

JOINT MEETING OF THE EDUCATION & CHILDREN, ENVIRONMENTAL & PUBLIC PROTECTION, COMMUNITY, POLICY & RESOURCES AND SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

15TH FEBRUARY 2017

PRESENT: Councillor D.M. Cundy (Chair)

Councillors:

S.M. Allen	D.J.R. Bartlett	C.A. Campbell	J.M. Charles
A.P. Cooper	A. Davies	D.B. Davies	G. Davies
I.W. Davies	J.A. Davies	S.L. Davies	W.R.A. Davies
T. Devichand	J.S. Edmunds	P.M. Edwards	W.J.W. Evans
W. G. Hopkins	J.K. Howell	I.J. Jackson	A. James
J.D. James	H.I. Jones	A. Lenny	M.J.A. Lewis
K. Madge	S. Matthews	A.G. Morgan	D. Price
D.W.H. Richards	B.A.L. Roberts	E.G. Thomas	R. Thomas
S.E. Thomas	D. Tomos	D.E. Williams	J.E. Williams
J.S. Williams			

Also present:

Mrs. V. Kenny – Roman Catholic Church Representative (Education & Children Scrutiny Committee)

Mrs. A. Pickles – Parent Governor Member (Llanelli Area) (Education & Children Scrutiny Committee)

Also in attendance:

Councillor D.M. Jenkins, Executive Board Member for Resources (Deputy Leader)
Councillor P.A. Palmer, Executive Board Member for Communities (Deputy Leader)
Councillor L.D. Evans, Executive Board Member for Housing
Councillor J. Tremlett, Executive Board Member for Social Care & Health

The following officers were in attendance:

Mrs. R. Mullen – Director of Environment
Mrs. W. Walters – Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy)
Mr. I. Jones – Head of Leisure
Mr. S. Pilliner – Head of Transportation & Highways
Mr. A. Morgan – Head of School Effectiveness
Mr. A. Rees – Head of Learner Programmes

Mr. R. James – Performance Planning & Business Officer
Mr. L. James – Housing Services Manager
Ms. S. Burford – Project Manager
Ms. A. Leonard – Performance and Planning Officer
Ms. H. Morgan – Economic Development Manager
Ms. M. Rogers – Performance Measurement & Monitoring Officer
Ms. N. Thomas – Service Manager, Children Services [representing S. Smith]
Ms. J. Wilkinson – Locality Manager [representing R. Dawson]
Mrs. E. Hope – Departmental Performance Co-ordinator
Mrs. J. Owen – Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen – 2:00 - 3:40pm

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

RESOLVED that Councillor D.M. Cundy be appointed Chair for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors, J.P Jenkins, S. Caiach, T. Evans, A.W. Jones, A. Speake, G.B. Thomas, D.J.R Llewellyn, E. Morgan, H.B. Shephardson and Mrs J. Voyle Williams.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor	Minute Item(s)	Nature of Interest
Mrs A. Pickles	6. Carmarthenshire County Council – Well-being Objectives 2017/18	She is the Director of a Community Interest Company which provides Counselling Therapy courses. The Company has recently submitted a tender to the Council.

4. DECLARATIONS OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

6. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES 2017/18

[NOTE: Mrs A. Pickles had earlier declared a personal interest in this item.]

The Joint Committee considered a report on the Carmarthenshire County Council's Well-being objectives for 2017/18. The Joint Committee noted that the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 required the Council to set Key Improvement Objectives Priorities (KIOPs) each year and that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 required all public bodies to:-

- Set and publish Well-being Objectives
- Take all reasonable steps to meet those objectives
- Publish a statement about Well-being Objectives
- Publish an annual report of progress
- Publish our response to a recommendation made by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

The Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) highlighted to the Joint Committee that the new Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 would place a Duty on public bodies to consider and improve the well-being of Wales, by taking into account the needs of future generations when taking decisions.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) informed the Joint Committee that for 2017/18 the Key Improvement Objectives Priorities and Well-being Objectives would be integrated.

The Joint Committee watched a short animation, which explained the positive impact the Well-being of Future Generations Act would have throughout a young girl's life. Following the animation, the Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) delivered a presentation which explained what was required by the Council in order to comply with the Act and how the well-being objectives were developed.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) stated that each of the Council's Well-being Objectives 2017/18 were developed to comply with the Act, which stated that public bodies must carry out sustainable development, improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. This included the adoption of the 5 new ways of working, which demonstrated that the sustainable development principle had been applied. It was explained to the Joint Committee that the 5 new ways of working would encourage collaboration, avoid duplication of effort between public bodies and tackle some long-term challenges. In addition, in order to ensure that those public bodies listed in the Act were working towards the same vision, the Council's well-being objectives were linked to the 7 National well-being goals which the Act had in place.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) explained that the Council was required to publish an annual report showing the progress they have made in meeting their objectives.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) informed the Joint Committee that guidelines on the Act had been created and were available to Members to take away with them.

With regard to consultation on the objectives, the Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) informed the Joint Committee that in addition to the Member Seminar held in October 2016, consultation was part of the Well-being Assessment for Carmarthenshire assessment and over 2500 responses were received to shape the Council's well-being objectives. We also took the opportunity to consult on the draft set of objectives as part of budget consultation and nearly 600 responded with high levels of agreement for each objective, an average of 80%+.

In addition, the Housing Services Manager delivered a presentation to the Joint Committee which demonstrated the close link between the work of Carmarthenshire Home Standard (CHS) and the Act.

The Joint Committee noted that over £230M had been invested in Council housing and that the CHS had been achieved in maintaining 9,000 tenant homes. The CHS enabled more affordable homes to be provided and in supporting tenants and residents by addressing fuel poverty, effects of Welfare changes, working with partners like Shelter Cymru and Credit Unions on money matters, energy efficient homes.

The Housing Services Manager explained that the CHS linked closely with the Well-being of Future Generations Act with ongoing extensive work which included a long term 30 year business plan that underpinned the work which had been put in place, work programmes and cross departmental projects. The main outcomes of the wider benefits for Carmarthenshire and the role of tenants linked well with the new 5 ways of working.

Furthermore, the Joint Committee noted that the outcomes of the CHS complied with the 7 sustainable development goals, by setting higher housing standards through the CHS, improving supply chain improvements by stimulating the economy, resilience by developing a 30 year business plan, reducing fuel poverty, providing affordable homes and developing more cohesive communities by supporting various forms of housing.

The Housing Services Manager stated that a Health Impact Study that had taken place showed that for example 87% of tenants now feel that their home suits their needs (up from 73% in 2009) and that 59% of tenants now find it very/fairly easy to meet the costs of living in their home (up from 34% in 2009). This demonstrated that improvements to people's lives had taken place, providing a more sustainable future.

Looking to the future, the Housing Services Manager stated that consideration would be given to cooperative, low cost and rural housing which work towards a more sustainable Wales whilst improving the well-being of those who live in Wales.

The following was raised during consideration of the report:

Reference was made to Objective 1. It was commented that there was no reference to education in children with special needs. It was expressed that future funding for this area was crucial and should be included within the objective. The Service Manager for Children Services stated it was important that every child has the best start in life and agreed that no particular reference had been made to

children with special needs. The Head of Learner Programmes added that this was an area that was being considered carefully and that a reference should be included in the objective.

Reference was made to the whole report, where it was commented that the well-being objectives came across as superficial with no measurable targets included. In response, the Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) stated that the objectives at this level were underpinned by a departmental business. For each objective detailed action plans were being prepared. Progress would be monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to the relevant scrutiny committee as part of the usual performance management reports.

Further to Well-being Objective 1, it was asked, how the council intended on considering the future of children's psychology needs? The Service Manager for Children Services stated that the objectives had been developed, however it was too early to prioritise what was important for the population at this stage. However, the Head of School Effectiveness added that 2 additional psychologists had been appointed and that further detail would be included in the departmental business plan.

A concern was raised about the timing of the report in relation to the budget. The Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) reminded members that departmental business plans and budgets were considered recently at the same Scrutiny Committees. However, once the budget was finalised, action plans would include information on how the objectives would be financed.

It was commented that whilst some of the Well-being Objectives were long term in nature, it was important that the Council looked to the future be more outcome focussed, however it was also acknowledged that it would not be an easy task. The Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) stated that whilst there were proposals for further collaboration such as the new White Paper on 'Reforming local government: Resilient and renewed' the objectives tie in closely with many other departments. The Head of Learner Programmes added that the Council was increasingly working closer together on a multi-agency basis.

In response to a query regarding Community and Town Councils, the Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) clarified that only Town Councils with an Expenditure over £200k had to adhere to the Act. Although all Community Councils were expected to take all reasonable steps to support the Well-being plan. She assured that Town Councils were already working closely with the County Council. However, Town Councils were encouraged to contact the Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) should they have any queries.

With regard to Objective 5, reference was made to the 58% of the 29,086 households living in poverty across Carmarthenshire who are located in rural areas. A concern was raised that with the Flying Start service not operating in within rural areas and the Communities First scheme soon to be disbanded, how did the Council plan to improve poverty in these areas? The Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) informed the Joint Committee following the statement by Carl Sargeant AM, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children regarding the phase out of the Communities First scheme, the Council had one year to find an alternative solution. The Minister had also announced that he would be launching a new fund that would concentrate on job creation and supporting

people back into work. It was envisaged that this would come into play for April 2018. Applications would have to be made to WG.

In response to a query on Well-being Objective 4, the Head of Learner Programmes clarified that the aim of the Cynnydd and Cam Nesa European Social Fund projects was to encourage people to stay in education or go on to meaningful employment. The effect of leaving the European Union would mean that funding for the projects would cease, however, alternative strategies were currently being looked into to enable these projects to continue. Furthermore, it was agreed that the security of funding for the Cynnydd and Cam Nesa European Social Fund Projects should be clarified within the wording of the objective.

In response to a further query in relation to Well-being Objective 4, the Head of Learner Programmes stated that the ongoing work was taking place to ensure that the people in Carmarthenshire were well educated and have the right skills in order to provide them with a passport to employability and a successful future. In order to work towards this, there were clear intentions to link courses to the requirements of the local, regional and international economy and to work more efficiently by working collaboratively with other colleagues and departments.

Reference was made to Objective 6. It was suggested that the wording in the paragraph under 'What do we need to do?' be amended to include the word 'current'. With the amendment the paragraph should read "Because future trends show a shift in the composition of the workforce over the next few years, giving us an opportunity to be 'ahead of the game' by increasing the economic opportunities and prosperity of the county by upskilling our current and future potential workforce." The suggestion was agreed as this would reflect the Council's commitment to it never being too late to learn.

Reference was made to Well-being Objective 8. It was suggested the first bullet point under 'Why should this concern us?' be made clearer in order to be able to distinguish between 'life expectancy' and 'Healthy' life expectancy. This was noted.

In response to a comment regarding the use of Welsh Language amongst staff within the Council, the Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) informed the Joint Committee that the Authority had a Duty to comply with the new Welsh Language Standards, and the Assistant Chief Executive offered to receive any issues of concern from the Member.

Reference was made to Well-being Objective 13. It was observed that there was no mention of flooding within the objective. It was commented that flooding should be included as it was felt that building houses on flood plains was an issue within Carmarthenshire. The Director of Environment stated that flooding was included within Well-being Objective 12, which quoted that 'We will protect our environment and properties through delivering our Flood & Waste Management Plan...'

It was suggested that due to the plan's ambitious aspirations, regular monitoring should take place. The Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) explained that each Well-being Objective would have a detailed action plan behind it to meet our duty under the Act to 'take all reasonable steps to meet those objectives'. Progress will be monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to the relevant scrutiny committee as part of the usual performance management

reports. Furthermore, each Well-being Objective would include a link to the detailed action plans.

In response to a query relating to the how the private sector feed into the Council's well-being objectives, the Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy) stated that business owners had the opportunity to feedback as part of general consultation.

It was commented that the Carmarthenshire County Council's Well-being Objectives 2017/18, was clear and easy to read document and expressed thanks to those officers responsible for its development.

The Joint Committee RESOLVED that subject to the inclusion of its comments and additional suggestions, the report be received and referred to the Executive Board for its consideration.

CHAIR

DATE