

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT BY ZOOM ON TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2023

Present:

Powys County Councillors Karl Lewis, Gareth E Jones, Adrian Jones and Corinna Kenyon-Wade.

Co-opted Members Jennifer Owen-Adams (Powys Teaching Health Board) and Peter Swanson (PAVO).

County Councillor James Gibson-Watt (Leader and Chair of Powys Public Service Board).

Officers in Attendance:

Catherine James (Head of Transformation and Democratic Services, PCC), James Langridge-Thomas (Deputy Head of Transformation and Democratic Services, PCC), Liz Hutchins (Senior Policy Advisor, BBNPA), Anna Prothero (Principal Public Health Practitioner, PTHB), Mererid Bowley (Director of Public Health, PTHB).

Apologies for Absence:

County Councillors A Williams, S McNicholas, G Preston and Dr Alison Merry (Deputy Director of Public Health, PTHB).

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR
--

Public Service Board (PSB) Scrutiny Committee Members were required to appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair for the ensuing year, following changes made to the Council's Constitution regarding the Committee's meeting arrangements and Membership.

No recommendations for Chair and Vice-Chair were received in advance of the meeting.

J Owen-Adams moved and proposed to be Chair, which was seconded by County Councillor G E Jones.

County Councillor C Kenyon-Wade moved to propose County Councillor G E Jones be Vice-Chair, which was seconded by J Owen-Adams.

Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee resolved to appoint J Owen-Adams as Chair for the ensuing year.

Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee resolved to appoint County Councillor G E Jones as Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received from Members.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS

No disclosures of prohibited party whips were received from Members in relation to the meeting, in accordance with section 78(3) of the Local Government Measure 2011.

Members were reminded that under section 78, Members who had been given a prohibited party whip could not vote on a matter before the Committee.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members received the [draft Terms of Reference](#) for the PSB Scrutiny Committee which required agreement before the rest of the agenda could be considered.

The draft Terms of Reference had been amended following changes to the Council's Constitution, to allow for three Members to be co-opted onto the Committee and to note that PSB Scrutiny Committee were permitted to meet up to two times per year.

It was explained that as set out in the Terms of Reference, the Chair and Vice-Chair were elected for a period of 12 months.

Members requested that there be a clear distinction between the PSB and PSB Scrutiny Committee membership within the Terms of Reference. **ACTION**

The Head of Democratic Services explained that PSB Scrutiny Committee would be required to consider reports of the PSB, with any scrutiny recommendations made provided to the PSB at the next meeting to formally consider. The PSB must then provide a response to PSB Scrutiny Committee within two weeks, as to whether the recommendations were accepted or rejected.

Members agreed that PSB agendas should be made available to the PSB Scrutiny Committee for information. **ACTION**

County Councillor K Lewis asked why Vice-Chairs of the three Scrutiny Committees were included in the membership for PSB Scrutiny Committee, rather than the Chairs when they held a paid role. **ACTION**

Members agreed the Committee's Terms of Reference, provided the minor amendments be made.

5. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF PSB WELL-BEING PLAN

The Deputy Head of Transformation and Democratic Services provided an overview of the Powys PSB Well-being plan, which was agreed by the PSB Partners at the June 2023 meeting. The PSB Well-being plan vision was noted as 'A Fair, Sustainable and Healthy Powys'.

There were three core well-being objectives that the PSB felt necessary to deliver on to meet the aim, these were:

1. People in Powys will live happy, healthy and safe lives.
2. Powys is a county of sustainable places and communities.
3. An increasingly effective Public Service for the people of Powys.

The following Steps would then inform the work and necessary changes required to meet the three objectives, in collaboration with the PSB Partner organisations across Powys:

1. Climate Emergency
2. Whole System Approach to Healthy Weights
3. Evidence and Insight

6. UNDERTAKING A WHOLE SYSTEM APPROACH TO HEALTHY WEIGHT

Documents considered:

- 'Undertaking a Whole System Approach to Healthy Weight' Step Presentation

The Principal Public Health Practitioner and Director of Public Health from Powys Teaching Health Board, provided an overview of the 'Undertaking a Whole System Approach to Healthy Weight' Step.

It was explained that there was a national plan and long-term strategy in Wales around healthy weight (Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales National Plan), with the aim to reduce levels of overweight and obesity.

The Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales National Plan contained four key themes:

- Healthy People
- Healthy Settings
- Healthy Environments
- Leadership and Enabling Change

It was noted that the 'whole system approach' related particularly to the 'Leadership and Enabling Change' category, as the work would involve a variety of organisations across different sectors; however, there were cross-overs between all four themes of the National Plan.

The focus around tackling overweight and obesity had moved away from a targeted approach towards individuals, to more of a public health population approach, as there were many interacting influences affecting peoples' weight that required a system-wide change.

The high-level action plan was aligned with the Public Health Wales Nine Step methodology, with work over the previous 16 months following the methodology in a systematic way. With regard to the action plan, work was progressing towards Step 6 (Network Analysis) and Step 7 (Action Plan).

It was noted that the system approach required buy-in from senior leadership and the associated strategic plans of organisations within the Powys PSB. Engagement had been undertaken across PSB Partners and with the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) strategic groups, such as Start Well and Live Well.

Following engagement and stakeholder workshops, sub-systems of overweight and obesity were identified and prioritised. This led to a focus on systems such as Children, Families and Access to Healthy Food. Further stakeholder events were held in May 2023 to extract key themes. The following key themes were identified:

- Breastfeeding
- Introduction to Solid Foods
- Cooking Skills
- Affordability of Healthy Food

A strategic steering group involving a wide range of stakeholders had been established to oversee the delivery of the Step action plan. However, further engagement work was planned. It was noted that the steering group's work and activities were reported to and scrutinised by Powys Teaching Health Board Executive Committee, Powys PSB and to Public Health Wales and Welsh Government.

Issues discussed:

<u>Question</u>	<u>Response</u>
How do you intend to roll this work out to members of the public, and ensure they are aware?	<p>A delivery plan was being produced however the activity may not be obvious. For example, it was known that children who were breastfed were more likely to be a healthy weight at four to five years old.</p> <p>One action around breastfeeding is to change the culture in Powys so that breastfeeding in public becomes more socially accepted. This may involve visiting leisure centres, cafes and organisations across the County to help them become breastfeeding friendly (Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme) and create the visible change in culture.</p>
There was not much emphasis on increasing physical activity.	Physical activity was not specifically included as a key theme as the stakeholder event discussions were more concerned around the food environment. However, that does not mean that physical activity will not be considered in the future as the work progresses.
Why was breast milk more beneficial for children?	<p>Breastfeeding was promoted as the evidence shows that if children are breastfed for at least six months, there is a link to children being a healthier weight when they start school.</p> <p>There were other positive aspects such as impact on palate and reducing tastes for sugary foods or other unhealthy food options.</p>
How do we support parents	The focus was on supporting individuals who

where breastfeeding was not possible, and ensure they are not ostracised?

wish to breastfeed, and also equally for those who do not want to, supporting them with introducing solid foods and the wider healthy eating environment.

7. EVIDENCE AND INSIGHT

Documents considered:

- Evidence and Insight Step Verbal Update

The Head and Deputy Head of Transformation and Democratic Services provided an overview of the Evidence and Insight Step, which was divided into an engagement and data workstream.

Engagement workstream:

- Work was ongoing to develop a One Powys Engagement Plan between the PSB and Regional Partnership Board (RPB).
- There was a need to develop understanding of the population of Powys.
- The aim was to avoid duplication and limit engagement fatigue for the citizens of Powys, by collaborating with PSB and RPB Partners in sharing engagement opportunities and insights where relevant.
- A PSB engagement event with town and community councils across Powys was planned for February 2024.
- Noted the second Well-being Assessment was undertaken in 2022, however there were still some gaps in the data to address.
- These data were collated and were available via the Well-being Information Bank and was available to the public on the Council's website.
- Population projects for the following 20 years were also available.

Data workstream:

- Gaps in the well-being data were to be addressed through the data workstream.
- Due to the size and spread of communities across Powys, it was important to map well-being data to aid with visualisation and planning across the PSB Partners. Graphical Information Systems (GIS) were to be explored to aid with data visualisation.
- There were plans for a website to be developed which could host resources including the Well-being Information Bank.
- Noted there was no additional funding made available and so would be managed with existing resources, which was why working Better Together was important to deliver on the workstream and the wider work of the PSB.
- Initial work had been focused on developing information sharing protocols, data sharing agreements and related governance pieces.
- A decision from Welsh Government was due regarding a funding agreement to hold a climate engagement event on behalf of the PSB, to support the work of the Climate Emergency Step, led by the Senior Policy Advisor.

The Chair thanked officers and noted the importance of collaboration between the PSB and RPB Partners around engagement across Powys.

Issues discussed:

<u>Question</u>	<u>Response</u>
How was the Climate Emergency event to be held?	<p>The application for funding was made on the basis that the event would seek to bring together community groups and stakeholders, who were already interested in supporting climate work.</p> <p>The event would provide a space for PSB Partners to provide updates to stakeholders, and develop conversations with town and community councils around how they could support the Race to Zero approach.</p>

8. RESPONDING TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Documents considered:

- Responding to the Climate Emergency Step Update presentation

The Senior Policy Advisor provided an overview of the Responding to the Climate Emergency Step.

Actions included the need for Powys to:

- Decarbonise in line with the 2015 Paris Agreement.
- Scale up carbon sequestration – increasing the space for nature to absorb carbon.
- Adapt to climate impacts – improving the resilience of people and nature to cope with climate impacts that are unavoidable.
- £199,931 funding awarded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support the work until the end of December 2024.
- Key deliverables were to include:
 - Carbon footprint assessment
 - Science-based target calculation
 - Decarbonisation action planning
 - Climate risk and vulnerability assessment
 - Climate adaptation and resilience planning
 - Carbon sequestration opportunity mapping and action planning
 - An area-based approach was to be taken across Powys, to align the strategic vision of the PSB Partners.
 - Regarding decarbonisation, to ensure Powys took its fair share of emissions cuts, the UN-backed Race to Zero framework could be utilised to calculate this and form an action plan.

- The first stage of the Step was to identify risks and put appropriate mitigations in place around funding and resources, and public engagement for co-creating.
- As funding was only in place until December 2024, part of the project work would include identifying further funding.
- In addition to the Senior Policy Advisor working for two days per week to support the Climate Emergency Step, two additional posts had been created using the SPF funding with recruitment underway for the:
 - Climate Evidence and Insights Officer
 - Climate Project Delivery Officer
- There were also opportunities for collaboration and shared learning via the Climate Working Group and task and finish group meetings, as well as to align with the other two Steps, especially around the carbon footprint of the food and drink sector in Powys.

Issues discussed:

<u>Question</u>	<u>Response</u>
How was carbon sequestration to be improved across Powys?	An assessment of carbon sequestration was required in the first instance. This would involve reviewing the land-use types, conditions, and options available across Powys for their potential to draw down carbon. The second stage would then be to take that information to landowners and managers to begin the conversations around options. It was known that Powys needed more trees, so part of the work would be to identify the appropriate areas for tree planting to compliment sustainable farming practices and local cultures.
It was mentioned previously during the presentation that the following 12 months would be about evidence gathering and action planning. Would this include 30x30?	There was an overlap between the climate and nature emergencies, particularly in avoiding emissions through restoring peatland and carbon sequestration. The work would therefore include colleagues who were developing nature action plans, to align the scale of carbon sequestration and carbon emissions avoidance. This would not specifically answer how 30x30 could be reached, however it could be aligned strategically to pursue such conversations.
How does the Climate Emergency Step work fit in with local energy infrastructure, such as proposed wind turbine and associated infrastructure developments?	There is a regional strategic energy plan for Mid Wales in addition to a local area energy plan in development. These strategies/plans would inform the work in terms of understanding how much and how quickly the local energy system needed to

	<p>decarbonise. The action planning therefore needed to be done with communities, as proposed pylons were a concern locally. There were also communitu projects aiming to generate energy at the community-level, as funding was likely not available to upgrade the national grid infrastructure although this would avoid the need for pylons for example. This would require increasing renewable energy generation and reducing demand by improving energy efficiency.</p>
<p>Where was the aforementioned substation located?</p>	<p>The Senior Policy Advisor was liaising with a local community group in Llangattock (Green Valleys). The project was in the early stages and were considering pre-feasibility study ideas.</p>

J Owen-Adams (Chair)