

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT RHAYADER FIRE STATION, EAST STREET, RHAYADER, POWYS, LD6 5DL ON THURSDAY, 18 JULY 2019

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Tony Thomas (Powys Teaching Health Board). Trish Buchan (Powys Teaching Health Board) attended in his place.

Present: Neil Evans (Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service) (Chair), Angela Davies (Powys County Council), Trish Buchan (Powys Teaching Health Board), Owen James (Powys Teaching Health Board), Ann Webb (Brecon Beacons National Park), County Councillor A Williams (Powys County Council) and Ruth Parry-Wright (PAVO).

In attendance:

Nigel Brinn (Corporate Director – Economy and Environment), Bethan Ledger (Strategic Planning, Policy and Performance Manager) and Liz Patterson (Scrutiny Officer)

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Resolved that County Councillor Ange Williams be elected as Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

3. MINUTES

The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 19th April 2019 as a correct record.

The Scrutiny Officer was instructed to follow up on the request for Scrutiny Training.

4. OUTCOME LETTER AND RESPONSE

The correspondence between PSB Scrutiny and PSB was attached. The Strategic Planning Manager confirmed that the meeting between Stuart Bourne (Powys Teaching Health Board), Nigel Brinn (Powys County Council) and Carl Cooper (PAVO) had taken place and a paper on Step 5 'Develop a joint approach to community resilience by co-ordinating existing support and building the skills and capacity within communities helping them to do the things they can do for themselves' would be taken to the next PSB meeting in September 2019. It appeared that it was the intention to use the North Powys Well-being Project and an existing PAVO project 'Social Value Forum' to progress this Step.

It appeared there was tension in using the North Powys Well-being Project to meet Step 5. This project is also being used in respect of Steps 11 and 12. It is

both wider than Step 5 in its remit and narrower than Step 5 in its geographical coverage of the county.

Discussion took place regarding what the PSB mean by the word resilience. Scrutiny partners from their different backgrounds would all have different understanding of the word which might be more specific (for example flood resilience, community fire safety etc) or more general (for example communities being resilient from a people perspective rather than physical perspective).

Agreed that Committee would await sight of the paper on Step 5 prepared by Stuart Bourne for the PSB before programming this step for further scrutiny.

5.	RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY FROM POWYS PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD ON WCCIS
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PSB Scrutiny had been assigned the task of Reviewing the effectiveness of WCCIS by the Joint Chairs and Vice-Chairs Steering Group on 11th September 2018. This had been considered at the meeting of PSB Scrutiny on 20th September 2018.

The meeting on the 20th September 2019 had resulted in a question which was posed to the PSB. On the 28th March 2019 PSB considered the question and concluded:

Carol Shillabeer as the officer responsible for the roll out of WCISS in Wales offered to respond the Scrutiny questions. It was noted that the questions would have been better directed to the RPB as the PSB was not responsible for the implementation on WCCIS. HD would raise this with the Scrutiny Manager at PCC.

Members noted the comments that this item sat under the Regional Partnership Board and sought assurance that WCCIS was receiving appropriate scrutiny.

Recommended that the Co-ordinating Committee* note the response from the PSB that the question would have been better directed to the RPB and re-assign the responsibility for scrutiny to WCCIS to an appropriate committee.

*The Co-ordinating Committee is the successor Committee to the Joint Chairs and Vice-Chairs Steering Group.

6.	STEP 10 UPDATE
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The Corporate Director (Economy and Environment) gave a presentation on the Growing Mid Wales (copy filed with signed minutes).

Powys County Council and Ceredigion County Council are working together on Growing Mid Wales. These areas face similar challenges one of which is the

lowest GVA in Wales at £16,910 some £9,268 less than the UK, share a similar geography and either have a lengthy coastline or border with England.

This is the fourth development deal in Wales following on from the Cardiff City Region Deal, Swansea Bay City Deal and North Wales Growth Deal. There are pros and cons of going last not least that lessons can be learnt from the other City and Growth Deals which include the importance of getting the governance right. Whilst the speed of progress may appear frustrating much work has been ongoing behind the scenes to ensure that the governance is correct. It is not intended to limit ambition and the aim is to provide a series of interventions which link to objectives rather than projects which have more invested in them.

An Inter Authority Agreement has been signed and a Joint Committee set up supported by an Economic Strategy Group, Regional Learning and Skills Partnership and Partnership Forum. A series of regional sub-groups exist below the main forums which can cross over into other areas (such as the transport sub-group which covers part of south Gwynedd).

Does the transport group link to the aims of Step 3 'work with an influence others to improve our transport infrastructure, our existing transport links and develop a sustainable and integrated approach for planning and delivery'?

These link to an extent.

Transport issues are of high importance to the Powys Teaching Health Board as access to health appointments for patients can be challenging.

Opportunities exist here for co-ordination of transportation and infrastructure improvements.

The key points for this programme are that it is over a 15 year period, unique to this area and intends to grow the foundation economy. This will need a skilled workforce and the right infrastructure. There has been engagement with the private sector as it is important that this is not too public sector orientated.

Will the education and skills programme include skills needed for all sectors including the health sector?

The education and skills programme will focus on meeting the skills gap locally.

Will the education and skills programme include school age children and offer a path locally so that young people can continue their education without having to leave the area to attend university where they tend not to return.

This is an issue and it is understood that the Mid Wales region produce proportionally more university level entrants who are not then retained.

A number of ambitions have been expressed including:

- Radio spectrum
- Food innovation
- Agriculture and grassland innovation
- Skills
- Tourism

which are supported by the following business ambitions:

- Broadening the economic base
- Strengthening the economic base

- Connecting our economy

The aim is to increase GVA by 5% as the Mid Wales region has the lowest GVA nationally. The region has a high employment rate but many of the jobs are low paid or part time.

Scrutiny Members noted the report notes a declining working population due to outmigration and a target of 23,000 skilled full-time jobs to increase the GVA. This gap affects both the working population and volunteer workforce due to changes in the pension age.

Step 10 with its focus on branding to promote and attract inward investment to Powys is not an appropriate step. The additional information contained within the Growth Deal papers show that a more ambitious step should have been agreed.

It is accepted that this is narrow definition.

The information provided is concerning as it appears there is a disconnect between the baseline for the Growth Deal and what is currently on the ground.

Welsh Government are taking an interesting stance with a focus on achieving a good foundation economy from which there will be opportunities to grow. There is space within the programme for all concepts and whilst other programmes within Wales are further ahead than the Mid Wales Growth Deal the other programmes are yet to spend any money.

If the private sector are involved there will be some realism within the programme and there are innovative firms in the region. The programme should build on these at an appropriate pace to succeed.

This is intended. For example there is a lack of available property in the north of the region but a simply property programme would not work under the Growth Deal. It is intended to link this to the infrastructure, low carbon and digital programmes. The process is iterative and it will be necessary to get support from Welsh Government and Westminster. The area would not want to be left behind whilst other regions are supported in their City and Growth deals.,

Powys is known as a county of SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) and the self employed. Is this a sufficient base from which to develop the economy as described?

It was acknowledged that Powys is a county of small businesses.

Does the programme know what skills existing employers need?

Comments relating to the connection with other steps within the PSB arena are welcomed.

What milestones and goals are defined in the intention to increase the GVA?

The PSB have a working group arranged for August which will populate the milestones for the steps.

Outcome:

- **That observations and recommendations are produced and provided to the Lead Officer in respect of Step 10**

7. PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

The Strategic Planning, Policy and Performance Manager confirmed that 8 two minute videos had been filmed covering the various steps of the Well-being Plan as the first Annual Report of the PSB. These videos will be uploaded to the Councils Youtube site and will be shared with partners for publishing and promoting. The videos are a mix of English and Welsh language with subtitles.

The meeting viewed three videos: the overview, one covering transport and one covering skills and lifelong learning.

It had been intended to publish the Annual Report at the Royal Welsh Show but this had not been possible as the County Council was in purdah until 2nd August. It is intended to publish the videos by the end of the week.

Resolved that, on publication the Scrutiny Officer circulate the link to the Youtube videos. Committee Members view the Annual Report from the perspective of critical friend and return any comments to the Scrutiny Officer for compilation.

8. PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS ACROSS WALES

The Scrutiny Officer presented a paper outlining the different scrutiny arrangements for PSB across Wales.

Scrutiny Members were asked to keep updated on the arrangements for other PSB Scrutiny Committees to identify any good practice which the Powys PSB Scrutiny may choose to use.

9. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Scrutiny Officer presented the paper on Governance Arrangements explaining that this paper had been considered at the meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee at Powys County Council which has the role of assigning scrutiny work across the Scrutiny Committees of the authority.

The Co-ordinating Committee had requested further detail and for the information to be presented schematically.

Concern was expressed that the PSB appeared to be delegating the delivery of certain Well-Being Steps to existing projects with separate governance arrangements. Whilst the challenge of delivery of such projects remains the responsibility of the PSB this delegation complicates matters in two respects

- The governance of such projects is separate from the PSB and in the case of the North Powys Well-Being Programme governance is undertaken within the Regional Partnership Board (to which there appears to be no defined scrutiny), and in the case of the Mid Wales Growth Deal it appears there is an intention to set up specific Joint Scrutiny arrangements. There is little sense in undertaking scrutiny in multiple

arenas but it is also important that all areas receive an appropriate level of scrutiny.

- By using existing projects to deliver a Well-being Step it maybe that the project is much wider than the Step in remit and potentially narrower (North Powys Well-being Programme), or wider (Mid Wales Growth Deal) than the Step geographically

The Co-ordinating Committee have been tasked to examine this issue and it is **recommended that the PSB Scrutiny Committee Chair attend the next meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee to take part in discussions which affect the remit of PSB Scrutiny.**

10. MINUTES FROM PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

The minutes from the meeting of the PSB held on the 28th March 2019 were noted. The draft minutes from the meeting of the PSB held on the 6th June 2019 were yet to be published.

Members expressed concern that the draft minutes from the meeting on the 6th June 2019 were not available some six weeks after the meeting and **resolved to query the timeframe for publication of minutes with the PSB.**

11. WORK PROGRAMME

The date of the next meeting clashed with a meeting of the Powys Teaching Health Board and it was agreed to meet on Thursday 3rd October at 10.30am with a briefing at 10.00am.

Items for consideration to include:

- Monitoring progress on Delivery Plans
- Detailed scrutiny of Step 6

Neil Evans Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service