

POLICY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 5TH OCTOBER 2015

PRESENT: Councillor D.W.H. Richards (Chair)

Councillors:

D.M. Cundy, J.S. Edmunds, W.J.W. Evans, A.W. Jones, A. Lenny, D. Price, D.E. Williams, W.T. Evans (In place of A. Davies), H.I. Jones (In place of A.G. Morgan), M.J.A. Lewis (In place of G. Davies) and K. Madge (In place of J. Williams)

Also present:

Councillor D. Jenkins, Executive Board Member (Resources)

Councillor P.E. Palmer, Executive Board Member (Communities)

Councillor L.M. Stephens, Executive Board Member (Human Resources, Efficiencies & Collaboration)

The following Officers were in attendance:

C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services

G. Ayres, Policy & Partnerships Manager

J. Owen, TIC Programme Manager

K. Pett, Policy, Consultation & Engagement Officer

S. Walters, Interim Economic Development Manager

B. Dolan, Senior Consultant

Also in attendance:

J. Evans, Performance Audit Manager, Wales Audit Office (WAO)

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen – 10:00am - 11:40am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T. Bowen, G. Davies, A.G. Morgan and J. Williams.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor	Minute Item(s)	Nature of Interest
Councillor A.W. Jones	Item 7	In that he is a Custodian of Land leased to the Authority for car parking and receives income as a Trustee of Ammanford Miners Welfare
Councillor K. Madge	Item 8	In that his daughter works in social services

3. DECLARATION OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

No public questions were received.

5. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee was provided with a list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next scheduled meeting on Wednesday, 25th November 2015.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the agenda items for the forthcoming meeting be endorsed.

6. WALES AUDIT OFFICE'S ASSESSMENT OF CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S TRANSFORM, INNOVATE AND CHANGE PROGRAMME

The Chair welcomed Jeremy Evans, Performance Audit Manager (WAO) to the meeting. The Committee welcomed the report of a review of the Council's TIC Programme undertaken during 2014/15 and published in May 2015. The report gave a positive assessment of the TIC programme in terms of its governance arrangements, objectives and contributions however included 3 proposals for improvement. The TIC Programme Manager advised that the proposals had already been implemented with stronger business cases in terms of risk and anticipation of outcomes.

Clarification was requested in relation to the term "dis-benefit" used in the report. The Performance Audit Manager (WAO) stated that it was describing potential unanticipated negative impacts of changes intended to benefit elsewhere.

It was asked what was done to ensure new ways of working were sustained and consistently applied. The TIC Programme Manager advised that a key feature was to ensure changes were sustainable and rolled in across the relevant service areas. TIC also had a mechanism to re-visit projects in a year's time to check that teams were sticking to the new operating principles, processes and that they were still working for the public. Projects were also reported to the Programme Board on an ongoing basis.

Comments were made that managers should be responsible for driving innovation rather than the TIC team. Case studies in the report would also have been welcomed. The Performance Audit Manager (WAO) responded that TIC activity was embedding cultural change in the organisation in a sustainable way with managers buying into TIC concepts and thinking differently. Examples included improvement in performance around void times. He was also aware of the annual TIC report to this Committee.

The TIC Programme Manager advised that it was always made clear that services owned any project and not the TIC team. The latter was there to provide capacity to take managers and staff out of their working environment so they could identify the need for change. Managers led on implementing change with support from the TIC team, which only withdrew when they were satisfied the change was sustainable. A continuous improvement course had also been developed by

Academi which was being piloted with 15 managers to create capacity for change and it was hoped to roll this out to other managers across the organisation in due course.

It was asked how much the TIC initiative had cost compared to the £2m savings referred to in the report. The TIC Programme Manager clarified that team had been originally seconded however had been made permanent last November. Savings of £4.5m had now been identified.

It was asked why business cases had not initially been sufficiently detailed. The TIC Programme Manager advised that these established the project proposals however it was difficult to get buy-in from managers and staff if savings were identified at the outset. It was however possible to produce savings from improvements and efficiencies. The Corporate Director added that any savings made were recurring in the base budget.

RESOLVED to endorse the report.

7. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2015/16

Councillor A.W. Jones declared an interest In that he is a custodian of land leased to the Authority for car parking and receives income as a trustee of Ammanford Miners Welfare.

The Committee considered the monitoring report that outlined the budgetary position for the 2015/16 financial year as at the 30th June 2015. The report included:

- Corporate Revenue Budget (Appendix A);
- The Chief Executive's and Corporate Services Revenue budget (Appendix B);
- Corporate Capital Programme 2015/16 (Appendix C) and
- The Chief Executive's and Resources Capital Programme 2015/16 (Appendix D).

The following issues were raised during consideration of the report:

In response to a general question about the reasons for the size of the forecast end of year overspend as well as a specific one about the recent decision to delay the increase in car parking charges and introduction of evening charges, the Corporate Director advised that the main reason for the former related to time delays in delivering PBB savings. The non-implementation of the increase in parking charges and introduction of evening charges had been accommodated in this year's budget. The impact of the pilot scheme of free parking in Llanelli had however not been accommodated. He noted that departmental reserves were helping to reduce the overspend corporately.

It was asked why the cost of building care homes was so much higher in the public sector than the private sector. The Corporate Director advised that he was not privy to the cost of private sector care homes however the extra care scheme in Ammanford comprised self-contained units with additional communal facilities rather than a traditional residential care setting. It was tendered by Family Housing

with contributions from WG grants and CCC funding, with costs in line with the Argel provision in Carmarthen.

Reference was made to the new map of local government in Wales and the possibility of WG preventing capital projects going ahead. The Corporate Director stated that WG would not freeze and spend before the elections next year however orders would state that the Minister would have to grant permission for any proposals

Concerns were expressed at budget pressures caused by school based EVR and redundancy costs, which were outside the Authority's control. The Corporate Director agreed that the legislation did not help the Authority and he was discussing the issue with the departmental Director. He was hopeful that schools and Governing Bodies would be willing to work with the Authority in light of the budget situation going forward however he acknowledged that school specific budgets benefited where schools employed newly qualified teachers. The focus needed to be on school staff that were not of retirement age being made redundant.

In response to a question about the timing of the budget setting for next year, the Corporate Director advised that they were waiting for the WG provisional settlement however were building up the budget profile, linking with reserves and the capital programme with consultation during November and December 2015. The Committee was urged to participate in the budget seminars for Members, the first one arranged for the afternoon after the next Council meeting.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to endorse the report.

8. AGEING WELL IN WALES - LOCAL AGEING WELL PLANS

Councillor K. Madge declared an interest in that his daughter works for social services.

The Committee welcomed the draft Local Ageing Well Plan for Carmarthenshire which had been developed to meet two key strategic drivers; the Ageing Well in Wales programme with five themes and The Strategy for Older People in Wales. The Plan linked with the 'Vision for Sustainable Services for Older People', under development within Communities. It also supported the 2015 Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, through contributing towards sustainable communities that enable people to age 'in-place'.

The following issues were raised during consideration of the report:

The importance of Welsh medium provision in providing services for people with dementia was highlighted, given many sufferers lose their second language.

Comments were made supporting the key themes in the Plan. It was felt that problems were identified however it was asked how they could be resolved. It was also asked how realistic it was in terms of delivery given funding issues. The Policy & Partnerships Manager advised that no additional resources were identified and the aim was to use existing resources in better and different ways. Identify need and tailor services to meet them. The Policy, Consultation & Engagement Officer added that the Plan would be built on. There were resource

implications with an ageing society however the intention was that the Council's and Elected Members' role would be to facilitate and enable communities to help them support their older people.

The reduction in social contact for many older people leading to loneliness, isolation, depression and dementia was also discussed, exacerbated by the reduction in meals on wheels and milkman services. It was also noted that the definition and nature of communities was changing rapidly.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to endorse the draft Plan to the Executive Board.

9. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORTS

The Committee received an explanation for the non-submission of the Procurement Annual Report 2014/15, Spend on Private Sector Services TIC review, Spend on Third sector Services TIC update and Spend on External Expertise, including legal services, reports.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the reasons be noted.

10. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 24th JULY 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th July 2015, be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE