

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT
COMMITTEE ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON
FRIDAY, 3 MARCH 2017**

PRESENT

County Councillor K W Curry (Chair), D O Evans, V E Evans, G Hopkins, D C Jones, H Lewis and D H Williams

1.	APOLOGIES	PLSC1-2017
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors M J Dorrance, G Morgan and GD Price

2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	PLSC2-2017
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There were no declarations of interest.

3.	DISCLOSURES OF PARTY WHIPS	PLSC3-2017
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There were no declarations of party whips.

4.	MINUTES	PLSC4-2017
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Documents:

- Minutes of meeting held on 8 December 2016

Discussion:

- It was noted that County Councillor D O Evans had tendered his apologies for the meeting
- Item 5 'Crime and Disorder' – the first bullet point was thought to be confusing and the first 'Powys' should be removed

Outcome:

- **The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2016 as a correct record**

5.	PAVO	PLSC5-2017
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Documents:

- Draft Partnership Agreement between Powys County Council (PCC) and Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO)

Discussion:

- A review had been undertaken of grants payable to third sector organisations
- Agreement had been reached to view the situation holistically
- PAVO have agreed to strengthen the partnership with the Council
- Biannual reviews will take place
- An annual report will be produced

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been agreed with PAVO
- Outcomes will be paramount and enable the Council to monitor levels of support across the third sector
- PAVO will be funded to assist other organisations to provide services. Some services will be provided directly by PAVO.
- Grants to some other organisations will continue although funds are limited
- Not all third sector organisations are members of PAVO
- PAVO and organisations within it may bid for the same work – a set of criteria will be determined and bids will be objectively assessed against that criteria. Genuine competition will ensue.
- The Committee sought further information as to how many contracts and service level agreements were in place and whether these were monitored in one area or in different directorates. This information would be obtained and circulated.
- The Council could not direct PAVO but expectations will be clearly set out – it will be PAVO's responsibility to achieve those outcomes
- PCC would not be represented on PAVO's Board as there would be a conflict of interest
- Members requested that the annual report be considered by Place Committee
- Annual reports would be submitted in the first instance but this would be subject to review
- PAVO was a registered charity and their accounts would be publically available
- Some minor amendments to the presentation of the document were suggested
- Members asked what alternatives would be available should PAVO not be able to deliver – discussions with PAVO had been very positive and there were no concerns that PAVO would not be able to deliver. However, the alternatives would be to deliver the services 'in house' or seek another organisation to undertake delivery.

Outcomes:

- **Additional information on contracts and service level agreements to be circulated**
- **The Annual Review to be incorporated into the Place Committee work programme**

6.	FUTURE SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS	PLSC6-2017
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The Scrutiny Manager was welcomed to the meeting to discuss concerns the Committee had had about the future role of scrutiny.

Discussion:

- In preparing for the Corporate Assessment it had become apparent that scrutiny was attempting to cover too many issues and the quality of work was suffering

- A revised work programme has been established allowing Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs Steering Group to allocate work more strategically to the two scrutiny committees and Audit Committee
- There was limited officer and Member time
- It had been suggested that there could be a more even distribution of work between the two scrutiny committees – proposals for realigning the work of the two committees is to be considered by County Council shortly. The roles and responsibilities of Audit Committee may be subject to review under the White Paper and clarification will be required.
- The Wales Audit Office (WAO) had raised issues regarding the Cabinet work programme and have indicated that they would wish to see a Cabinet Work Programme populated for at least eight months
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) contains a three year plan and a work programme over the longer term could be developed
- The timetable for Cabinet reports is now 60 days to enable pre-decision scrutiny to be incorporated
- Pre-decision scrutiny will be the main focus going forward
- There will be greater opportunity for joint working
- Public Service Board (PSB) scrutiny will also need to be undertaken
- Scrutiny of joint collaboration work with the Health Board will be necessary
- Members were of the opinion that there was too big a gap between scrutiny and the Cabinet – too much scrutiny work was ignored and scrutiny itself spent too much time looking back rather than forward
- With the emphasis on pre-decision scrutiny, and amendments to Cabinet report templates, the influence scrutiny is having should be more apparent
- It was suggested that when a scrutiny group is set up, all Members should be emailed to establish whether any would like to take part in a particular review
- Reporting of Cabinet meetings does not currently demonstrate that Scrutiny Chairs or Group Leaders have had any influence – minutes of Cabinet should reflect which scrutiny recommendations have been accepted or rejected together with the reasons
- The press and public seem to have a limited perception of the decision making processes within the Authority. Members were of the opinion that there was little debate and a perception that decisions had been taken before meetings were held. There was insufficient engagement with the general public.
- Web casts were being used more frequently – all meetings of County Council and some Cabinets are web cast. This should be extended to all Cabinet meetings as well as Planning and Scrutiny Committees.
- Scrutiny Chairs have also been asked to comment at Cabinet on issues which have not been subject to scrutiny. In future Scrutiny Chairs will only be invited to speak on those issues which have been considered by scrutiny.
- It was noted that the White Paper was consulting on a return to the committee system. Some Members would welcome this, but it was reported that the WLGA Co-ordinating Committee had overwhelmingly rejected such proposals.
- The White Paper was encouraging greater regional working although further clarity was required on some proposals

Outcome:

- **Noted**

7.	WORKING GROUP - PLACE WORKING GROUP 3 - HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY	PLSC7-2017
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Documents:

- Scrutiny summary report

Outcome:

- **Noted**

8.	WORK PROGRAMME	PLSC8-2017
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Documents:

- Work Programme

Outcome:

- **The PAVO annual review would be added to the work programme**

9.	CORRESPONDENCE	PLSC9-2017
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There were no items of correspondence.

County Councillor K W Curry (Chair)