

**Joint Scrutiny Committee A and B Working Group  
Scrutiny Observations to Cabinet on: Corporate Leadership and Governance  
Plan version 5.6 - 17.01.2018**

The Audit Committee representatives met on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018 to comment on sections D and F of the Plan.

The Joint Scrutiny Working Group were due to meet on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018, however, an urgent Budget Seminar was called necessitating this scrutiny to be undertaken by way of email.

The following observations are made to Cabinet in respect of version 5.6 of the Plan.

General observations:

1. The Plan is titled 'Corporate Leadership and Governance Plan' (the Plan) and subtitled 'Making it Happen'. It is Members understanding that the Plan has been produced in response to comments made in Regulatory reports most recently the CIW Children's Service Inspection Report. The Group Members are unclear how this Plan will also fulfil the longer term aims of the 'Making it Happen' programme which underpins the programmes associated with Vision 2025. As the Plan progresses it becomes more children centric to the exclusion of other services. Is this a Corporate Plan?
2. The Group are unclear as to whom the document is aimed as it contains a number of examples of the use of jargon and acronyms. A glossary would assist. Further comments can be provided if it is intended that this document is public facing.
3. Members welcome the issues recognised within the Organisational Context but found it difficult that it was not immediately obvious where these are addressed within the Plan.
4. It is recommended that for both political and officer posts the role rather than the postholder is defined. For officer posts the substantive rather than acting or interim post should be included. An Annex could be provided which details postholders allowing clarity of accountability but which could be more easily updated.
5. Any plan such as this must consider the impact on "day to day" functions, and whether resources both from the member and officer side are available to carry

out this work. The time scales are tight and a change of approach will be required if we are to succeed.

6. What monitoring arrangements will be put in place and how will this be co-ordinated. If recommendations are included in more than one improvement plan how will accountability and progress be co-ordinated.
7. It is also noted that some completion dates are January 2018 and question how this links with the document approval date.

#### Specific observations:

1. Page 2 – ‘**open:** we keep each other *and the public* informed...’
2. Page 5 - penultimate paragraph – should the percentage of self employed and high levels essential car ownership given the lack of public transport be included
3. Page 5 – last paragraph – some of the assumptions are questionable such as ‘good leisure and employment opportunities’. Access to good leisure opportunities is not necessarily available to most young people within their own communities – they may have to travel to access this which brings its own inherent difficulties. If employment opportunities are acknowledged as good, this appears to conflict with aim of the Vision which is to ‘develop a vibrant economy’.
4. Page 7 – fifth bullet point – ‘The Council’s leadership needs to be .....and guidance, *thereby improving morale and motivation for change*’.
5. Page 8 Vision 2025 third bullet point should come first.
6. Page 10 – Under ‘Prevention’ the document states we are ‘responding to abuse’. This is not prevention.
7. Page 12 and 13 – consistency in use of acronyms and definitions ie include who is on the PSB.
8. Page 16 - include in the last paragraph that ‘to the required standard *and understand the financial implications of their decisions*’.
9. A7 – Members are provided training about their corporate role but would welcome further advice going beyond their monitoring role.
10. A7 – it is understood that Corporate Parenting Training by Bond Solon is now only timetabled for Senior Officers and therefore alternative arrangements need to be identified and included under ‘progress’.
11. A8 – It is stated that Members will have access to monthly indicators. These are currently updated monthly but within a quarterly report so that month by month information is not available.
12. A8 – From a scrutiny perspective their relationship with the Corporate Parenting Group is by way of the Lead Member and/or Chair and Vice-Chair attending the meetings as Observers. It is not clear how this arrangement or how Cabinet will report to all Members.
13. A10 – the action states the briefing will be provided to all Members but this intention should be reflected in progress.
14. A12 – the action states the mapping and gapping exercise should be undertaken ‘across the council’ whereas the progress seems to limit this to CYPP. Is the CYPP undertaking the exercise across the authority or is it limited to their own area of work?
15. B8 – the actions states key elements **could** be. This is not an action.
16. C7 – the robust approach to exit interviews is welcomed but there may need to be a personalised follow-up to automated questionnaires if there is no response.
17. C10 and C21 – the timescale to develop an approach from recruitment campaigns is questioned – staff are urgently needed now.

18. C16 – the Corporate target for IPRs should be 95%. This only equates to a Manager/Staff conversation every three months which is integral to good management.
19. Page 39 – ‘we must ensure that our medium term financial plan identifies the major financial risks and key assumptions with *Portfolio Holders*, Senior Officers...’.
20. Page 50 – Priority F – where do KPIs fit into this strategy – unless KPIs are included the Plan is subjective.
21. Page 55 – Priority G – there is too much ‘hope’ in the narrative.
22. G3 – the communication and engagement plan is noted but it is suggested that this list should include the proposals regarding the budget.
23. G5 – this is welcomed
24. H10 – H19 some of this section is A27 – A36 in the Children’s Improvement Plan. Is this replication necessary.
25. Page 71 – this needs to be redrawn to be legible

Membership of the Joint Scrutiny Group:

County Councillors E. Durrant, D. Jones, E. Jones, L. Roberts, P Roberts, G. Pugh, E. Roderick, D. Selby, G. Williams and R. Williams

Audit Committee Member Representatives: County Councillor J Morris and Independent Audit Member Mr J Brautigam

Scrutiny Officers: Liz Patterson and Lisa Richards