> <p>Action: Each statutory partner organisation raises a Purchase Order for £2,140 to BGCBC for invoicing, this will cover the costs for calendar year 2023.</p> <p>Costs for operating the scrutiny committee will be monitored by BGCBC as the lead organisation and can be considered for fairness and sustainability as part of an initial evaluation of regional scrutiny arrangements after one year of operation (see recommendation 6).</p>
4.3	<p><u>Recommendation 3 – Identifying Membership</u></p> <p>Two local authority elected member are identified by each of the five local authorities, and an additional one representative from the following partner organisations (<i>note these cannot be officers of the organisations</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fire and Rescue Authority • Third Sector • Health Board Member • NRW <p>This will lead to 14 elected official participating in regional scrutiny processes for Gwent PSB, and should be based on general principles set by existing regional processes already in place i.e.: The Committee should have an equal number of elected members from each appointing local authority, none of which are executive or cabinet members; and that each local authority and statutory partner organisation will determine and nominate its representative(s) in accordance with its own arrangements. The term of office of the nominated elected members shall be a matter for each nominating local authority.</p> <p>Action: Each partner organisation to identify their nominated elected representative(s) by no later than the end of December 2022.</p>

4.4	<p>Recommendation 4: Timeframe for Regional Scrutiny</p> <p>Regional Scrutiny to commence from 2023, with:</p> <p><i>Initial Six Months (Jan to June 2023)</i> Training for identified members from each organisation in January /February 2023, this session will outline roles and responsibilities, go over the remit of the committee via the appended Terms of Reference (proposed to PSB in June 22 paper), and deal with any emerging considerations and issues.</p> <p>This will place members of the committee in good stead, for an initial formal meeting of the committee in March/April (subject to PSB date confirmation) to scrutinise the final draft well-being plan, and allow the committee to report back any observations or recommendations to Gwent PSB before the plan is considered for agreement in-line with the legal timeframe.</p> <p>During this initial period a draft forward work programme aligned to the work of the Gwent PSB will be developed to be considered by the committee at their first meeting.</p> <p><i>Following Six Months (July to December 2023)</i> Regional Scrutiny will follow a forward work programme, with meetings being aligned to the Gwent PSB meeting cycle to allow for effective interaction between the committee and PSB. This would see meetings 4 weeks before each scheduled formal Regional PSB Meeting (quarterly).</p> <p><i>Action: BGCBC to draft timeframe and liaise with SPOCs from each organisation to avoid clashes with individual partner organisation programmes.</i></p>
4.5	<p>Recommendation 5 – Agree Draft Terms of Reference</p> <p>Agree the Draft Terms of Reference for the Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee, to include other key recommendations from June meeting (appendix 2) i.e.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting: One vote per organisation (regardless of number of members). • Chairs and Vice Chairs to be identified at the first meeting of the Committee. BGCBC to make formal nomination for Chair to aid the inception of the process as the lead organisation. • Meeting arrangements as previously included e.g. key issues for hybrid meetings, with physical location for all meeting being General Offices, Ebbw Vale, Blaenau Gwent. • Quorum status of each local authority area to be represented, and at least one-third of the overall number e.g. 5 members.
4.6	<p>Recommendation 6 – Evaluation Approach</p> <p>Agree that the arrangements set out for implementing and operating the Regional Scrutiny Committee are reviewed after one calendar year of operation to include key areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness of approach • Expected tenure of lead organisation • Financial contributions and sustainability

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership participation • Effectiveness of approach and interaction between PSB and Committee • Any other relevant factors that were identified in the initial year of operation. <p>Action: BGCBC to draft paper on evaluation of scrutiny processes for final calendar quarter of 2023 for Gwent PSB consideration and approval.</p>

Report Date: Sept 2022

*Appendix 2 - Draft Terms of Reference – Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee***DRAFT Terms of Reference – Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee**

The Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee will have the strategic oversight of the PSB and will hold the Regional PSB and Partners to account for the delivery of the Well-being Plan and supporting projects.

The Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee will:

- Perform the Overview and Scrutiny function for the Regional PSB on behalf of the five local Authorities of Gwent.
- Develop a forward work programme reflecting its functions.
- Review, scrutinise and challenge the performance, decisions made or actions taken by the Board;
- Review and scrutinise the Board’s governance arrangements and function;
- Review and scrutinise the performance of the PSB projects including delivery and outcomes
- Make reports or recommendations to the Board regarding its functions or governance arrangements;
- Promote public engagement and participation;
- Consider matters relating to the Board as Welsh Ministers may refer to it and report to the Welsh Ministers accordingly; and
- Carry out other functions in relation to the Board that are imposed on it by the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. c).
- Review or scrutinise the progress of any joint project.
- Refer any matter to the Regional Gwent PSB which is relevant to its functions:
 - The matter relates to one of the functions of the authority and is relevant to the functions of the Regional scrutiny committee; and
 - It effects the electoral area of the member or it effects any person who lives or works there.

When considering whether to refer a matter to the Regional Scrutiny Committee a member should first consider if it falls within the remit of a single overview and scrutiny committee within the member’s local authority, and if that is the case the member should raise the matter there. ***Members should only refer a matter to a Joint scrutiny committee if it falls clearly within the responsibilities and terms of reference of the Regional Scrutiny Committee and if there is no scrutiny of the issue in the local authority to which the member belongs.***

It is acknowledged that the establishment of a Regional Scrutiny Committee shall not serve to exclude a local authority’s right to carry out its own individual Scrutiny of any decision of the Regional Gwent PSB.

In addition to these functions the Regional Scrutiny Committee’s lines of Inquiry can include (but not be limited to), the following:

- The effectiveness of the Wellbeing Assessment;
- The effectiveness of the Wellbeing Plan;

- The effectiveness of performance measurement arrangements;
- The level of commitment from individual partners to the work of the Regional Gwent Public Services Board;
- The effectiveness of the Regional Gwent Public Services Board in communicating its work, objectives and outcomes to its stakeholders; and,
- The effectiveness of the Regional Gwent Public Services Board in addressing the issue of pooled funding to tackle priorities

The WBFG act allows for scrutiny of the PSB as a 'collaborative body', not the individual partners comprising the PSB. Paragraph 180 of the Future Generations guidance states that; 'The committee can require any member of the board to give evidence, but only in respect of the exercise of joint functions conferred on them as a member of the board under this Act.' This includes any person that has accepted an invitation to participate in the activity of the Regional Gwent PSB. The Regional Scrutiny Committee will therefore scrutinise the work of the Regional Gwent PSB and **not** the individual activities of partners.



Scrutiny Report

Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships

Part 1

Date: 30th November 2022

Subject Scrutiny Adviser Report

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Role
Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser)	Present the Committee with the Scrutiny Adviser Report for discussion and update the Committee on any changes.

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

1. Committee’s Work Programme:

Consider the Committee’s Forward Work Programme Update (**Appendix 1**):

- *Are there any amendments to the topics scheduled to be considered at the next Committee meeting?*
- *Are there any additional invitees that the Committee requires to fully consider the topics?*
- *Is there any additional information that the Committee would like to request?*

2. Action Plan

Consider the Actions from previous meetings (**Appendix 2**):

- *Note the responses for the actions;*
- *Determine if any further information / action is required;*
- *Agree to receive an update on outstanding issues at the next meeting.*

2 Context

Background

2.1 The purpose of a forward work programme is to help ensure Councillors achieve organisation and focus in the undertaking of enquiries through the Overview and Scrutiny function. Effective

work programming is essential to ensure that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.

- 2.2 Further information about the work programming process, including the procedures for referring new business to the programme, can be found in our Scrutiny Handbook on the Council's Scrutiny webpages (www.newport.gov.uk/scrutiny).
- 2.3 The Centre for Public Scrutiny's Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the forward work programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be co-ordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

Action Sheet from Previous Meetings

- 2.6 Attached at **Appendix 2** is the Action Sheet from the Committee meetings. The updated completed actions are included in the table.
- 2.7 Any actions that do not have a response will be included on the Action Sheet at the next meeting to ensure that the Committee can keep track of outstanding actions.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 The following information is attached:

Appendix 1: The Committee's Forward Work Programme Update;
Appendix 2: Action Sheet from Previous Meetings.

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- **Forward Work Programme Update - Appendix 1**
Consider:
 - Are there any amendments to the topics scheduled to be considered at the next Committee meeting?
 - Are there any additional invitees that the Committee requires to fully consider the topics?
 - Is there any additional information that the Committee would like to request?

- **Action Sheet from Previous Meetings - Appendix 2**
 - Consider the responses to the actions from the meeting;
 - Are you satisfied that you have received the necessary information?
 - Are there any further issues arising from the responses that you would like to raise?
 - For the actions that do not have responses – these actions will be rolled over to the next meeting and reported back to the Committee.

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The Corporate Assessment, and the subsequent [follow up assessment](#) provide background information on the importance of good work programming. Specific reference is made to the need to align the Cabinet and Scrutiny work programmes to ensure the value of the Scrutiny Function is maximised.
- 5.2 The latest Cabinet work programme was approved by the Cabinet on a monthly basis for the next 12 months and includes the list of reports scheduled for consideration. Effective forward planning by both Cabinet and Scrutiny needs to be coordinated and integrated in relation to certain reports to ensure proper consultation takes place before a decision is taken.

6. Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- 6.1 Having proper work programming procedures in place ensures that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services, contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and ensures that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.
- 6.2 This report relates to the Committee's Work Programme, Actions from Committee's and Information Reports that support the achievement of the Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the Law and Regulation Service Plan, Objectives, Actions and Measures and the Wellbeing objectives.

7 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

- 7.1 The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 which came into force in April 2016 sets the context for the move towards long term planning of services.
- 7.2 **General questions**
- How is this area / policy affected by the new legislation?
 - How will this decision / policy / proposal impact upon future generations? What is the long term impact?
 - What evidence is provided to demonstrate WFGA has been / is being considered?
 - Evidence from Community Profiles / other data?
 - Evidence of links to Wellbeing Assessment / Objectives / Plan?
- 7.3 **Wellbeing Goals**
- How are the Wellbeing goals reflected in the policy / proposal / action?
 - *A prosperous Wales*
 - *A resilient Wales*
 - *A healthier Wales*
 - *A more equal Wales*
 - *A Wales of cohesive communities*
 - *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*
 - *A globally responsible Wales*

7.4 Sustainable Development Principles

- Does the report / proposal demonstrate how as an authority we are working in accordance with the sustainable development principles from the act when planning services?
 - **Long Term**
The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs
 - **Prevention**
How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives
 - **Integration**
Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies
 - **Collaboration**
Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives
 - **Involvement**
The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

8 Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2022-2027](#)
- The Corporate Assessment and [follow up assessment](#).

Report Completed: 30th November 2022

Appendix 1

**Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships
– Forward Work Programme Update**

Wednesday, 7 December 2022 at 5pm		
Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)	Examine proposals for the next steps in the developments of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence regional team.	Head of Children and Young People Services; Head of Safeguarding; Regional Lead Advisor Gwent VAWDASV.
Shared Resource Services (SRS) Update	Performance Scrutiny – Effectiveness of Partnership Arrangements The Committee received a performance update in December 2021 and requested an updated Action Plan to monitor progress in 12 months.	SRS Chief Officer Head of People and Business Change Digital Services Manager Digital Information Project Officer

Wednesday, 2 February 2022 at 5pm		
Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Potential Invitees
Education Achievement Services (EAS) Business Plan	Performance Scrutiny – of the EAS Partnership and its achievement of the objectives within the Business Plan and consider the impact of the plan for communities within Newport The Business plan is the regional strategic plan for accelerating educational outcomes during 2017-2018. It sets out the priorities, programmes and outcomes to be achieved by the Education Achievement Service on behalf of the South East Wales Consortium. The South East Wales Consortium is required to submit to the Welsh Government a three-year Business Plan that will be updated annually and the local authorities Scrutiny Committees are consulted as part of this process.	EAS Representative Chief Education Officer Deputy Chief Education Officer

**Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships
– Forward Work Programme Update**

<p>One Newport Wellbeing Plan 2022-23 Q2 Performance</p>	<p>Performance Monitoring of the delivery of the Wellbeing Plan by the PSB Statutory obligation within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2014 for this item to be included on the work programme.</p>	<p>One of the Leads for each of the interventions which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Newport Offer; - Strong Resilient Communities; - Right Skills; - Green and Safe Spaces; - Sustainable Travel.
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Performance Scrutiny Committee – Partnerships

ACTION SHEET – 26 October 2022

	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
1	Gwent Regional Integration Fund	The Committee considered the financial liabilities and implications of the new Regional Integration Fund and its tapered funding model.	Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board	ACTIONED – Comments from the Committee forwarded to officers on 26th October 2022. The Committee wished to make comment to Welsh Government that now is not the time for the tapering funding model as the challenge at present climate is too great. The Committee requested that deadlines be pushed back for the tapered funding model until 2024.
1	Gwent Regional Integration Fund	The Committee ask if the comments from the other partnership members where this has been presented could be shared.	Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board	ONGOING –Request forwarded to officers on 26th October 2022. When comments are received, Scrutiny Adviser will forward to Committee.
1	Gwent Regional Integration Fund	The Committee requested for a report on the work of the Regional Partnership Board will be brought back to the Committee.	Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board	ONGOING –Request forwarded to officers on 26th October 2022. Scrutiny Adviser to liaise with RPB to organise a date to add report to Committee’s Forward Work Programme.

1	Gwent Regional Integration Fund	The Committee ask if they could be provided with the figures of the amount of unpaid carers there are in Newport.	Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board	ONGOING –Request forwarded to officers on 26th October 2022. When figures are received, Scrutiny Adviser will forward to Committee.
1	Gwent Regional Integration Fund	Members asked if they were able to be advised of the outcome of tomorrow’s meeting with the Ministers	Scrutiny / Regional Partnership Board	ONGOING –Request forwarded to officers on 26th October 2022. When information is received, Scrutiny Adviser will forward to Committee.

ACTION SHEET – 9 November 2022

	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
1	Norse Joint Venture Partnership	The Committee considered the report and presentation from the Norse Joint Venture Partnership.	Scrutiny / Norse JV Partnership	ACTIONED – Comments from the Committee forwarded to the partnership on 14th November 2022.
1	Norse Joint Venture Partnership	The Committee thanked Newport Norse for their invitation to their Newport Head Office and wished to take up their offer to visit their site to see how things are operated there.	Scrutiny / Norse JV Partnership	ONGOING – Scrutiny Team to arrange a date with Norse for a site visit.

1	Norse Joint Venture Partnership	Members would like to receive the full details of the complaints	Scrutiny / Norse JV Partnership	ONGOING – Information requested on 14th November 2022.
1	Norse Joint Venture Partnership	The Committee asked the partners to provide a more detailed breakdown of their staff numbers and to clarify how much of the work is subcontracted. The Committee also requested what the gender and ethnicity of the apprenticeships/trainees were, would like to see this area monitored on an annual basis	Scrutiny / Norse JV Partnership	ONGOING – Information requested on 14th November 2022.
1	Norse Joint Venture Partnership	The Members would like to know the figure of money which goes into the public services and how much shares Norfolk Council gets. Members also wish to know where does the rebate money go, and how is it used and recorded?	Scrutiny / Norse JV Partnership	ONGOING – Information requested on 14th November 2022.
2	Education Achievement Service Value for Money Report 2021-22	The Committee considered the information provided within the submission of evidence, together with the externally commissioned Education Achievement Service (EAS) Regional Value for Money (VfM) report 2021-22 and PowerPoint presentation.	Scrutiny / EAS	ACTIONED – Comments from the Committee forwarded to the partnership on 14th November 2022.

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Minutes

Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Date: 26 October 2022

Time: 5.00 pm

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

In Attendance: Sally Ann Jenkins (Strategic Director - Social Services), Roxanne Green (Regional Partnership Board - Assistant Director Partnership and Integration PMO), Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser) and Felicity Collins (Governance Officer)

Apologies: None.

1 Declarations of Interest

None.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 October 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 October 2022 were **accepted** and approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 Gwent Regional Integration Fund

Invitees:

- Sally Jenkins – Strategic Director – Social Services
- Roxanne Green - Regional Partnership Board – Assistant Director Partnership & Integration PMO

The Strategic Director introduced the report to the Committee, explaining that the Regional Partnership Board are looking at the Health and Social Care Regional Integration Fund (the RIF) which is a 5 year fund to deliver a programme of change from April 2022-March 2027. The Strategic Director gave background to the RIF which is a joint venture across the 5 local authorities and the health board. The RIF has brought about projects that have become a part of the core funding. If the social services wish to bring about transformation, the area is in a position where the financial future looks uncertain.

Members were asked to consider the financial implications and proposed tapered funding model and welcomed any comments they would like the partners to take back to the Regional Partnership Board.

The Committee asked the following:

- The Chair asked what the benefit is of having all of the five authorities, GAVO and TVA working together and if there is a financial saving. The Chair then queried if they operate as a Social Services the same as other authorities.

The Strategic Director advised that it is in statute that the Partners have to have a RPB with the third sectors. It was clarified that the board is in line with the Well-being of the Future Generations Act, which stipulates that every area has an RPB that comes together to join areas in work where possible. It was highlighted that the authorities still have their own separate work but look at areas of work where they have commonalities and share ideas, also where the health services and social services intersect.

The Assistant Director PMO added that they have specific population groups also for example such as children, dementia, adults, all with complex needs. These specific population groups support would benefit from a joint response. The Strategic Director asserted that there is a high degree of operational independence within each local authority, some of these areas of work are delivered locally or regionally. There are differences on those depending on which group and which money for those projects. But the RPB is laid out for them in the constitution.

- A Member queried that they are lacking resources individually and as a group, if it is a Welsh Government Policy, there are a lot of ideas shared as its cross cutting on the board; so the Member asked if the Officer could confirm the best way to do it financially and if there is anything that the partners would like to change.

The Strategic Director recognised that if a comment on possible change was made, that could have a political dimension to the answer. Financially, as the Welsh Government has chosen this way to funnel the grant money to them; whether the officers agree with that is not for discussion. They have chosen this route for funding to ensure that the partners work together and have commonalities, such as the ones that the Assistant Director mentioned.

The Officer confirmed she would not be able to confirm if there is one way better than the other, but it was stressed that if the Council chose to walk away all together, then they would lose that share of money, or go back to Welsh Government and explain they cannot taper the funds due to the change in the financial climate.

- A Member confirmed with the partners that the tapered money is in addition to the Newport City Council's core funding. As that will reduce on a 5 year period, that would leave a sum of money as stated on page 28 on the table and asked the partners to confirm if they would have to find the funds to continue the services with the funds to come out of Newport's core budget. The Member also asked where the taper is coming from.

The Strategic Director confirmed that if they wanted to continue the services then they would have to find the money to fund those projects. The Strategic Director also confirmed that it is in the Terms and Conditions from the funding from the Welsh Government. The Assistant Director PMO gave a bit of background in the negotiations of the RIF, it posed a cliff edge with a lot of risk in the system. She was involved in the earlier conversations advocating for the positions of the statutory partners within Gwent with Welsh Government. Their intention with the tapered funding model is to promote sustainability. It would only reduce to 50%, but it was mentioned that the percentage was going to be much less initially, but they managed to negotiate it to 50%.

To help explain the concept behind the guidance, it was mentioned that the government want the statutory partners to bring existing resources to the table to bring ideas together to benefit those with complex needs. Members were

signposted to the tables in appendix A which sets out what it would mean for the organisation if they adhered to the Welsh Government's terms and conditions.

- A Member queried if the partners have assessed this on the current inflation levels.

The Strategic Director advised that they have assessed the position they are currently in with the current funding under the RIF and advised they are working over the fall out on pay and inflation issues. As noted by the Committee, the inflation is a challenge as it changes frequently. If there were no inflation, then the social services sector would be in a better position to think about the taper and re-purposing of the money but unfortunately it was stressed they are not in that position.

- A Member referred to the table that shows a number of initiatives with the costs in relation to children with enhanced Educare and asked if they are all new projects.

The Strategic Director confirmed that they are all funded under the RIF, some were existing projects under the GRIF which moved under the new RIF. These are not part of the Newport City Council's core budget and clarified that they are from grant funding through the partnership boards. Therefore it was confirmed that most of the projects materialised from the funding of the RIF not the Newport City Council.

- The Member asked the partners if the projects are additional to the core funding.

In response, the Strategic Director advised that they have been able to develop those projects on top of their core funding; therefore they could construct the argument that they are core services. An example was used where enhanced Educare services which prevent children from becoming looked after children is a statutory care for the team. The funding for that is coming from that stream and assured the Members that they are using the funding to ensure that services can deliver to the best of their ability to support the vulnerable individuals. That could be seen as a key service.

- If those services and projects were to stop and not be implemented again, would that increase the strain on the health services?

The Strategic Director confirmed that many of the projects help support people so that they do not go to hospital and also to help patients leave hospital. It was explained that if the council were to have to use the taper, it would jeopardise those projects and therefore have an impact on those issues.

- A Member asked if the tapering effect is a phrase for a budget cut over time, and if that is the case, it was acknowledged that hospital admissions and discharges are problematic at the moment to the public. The Member went on to ask if having two distinct services; health and social services are problematic to resolving the problem.

The Strategic Director advised that a response is out of her remit due to the political agenda with social and health services. The Officer stressed that working together is imperative to address such issues. There are challenges within that such as winter planning for all of the five local authorities and acknowledged the problems with ambulances and front door emergency services. Most of the work is an attempt to address these issues but explained that they do not have another budget to do that. The Officer felt that particular issue is not with the taper and that there are bigger issues that relate to that.

The Assistant Director explained that with the RPB – the funding does not reduce for 5 years. The model is to help the reinvestment and all parts of the system, so it is trying to support the developments of the systems within this time. The overall budget would stay the same for the RPB but if the tapering were to be pushed back, it would mean all statutory partners would respond and have that conversation with the Welsh Government.

- A Member mentioned under the carers training part; it was highlighted the social care workers have the lowest funding spending wise in the council due to cutbacks. The Member asked how that impacts the training and recruitment.

The Strategic Director felt that the recruitment force is a real challenge but is a nationwide issue also. They have quite a high rate of vacancies in social care but they face an issue in providing domiciliary care. There are pots of money in the council specifically for certain projects and staff for the roles, and they need to retain those for the support.

- The Member also recognised the shortages everywhere in all aspects for staff and asked how the social services have a vision on how to recruit.

The Strategic Director acknowledged the issues agreed that is a challenge and that the staff are exhausted from post pandemic work. There are issues about pay, terms and conditions, staff are exhausted from the work post pandemic. There is a body of work ongoing on how to increase support, how to retain and how to train their staff as it impacts them every day.

- A Member asked if the methodology behind the taper is to encourage services to change over the 5 years of funding.

The Strategic Director confirmed that is to support the innovation with the tapered support. However the challenge is that there are some vital services as mentioned in the earlier discussion. Which may mean that other services would need to be cut due to continue funding after the 5 years.

- A Member asked the partners to confirm how the partnership is working for other Local Authorities.

The Strategic Director explained that Councillor Hughes has recently joined the RPB as Cabinet Member for Social Services. The Officer felt that the working relationship is good, it was mentioned that they do not always agree on everything. The 5 Local Authorities work well together and also disagree with the health board frequently and mentioned that some areas do not have such a good working relationship as Newport does. It was stressed that operationally, there are strong working relationships. It was recognised that the 5 local authorities have different demographics and needs, which can be difficult at times but reassured the Committee that working relationships are strong.

- A Member commented how Newport has a large BAME community; which means that Newport's needs might be different from the other areas.

The Strategic Director stressed that they are able to reflect local differences on the RIF. An example was mentioned where they highlighted the children element, looking at a similar model of care across Gwent. This was delivered and is a successful way of working, as educare services are delivered in a particular way by looking at particular needs of the community and ensuring the understanding of particular needs of Newport's BAME communities.

The Assistant Director added that some work they would not see from the report, Newport has specific elements in the health board plan; such as assisted technology plan which targets unpaid carers work in BAME, where pockets of work have been enabled and developed from working collaboratively. The Partner offered a follow up session that to show the Members what work they do for that.

- A Member asked if the Partners have any figures on unpaid care workers in the area.

The Strategic Director advised they can provide this data. It was explained that they are going to People Partnership Scrutiny Committee in November on Adult Carers and advised the Members they will be looking at that. When the report is ready, the partners agreed to share that report with the committee.

The Cabinet Member added that the Regional PSB is a relatively new group of people who get on particularly well in communication with a range of benefits. It was stressed that the council needs to work with its colleagues to use that money in a targeted response to help Gwent.

Through a pushback in the RIF, as the council has always faced increasingly challenging economic positions; but the reality is that they would not be able to afford the funds for the projects due to the situation.

It was mentioned that conversations have been made with Ministers as a partnership board in sustaining the RIF. It was suggested that the partners push back on the deadlines as the financial implications for the authorities would be detrimental.

The Cabinet Member addressed the Committee that they support the regional model. The Member went on to cover the positives to the joint venture such as the fact they get on well with the other authorities and the health board and look to continue to support the RIF as the authority does get a lot from it. It was emphasised that the partners should not be rushed into major decision making but stressed they are in a position where they have to push back on the taper.

- A Member agreed with the Cabinet Member's comments and stated that the tapering model is problematic due to the current financial situation that the council finds itself in and then asked the Assistant Director to agree whether the current services would suffer if the council adopted the model.

In response, the Assistant Director confirmed that as a Regional Partnership Board, each statutory partner would need to consider the implications of that. It was explained that they could either stop the projects or cut another service to adhere to the terms and conditions and confirmed that the Members' summary was very accurate.

- The Chair of the Committee referred to the partnership website which appeared incomplete and asked for the partners to confirm how the partnership is made up with the delegates.

The Strategic Director confirmed that each of the five authorities have the relevant Cabinet Member, and the Social Services Directors as representatives of their areas, one from GAVO, one from DVA.

The Assistant Director gave a breakdown of the Membership; the Regional Partnership Board Chair, the Chair of the Health Board, the Chief Executive Officer of the Health Board, Independent Member of third sector, Special Advisor

to the Board, 5 Directors of the Social Services from the local authorities, 5 Cabinet Members for Social Services, Housing Representative, Populations Representatives, specific Member acts on behalf of the education officers, Chief Education Officer alongside the 5 Education Officers from the authorities, Citizens Representative, a Housing Association Representative, GAVO, TVA Representative representing third party, with support officers also. It was noted that the membership is quite large of near 28 Members in the discussion.

- The Chair made the comment that the Welsh Government is relying on each individual authority to get on with the taper. As there are local families in Newport who have family in the surrounding authorities, the Member stated he understood that the partnership is working, but not the methodology.

The Strategic Director explained that the structure of groups such as children's services, adult services board, dementia services all come together at different levels. The Director previously sat on the children services board which she deemed a really effective board and now chairs the iScan board which works very well together. The Gwent Adult Board was also mentioned as an example which was effective during covid in working together to address care home issues and challenges with the hospitals. The RPB is there but claimed that the work of these that they have put in is relevant.

- The Chair informed the Partners that he has confidence that they are doing their best but expressed his concern on what exactly the committee are scrutinising and asked the partners to confirm who is scrutinising in how the partnership works together.

The Strategic Director echoed the Cabinet Members' previous point, where the RIF brings in a significant amount of money and even before tapering, the council would have been stuck. It gives the authority a door to other funding streams, for instance the transformation fund. It also gives cross hurdling of ideas and comparisons on the other boards. The Director used a small example of a small psychology service with poor working relationships to begin with at the start, but as a result of working together through the service, they now have very good relationships. This example was shown to explain how collaborative working has helped the authorities. In terms of the scrutiny of the partnership, the Director offered to come back to Committee to inform them about the actual day to day work details.

The Chair and Committee agreed that they would be happy to arrange that.

- A Member commented on the range of different sectors and asked where the vision comes from, and also asked how they measure the KPIs.

The Strategic Director confirmed that the partners measure each other on KPIs and have a significant amount of reporting back to Welsh Government in terms of what the partners do with the funds. The visions all come from the Members of the board.

- Members felt that the large membership of the board does not sound manageable in terms of getting everyone to agree on things.

In response, the Strategic Director assured the Committee that the 28 members all agree on the RIF and Tapering.

- The Chair went onto ask if they are the first committee that this has been to.

The Strategic Director confirmed that they are the third, and that the others all agreed on it.

The Assistant Director added that this is the first committee that she has attended for it and was happy to provide any detail. The agreement through discussion with all partners, it was agreed that it would be detrimental to either service deliverance or financial budgets if they were to intervene the tapered funding model. As a RPB they are being honest and transparent with the Welsh Government as she advised that the tapering would be realised from this April for the start of the next financial year. This explains why it is shown as commencing in the second financial year under the appendix A under financial consequences.

- Discussion ensued amongst the Members as they shared their awareness over the forecast of the financial situation that the local authorities will all find themselves in. A Member felt it was a shame that the report did not transpire the good working partnership relations mentioned in the earlier discussion which would have been helpful for the Committee. It was also mentioned that comments from senior officers in the report did not figure out the issue of where the money will come from at the end of the taper.
- The Members acknowledged that the council will be facing budget pressure in a difficult financial situation and would like to have more information as it is important for the partners to stick together to work through that. It was also mentioned that they may not know how much funding will come from Westminster Government.

The Assistant Director felt it was important to mention an unrelated matter that in statutory organisation, they have to pre-empt the risk. Last year was when the partners felt the cliff edge and with some of the information that they can share; they undertook significant assessments on the impact should they have to stop some of the services. Some were quite specific to the service areas and third party sectors, with a source of income to some employees, as they have around 400 members of staff through the RPB sources across Gwent. These services were seen as critical for the system flow and the partner apologised if the information for the Members was not sufficient and agreed to provide more in-depth detail to the Committee on the points mentioned.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services also responded, stating that there is a unanimous feeling amongst the Members sitting on the RPB on the tapering. As the funding would massively de-stabilise the social services areas going forward. It was mentioned that projects going into 2023, 2023 and 2025 rely on this funding and therefore stressed that the council needs to push back on the tapering, otherwise the impact on the citizens would be dire. The Member explained that this is why they would like to recommend to ministers to push back on the deadline.

- A Member noted with regard to the innovations and improvements and asked if they are financially available for the council given the circumstances. As the authority would need to top up the funding that would be taken away with a taper, the Member felt that it would not be a practical situation. The Chair added that innovation can sometimes come from pressure and that it could be done as that is the authority's priority and acknowledged the pressures that the council faces.
- Discussion ensued and the Strategic Director echoed her support for the Cabinet Member's comments and advised the Committee that it would be helpful for them

to pass on the Members comments that they would like to push back on the tapering to Welsh Government.

A Member confirmed he was happy to agree to that as he expressed his concern on the impact of the taper as it would be difficult to see where the money is going to come from in the future to fund the services and also for impact it could potentially have on hospitals with consequences such as bed-locking.

- A Member asked the partners if they would need to go back to the Welsh Government as the Regional Partnership Board or ask them for a few years longer or one year instead.

In response, the Strategic Director explained that they would be going back to innovation and improvements; therefore they would go back to the Welsh Government to explain that now is not the time for the taper and that innovation is something that they are currently seeking but given the financial situation, it would post a challenge as mentioned by the Members.

The Committee were informed that the Regional Board are chairing a meeting with a Minister tomorrow to discuss with the relevant Ministers.

The Members thanked the partners for their work and for their time. The Members agreed that they would like to clarify their position that the message can be passed on to the Welsh Government that they need to push back on the taper.

Conclusions

- The Committee considered the financial liabilities and implications of the new Regional Integration Fund and its tapered funding model.
- The Committee wished to make the comment to Welsh Government that now is not the time for the tapering funding model, as the challenge at present; economic climate is too great. It was agreed that innovation and improvement is desirable in the longer term, however now is not the time to put these services at risk. Not having the funds to be able to run the projects noted in the report would have an enormous impact on the people who rely on these projects for support. The Committee requested that the deadlines be pushed back for the tapered funding model until 2024.
- The Committee asked if comments and views from the other partnership members where this has been presented, could be shared with them.
- Members requested for a further report on the work of the Regional Partnership Board to be brought back to the Committee. Members commented that it would be helpful if the report could include possible case studies to show examples of how the partnership works as the partnership is quite evident.
- The Scrutiny Adviser agreed to arrange with the Strategic Director to bring that report in around March/April time. Members were informed as soon as the adviser receives that update, he would update the forward work programme to include it.
- The Committee asked if they could be provided with the figures of the amount of unpaid carers there are in Newport.
- The Scrutiny Adviser agreed to put the Committee's confirmation of push back in writing in email to the partners which will also be included in the minutes.
- A Member asked if they would find out about the outcome with the Welsh Government on the following day. The Scrutiny Adviser informed them that he

would ask the Strategic Director to see and confirm with the Members when he knows.

4 **Scrutiny Adviser Reports**

Invitee:

- Neil Barnett – Scrutiny Adviser

a) Forward Work Programme Update (Appendix 1)

Wednesday 9 November

- Norse Joint Venture Partnership
- EAS Value for Money Report

Wednesday 7 November

- VAWDASV
- Shared Resource Services

The Committee will receive annual updates on both.

b) Actions Plan (Appendix 2)

- The Scrutiny Adviser advised the Members that all actions apart from one action are up to date on the action sheet as actioned.
- The Community Safety Update has been considered as an action. The Members were informed that the Scrutiny Adviser is working with Janice Dent on bringing that report to the committee which would likely to be in March/April. The Adviser agreed to let the Committee know when a date has been set.
- A Member asked for clarity on the work programme order as the report mentions that the cabinet has also put together a work programme.

The Scrutiny Adviser explained that when the advisers plan the Forward Work Programme, they also initially work out Cabinet's Forward Work Programme and then work with the Heads of Service to look back at what comes in annually such as the EAS Value for Money Report, the Well-being Plan.

The Adviser informed Members if there is anything that the Members would like the scrutiny team to bring to the partnership committee then that could be suggested with the chair of the committee to include in the draft forward work programme. The Committee were reminded that it is entirely up to them to add or take away items as they please.

- The Member then queried if the committee are mirroring what the Cabinet are working through.

The Scrutiny Adviser raised the Market Stability Report which most recently came to Committee, which was requested by Phil Diamond to go to Partnerships before going to the Cabinet, which then would go to council. It varies amongst reports, as sometimes officers and partners ask for scrutiny input before sending the report to Cabinet and Council.

- A Member asked to clarify if items on the agenda can only be reports.

The Scrutiny Adviser explained that some things come to scrutiny which have not before such as community safety as the Members have specifically asked; as it is a chance to speak with Janice Dent on that.

- The Member wondered if it can be an area of working and not a specific report for discussion.

The Scrutiny Adviser confirmed as long as they fall within the terms of reference.

- The Member asked if there is a list of partnerships that the council has.

The Scrutiny Adviser advised that this was sent to the chair when the committee was formed in May but offered to re-send that list. Members were referred to the list which is in the terms of reference.

Discussion ensued about the upcoming reports and a Member wished to ascertain what the scrutiny committee would be looking at in the meeting with Norse.

The Scrutiny Adviser agreed to circulate last year's report and minutes to give the Members an idea of how to prepare for the meeting as a guideline. If it's about individual queries then that would be taken up outside of the committee. The Adviser explained that they are finalising the scrutiny handout which helps explain what every committee does, such as councillor support as they are looking to update it as it would be going regional. It would be something the officers will send out as a lengthy document but it is an in-depth look at how scrutiny works.

The meeting terminated at 6.13 pm

Minutes

Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Date: 9 November 2022

Time: 3.00 pm

Present: Councillors D Mayer (Chair), S Cocks, P Drewett, Hussain, Jones, M Pimm, A Screen and E Stowell-Corten

Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser) and Felicity Collins

In Attendance: Councillors D Davies (Cabinet Member for Education) and L Lacey (Cabinet Member for Infrastructure), Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director – Transformation and Corporate), Tracy McKim (Head of People, Policy and Transformation), Lyndon Watkins (Managing Director – Newport Norse), Mark McSweeney (Director – Professional and Contract Services – Newport Norse), Sarah Morgan (Head of Education), Sarah Davies (Deputy Chief Education Officer), Geraint Willington (EAS Director – Resources), Ed Pryce (EAS Assistant Director – Policy and Strategy), Marc Belli (EAS Principal School Improvement Partner), Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser), Felicity Collins (Governance Officer) and Pamela Tasker (Governance Officer)

Apologies: Councillors K Whitehead

1 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

2 **Norse Joint Venture Partnership**

Invitees:

- Tracy McKim – Head of People, Policy and Transformation
- Rhys Cornwall – Strategic Director – Transformation and Corporate Centre
- Lyndon Watkins – Managing Director of Newport Norse
- Mark McSweeney – Director – Professional and Contract Services – Newport Norse
- Councillor Laura Lacey – Cabinet Member for Infrastructure

The Head of People, Policy and Transformation introduced the committee to the Newport Norse representatives. The Managing Director of Newport Norse provided an overview through a presentation of the joint venture plan and covered the turnover, profit sharing and covered the main points of the report such as performance monitoring and the meeting arrangements in place for review and discussions with the authority and schools in particular. The Partner advised the Committee of the pipeline of work planned with the council for the next 2-3 years but assured Members they are aware of the areas they could improve on and that they will be working harder with the council with austerity coming shortly. The Members were informed of the office based in Cleppa Park and were offered an open invitation to visit the team to see what they do.

Committee raised the following points:

- A Member felt pleased to see that the partners are working with the schools to encourage young individuals for apprenticeships. In relation to value for money, as it is important for customer satisfaction. A number of head teachers seem to hold negative opinions on the efficiency of Norse and asked the partners for their comments on that.

The Managing Director advised that over the years as with any client/provider relationship there can be tensions. The partner has evidence of those which are looked into on a case by case basis, usually out of ten, only one of those have any substance for a complaint.

The Director clarified that the Corporate Landlord Policy is the council's policy, and that Newport Norse are the agent for the policy. The partner highlighted there are occasions where structures have been built not in accordance with respective regulation in which Norse would have to do something about it to make it safe, and appreciated that some schools may complain. It was stressed that particular buildings such as schools should be safe from a health and safety compliance view. It was noted the partners encourage all schools to go through in terms of the education liaison groups so they can sit down and discuss with the schools – when schools get quotes for certain things it may be they are looking at different materials such as timber instead of steel, for instance. The Partner admitted generally that some suppliers may be cheaper but not by a lot and felt it was important to mention they pay their employers the living wage.

The Head of People, Policy and Transformation highlighted that it is important to acknowledge how things can be perceived from the client side such as corporate landlord policy, and it's important for schools know what Norse is, how it is priced and why that is. They work closely with education on that, but acknowledged there is more that they can do to improve on that.

- In relation to the rebate section of the report; a Member asked the partners to confirm the proportion of profit that the Authority receives.

The Managing Director advised the Committee in the region of 50% with the way the contract is structured.

- The Member also asked the partners to confirm what happens with the rest of the profit made.

In response, the Managing Director confirmed that most of it is in the public sector, a dividend goes to the parent company, Norfolk City Council who started Norse, and the rest goes to the Newport Norse group.

- The Member then made an observation that they reinvest in the company and Norfolk City Council gets a dividend and asked if that is above the share that the partner receives.

The Managing Director confirmed that it is as they also put their work into it and share as they are the ultimate shareholder but informed Committee it is not a huge payment.

- The Chair asked if that figure is published.

The Managing Director confirmed that it is and that he will follow that up to share with the committee as he was unable to confirm the figure from memory.

- A Committee Member queried if all of the 298 Norse employees are on a full time contract.

In response, the Managing Director clarified that there is a variety of full time and part time staff, being both office and field based. On average there are around 70-80 in office based roles as it has expanded, with a number of those roles being part time. They aim to attract the best staff with their flexible arrangements.

- The Member acknowledged that Norse spend £13.9 million on staff wages, and asked if that number included the work that has been sub-contracted out. How many are full time.

The Managing Director confirmed that the number provided includes the sub-contracted work. Norse have 35 full time members of staff.

- The Member asked if most of the work is from sub-contractors.

The Managing Director confirmed that out of their own labour, they do active maintenance and statutory testing, with minor works and providing technical services, but very often that work can be sub-contracted.

- The Chair referred to Norse's case study of a school needing aluminium windows but ordering from another trader for the wrong material. The Chair asked Norse to explain who would have got the material for the school, who negotiated with them and asked whether it was contractors. And asked if they get a range of people to bid and then Norse select the best.

The Director for Contracts highlighted that the issue they face is that as the school is the purchaser, they dictate the specifics and the Managing Director confirmed that the school do not have to use them.

The Director for Contracts confirmed that they do indeed review the bids and select which one would be best.

- The Chair asked the partners if those mentioned would be local.

The Director for Contracts confirmed they are as they aim to hire and bring in local. The Managing Director advised on page 11 there is a statistic which highlights around 79% of the work is given locally.

- A Member referred to the number of 25 trainee apprentices and asked what the partners do to encourage female and individuals from ethnic minorities to work in the construction industry.

The Managing Director recognised that the majority of individuals coming to work in are male and they have struggled to change that statistic as they have struggled for direct labour. Members were assured that the Norse team would like to have female operatives in that area and appreciated that it is something they need to work on. It was mentioned that they have a significant number of females in terms of office based roles, their gender split in the overall work force is 40/60 at the moment.

The Director with Contracts agreed and added that they went to Llanwern pre-pandemic and will look to visit John Frost School to talk about construction work opportunities with the pupils. They attend job fairs and also have a kick start scheme in which a female law graduate came in for training and has now been given a permanent role there.

- A Member asked the Partners if they work with local universities to attract students to the roles.

The Managing Director recognised that they could look into it as they could do more on that. It was mentioned that the benchmark scheme he once worked on in Somerset Council was pre-dominantly white males in the profession. It was acknowledged there is a course being developed with Jeff Bacon in Bristol on surveyors on how to bring in more people. They advised they are looking at it constantly as it is a competitive market.

- A Member expressed his interest in the apprentice training statistics as it is an important role to upskill people in the local area. It was highlighted that they have 298 staff and have 500 training days, which equates to around 1.5 training days per person a year. The Member felt that number did not sound like much training.

The Director for Contracts felt it was important to note that 200 of those staff are cleaners who work part time and may do less than 15 hours; which skewed the numbers.

The Managing Director added that some employees are undertaking a Masters of Business Administration. Many of the colleagues who work in the administration team are undertaking courses, when they apply that number to the office based staff then that number would go up as it was highlighted that Norse pay for those courses. The Director for Contracts also mentioned that teambuilding is not classed as training. Members were informed that Norse does lots of work on that but mentioned that it is not included in the report.

The Director also highlighted they have a system called The Learning Hive which is an online system which ensures all employees are up to date on their health and safety training and a range of different training modules.

- A Member wished to know more on the partner's plans for sustainability and asked if they could see their policy on climate change to see how it aligns with the council's policy.

The Managing Director explained that they will be introducing climate change as a standing item in their board. They support the council on climate change, it is built in the environment and group policy. It was mentioned that the group aspirations net carbon aim is by 2050 and the council's is by 2030.

It was mentioned that Norse have a tradition base fleet of around 30 vehicles which are all leased, and that they are looking to change the electrified fleet. They are currently in talks with the council on how long that aspiration would need to become a reality.

The Managing Director also mentioned that they are looking to develop this, noted that the council has undergone Carbon literacy training and have therefore asked for the provider so they can do it for Norse also. The Head of People, Policy and Transformation added that it has been mentioned as it is important to weave it into their decisions.

- A Member asked the partners to confirm their total profit from 2021-2022 and if any of the profit has gone into local charities/community groups. It was acknowledged that Newport Norse has arranged work for charities such as Age UK and MacMillan.

The Managing Director confirmed that they have worked for local women's shelter, and pre-covid, they were able to take children to the pantomime, supported St. David's Hospice and that they usually do a sponsored bike ride to support schools also for their playing kits and for local organisations.

- A Member asked if they have built or invested in Newport with projects.

The Managing Director confirmed that they have not but explained that staff have a number of volunteering hours where they can work on projects. If there is a Newport City Council project whereby the case and aspiration may not match, the Newport Norse staff can get involved with jobs such as gardening and decorating jobs, for instance. The Committee was assured that colleagues are encouraged to use their volunteering hours.

Discussion ensued about the profit share model and the Managing Director explained the value is shared between Norse and the Council which can be shared in a range of forms for the council, such as a financial sum or as goods and services. The Director acknowledged that the social value now is very different from the value from when the contract was signed back in 2014. Part of the ongoing discussion amongst the partnership, if the Council were to extend the contract, then there are things that the council would like to see differently due to the changes over time.

The Head of People, Policy and Transformation recognised that it is important to highlight what Newport City gets in return from the partnership, for instance, with the profit share model. The Council made those decisions on the profit share model and felt it was important to mention that. At the renewal, the council and partner will consider those in discussion.

- A Member noted that the partner's presentation was very similar to the last year and that there is not much change in terms of profit/rebate and asked why the partners have not done a breakdown this year on their compliments/complaints data. The Member also asked the partners to confirm how they see the potentially last two years of the contract going; and asked where it could benefit both services users and the partners.

The Managing Director explained the difference on complaints procedures, but agreed that they could produce more and share more detail on that if the Members would like that information, it has just been a change of style.

The Chair and Members wished to follow that up with the partner.

Further to the discussion, the Managing Director continued to explain that for the last two years, the operating model will be much more secure and with customer feedback, the Newport Norse team undertake an annual survey in terms of customers such as schools. It was explained they undertake the work and also request the feedback while it is being done. It was stated that the approval rate is along the lines of 98% and they are trying to maintain that level of satisfaction and go beyond that.

The Director recognised that the uncertainty in the relationship has been discussed due to there being two years left in the contract. They strive to perform the best services they can and that they are committed to Newport and will continue to look to provide certainty.

Members were informed that the feedback has improved and that they receive around 2000 calls a month through the helpdesk which translate to thousand work orders. On the scale of the operations, there are bound to be issues; as if they would not receive communication from their customers then those customers would be hiding the problem and not tackling the issue. It is also in the staff's interest to provide a good service as they are local, therefore are recipients of their work.

- The Chair asked how independent the Partner's report is on compliments.

The Managing Director confirmed that they have a complaints procedure as they are reported quarterly to the board. It was mentioned that they did not have any

complaints in the latest one and the council has two independent representatives on that board.

- A Member felt he appreciated the concept of the public ownership side of Norse, paying their staff the real living wage and local people being employed through them. However it was noted the report lacked feedback of customer satisfaction. The Member suggested that Norse could include the customer surveys in future on cost efficiency and feedback from the service users.

In response the Managing Director said that on value for money report each year they run through that and agreed to share their feedback records after the meeting. For their benchmark rates, they do an annual survey from customer experiences and assured the Members that they are taking the Committee's feedback on board.

- A Member expressed his concern on the rebate model during the current financial climate and asked the partners if they would look to keep it the same.

The Managing Director appreciated the Member may have philosophical views on that. The Director gave a breakdown if the Council went to another provider with a 10% rate. If that work went through Norse rather than external with the same profit margin, the Council in effect gets 5% back. Norse accepted lower profit margins than any other private company would. The Rebate is for value share. It could be that the council may want that share done in a different way, they could either have it given back through work done or rather have the money to use.

- Discussion ensued and the Member highlighted the cost of the living crisis and believed that the service users are overspending to get the rebate back and was conscious that it is taxpayers' money. It was appreciated that the model was set years ago and that the partnership does return money to the council; but the Councillor felt during the current climate, Norse's prices being higher than others so the council may not be saving that much and a new model could be brought in.

The Managing Director noted the Member's comments and asserted that the alternative for the council would be to insource everything, the supply chain as well. It would be a huge entity for the council to arrange. The Director of Contracts stated that he has been in the public sector industry for 38 years and felt that the current model is the best he has worked with as they can make a decision quickly.

The Managing Director acknowledged the concerns mentioned and assured the Committee that they review their benchmark trade rates and sit in the middle of their competition. The Head of People, Policy and Transformation reminded Members that it was the proposal at the time when the joint venture was agreed and that the view from the committee on how the partnership is perceived and how the public money is spent is just as important to note.

- A Member mentioned the facilities offer to the council in the report, and noted that project management was included. The Member referred to the work at Bassaleg High School with Wilmott Dixon and asked if they selected them or did the panel group select from the school.

The Managing Director clarified that Wilmott Dixon are the contractor and the Director for Contracts highlighted that they were the contract manager and ran the procurement selection, the project between Wilmott Dixon and the Council. The Director mentioned that Norse were not involved with the contractual arrangement, just the procurement.

The Managing Director advised that the procurement is based on the framework that the Welsh Government determined, and that it is specific because of their funding arrangement.

Conclusions

- The Committee thanked the Officers from the Newport Norse Joint Venture Partnership and considered the report and presentation that was shown. The Committee decided that although there has been satisfactory progress against the initial aims of the partnership, some Members spoke of disagreement about the existing profit split model that was agreed at the start of the contract.

Comments were made that with the current cost of living climate, the model perceives an overspend on services and the partnership not directly showing corporate responsibility. Members also wished to comment that when discussing a possible renewal of the contract, the partnership arrangements need to consider corporate social responsibility and social value further, as well as reconsidering the cost model. Further comment was made that the next partnership with Norse or other, should be operated as an open book with a fixed profit margin, maybe 3 - 4%. There would be little or no risk to the partner as they have 100% of the work, should charge the true cost and still have a profit of 4% to operate the management of their responsibilities.

- The Committee think that better communication is needed between Norse and NCC/clients in relation to the costing model.
- That Norse and the partnership should consider climate change in its decisions and planning.
- The Committee thanked Newport Norse for their invitation to their Newport Head Office and wished to take up their offer to visit their site to see how things are operated there.
- The Committee that unlike last year's report, there were no breakdown of the compliments and complaints attached. Members would like to receive the full details of the complaints. Members also advised it would be helpful to see customer surveys undertaken and included in performance reporting.
- The Committee asked the partners to provide a more detailed breakdown of their staff numbers and to clarify how much of the work is subcontracted. The Committee also requested what the gender and ethnicity of the apprenticeships/trainees were, would like to see this area monitored on an annual basis and also what action they might take to move towards ensuring they have a diverse workforce.
- The Members would like to know the figure of money which goes into the public services and how much shares Norfolk Council gets. Members also wish to know where does the rebate money go, and how is it used and recorded? Members stated that it is not transparent and for clarity, very suspect to interpretation by the public.

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3 Education Achievement Service (EAS) - Value for Money 2021-22

Invitees:

- Geraint Willington - EAS Director – Resources
- Ed Pryce – Assistant Director – Policy/Strategy

- Marc Belli – EAS Principal School Improvement Partner
- Sarah Davies – Deputy Chief Education Officer
- Sarah Morgan – Chief Education Officer, Newport City Council
- Deborah Davies – Cabinet Member for Education, Newport City Council

The Chief Education Officer introduced the Committee to the Partners and introduced the report. The Education Achievement Service (EAS) Director for Resources presented an overview and presentation of the Value for Money Report 2021-2022 and drew the Committee's attention to the main points and invited the Committee to ask any questions they felt were relevant. It was highlighted that 5 authorities own the company and that the report is focused on the S2S (School 2 School) approach.

Members asked the following:

- A Member referred to the economy and efficiency part mentioning the 96% going to schools and asked if there is any obligation on schools to use it for improvement.

The EAS Director for Resources responded that two grants come in – the Regional School Improvement of DPP Grants and lots of sub-grants within those grants, then there is an expectation within those to be fulfilled.

EAS have been more flexible with schools, given them the money to decide what to do, the school would show us what they wish to use it and demonstrate how, which is then signed off by the panel following review. The Chief Education Officer mentioned that EAS also have a Head teacher Strategy Group which worked well for the minimum requirements and advised that the model is sensible.

- A Member highlighted the finance side, mentioned the strain from staffing levels and the cost of living crisis; despite they may have efficient funding at the moment, the Member asked if the partners could see that changing.

The Director for Resources recognised that it will be challenging moving forward with the funding from the grants and Welsh Government.

The Chief Education Officer explained that the model works on 50% grants and that is dependent on what the Welsh Government. The other 50% is from Newport City Council. It depends if they can afford EAS on annual value but assured the Committee it is excellent value for money. It was mentioned that other regional services have gone up in price but with EAS that has not happened. The contributions with Local Authorities have decreased but EAS has allowed them to retain a good service to see efficiency.

- A Member noted he found the report quite hard to read as a newly elected Councillor with the range of unfamiliar terms and phrases. The Member asked for the Partners to confirm what they would like from the discussion and asked what the local schools receive from EAS on a monthly basis.

The Principal School Improvement Partner gave an example of where a local Newport school partnered up with a school in Cardiff, both schools had similar socio-economic challenges. The children in the schools come from the 20% most deprived areas in Wales. The Head-teachers of the schools have been working together with a serving practitioner, as an improvement partner alongside Estyn report measures due to a disappointing inspection

It had a significant impact through the process at all levels, which was effective in working to evaluate the standard of pupils work and also established informal relationships in both schools to share effective practice. From this, the schools saw rapid improvements. In December 2021, they saw the Newport school being removed from the notifications from Estyn which is a great improvement for review. The

partners will continue to work hard as no school is perfect, as they would like to further build on the confidence of the schools. The Cabinet Member also commended the local high school after having visited it.

- A Member wished to know what has been the significant challenge over the past year for the partnership and if the partners could foresee the next year's challenges.

The School Improvement Principal explained that the new curriculum for Wales and the ALN transformation are two key legislative changes in Wales coming in at a time of the post-pandemic era, will be a challenge for all schools.

- A Member felt it was good that the schools partner up with others in other areas. It was mentioned that some schools may have a larger population of pupils from BAME communities and therefore the Member wanted to know if those schools would have access to extra funding for that, as there must be more costs for the interpreters.

The Assistant Director for Policy advised that would be specific for GEMS, who are separate from EAS but that service is provided through them. Their colleague Sally Bevan is running a team in ensuring the right provision is in place for teachers. Many of EAS programmes go through their provision.

- A Member appreciated how the report writer mentioned that he did not have access to the pupil attainment data due to the change in reporting style. The Member noted there are three case studies within the report and asked if there were more and how extensive the evidence is.

The Assistant Director – Policy (EAS) confirmed that there is a breadth of evidence not included in the report. The way the report was written is in a way that it is not the whole of EAS' work. In relation to a Member's prior point about the jargon, it was written for people with more contextual information. That is why the partners tried to fill in the gaps on that in the meeting and stressed that they would be more than happy to return to do that but assured Members there is a range of evidence available but was not included in the report.

- A Member asked the partners to clarify when they identify a school experiencing issues before partnering up; when the partners would go visit and evaluate the issues; if there is a budget on solving the problem as well as the partnership itself.

The Chief Education Officer explained that on occasion the budget comes in and if there is a host of problems; the partners work together as professionals and recognise the issue that the school improvement partners cannot improve everything. Such as poor financial management, poor exclusion issues. They do offer support in a targeted approach for those schools.

The Deputy Chief Education Officer added that the EAS work closely with the council with the School Development Plan. Where in the region, local Headteachers would meet to evaluate the progress from the previous plan and evaluate. Then EAS would go to the school, ensure the evaluation is robust and discuss key priorities with the partnerships to identify the key needs. Could be through local authority, EAS or a mixture of both. It was emphasised that every school has a universal offer of eight days of support and in addition to that the learning school network such as the two schools earlier mentioned working together.

It is an opportunity for professional learning in targeted groups in schools, for instance support for the middle leadership in schools who are the engine for learning. The tiered approach evolves every year as they are able to better match their improvement partners in the regions to meet the needs of the schools in a more

refined approach. Discussion ensued amongst the Members and EAS partners regarding the budget and the Deputy Chief Officer highlighted the cultural shift of supporting schools without pressure to build it in to partnerships.

- A Member made the observation that pupils were hardly mentioned in the report and that the report almost admits to that as it states that it came to conclusions in the recommendations to make sure that the mechanisms are in place to gather data if the pupils are making progress.

The Assistant Director – Policy (EAS) appreciated the Councillor’s comment and explained that in terms of the data, it is not that it does not exist; as it exists in schools. He went on to note that they cannot aggregate up to Local Authorities to compare league tables as referred to in the report. The Director also stated that getting the improvement partners into the school is key and having personalised assessments; which is more qualitative than quantitative.

It was highlighted that the report was written on the year where the systems were based in pandemic era where they were not able to access schools in lockdown. The partners have returned since April to schools much more and explained that physical work is taking place.

The Committee Members thanked the officers for the work that they do and for their time and commended them on their partnership work.

Conclusions

- The Committee considered the information provided within the submission of evidence, together with the externally commissioned Education Achievement Service (EAS) Regional Value for Money (VfM) report 2021-22 and PowerPoint presentation. Members. The Committee praised the partnership for their hard work and appreciated that the job is difficult. They were pleased with the figures contained within the report and wished to comment that this feels like a real partnership.
- The Committee were pleased to note that good practice is being shared within the partnership and schools from the examples that were given by the Officers and are hopeful that this continues in future.
- The Committee raised a comment related specifically to the impact of the school support measures on school improvement. The progress made in moving to a new model of school support was acknowledged, however the lack of pupil based data did not yet make it possible to state that the model resulted “in significantly accelerated progress in schools.” Members appreciate that much of the pupil progress data used previously to make judgements on school effectiveness is now not available - the Alcott report acknowledged this. The report recommended, however, that EAS find to systems to gather such data.

Members would like to see this data as part of future reports. It is appreciated that it may be necessary to summarise the data if there is a large amount of it. Conclusions drawn from the data could be in the main report, with the supporting data as an appendix- maybe as summary tables.

- The Committee wished to make the comment that it would be nice to see the benchmark figure of 96% being maintained but were mindful of pressures such as the decreased staff levels, the cost of living, and the pay rise, could affect that.

- The Committee queried whether EAS had any direct communications with Norse or previous partnership work with regards to the schools they both represent. Members commented that given both services work directly with the schools in Newport, it may be beneficial if there was partnership work between EAS and Norse to see how they can make the necessary improvements the schools think they would benefit from.

The meeting terminated at 6.00 pm

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