

Minutes



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: 22 March 2018

Time: 10.00 am

Present: Councillors J Guy (Chair), M Al-Nuaimi, M Evans, C Ferris, P Hourahine and M Spencer

In Attendance:

R Cornwall (Head of People and Business Change), M Dickie (Business Service Development Manager), R Kalahar (Senior Performance Management Officer) and D Cooke (Overview & Scrutiny Officer)

Apologies: Councillors C Evans, J Hughes and L Lacey

1 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

2 **Minutes**

3 **Corporate Safeguarding**

The Committee made the following comments on the report and requested that the Officers provide the additional information when the item returned;

- The Corporate Safeguarding report had been difficult to read and contained vast amounts of information. The information was not not easily accessible and understandable to the Committee.
- The information included in the report could have been presented in a different manner making the information more useful. One example of this was '4.4 – *E Learning and Training*' where numbers of staff are provided when percentages would be more effective.
- The Members asked if there had been an opportunity to include more statistics. Including comparative statistics from other Local Authorities.
- The Members asked if the Officers could provide information on the Councils Triage system, if it had one.
- The Members were interested in the cost effectiveness of the partnerships that Newport takes a lead on. The Members wanted to know if other partners had paid equal amounts.
- The Committee wanted to know if the recent budget savings had had an impact on the ability carry out the safeguarding obligations. The Members referenced the Adult

Safeguarding Plan in particular, which stated that there was already an increasing demand and service delivery was challenging. This was lowering the resilience especially in times of sickness, training and annual leave.

The Committee requested that the Officers complete an 'Executive Summary' of the Corporate Safeguarding report which introduced the report and highlighted its key points. They requested that it contained a table outlining just the AMBER and RED Key Priorities / Themes and associated plans to turn them GREEN with timescales. This they believed would allow them to focus on the most important sections of the report without having to work through the rest of the document.

The Committee **agreed** to defer the item to the 21st June.

4 **Draft Performance Management Strategy**

Attendees;

- Head of People and Business Change
- Business Service Development Manager
- Senior Performance Management Officer

The Head of People and Business Change presented an overview to the Committee. It was explained that the aim with the strategy was to improve the organisation by implementing a performance culture. Despite financial constraints, the Council has always met its statutory obligations however it had got more difficult.

It was advised that the Performance Management System gives real time data to see how the Authority was doing. The Clear Review system moves away from the annual form appraisal to an online system to be used on a monthly basis which links staffs performance to the Council's performance.

The Committee were advised that the roles of all staff are important, but the role of the Scrutiny Committee was to critically look at how the Council were performing and making sure that the right things were being focussed on.

The Committee asked the following:

- Did the strategy take into account the Council's new Wellbeing Plan? Members were told that the Improvement Plan would be scrutinised in the next round of Scrutiny Committee meetings and how the Council are performing against it. This will be the last year of the Improvement Plan as the Wellbeing Plan will be used going forward. The Officer informed the Committee that the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act impacts on practically everything in the Council, and the Performance and Policy Team lead the organisation on the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, lots of work had been completed to integrate the data. The Wales Audit Office had completed a report for the Wellbeing of Future Generations first year, which would be used in future audits to allow the Council to judge the performance of measures.
- Members asked if the Wellbeing Plan would maximise the Council's performance. Members were informed this was difficult to foresee, it would raise questions for Members and Officers on how the Council makes decisions, which may impact performance but will ensure statutory objectives are met. The Wellbeing Plan focuses on the long term and encourages preventative ways of working.
- Members discussed the Best Practice in Performance Management model, in particular "Transparent recognition of good performance and challenge of poor

performance". It was asked how this would be applied with dwindling resources. Members were informed that the online system put in place for staff replaces the monthly 1 to 1's, which had previously been completed on paper forms. It allowed Line Managers and staff to set actions for the next month and to monitor progress against those actions. It allows anyone to give staff feedback, what had gone well or what needed to be developed. A demonstration of the system was then offered for the Committee to view.

Members were also advised that the Council had got better at understanding the cost of improving performance by analysing the worst performing measures.

- A comment was made that in the report there was no mention of how tasks would be evaluated. The Committee were told that there was a separate stream of work which looked at system analysis in services areas. The system analysis took a view on performance and how the service can be made better and more efficient. The Committee were informed that there could be a session made for a future meeting, during which the HR Manager could be invited to attend and discuss this section with the Committee in further detail.
- The Corporate Plan was discussed and comments were made about how the intentions were great but the reports given were hard to understand. It was then asked if data was easy to access with the user friendly system. The Committee were advised that in regards to the Corporate Plan there was an Annual Staff Conference that staff can attend to ensure they were aware of the visions of the Corporate Plan. It was then stated that the storage of data was more resilient as data goes on a cloud based system, and not held on the Councils servers. It was advised that there will be ongoing meetings with the Shared Resource Service to ensure the systems offer more resilience.
- What are the pressures for managers to have monthly meetings, and will they be used to improve the performance for staff? The Officer informed that after reviewing data it was found that the vast majority of managers were meeting with their staff once a month. A pilot scheme was created and feedback was used to create the system. The system provided direction to the manager's conversations with staff and helped assist staff members to hit their targets.
- Members enquired if the feedback left for staff was confidential, and if there was continuous evaluation for staff. Members were advised that there was a confidential record for each staff which was safeguarded by the Data Protection Act. Anyone was able to give feedback, which was also kept confidential.
- Members were advised of the best practice in Performance Management. Members suggested that the strategy comes back to the committee 12-18 months after being implemented.

The Committee then thanked the officers for attending and they were excused.

Conclusion

The Committee made a number of comments on the Performance Management Strategy;

- The Committee would like to receive more information on the results based evaluations and how they would work in practice.
- The Members were unclear about how the Performance Management Strategy links to the Corporate Plan.

- The Committee considered the ability to provide comment on anyone's performance in the organisation as a good idea, but they had reservations on whether it was open to abuse and would there be repercussions for misuse.
- The Committee wanted to know whether there would be an opportunity for anonymous staff feedback on the use and success of the Performance Management Strategy.
- The Committee were interested how the Performance Management Strategy would be implemented on the ground. They were particularly interested in how it would work with public facing staff and staff who work peripatetically. They requested that a report is presented from the Chief Executive on the Strategies success is fed back to the Committee in 12 – 18 months.

5 **Forward Work Programme**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented the forward work programme, in particular the items on the next two meetings.

The Committee were advised that there had been an amendment in the running order of the meetings; the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order would now be taking place on 26 April, and will be held in the Council Chambers. It will also be broadcasted in light of the public interest in this item.

Recommendations Monitoring for Adult Residential Care, Community Centres and Economic Regeneration would now be taking place on 10 May.

The meeting terminated at 11.30 am