

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillor A.G. Morgan (Chair) (In Person)

Councillors (In Person):

K.V. Broom

Councillors (Virtually):

T. Davies

A. Evans

A.D. Harries

D. Jones

M.J.A. Lewis

M. James

Also in attendance (In Person):

Councillor D. Price – Leader

Councillor A. Lenny – Cabinet Member for Resources

Councillor L. Davies-Evans – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Homes

Also Present (In Person):

N. Evans, Business Support Manager;

D. Hockenhull, Media and Marketing Manager ;

G. Ayers, Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager;

J. Owen, TIC Programme Manager;

A. Machin, Learning and Development Manager;

J. Jones, Head of Regeneration, Policy and Digital;

G. Jones, Chief Digital Officer;

S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator;

J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer;

K. Evans, Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present (Virtually):

L. Rees Jones, Head of Administration and Law

C. Reynolds, Business and Projects Co-ordinator

R. Hemmingway, Head of Financial Services

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 11.18 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G. John, K. Madge and P. Hughes.

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

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
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A. Evans	5 – Carmarthenshire County Council's Draft Annual Report for 2022/23 6 – Revenue Budget Outturn Report 2022/23 7 – Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2023-24 8 – Quarterly Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator report 1 st April 2023 to 30 th June 2023	Cllr Evans declared a personal interest in that he had a family member who works within the Democratic Services section of the Council. By nature of the interest, Cllr Evans stated that he would declare an interest and leave the meeting should the discussion turn towards a matter related to the interest. Cllr Evans stayed in the meeting, took part in the discussions and voted.
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There were no declarations of any prohibited party whips.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

No public questions had been received.

4. TASK & FINISH GROUP 2023/24 PLANNING AND SCOPING DOCUMENT TO REVIEW THE PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORPORATE CONTACT CENTRE

The Committee, having agreed, in principle, to undertake a Task and Finish review on the Council's Contact Centre at its informal meeting held on 27th September, received the Task and Finish Draft Planning and Scoping Document on a review of the performance and development of the Corporate Contact Centre.

The Chair, in presenting the document emphasised that this was an area the Committee felt strongly would benefit from a review, as it was a fundamental means for the public to report issues and seek information. Therefore, Committee in considering the aims and objectives as set out in the document would be the best approach to undertake research into the current systems in place, the performance and generate recommendations to Cabinet.

In order to form a politically balanced Task and Finish Group, the Chair requested for up to 6 nominations from the Committee. The Committee, in acknowledging that the nominations received was weighted towards Plaid Cymru balanced, agreed to the membership, pending and subject to the Council decision on the membership of committees which would take place at the full Council on 8th November, 2023. This would provide an opportunity for a member of the Labour Group to join the group making it politically balanced. Should an nomination come forth from the Labour group prior to the first meeting in November, it was agreed that Cllr Jean Lewis would stand down.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 4.1 the Draft Planning and Scoping Document – To Review the Performance and Development of the Corporate Contact Centre be received;**
- 4.2 the aims and scope of the work of the Task and Finish Group as stated within the Planning and Scoping Document be endorsed;**
- 4.3 the Membership of the Task and Finish Group on the Performance and Development of the Corporate Contact Centre be as follows:-**

	COUNCILLOR	PARTY
1.	Councillor Kim Broom	Plaid Cymru
2.	Councillor Alex Evans	Plaid Cymru
3.	Councillor Terry Davies	Plaid Cymru
4.	Councillor Dot Jones	Labour
5.	Councillor Giles Morgan	Independent
6.	Councillor Jean Lewis <i>Cllr Lewis' Membership is subject to receiving a nomination from Labour Group following Council meeting on 8th November 2023</i>	Plaid Cymru

5. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/23

[NOTE: Councillor A. Evans having earlier declared an interest in this item remained in the meeting for its consideration and voting thereof.]

The Committee considered the Council's draft Annual Report for 2022/23 together with the new Council Well-Being Objectives (WBO) detailed reports falling within the remit of the committee namely:

- WBO1 – Enabling our children and young people to have the best possible start in life (Start Well)
- WBO2 – Enabling our residents to live and age well (Live and Age Well)
- WBO3 – Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe and prosperous (Prosperous Communities)
- WBO4 – To further modernise and develop as a resilient and efficient Council (Our Council)

The Leader in presenting the report highlighted that this report was a statutory requirement, and by using the well-being objectives to frame the self-assessment enabled the Council to integrate the reporting requirement of both the Local Government & Election (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act into a single report.

The report provided information on how the Council engaged with citizens and

stakeholders across all key Council functions.

The comments/observations were responded to as follows:

- Reference was made to the specific grants received from Welsh Government as they equated to the total amount at 16% that the Council receives from council tax. In response to a query, the Leader confirmed the amount the Council received from council tax in the overall spend, was small in comparison to the importance of the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) received from Welsh Government. There were ongoing discussions at an all-Wales level. The Leader informed members that the Minister for Finance and Local Government, would be visiting Carmarthenshire in the next week where a discussion would take place in regard to the current grant situation and possible consolidation in the RSG. Information would be circulated to Committee Members outside of the meeting.
- The Cabinet Member for Resources explained that the Council was dependent on grants to maintain the revenue budget.
- In response to a query, the Head of Financial Services, confirmed that the non-domestic collection rate was 97.97% which was marginally down on the previous year. Non-domestic rates are pooled across Wales and therefore, any under or over collection within an individual local authority would go into the pool and be shared across Wales. The authority is protected from any variation of local economic factors.
- The Head of Regeneration, Policy and Digital, in response to a query on retailer vacancies and retailers going into administration, confirmed that the landlord would be liable for rates albeit that there is an interim vacant 3 month void period.
- In response to a query regarding a decline on statutory response targets to complaints, the Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager, explained that there had been an increase in number of complaints received by the Authority during the same period. The complaints received were of a complex nature that needed time to be investigated thoroughly. It was reported that a detailed Complaints Annual Report would be presented to the next Governance and Audit Committee.
- In response to a query, the Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager clarified that a directive to Heads of Service from internal audit regarding management response time had been actioned.
- In response to a query, the Business Support Manager confirmed that a written response would be provided to the Committee, explaining as to why there was an increase in the number of death registrations in Carmarthenshire during 2022/23, including an increase in cases requiring coronial involvement.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to receive the report.

6. REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT 2022/23

[NOTE: Councillor A. Evans having earlier declared an interest in this item remained in the meeting for its consideration and voting thereof.]

The Committee considered the Authority's 2022/23 Corporate Budget Outturn reports and the Chief Executive and Corporate Services departmental reports. Overall, the net position for the authority was an underspend of £1,288k.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

7. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2023/24

[NOTE: Councillor A. Evans having earlier declared an interest in this item remained in the meeting for its consideration and voting thereof.]

The Committee considered the Authority's Corporate Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24 and the Chief Executive's and Corporate Services departmental reports as at 30th June 2023 in respect of the 2023/24 financial year.

The monitoring report forecasted an end of year overspend of £4,504k on the Authority's net revenue budget with an overspend at departmental level of £7,399k.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to receive the report.

8. QUARTERLY TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 1ST APRIL 2023 TO 30TH JUNE 2023

[NOTE: Councillor A. Evans having earlier declared an interest in this item remained in the meeting for its consideration and voting thereof.]

The Committee considered the Quarterly Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Report for the period 1st April 2023 - 30th June 2023. The report listed the treasury management activities which had occurred during the first quarter of the year in line with the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2023-2024 adopted by Council on the 1st March 2023.

The Committee noted that the Authority had not breached any of its Prudential Indicators during the period.

The comments/observations raised were responded to as follows:-

- Reference was made to the low WAYield for Lloyds Bank. In response raised to a query regarding the market rate, the Cabinet Member for Resources, informed the Committee that the Council had re-invested with Lloyds Bank at a higher rate of 6.22%.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to endorse the report.

**9. 2023/24 QUARTER 1 - PERFORMANCE REPORT (01/04/23-30/0623)
RELEVANT TO THIS SCRUTINY**

The Committee considered a report with provided a progress update for the end of Quarter 1 – 2023/24, of Actions and Measures linked to the Corporate Strategy and Well-being objectives.

The comments/observations raised were responded to as follows:-

- In terms of apprenticeships, it was noted that work was being undertaken to look at ways of re-launching the scheme.
- The Learning and Development Manager agreed to provide vacancy figures for apprenticeships across the Authority.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

10. CARMARTHENSHIRE PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD (PSB) MINUTES APRIL 2023

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Carmarthenshire Public Services Board [PSB] held on the 25th April, 2023. 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.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the PSB meeting held on the 25th April, 2023 be received.

11. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

The Committee received the Non-Submission report in regards to the PSB minutes for July meeting and noted the explanation.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be noted.

12. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee received a list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next meeting to be held on the 12th December 2023.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 12th December 2023 be noted.

13. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 19 JULY 2023

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 19th July, 2023 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE