

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE A HELD AT  
COMMITTEE ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON  
THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2017**

**PRESENT**

County Councillors G I S Williams (Chair), K W Curry, E Durrant, D O Evans, E Jones, G Jones, G Morgan, G Pugh, J Pugh and D Selby

Officers: Paul Griffiths, Strategic Director Place, Fay Smith, CSP Co-ordinator, Clive Jones, Professional Lead, Trading Standards, Community Safety and Emergency Planning, Vince Hanley, Professional Lead, Commissioning and Procurement and Tom Simmons, Procurement Specialist

<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors S C Davies, L George, K M Roberts-Jones and A Williams

<b>2.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
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County Councillor E Durrant declared a personal interest in item 7, Commissioning and Procurement, as there was a small auto parts business in her ward.

<b>3.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIPS</b>
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There were no declarations of party whips.

<b>4.</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>
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**Documents:**

- Minutes of the last meeting held on 15 June 2017

**Discussion:**

- Members asked for an update on the Brecon Hub – the Strategic Director, Place confirmed that the project had strong governance around it and was largely now on track to be completed in the Autumn of 2018. The contract had been signed off and it was not expected that Council would be asked to approve additional capital funding. The project was now proceeding at pace. He agreed to circulate dates regarding completion, handover and soft opening after the meeting
- A question had been raised at the last meeting regarding the number of cautions issued to young people which a Member thought was disproportionate – this would be raised with officers during the discussion on Crime and Disorder

**Outcome:**

- **The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes as a correct record**

<b>5.</b>	<b>HEART OF WALES PROPERTY SERVICES</b>
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The Committee received a briefing from the Strategic Director, Place.

- Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs Steering Group had received a request for scrutiny to be undertaken on the Heart of Wales Property Service (HOWPS) following issues having been raised with several Members
- It was acknowledged that there had been mobilisation issues and the Chief Executive and Strategic Director Place had met the Chief Executive of Kier to express dissatisfaction
  - Changes and actions have taken place: a telephone conference now takes place every Friday between the Chair of the JVC Board and the Strategic Director, Place.
  - A detailed rectification plan is in place to recover the situation
  - Additional expertise has been brought in by Kier for a 3 month period at Kier's expense.
- The service had not been acceptable but now, following interventions, the Strategic Director, Place had a reasonable level of confidence that significant improvements would be made
- If improvements are not made consideration would be given to determining the contract
- It was expected that some costs and fees may be reduced
- The Strategic Director Place has been appointed to the HOWPS Board to replace the Head of Regeneration and Statutory Services who is leaving the Authority
- Scrutiny was needed but it might provide more beneficial if this was delayed to the spring
- One of the objectives of establishing HOWPS was to create more capacity in the service
- Kier have had significant success with this type of arrangement elsewhere
- Members noted that lessons needed to be learned if this type of venture was to become more commonplace within the Authority
- There was concern that the number of voids in the Housing Service had trebled since HOWPS went live
- Tenants' perception was that there was a new fleet of vans but no other improvements and it was suggested that consideration should be given to how new ventures are introduced
- Difficulties with combining IT systems and rearranging existing contractual arrangements should have been foreseen
- Members were aware of poor quality workmanship in some areas and it was debated as to whether these were pre HOWPS. Some examples mentioned during the meeting appear to have been pre- HOWPS. Details would be sent to the Strategic Director for investigation.
- It was suggested that a structure chart with phone numbers and emails be provided for Members. A further suggestion was that Members be notified of works ongoing in their wards so they could monitor progress.

**Outcomes:**

- **Scrutiny of the Heart of Wales Property Service be referred to Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs' Steering Group for prioritising**

<b>6.</b>	<b>CRIME AND DISORDER</b>
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**Documents:**

- Report of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Co-ordinator

**Discussion:**

- The CSP had a new Chair in July – Chief Inspector Rhiannon Ivens has considerable experience with CSPs
- A joint assessment is an annual requirement which will determine priorities
- The Wales Audit Office had completed a report regarding CSPs in 2016. There were seven recommendations to be implemented. The Welsh Government have formed an overview panel comprising the statutory members of the CSP to review CSPs and how they operate – they too have made seven recommendations although the time frame for these changes is unknown. The review was published on 13 December 2017 and can be found at the following link <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/communities/safety/working-together-for-safer-communities/?lang=en>
- Dovetail is a pilot project in relation to the PREVENT, CONTEST and CHANNEL programmes which aims to assist those voluntarily seeking support to turn away from terrorism and extremism. To date the Authority chairs the Channel Panel, but the Police have undertaken the bulk of the work. Dovetail has piloted a new way of operating in nine areas – much of the work currently undertaken by the police will be moved to local authorities. A consultation process has commenced. It is proposed that there be new appointments to the posts of Channel Co-ordinators (5) and Supervisors (2). It was suggested that other agencies could be more helpful in assisting those wanting to turn away from extremism, freeing up the police to concentrate on enforcement and pursuing those not wishing to engage. There will be retraining and IT issues to be resolved.
- A Rural Crime Partnership is to be developed on a local basis to deal with grassland fires, sheep thefts etc. Various groups have been established over the years but an overarching group is being proposed.
- Fraud – officers were asked how this was classified. Police recording systems have changed and clarity will be sought. There is an internal fraud unit within the Council and Trading Standards will prosecute under fraud legislation. There was a need to ensure that all fraud matters are recorded together. The Committee asked if there was a specialised unit for Powys or a cyber-crime unit. Priorities for the area were burglary non-dwelling and crime against the person.
- At the last meeting a Member had questioned the number of cautions given to young people and whether this was disproportionate with the rest of Wales. The CSP Co-ordinator had requested this information but a response has not been received. She would follow this up with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

- Acquisitive crime is that which results in financial gain. Social Media is used widely as a preventative measure. Organised gangs have been predominantly involved with drugs but are increasingly becoming involved with counterfeit tobacco. A strategy with HMRC and the Police has been introduced.
- There is co-operation with other authorities in regards to rogue traders. There has been success in prosecuting under the Proceeds of Crime Act and victims have been repaid. A financial investigator has been employed.
- Road Safety – there was no update to provide as the Road Safety Partnership has not met since June 2017. Carmarthenshire County Council are undertaking some analytical work. The issue has been raised with the Police and Crime Commissioner. Members were concerned at the lack of data alongside the number of accidents involving motorcyclists (motorcyclists account for 5% of road users, but 60% of road deaths). Other issues regarding cyclists, slow moving traffic and alternatives to fines and penalty points were debated.
- Victim Support and Victims of ASB have been combined under a new project, Goleudy

**Outcomes:**

- **The report was noted**

<b>7. COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT</b>
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**Documents:**

- Report of the Interim Professional Lead, Commercial Services

**Discussion:**

- A new contract was put in place to ensure that the Authority was compliant and efficient
- The National Procurement Service (NPS) was used as it offered an opportunity to move quickly
- A balance needed to be struck with local markets – current local spent was considered low at 18%
- The NPS provided a route to retain local business and a community benefits clause was included in the contract for fleet spares
- The majority of spares for larger vehicles are obtained directly from the supplier or their dealers
- Smaller companies are used for consumables or parts no longer under warranty
- A mini competition was run through NPS
- The winning contract has fair payment clauses and community benefit requirements included
- An analysis of a random selection of invoices has been completed – a new system will provide more data going forward
- An efficiency of 20% has been achieved
- Local members had been concerned that local business would lose out – every supplier had been contacted and assured that there were still opportunities for local businesses

- 2% of value will be used for community initiatives in the fleet or engineering area. Recent discussions have shown that there is a wish to employ an apprentice to ensure capacity and career development
- Spend had been £520K in the previous year. The current year shows a spend of £203K for the first two quarters. Although some work is seasonal, overall efficiencies are expected at year end.
- The contract is for two years with an option of a further two years by agreement by both parties
- Members asked for a comparison between the last year and the current – this would be provided for Q2 and Q3 for both years
- The Committee sought assurance that response times etc were at least as good as previously – these were tracked by the Integrated Transport Unit and KPIs reported to the NPS
- It was suggested that savings might be achievable in the first year but that these efficiencies could be lost in subsequent years as prices were increased. The contract was based on the North Wales Purchasing Pattern in 2011 which had demonstrated year on year improvements of 8%. The company are reporting back on parts usage and this will influence the 'basket of spares' used to determine prices. There was insufficient data at the start of the process but this is improving and monitoring and negotiation will take place to ensure improvements will carry forward.
- One of the drivers in moving to a new contract was to ensure that the Authority was compliant. The service had not been as efficient as it could be. The contract represented a good option and savings would be made.
- An Impact Assessment had not been prepared
- An open book exercise was not undertaken – the mini competition was a tender process between three companies
- The decision to use genuine parts (OEM - original equipment manufacturer or non OEM) was a decision taken by the workshop manager
- Members asked if random checks were made – this was a matter for the service and not the Procurement Section
- It was suggested that a retrospective analysis of non-standard items should be undertaken to ensure that disproportionate mark ups were not being made on such items – there is no evidence to suggest there is a mark-up on non-standard items but a random check will be made for monitoring purposes
- Efforts were being made to boost the 20% local spend figure
- The contract was strong and made under a national framework – there was more leverage at the centre to maintain prices than local negotiation
- Members questioned whether similar contracts were in place for fuel – fuel is sourced through the Crown Commissioning Service which buys futures on behalf of public bodies. Details of prices paid would be circulated following the meeting.

**Outcome:**

- **The report was noted**
- **Fuel prices and the position regarding VAT would be circulated to Members**

<b>8.</b>	<b>SCRUTINY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD</b>
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The Committee were asked to appoint a representative to the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee together with a substitute representative.

**Outcome:**

- **County Councillor E Durrant be appointed as the Committee's representative on the PSB Scrutiny Committee, with County Councillor G Williams as the substitute representative**

<b>9.</b>	<b>CORPORATE LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE PLAN</b>
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The Committee was asked to appoint three representatives to join the Chair and Vice Chair in a joint scrutiny of the Corporate Leadership and Governance Plan. This meeting would take place on 19 January 2018 at 2pm.

**Outcome:**

- **In addition to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, County Councillors D Selby, G Pugh and E Jones were appointed to the joint scrutiny of the Corporate Leadership and Governance Plan**

<b>10.</b>	<b>WORKING GROUPS</b>
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<b>11.</b>	<b>ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b>
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**Documents:**

- Scrutiny summary report

**Discussion:**

- Members commented that the recruitment campaign could be improved
- It was noted that a Welsh Government Grant was available to train via the Open University whilst working for the Authority
- Members were of the opinion that more apprenticeships were needed

**Outcomes:**

- **The report was noted**

<b>12.</b>	<b>GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS REVIEW</b>
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**Documents:**

- Scrutiny summary report

**Outcome:**

- **The report was noted**

<b>13.</b>	<b>WORK PROGRAMME</b>
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**Documents:**

- Work Programme

**Discussion:**

- Members requested that scrutiny be undertaken on the stationery contract
- A request was made to review the parking policy – a Member suggested that areas of underused car parks could be set aside for residents parking. This had been considered by the Portfolio Holder and Officers but could not be implemented as the same policy would need to operate across the County and the appropriate IT was not available. Members acknowledged the need to take a strategic approach but that the current policy may be too rigid.

**Outcomes:**

- **The issues of stationery and car parking policy would be referred to the Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs' Steering Group for consideration for inclusion in the work programme**

<b>14.</b>	<b>JOINT CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS STEERING GROUP</b>
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**Documents:**

- Notes of meetings of the Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs' Steering Group held on 20 June, 11 July, 19 September, 10 October and 7 November 2017

**Outcome:**

- **Noted**

<b>15.</b>	<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>
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There were no items of correspondence.

**County Councillor G I S Williams (Chair)**