

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE JOINT CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS STEERING GROUP HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON TUESDAY, 12 APRIL 2016

PRESENT

County Councillor JG Morris (Chair)

County Councillors D R Jones, L V Corfield, E M Jones and J Brautigam

1.	APOLOGIES	JCSG1 - 2016
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Members: County Councillors S C Davies

Officers: Amanda Lewis, Strategic Director, People and Jeremy Patterson, Chief Executive

2.	DRAFT NOTES - FOR CONSIDERATION	JCSG2 - 2016
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Documents Considered:

- Draft Notes – 18 March 2016

Issues Discussed:

- **Corporate Assessment** – it was noted that a full Corporate Assessment will not now take place. This will be replaced with three thematic reviews – Financial Resilience, Corporate Governance (including scrutiny) and Transformation. The strategy to address the corporate assessment in relation to scrutiny will however continue with some refocussing depending on timetabling.
- **Integration** – initial discussions have taken place with the PTHB. There were four strands to consider – the Joint Partnership Board, Joint Management Team, Part 9 Board (a regional board required by statute) and the PSB itself.

Outcomes:

- **Noted**

3.	DISCUSSION WITH THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR REGARDING POTENTIAL SCRUTINY ITEMS.	JCSG3 - 2016
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Documents Considered:

- None

Issues Discussed:

- No items were raised

4.	SCRUTINY SELF ASSESSMENT	JCSG4 - 2016
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Documents Considered:

- Assessment Matrix
- Scrutiny work programme

Issues Discussed:

- The existing scoring mechanism for determining scrutiny work was considered to be too subjective and difficult to manage
- Officers suggested the use of a risk matrix – this still proved to be subjective, but a list of existing and potential work items had been drawn up for consideration and prioritisation by the Steering Group
- It was considered that some items included should be undertaken by the Cabinet – Portfolio Holders should have responsibility for scrutinizing their own areas and policies
- There was concern that the Cabinet did not fully understand the requirements of a ‘commissioning’ council and had a tendency to want to deliver all services
- Too much work was left to scrutiny to deliver
- Some items (e.g. library standards report) should be challenged by the Portfolio Holder
- Regulators were also putting scrutiny under pressure
- The relationship between Cabinet and Scrutiny must be improved and a joint meeting should be arranged to discuss improvements
- Work programming links between the Cabinet and the scrutiny committees must also be improved to allow sufficient time for scrutiny to take place. Existing work programmes are ineffective.
- Scrutiny should not be used merely to give added assurance to Cabinet prior to decision making
- The mechanism for approval of reports for submission to Cabinet was also under review and more discipline needed to be introduced to the process. A timetable is being prepared for consideration by Management Team which will be strictly adhered to – this may incorporate a deadline for informing scrutiny.
- A suggestion was made that the current work programme for scrutiny should be completely redrawn based on the priorities of the One Powys Plan
- Scrutiny should be more involved in determining whether proposals to be consulted upon are correct
- A forward vision is required to enable effective forward planning
- Members debated whether there should be a comment from scrutiny on every report – it was thought this would be too cumbersome and slow down the process
- Scrutiny should also be undertaken on low risk issues which may develop into high risk
- Insufficient scrutiny taking place at an appropriate level

Scrutiny Work Programme – amendments

Education:

- Unverified exam results, verified exam results, attendance, exclusions categorisation, SIP monitoring – annual report for monitoring otherwise Cabinet responsibility
- School budgets – reports to Cabinet periodically. Every Portfolio Holder will be in receipt of bespoke monitoring reports. The Portfolio Holder for Schools will also receive individual school monitoring reports. A recent issue regarding the misuse of school funds had been widely reported and was subject to an investigation. Members were concerned that such activity could take place outside of policy and had little confidence in current processes.
- ERW Challenge Advisory Service – to be re-categorised as HIGH / HIGH
- School Modernisation Proposals – categorize as HIGH / HIGH. The policy should be correct. A useful piece of work would be to monitor previous projects but there is a lack of capacity to undertake this at the present time
- School Pupil Projections including retention rates - to be referred to FSP
- Payments to temporary and supply staff – remove
- ERW Business Plan including monitoring – ERW Joint Scrutiny

Adult Social Care

- Day Services and Welshpool Day Centre – combine
- Fairer and Affordable Care and Direct Payments – briefing prior to a decision being taken on further scrutiny
- Residential Care – pre decision scrutiny required – briefing to be provided to Members in the near future

Corporate

- Welfare Reform – Universal Credit should be monitored post roll out – annual monitoring
- ICT Security and business continuity to be added

Cultural

- Libraries – Annual Report – Cabinet should monitor

Joint Scrutiny

- Mid Wales Health Collaborative and Scrutiny of Integration with Health to be combined
- ACRF – categorise HIGH / HIGH. Outcomes should be apparent in the Director of Social Services' annual report.

Finance and Performance

- Proposal under consideration for this work to be undertaken by FSP

Place

- Prioritisation to be carried out – Highways savings to be placed first

Outcomes:

Action	Completion Date	Action By
Joint Meeting to be arranged with Cabinet		Lisa Richards
Scrutiny work programme to be amended as discussed.		Wyn Richards

5.	PSB DATES - FOR INFORMATION	JCSG5 - 2016
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- 9 June, 2016
- 22 September, 2016
- 1 December, 2016

6.	DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS - FOR INFORMATION	JCSG6 - 2016
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- 24 May 2016
- 5 July 2016
- 13 September 2016
- 18 October 2016
- 29 November 2016

County Councillor JG Morris (Chair)