

POLICY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 10 October 2019

PRESENT: Councillor A.G. Morgan (Chair)

Councillors:

S.M. Allen, K.V. Broom, T.A.J. Davies, H.L. Davies, S.J.G. Gilasbey (In place of D.E. Williams), J.K. Howell, G.H. John, C. Jones, G.R. Jones (In place of D.M. Cundy), K. Madge and J.G. Prosser

Also in attendance:

Councillor D.M. Jenkins, Executive Board Member for Resources

The following Officers were in attendance:

N. Daniel, Head of I.C.T.

R. Hemingway, Head of Financial Services

L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law

P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)

G. Ayers, Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager

M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP. - 10.00 am - 12.00 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Cundy and E. Williams.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

4. COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The Committee considered the Council's Annual Complaints and Compliments report for the period 2018/19 which detailed.

- The numbers of complaints investigated and responded to between April 2018 – March 2019 by department;
- Statistics on communications received by the Complaints Team and redirected. These were enquiries and requests for assistance which once presented offered the team the opportunity to try and rectify difficulties before complaints arose;
- Complaints determined by the Ombudsman;
- Analysis of complaints and compliments by department;
- Summary of councillor enquiries.

The following issues were raised on the report:-

- The Head of ICT & Corporate Policy agreed to append the report on complaints relating to Adult Social Care matters to the Annual report in future;
- The Head of ICT & Corporate Policy agreed to ensure that staff at contact centres and Delta Wellbeing passed on complaints received to the Information Governance & Complaints section;
- The Committee was reminded that there were procedures in place for members to register complaints and they should not be made through the Councillor Enquiry System;
- The view was expressed that the complaints procedures should allow for 'low level' less formal complaints which, if addressed, could lead to service improvements. The Head of ICT & Corporate Policy commented that the Annual Report only accounted for formal complaints. Less formal complaints/concerns/issues were often raised via, for example, social media/phone, where a quick resolution to a problem was sought. Whilst it was acknowledged that complaints were a useful source of intelligence as to how the Authority was performing in delivering services the amount of resources the Authority wished to dedicate to addressing formal complaints also had to be considered.

RESOLVED that the Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2018/19 be received.

5. QUARTER 1 - 1ST APRIL TO 30TH JUNE 2019 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered a report which provided an overview of progress against actions and measures in the Corporate Strategy 2018-2023 to deliver the 2019/20 Well-being Objectives as at 30th June 2019 and broken down by Scrutiny.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to note the report.

6. QUARTER 1 - 1ST APRIL TO 30TH JUNE 2019 DEPARTMENTAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered a report detailing progress against the actions and measures in the Corporate Strategy 2018-2023 to deliver the 2019/20 Well-being Objectives relevant to the Committee's remit, as at 30th June 2019.

The following issues/observations were raised on the report:-

- It was noted that since 30th June 2019 there had been an improvement in the percentage of employees who had completed the e-learning module or attended a training session;
- In terms of the number of working days lost to sickness absence per employee the Authority continued to do all it could to support staff with the Challenge and Review Forum, referred to at previous meetings, making positive inroads in calling Heads of Service to account. It was suggested that the Heads of Property and Integrated Services could be invited to attend a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to outline how they were

addressing sickness absence within their remit. Sessions were also being arranged to raise awareness amongst staff of mental health issues;

- It was clarified that 5-8 Spilman Street had not been sold to a private purchaser but had actually been acquired by another Council department and accordingly there would be a transfer of funds within the Authority;
- The Head of ICT & Corporate Policy agreed to ascertain progress in regard to the search for a suitable location for a within Carmarthen town
- With regard to Action 13179 it was queried as to whether members would receive a detailed map indicating connectivity strengths in Carmarthenshire. The Head of ICT & Corporate Policy responded that whilst it was unlikely that connectivity would be achieved in all rural areas in Wales the hot-spots in Carmarthenshire had been identified and a detailed "Connectivity Action Plan for Carmarthenshire|" was being drafted. It was noted that an I.T. Development seminar for all members had been arranged for 29th November 2019.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

7. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2019/20

The Committee considered the monitoring report that outlined the budgetary position for the 2019/20 financial year as at the 30th June 2019. The report included:

- Authority Corporate Budget Monitoring Report (Appendix A);
- The Chief Executive's and Corporate Services Revenue budget (Appendix B);
- Corporate Capital Programme Monitoring 2019/20 (Appendix C);
- Corporate Capital Programme Monitoring 2019/20 – main Variances (Appendix D);
- The Chief Executive's and Corporate Services Schemes 2019/20 (Appendix E).

The following issues were raised during consideration of the report:

- The Head of Financial Services highlighted the forecasted overspend in the Education and Children Services budget and advised that the Director of Education and Children Services had written to a number of Headteachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies on the matter. The Assistant Chief Executive added that a Challenge and Advisory Intervention Panel had been established to support schools;
- The Head of Financial Services agreed to convey to the Head of Property the Committee's concerns over the future of Nant y Ci Mart in light of the income shortfall and the continued decline in its use;
- In response to a concern over the number of vacant posts within the Revenues and Financial Compliance Division the Head of Financial Services commented that the team had recently been restructured;
- The Chair commented that the issue of receiving more up-to-date budget figures was still being addressed.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

7.1 that the report be received;

7.2 that the Education and Children Scrutiny Committee be recommended to reverse its decision to receive Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring via e-mail only [Education and Children Scrutiny Committee 7th June 2018 minute 6.2 refers] in view of the absence of formal monitoring of the Education Department's budget which has significant pressures and a high risk of overspending against the budget.

8. QUARTERLY TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 1ST APRIL 2019 TO 30TH JUNE 2019

The Committee considered the Quarterly Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Report for the period 1st April 2019- 30th June 2019 which listed the treasury management activities which had occurred during the first quarter of the year in line with the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2019-2020 adopted by Council on the 20th February 2018.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to endorse the report.

9. CARMARTHENSHIRE PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD (PSB) MINUTES - MAY & JULY 2019

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting of the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board [PSB] held on the 20th May 2019 and the 8th July 2019. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 required that a designated local government scrutiny committee was appointed to scrutinise the work of the PSB. In Carmarthenshire, the Council's Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee had been designated as the relevant scrutiny committee.

The Corporate Policy & Partnership Manager advised that the Wales Audit Office had recently published its 'Review of Public Service Boards' Report which she agreed to circulate to the committee.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the PSB meetings held on the 20th May 2019 and the 8th July 2019 be received.

10. POLICY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The Committee considered the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for the 2018/19 municipal year which provided an overview of the work of the Committee including:-

- Overview of the Scrutiny Work Programmes
- Key issues considered
- Issues referred to or from Executive Board/Other Scrutiny Committees
- Member attendance at meetings

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to endorse the report.

11. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

The Committee received the Non-Submission report.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be noted.

12. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting to be held on the 2nd December 2019 be received.

13. MINUTES - 18TH JULY 2019

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th July 2019 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE