

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ECONOMY, RESIDENTS, COMMUNITIES AND GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT BY TEAMS ON MONDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2020**

PRESENT: County Councillor M J Dorrance (Chair)  
County Councillors K W Curry, D O Evans, J Gibson-Watt, G Jones, I McIntosh, J Pugh, D Selby and L Skilton

Cabinet Portfolio Holders In Attendance: County Councillors G Breeze (Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance and Engagement), P Davies (Portfolio Holder for Education and Property) and A Davies (Portfolio Holder for Finance, Countryside and Transport)

Officers: Ness Young (Corporate Director -Transformation), Nigel Brinn (Corporate Director - Economy and Environment) and Kelly Watts (Customer Services Manager)

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| <b>1.</b> | <b>APOLOGIES</b> |
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor P Pritchard, Portfolio Holders R. Powell (on other Council business) J. Evans and H. Hulme and from D. Reynolds (Head of Digital Services) and E. Palmer (Head of Transformation and Communication).

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| <b>2.</b> | <b>DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST</b> |
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There were no disclosures of interest by Members relating to items to be considered at the meeting

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| <b>3.</b> | <b>DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPS</b> |
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The Committee did not receive any disclosures of prohibited party whips which a Member has been given in relation to the meeting in accordance with Section 78(3) of the Local Government Measure 2011.

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| <b>4.</b> | <b>SUPPORT FOR SHIELDING INDIVIDUALS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC</b> |
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**Documents Considered:**

- Report of the Portfolio Holder for Digital Services.

**Issues Discussed:**

- March to August 2020 the Council provided information to Welsh Government on those individuals who required food parcels, provided a welfare call back facility and set up in conjunction with PAVO befriending services and support for those needing assistance to obtain food, medicines etc. 23,000 calls were undertaken in all. 120 community based groups were established with PAVO providing formal support to those groups.
- Moving forwards the Council will maintain the shielded persons list. In the event of a lockdown the Council will take a lead role in offering support in relation to food, medicines and prescriptions and well being including the reintroduction of welfare calls.

- Support for vulnerable residents will be provided by the community support and response group.
- Questions:

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| <p>What resource is available to bring back the support being proposed for a longer or shorter period.</p>  | <p>As the decision regarding lockdown has only today been announced, discussions are required with senior management regarding resourcing. With welfare calls it would be necessary to identify a group of around 10 staff initially to make this operational.</p> <p>The Council was in addition, recommencing more frequent meetings of its Gold and Silver commands with officers asked to consider what resources could be made available during the circuit break recently announced. Redeployment of staff will be considered as previously.</p> |
| <p>Welfare Calls – is there guidance to Councillors on how to deal with these calls. If not could guidance be provided to assist Members in making these calls.</p>   | <p>No guidance was provided to members previously as to when welfare calls should be undertaken. When the referral is passed on to councillors, the time when the Council made contact with the resident can be made known to Councillors to assist them in deciding when to ring their constituent.</p>   |
| <p>How will the Council be publicising that the support for food, medicines, etc are operational. Is the Council checking that all the support groups are operational in preparation for the lockdown period.</p>   | <p>Discussions will take place with partners such as PAVO and communications will be put in place before the lockdown commences which will include information publicised on social media.</p>   |
| <p>Is there anything the volunteer groups can do to assist the Council.</p>   | <p>It is probably better if this information about support is co-ordinated through CSERT.</p>  |
| <p>Builth Wells has a good community support system in place which was duplicated by PAVO in the first lockdown. Welfare support was also being co-ordinated through the community support. The Council needs to work together with the support that is already in place.</p> | <p>Lessons have been learned during the first lockdown and PAVO and CSERT know what support is available locally.</p> <p>Members were also asked that if there are specific issues in localities that they are made known to the Council.</p>  |

**Outcomes:**

- **Noted.**

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| <b>5.</b> | <b>PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORTS</b> |
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5.1. Performance Reports

**Documents Considered:**

- Performance Report Quarter 2, 2020-21

**Issues Discussed:**

- This is part of the new arrangements to allow scrutiny to comment on performance reports.
- Report provides a summary of achievements during the pandemic as well as meeting the objectives of the Corporate Improvement Plan and Public Accountability Measures.
- Key elements in response to the pandemic outlined for the committee e.g. homelessness, track and trace, shielding calls, grants to businesses, order and collect library service, business survey. The Council's response to the flooding in August 2020 was detailed in the report.
- The Corporate Improvement Plan includes the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives. Nearly 45% of data has not been able to be collected either as it is annual information or due to the disruption due to the pandemic. 34% of the Corporate Improvement Plan measures and 24% of the Public Accountability Measures have met their target which is a slight reduction on quarter 2 of 2019-20 which shows that despite the pandemic the Council's performance is similar to the previous year in spite of the additional requirements caused by the pandemic.

- Questions:

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| <p>Complaints and Compliments – complaints have increased in the current quarter (60 to 90). What work has been undertaken to understand the cause of this increase.</p>  | <p>Details of the specific analysis of the types of complaints can be made available and how the Council is responding to any patterns in the data. There is no pattern to the complaints. In addition, the position for quarter 2, 2020-21 is better than for quarter 2, 2019-20.</p>   |
| <p>Homelessness – the Committee was previously advised that all homeless people who wanted accommodation had been provided with accommodation. What is the current position and what is the current plan during the firebreak.<br/>Good news that residual waste has gone down and recycling increased. Is there any indication as to why this is the case.</p> | <p>Homelessness – in terms of those who could be accommodated, they were accommodated. There were a few who did not accept the offer of accommodation made. The regular homelessness update was made available to Members during the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live homelessness cases (beginning of October) – 320</li> <li>• Numbers of homeless households in temporary accommodation – 110 (excluding bed and breakfast)</li> <li>• Number of households in bed and breakfast – 15</li> <li>• Numbers of new properties</li> </ul> |

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|   | <p>identified to boost accommodation – 82.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of known rough sleepers - 5</li> </ul> <p>Waste and Recycling – there was less access to the HWRCs (Household Waste Recycling Centres) during the lockdown which may have contributed to an increase in recycling but there could be a number of other factors as well. The Director of Economy and Environment suggested asking the waste team their view as to why there had been an increase in recycling.</p> |
| <p>Track and Trace – it is widely recognised that only 92% of the Covid tests are accurate with 8% being inaccurate. What is being done to retest individuals who show no symptoms.</p>                 | <p>When there is mass testing there is an issue of false-positives. The Council is aware of the potential for false-positive tests in cases such as care homes. However if a person is symptomatic positive the tests results are very accurate. It is the cases of asymptomatic cases where retesting is required.</p>  |
| <p>Public Accountability Measures – the narrative acknowledges that it has been difficult to collect data. Is the Council doing better or worse in terms of public service delivery than last year.</p> | <p>Public Accountability Measures are measured at different times of the year, dependent on the measure. The national figures are not published until the end of the year for the previous. The Council is more or less where it is expected to be (24% rather than 27%) in terms of performance for the year, so there are no current concerns regarding performance.</p>   |
| <p>Why does the Council still have a number of rough sleepers</p>   | <p>Some of these individuals are hard to reach or do not want to accept the accommodation being offered. The Council will provide accommodation to those who want it, but there are some who have declined that support.</p>   |
| <p>Complaints – how quickly are they resolved and how much resource is committed to closing complaints. Should this information be included in the report together with timescales.</p>                 | <p>Capturing the outcome is important but this information can be provided to Members.</p>   |

**Outcomes:**

- **Noted.**

## 5.2. Risk Report

### Documents Considered:

- Strategic Risk Register

### Issues Discussed:

- 12 risks on the strategic risk register, 9 of which fall under the remit of the Committee.

- Questions:

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| <p>Powys is not investing in developing young people into jobs within the Council as young people are leaving the county.</p> | <p>There are a range of actions which the Council is undertaking to encourage young people to come and work for the Council e.g. apprenticeships. The Council has been unable to meet its target for apprenticeships due to the pandemic and not recruiting new staff. However, the Council has interviewed and has a pool of 28 young people ready to take up apprenticeship roles with the council. The Council is also working with the Health Board around the workforce futures programme and support through training those who can work in the health and care sector.</p> |
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### Outcomes:

| Action  | Action By /<br>Completion Date |
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| That the full version of the risk register be included on the agenda for the next meeting | WR                             |

## 6. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted that the next meetings would be held as follows:

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| 02-11-20 | 14.00 – 16.00 |  |
| 07-12-20 | 10.00 – 12.00 | Options for Improving Broadband Structure - Head of Digital Services   |
| 18-01-21 |               | Performance Q3 + Risk<br>(Provisional – Confidential Report – Housing) |
| 28-01-21 |               | Budget   |
| 01-03-21 |               | Digital Strategy 2021-25   |
| 12-04-21 |               |  |

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| 03-06-21 |  | Performance Q4 + Risk  |
| 12-07-21 |  | Performance Q1? + Risk |
| 06-09-21 |  |                        |
| 18-10-21 |  | Performance Q2? + Risk |
| 29-11-21 |  |                        |

Potential items for consideration:

- Regulatory Services
- Recycling rates – what advantage is being taken of the increases in recycling rates and how can we maintain recycling rates.
- Economic Impact Study / Town Centre Focus Group
- County Farms

Update Information arising from previous meeting:

- Car Parking Charges review – second meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.

The Committee noted that Freedom Leisure would be attending the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> November to present their annual report. The risk register would also be added to the agenda for that meeting.

The Lead Member provided the Committee with an update on the Car Parking Charges review group. The issue of potential conflicts of interest for Members of the Working Group in developing the policy was raised which was clarified by the Scrutiny Manager.

The Chair thanked Ness Young , Corporate Director – Transformation for her work during her term of office with the Council and wished her well for the future.

**County Councillor M J Dorrance (Chair)**