

Minutes



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: 21 June 2018

Time: 10.00 am

Present: Councillors J Guy (Chair), M Al-Nuaimi, C Evans, M Evans, C Ferris, M Spencer and K Thomas

In Attendance: Liz Blayney (Scrutiny and Governance Manager), Keir Duffin (Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing), Sally Ann Jenkins (Head of Children & Young Peoples Services), Beverly Owen (Strategic Director (Place) and Mary Ryan (Corporate Safeguarding Manager)

Apologies: Councillors J Hughes and L Lacey

1 Declaration of Interest

Councillor K Thomas declared an interest as a member of a Local Safeguarding Network in her work.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 April 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2018 were **approved** as a true and accurate record.

Regarding Corporate Safeguarding, it was noted that the discussion had by the Committee at the meeting in March had now been updated in the minutes for that meeting. However Councillors stated that this information should have been included within the report on the agenda for this meeting today.

On page 7, there was mention of a blanket ban of begging being implemented in Kettering, during the meeting the Monitoring Officer was unsure of the legality of this and asked for clarification. The Scrutiny and Governance Manager advised the Committee that the matter was being considered by the Council at its meeting in July.

Councillor C Evans queried the recording of his abstentions during the voting at the last meeting. He was advised that the minutes could only reflect the occasions where the Committee took a vote, and that a paragraph had been included to note Councillor C Evans's comments regarding not wanting to support any of the recommendations.

Regarding the City Centre PSPO item, the Committee acknowledged that the meeting had been a thorough and extensive exercise for the Committee, which had been captured and summarised in the minutes.

3 Corporate Safeguarding (2017 - 18) Executive Summary

Invitees:

- Sally Ann Jenkins (Head of Children and Young People)

- Mary Ryan (Corporate Safeguarding Manager)
- James Harris (Strategic Director – People)

The Head of Children and Young People briefly presented an overview of the report to the Committee. Members were reminded that the report had originally presented to the Committee in March 2018, however due to a miscommunication, the officers had not been in attendance. At this meeting, the Committee had raised a number of issues with the report, for which they had asked for answers to be provided when the report was considered next.

In response to these comments, the Officers had provided the Committee with a summary document, which focused on the red and amber measures within the Corporate and Team action plans, and provided a response to each of the issues raised by the Committee. The comments around the readability of the original document were noted by the Officers, and the Committee were assured that the report would be redrafted in future years to take into account the Committees comments. The Officers outlined that the original report emphasised the journey of how Safeguarding had been reported to the Members, but acknowledged that it the detail within the report had meant that the report was difficult to read. Now that this detail had been reported to the Committee, the next update to the Committee would be focusing on the actions being taken to meet the obligations around safeguarding.

The Officers reinforced that Safeguarding was not only a Social Services issue, but a Corporate responsibility. It was also noted that Safeguarding covered all vulnerable people, rather than only children.

The Corporate Safeguarding Manager then advised the Members that legalisation had changed recently, and that Safeguarding was now a statutory function for the Authority. The report provided the Committee with an overview of the requirements from Welsh Government placed on all Welsh Councils. The Committee were advised that there was additional information available on this on a local, regional and national level which could be provided to Members if further information was requested.

The Committee asked the following:

- How was the role of safeguarding champion defined and what was the purpose of this role? A register was held of who the Safeguarding Champions were in each service area. This role was not intended to replace the line manager's responsibility but rather to enable information, and processes to be disseminated throughout the organisation effectively. The time requirement for these Champions would be minimal, with meetings set at various points during the year, to inform them of any changes to processes / contacts. The purpose was to ensure there were people at every service area who could signpost any safeguarding issues to the right place/ person within Social Services.
- Members queried how the Champions role was different to that of Line Managers, who should be able to disseminate information through their teams. It was clarified that this was not intended to replace the role of the line manager, but to add additional resource within the Teams to have a person within each service area who was knowledgeable about safeguarding processed, and who could ensure that any safeguarding issues were directed in the appropriate way to be dealt with.
- How did the role of the Champion fit in with the Officers normal role in terms of the time it would require, and what was the measure of the outcomes? In response, the Officers acknowledged that it was important that extra pressure was not placed on these officers who were potentially already stretched. It would be a few hours commitment a year, comprising of a few meetings throughout the year to communicate any changes in practices. It was intended that these Champions would act as a contact within the service areas to disseminate information, for example

through team meetings, and to be a signpost for any safeguarding issues that arise to advise their team on who to contact to report it.

- It was recognised that this will be challenging, however as it was a statutory responsibility for the Council it was important that this process worked. The Corporate Safeguarding Team were able to oversee this process, and directly support the champions. It was also advised that it was not intended that this would require a large amount of time from these Champions, and would not add undue pressure to these Officers or affect their ability to undertake their normal job roles.
- Regarding the action plans and the traffic light reporting, Members commented that some of the red measures did not include explanations as to why they were red, and in some instances, they did not include details on how targets would be measured and achieved. It was suggested future updates should focus on the key concerns and issues that the team have, how to progress on the measures associated with these, and should also include accurate timescales on achieving progress, for which the Committee could measure progress against.
- The Officer advised that the team also look at green measures, if they could go into amber or red and they then discuss what can be done to ensure this does not happen.
- Members commended the Officers on the updated report, noting that the executive summary had made the report more manageable to read, and gave more of a snapshot of the current situation.
- The roles of key officers were unclear. In particular the Committee commented that the roles of the Cabinet Member and Strategic Director required further explanation on what the responsibility was for each of these.
- Concerns regarding the method of communications being used with the public being mainly focused on the website, and what the Council was doing to target vulnerable and hard to reach groups. It was suggested that other communication methods were explored, such as delivering leaflet, advertising in Newport Matters and disseminating through partner networks. The officer advised that partner networks were utilised to disseminate information where possible.
- It was noted that some of the items within the report related to schools, which presented an opportunity to work with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) and to encourage / guide all governing bodies to have safeguarding as a standing item on their agendas.
- Query regarding Welsh Government policy that incidents of bullying need to be reported, and whether this would be the same for incidents of racism. It was advised that racism had to be reported to the Welsh Assembly, however it was not known if this applied to all bullying. The Officer agreed to confirm and provide an update to Members. The Committee felt that this should be one of the range of categories that schools had to report on.
- Members queried an Amber measure on page 42; "At the end of quarter two (end of Sept 2017) 9.9% of Newport CC's workforce has completed NTF Group 1 learning – this includes e-learning and alternate face to face training." It was commented that it would be helpful for the Members to have the latest information. Members asked if the training for staff and Members was statutory and if so to ensure that it was undertaken. It was advised that the training had been provided as an e-learning module. It was noted that this training would need to be part of a rolling programme, recognising that things change and updates would need to reflect any changes.

- In response to queries from Members regarding trafficking, it was advised of a pilot of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), which had been operating for 4 months.

The officer noted it was more difficult to get actions and protections once people reach 18 and older; however progress was being made reaching under 18's. The Police were working closely with Children Services, and were trying to promote more community awareness this issue.

- Members raised concerns regarding how the Council ensured the safeguarding of children placed out of county, it was advised that there are a clear set of processes in place to ensure that children placed out of county had regular contact with the Team, and regular visits by officers to these children. There were a number of statutory responsibilities for how often those children need to be seen which the Council were meeting, which included regular reviews. The Committee were advised that it was often the Corporate Safeguarding Manager who undertook these visits for children on out of County placements.
- Comment was made about who the leader officer was for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) within the Health Services. The Officers agreed to confirm who the lead officers were for FGM and partners.

The Chair then thanks the officers for their attendance and the detailed answers provided to the Committee.

Conclusion

The Committee agreed to forward comments to the Cabinet Member responsible for Safeguarding, and outline the following key points of the Committees consideration of the Annual report on Corporate Safeguarding:

Role of Cabinet Member within the report

The role of the Cabinet Member needs to be made clearer within the report. The report presented to the Committee outlined the Cabinet Member's role was to receive the update on safeguarding. The Committee felt that this was not sufficient to cover the key role that the Cabinet Member has to ensure the effective delivery of the outcomes relating to safeguarding.

Safeguarding Champions

The Committee has raised concerns with the Officers regarding the clarity of the role of the Safeguarding Champions, and have received assurances that the intention is to ensure that information can be disseminated throughout the organisation, and that each service area had a champion to signpost the correct process for dealing with any safeguarding issues that arise.

The Committee accepted these assurances, however wished to advise the Cabinet Member that it has concerns about how this role will work in practice, and how this role would be different to what the line managers could do in terms of disseminating information.

Members also felt that the role of the Cabinet Member, and the Strategic Director was unclear in terms of their role in ensuring Corporate Safeguarding and this should be clearly set out in the safeguarding report.

Strategy document vs annual action plan

The information presented to the Committee in its initial meeting was a large document covering all of the background information, statutory obligations and partnership arrangements. Whilst the Committee acknowledged that this documentation is needed to give a full picture of the obligation placed on the authority, the reporting for safeguarding in future should be more strategic in its presentation. It should focus on the key actions linked to strategic priorities for Safeguarding, timescales, progress with actions, and mitigations in place where targets are not being met.

The Committee suggest that the style reporting format used for the Director of Social Services Annual Report is used in future for Safeguarding reporting to provide a more strategic snapshot of the current position regarding safeguarding.

Communication

The Committee notes the online methods used to promote the information on safeguarding. It was suggested that other communication methods were explored, such as delivering leaflet, advertising in Newport Matters and disseminating through partner networks.

Collaboration with EAS

The Council should investigate how it can utilise its collaborative working with EAS to promote safeguarding within schools, and to encourage all governing bodies to have safeguarding as a standing item on their agendas.

Training for Staff and Members

The Committee asked for clarification on whether the training was statutory for staff and Members, and that it was promoted to maximise participation. Members asked that this information and information on attendance numbers of training sessions be provided as part of the next update.

Future reporting on Corporate Safeguarding

Future reports should include:

- Sufficient information on the red and amber measures to enable the Committee to understand the Councils progress with these Measures, including the current situation, the progress being made, whether it is likely to be achieved and accurate timescales that can be measured against.
- Red and Amber measures should also include information on what actions the Officers, and the Cabinet Member, is taking to rectify the progress.
- The format of the initial report to the Committee was too large, and did not make it clear what the Council's strategic approach to safeguarding was. There were too many action plans for the different areas, which should be presented differently to summarise the key actions and make it clear what the Teams focus was. The number of actions presented should be reduced to focus on the key strategic actions.
- A table for any Acronym's used.
- Accurate timescales. The update presented had out of date timescales for dates that had passed.

4 Economic Regeneration - Recommendations Monitoring

Invitees:

- Beverly Owen – Strategic Director – Place
- Keir Duffin – Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing

The Strategic Director introduced the report and gave an update on the current progress with the implementation of the Economic Regeneration Strategy. It was advised that a review was undertaken by a Scrutiny Policy Review Group in April 2015 to consider a future Economic Regeneration Strategy for Newport. This final strategy was renamed Newport's Economic Growth Strategy. A six month progress report was submitted to Scrutiny in April 2017 and the following report details the progress up to the end of December 2017.

The Members asked the following questions:

- Members discussed the Destination Management Plan, and queried why there was no mention of the Convention Centre. Concerns were also raised about empty units in the city centre the lack of national chains in the city centre. It was advised that this would be taken on board and agreed that there more work to be done on the city centre. It was advised large projects take time to develop so updates were not always available.
- Members expressed concern about the number of fires that have taken place in numerous properties in the city and asked what safeguarding measures were in place in order to preserve these buildings. The officers advised the Councils enforcement powers regarding derelict buildings were limited to ensuring public safety. The issue with most of the derelict properties was often that they were privately owned. The Members were advised that where the condition of the building was a threat to public safety, the process was to contact the property owners and issue notices
- Some Members congratulated the Strategic Director for the 2015 Economic Growth Strategy. Comment was made that there was an action plan in the original report that was approved by Council however this was not included in the update to the Committee. It was felt that this action plan should form the focus on the Committees monitoring of this strategy, as it contained relevant measurable actions to implement the strategy effectively. Members asked that this be included in future reports.
- The Strategic Director agreed that the report needed clearer high level data to clearly demonstrate the actions. It was advised that Inward Investment identified Newport as the 2nd fastest growing city in the UK. The Council is working closely with Welsh Government to position Newport for key areas for investment. A Destination Development Group had been established, including business representatives from Newport and was being Chaired by Tiny Rebel. The Committee were also advised of the Partnership Marketing Strategy which was looking at developing the city marketing strategy and a new website with the Marketing Team.
- Members highlighted the issues and challenges for the Council around the City Centre Development, and capitalising on large events that bring people into the centre. The Officers advised of the impact of the Cardiff region city deal for Newport. Members queried the Scrutiny arrangements for the City Deal and how this was to be held to account in terms of value for money.
- The Committee discussed the Wellbeing Hubs and were pleased to see this rolled out into Ringland. Concerns were raised that the Council were not maximising assets and exploring how these resources could go back to the community. The Committee were assured that the team are working hard to find the best mechanism for sale of land and assets and to make sure full commercial value is taken from those properties. A

review was currently being undertaken into empty homes and the team hopes to bring back information to show the Committee how it is being dealt with.

- Concern was raised that people did not feel safe going in the city centre and the negative perception associated with antisocial behaviour in the city centre which many people considered to be intimidating. The Committee asked what the Council was doing to improve this. The Committee were advised that the Council was taking steps to address this issue, and that the police enforcement played an important role in addressing this.
- Members commented that the update provided a list of activities, rather than providing the Committee with any analysis of how effective these activities had been, whether they were good value and the impact for the city of these actions. The Strategic Director – Placed acknowledged these comments, and agreed that although this information was imbedded into the detail of the update, the challenges going forward could be made more clear.
- Members discussed the impact of big changes to the environment in Newport, such as the Convention Centre and the removal of the tolls on the Severn Bridge. Members raised concerns that this had not been evaluated within the update in terms of what opportunities and challenges these presented for Newport in the future.
- Members discussed the importance of increasing an environment within Newport that would promote investment.

The Chair thanked the officers for the report and attending.

Conclusion

The Committee acknowledged that progress was being made in some areas, and noted the work being done by the team, particularly around inward investment opportunities, the Destination Development Group, City Marketing and the new marketing website.

The Committee **agreed** that the update needed to include additional information in future to enable the Committee to fully evaluate how effectively this strategy is being implemented:

- Commentary of the progress with the action plan and reference made to the action plan that had been included within the original strategy and how the actions contribute to the priorities.
- Clear high level data to link to the strategy and aims in the original document and figures to evidence of growth and direction of growth.
- An outline of what the key challenges are for the Council in this area and what actions the Council is taking to address them
- Commentary of the impact being made and some analysis of the data to establish progress. Key messaging picked NTE – significant problems – don't have the national operators / competition than other cities.
- Key projects not detailed in the report:
 - **Convention centre.** This presents a massive opportunity for the City and information should be included within the update. Future updates should cover on how the Council is been making the most of these opportunities, how it is ensuring good value for money, and the impact for the city in developing these opportunities.
 - **Impact of City Deal.** Information on Newport's contribution, key projects and how they affect Newport.

The Committee agreed to forward these comments to the Cabinet Member for information, and to ask that this be provided by the Officers in the next update to the Committee.

The Committee **agreed** to monitor this as part of its work programme, and receive a further update in 12 months time.

5 **Draft Annual Forward Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Adviser introduced the Draft 2018-19 Annual Forward Work Programme to the Committee and advised that it was best practice and a cornerstone of good scrutiny for Members of a Scrutiny Committee to have ownership of their forward work programme and to be involved in developing, reviewing and updating it. The draft Annual Forward Work Programme had been produced following a review of the outcomes from the Committee's Work Programme the previous year.

The Adviser presented an overview of the suggested topics for the Committees discussion, which had been included within the draft Work Programme. Key work for the Committee included monitoring items that had previously been considered by the Committee including the Budget and Public Engagement Recommendations Monitoring for the next meeting in July.

Agreed:

The Committee **approved** the draft Annual Forward Work Programme and the proposed schedule of meetings for 2018/19.