

POLICY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 6 February 2019

PRESENT: Councillor A.G. Morgan (Chair)

Councillors:

F. Akhtar, S.M. Allen, K.V. Broom, T.A.J. Davies, H.L. Davies, D.C. Evans, J.K. Howell, G.H. John, K. Madge, J.G. Prosser and D.E. Williams

The following Officers were in attendance:

C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services
W. Walters, Director of Regeneration & Policy
N. Daniel, Head of I.C.T.
S Burford, Project Manager
G Davies, Treasury Management Officer
M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen: 10.00 am - 12.45 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A.C. Jones.

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. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2018/19

The Committee considered the Authority's Corporate Budget Monitoring Report and the Chief Executive's and Corporate Services departmental reports as at 31st October 2018 in respect of the 2018/19 financial year.

Amongst the issues raised during consideration of the report were the following:

- Reference was made to the futility of increasing the income target for car parks if parking charges were not increased;
- Previously expressed concerns were reiterated over the fact that the Committee was being invited to scrutinise the budgetary position two months later than the period reported. The Director of Corporate Services acknowledged the concerns but commented that it took about a month from the month-end to prepare the budgetary position for the period in question which then had to be considered, in the first instance, by the Executive Board before being submitted for scrutiny. He added that whilst the main emphasis of the report was to provide end-of-year forecasts and highlight pressures his officers would look into the timings for its future submission;
- The Director of Corporate Services, in response to a query, agreed to ascertain the reason as to why the predicted increased income target for

the provision of Operational compliance training within the Environment Department would not be achievable;

- The issue of the ongoing realignment of the Highways and Transport services in spite of their merger into one division in 2016 was raised.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to receive the report.

5. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY & STRATEGY 2019/20

The Committee considered the proposed Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2019/20 [which had also been considered by the Executive Board at its meeting held on the 4th February, 2019] and was reminded that, as part of the requirements of the revised CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Council was required to maintain a Treasury Management Policy detailing the policies and objectives of its treasury management activities, and to approve a Treasury Management Strategy annually prior to the commencement of the financial year to which it related. Additionally, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council was required to approve its Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for the coming year. The Director of Corporate Services highlighted that the Council would be expected to borrow, for the Carmarthenshire led projects within the Swansea Bay City Deal partnership, £40m for the Life Science & Wellbeing Village and £2m for Yr Egin from 2019-20 to 2021-22. He added that the Executive Board had recommended to Council that Cartrefi Croeso Cyfyngedig be offered a maximum funding facility of £6m. Reference was made to the need for close scrutiny of tenders invited by Cartrefi Croeso Cyfyngedig.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2019/20 and associated appendices be endorsed.

6. LLANELLI LIFE SCIENCE AND WELLBEING VILLAGE POSITION STATEMENT

With reference to the Chief Executive's position statement on the Llanelli Well-Being Village to Council on the 12th December 2018 [Minute 3 thereof refers] the Committee considered a report which aimed to provide further assurance on the governance of the Village Project both during the procurement process and following the signing of the Collaboration Agreement with Swansea University and Sterling Health Security Holdings Limited. The report included:

- Progress of the City Deal Business Case;
- The status of four reviews which had commenced and the delivery of the Village project;
- Assurances, through legal review, that a robust procurement process had been undertaken;
- Assurance around the governance of the project;
- Termination of the Collaboration Agreement.

The Committee was advised that the findings of the four reviews would be shared once completed. In addition, whilst the Collaboration Agreement had been terminated, a working relationship with Swansea University was required and at present, in spite of recent well-publicised staff suspensions, the University had not withdrawn its involvement from the project but would not be able to continue with its engagement until its internal investigations were completed. Progress

continued to be maintained with the aim of completing phase one of the Village in 2021.

Amongst the issues raised on the report were the following:

- The Committee was advised that should Swansea University withdraw from the project the Authority would be prepared to discuss alternative project delivery with another academic institution which may be interested;
- Officers clarified that they had first heard of the University suspensions at the same time as it had been reported by the press;
- With regard to the queries raised by NRW regarding the Flood Consequence Assessment required as part of the recently approved Planning Application for the Wellness Village it was anticipated that the relevant information would be submitted to NRW within the next month but recent feedback had been positive;
- It was noted that the Hywel Dda Health Board remained fully committed to the project;
- It was emphasised that the County Council's assets had been protected at all stages in the development of the project,
- In response to a comment regarding County-wide connectivity to the Wellness Village site members were advised that the Planning Application had been accompanied by a Transport Assessment of the potential traffic and transportation impacts of the developments during and after construction and a framework Travel Plan had also been produced. It was also likely that jobs with agile-working possibilities would be created.

Officers were thanked for the comprehensive update.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

6.1 that the report be received;

6.2 that a further update be provided at the next meeting.

7. CARMARTHENSHIRE PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD (PSB) MINUTES - 20TH SEPTEMBER 2018

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting of the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board [PSB] held on the 20th September 2018. 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.

With reference to minute 3 of the aforementioned minutes - 'Llanelli Wellness and Life Science Village Update' - the Committee was assured that the Council would ensure there were benefits to local businesses through control of the supply chains to larger companies which may be involved in the project.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the PSB meeting held on the 20th September 2019 be received.

8. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting to be held on the 20th February

2019 be received subject to the inclusion of PSB Minutes and an update on the Wellness Village.

9. MINUTES - 11TH JANUARY 2019

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 11th January 2019 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE