

Minutes



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Date: 19 July 2023

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors E Stowell-Corten (Chair), B Davies, P Drewett, F Hussain and A Screen

In Attendance: Janice Dent (Policy and Partnership Manager), Tracey Brooks (Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing), Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser), Emily Mayger and Taylor Strange (Governance Officer)

Apologies: Councillors C Baker-Westhead, J Jones, M Pimm and K Whitehead

1 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

2 **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th March 2023**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th March 2023 were held as a true record.

3 **Newport Local Action Plan Consultation Draft**

Invitees:

- Janice Dent (Policy and Partnership Manager)
- Wayne Tucker (Senior Policy & Partnership Officer)

The Policy and Partnership Manager gave an overview of the report.

Members asked the following:

In what forms is the consultation taking place? The Policy and Partnership Manager highlighted the use of consultation via bus Wi-Fi the NCC website, as well as other methods.

- The Committee felt it will be difficult to get public feedback on flood defence. The Policy and Partnership Manager informed the Committee that the public are able to choose what parts of the consultation they give feedback on as well as the consultation information using terminology the public could understand.
- The Committee enquired about the involvement of Natural Resources Wales in the flood defence section of the consultation. The Policy and Partnership Manager advised that the partnership includes various board members, including Natural Resources Wales, Newport Live, the police, and others, who have been and will continue to assist with the consultation process. It was also advised that workshops will be conducted with partners to determine the most effective ways to leverage their expertise and involvement.

- The committee noted the importance of getting as many citizens responses as possible during the consultation and asked would officers do work within wards to get a larger response? The Policy and Partnership Manager highlighted that they would make use of ward meetings as well as making use of events within wards that are already occurring and scheduled.
- The Committee highlighted that Newport is a mix of rural and urban environments with the impact being different in each. The Policy and Partnership Manager noted demographics that may change answers will be looked at the end of the consultation. The Senior Policy and Partnership Officer explained to the Committee that the focus is to get as many respondents as possible in order to better analysis the demographic data within the range of ward types within Newport.
- The Policy and Partnership Manager confirmed that social media will be utilised as a method during the consultation period. This will be done through Newport Live and in collaboration with other partners.
- The Committee enquired about the strategy for maximising the number of responses during the consultation process. The Policy and Partnership Manager emphasised that the team is continuously learning and exploring best practices by examining other consultations conducted by the NCC. Additionally, the efforts made by councillors to increase the number of responses were highlighted.
- The Policy and Partnership Manager suggested using QR codes for accessing the consultation. Members raised concerns about accessibility for individuals with visual impairments and asked about the use of technology to address this issue. The manager mentioned ongoing work to make the consultation more accessible, including the use of larger fonts.
- The Committee enquired whether there would be support for non-English speaking citizens or those whose primary language is not English in promoting the consultation. The Policy and Partnership Manager stated that they are currently testing translation services and actively engaging with communities to establish connections.
- The Committee noted the use of young interpreter's projects from within primary schools and explained that program has been expanded in order to include other year groups. The Policy and Partnership Manager highlighted that they would take this on board.

The Chair thanked the officers for attending.

Conclusions

- Members expressed their satisfaction after discovering that even though they were not mentioned in the initial draft questionnaire presented to the committee, demographic questions would be featured in the final version.
- The Members were informed that the team was experimenting with Amazon translation services and verifying translation accuracy through links with various communities. In response, Members recommended scheduling events in schools such as Maindee Primary, which possess student interpreters. Holding these events in September was also suggested.
- Members mentioned the need to ensure that the consultation was accessible by using ALT text on Social Media, text-to-speech, large print hard copies etc to ensure that our visually impaired residents are supported in taking part in the consultation.

- Members wished to include the issue of flood risk and the need for Natural Resources Wales to be represented in the public consultation events. Comment was also made for NRW to come to give a presentation to the committee in the not too distant future on the risks and mitigations for Newport.

4 Newport Live Partnership

Invitees:

- Steve Ward - Chief Executive - Newport Live
- Kevin Ward - Chairman - Newport Live

The Chief Executive and Chairman gave an overview of the report, and also presented a couple of short videos to the Committee to give extra context of the work that the Newport Live Partnership do.

Members asked the following:

- The Committee thanked the presenters and congratulated Newport Live for their recent award. The Chief Executive commended the staff and acknowledged the exceptional community engagement efforts of the Riverfront. They emphasised the importance of recruiting individuals who can assist the public and mentioned the approval of an Olympic Training Camp. The Committee expressed gratitude for the variety of services offered.
- The Committee enquired about the origin of tourism mentioned in the Music Tourism Report. The Chief Executive mentioned applying for double funding from the Arts Council of Wales to implement a larger arts development program. The Chairman highlighted that projects serve as community hubs and ongoing discussions are taking place to incorporate Newport Live's systems into prevention work.
- The Committee asked about the reduced funding in the advertisement budget. The Chairman explained that more funds would have been spent on advertising following the easing of Covid restrictions, and the budget for advertising and marketing is flexible.
- The Committee noted the correlation between mental and physical health and wondered about its impact on those utilising the services. The Chief Executive noted that while it's not scientifically possible to measure, anecdotal evidence exists. Some academic questions have been asked in relation to mental health in certain projects. The Chairman mentioned that data on those who undertake specific projects would be available.
- The Committee noted that collecting data on mental health impact could lead to greater grant funding. The Chief Executive emphasised the positive impact Newport Live has on people's lives and the help provided by allowing them to run facilities.
- The Committee queried if Newport Live has partners within the communities. The Chief Executive confirmed working with a variety of partners within the community.
- The Committee enquired about the effect of the cost-of-living crisis on attendance. The Chief Executive advised that there has been an impact, with costs increasing by an average of 8%. Energy costs, the availability of swimming instructors, and demand for swimming pools present significant challenges.

- The Committee asked about the record of participation of products by demographic group. The Chief Executive mentioned that products ask for demographic data, but it's not mandatory for individuals to provide it. There is a plan to target communities with lower uptake and gather intelligence with partners.
- The Committee expressed the need for the general public to know more about Newport Live. The Chief Executive emphasised the focus on individual outcomes and the importance of staying competitive commercially. Diversifying the audience and getting into as many realms as possible are key points.
- The Committee raised the possibility of women-only swimming lessons and activities. The Chief Executive agreed to bring women-only sessions to the new centre and highlighted the potential for programs that cater to diverse areas. Statistics and personal information would be needed to fully understand community needs and desires.
- The Committee requested an updated list of partnerships. The Chief Executive explained that the next time they come to Scrutiny, they will include all new partners on the list.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their attendance.

Conclusions

- The Committee expressed their gratitude to the invitees for attending, commended the positive report, and were highly impressed by the informative presentation. Members observed that the work between the partners was significant, revealing the effectiveness of the partnership in safeguarding children. Additionally, they expressed appreciation for the brief video clips that provided additional insight into the partners' work. The Committee also praised the Menopause Active Work, along with several other schemes, and wished to give their thanks to all staff involved.
- The Committee recommended that the partnership explore ways of measuring the impact on the mental health of people who participate in activities. While there is currently no measure in place, Members commented that it may be advantageous to do so in order to gain further grants elsewhere.
- Members suggest that the partnership look into further opportunities for Ladies Only activities, such as Swimming. It was also requested that this is looked into for the future work programming for the new leisure centre.
- Members were pleased to learn that the Riverfront had achieved its highest figures. Members expressed interest in discovering the breakdown of these figures between tourism and local visitors. Members were also interested to see some information regarding demographics when Newport Live come to the committee next year - it was felt it would be good for the Committee to know if Newport Live are reaching all communities.
- Comment was made that in some communities Cricket is a passion, but due to it being an expensive sport in terms of price of kit and equipment compared to other sports, we are seeing a major decline in cricket in the younger generation. Members asked how we can improve facilities/grounds and access to these activities, especially looking at the costs of hiring a cricket pitch for those independent teams who do not have their own pitches.

5 **Draft Annual Forward Work Programme 2023 - 2024**

Invitee:

- Neil Barnett - Scrutiny Adviser

The Scrutiny Adviser introduced the Draft 2023-24 Annual Forward Work Programme to the Committee, and detailed the reports coming in the next calendar year. The Draft Annual Forward Work Programme had been produced following a review with Heads of Service, and includes statutory reports that come to the Committee annually.

Actions:

1. The Committee **approved** the Annual Forward Work Programme, the start time for Committee meetings and the proposed schedule of meetings, which included the topics being discussed at the next two meetings:

Wednesday 4th October 2023, the agenda items;

- Shared Resource Services (SRS) Update
- One Newport Wellbeing Plan Final Report.

Wednesday 8th November 2023, the agenda items;

- Norse Joint Venture – Strategy and Performance Review
- Community Safety Plan

6 **Scrutiny Adviser Reports**

Invitee:

- Neil Barnett - Scrutiny Adviser.

a) Action Sheet

The Scrutiny Adviser presented the action sheet to the Committee and advised that as indicated in the table, all actions are up to date with one outstanding presentation that is being arranged.

7 **Recording of meeting**