

Minutes



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: 7 March 2019

Time: 10.00 am

Present: Councillors J Guy (Chair), M Al-Nuaimi, G Berry, C Evans and C Ferris

In Attendance: E Blayney (Scrutiny and Governance Manager) and L Davies (Governance Officer)

Apologies: Councillors M Evans, L Lacey and K Thomas

1 Declarations of Interest

None

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 January 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2019 were approved as a true and accurate record.

3 Waste Service Review

Attendees:

- Gareth Jones, Wales Audit Office Lead
- Paul Jones, Head of Streetscene and City Services
- Silvia Gonzalez-Lopez Service Manager Waste & Cleansing
- Councillor Roger Jeavons, Cabinet Member for Streetscene and City Services

The Wales Audit Office Lead presented a brief overview to the Committee and highlighted the key areas for consideration. In the conclusion to the follow up review it was found that the Authority had made progress in addressing some of the Wales Audit Office proposals for improvement, but still lacked strategic direction to secure sustainable improved outcomes.

Members asked the following:

- Members of the Committee asked the Head of City Services if they accepted the findings of the report made by the Wales Audit Office. Officers confirmed that some of the findings in the report were aimed at corporate level, and some of the issues were regarding the waste board.
- Members asked Officers to confirm if they had published a waste strategy. Officers replied explaining that the field work for the review had been conducted 6 months ago, and that the outcomes of the review were recently presented to the Cabinet Member. The Cabinet Member had made key decisions to provide the strategic direction of the Waste Strategy and that the key outcomes of the Policy

Review Groups recommendations were being considered as part of this decision making.

- A Member felt that education was a principal mechanism to increase recycling within the Authority, asking Officers whether the Waste Strategy could include recycling education starting with in schools as an important key component. Officers confirmed that engagement with schools was ongoing. There was no evidence to suggest that education alone would increase recycling without restricting the amount of landfill waste that could be collected. Newport has a 60% rate of recycling and had taken key steps to ensure that this figure increased in line with the necessary changes needed to meet Welsh Assembly Targets.
- A Member expressed concerns regarding the recycling of food, referring to the report. Members asked Officers to confirm what issues the authority were facing in relation to food waste. The Officer confirmed that food recycling was on the lower side, but that the Authority had recently run a campaign in the Newport Matters Paper, reinforcing the importance of recycling, which included food recycling.
- Members enquired about the relationship between the Authority and Wastesavers, asking for confirmation on level of communication between the organisations, and how often reporting was fed back and challenged. The Officers explained that the Authority had a good service contract relationship with Wastesavers, communicating on a daily basis, holding monthly meetings to analyse tonnage and discuss key performance indicators.
- A Member expressed concerns over the Authority potentially issuing fines to residents for non-conformance. Members also asked if the targets set by Welsh Government were realistic. The Officers confirmed that the fines would be a last resort, that the system would be tiered, and only put into practise for residents who repeatedly refused to recycle. The Officers also confirmed that the terms of the targets set by Welsh Government were targets based on One Wales One Planet.

The Chair thanked the officers and Cabinet Member for attending.

Conclusion - Comments to the Cabinet

The Committee noted the progress being made in relation to the Waste Strategy and in addressing the issues raised within the Audit Report.

The Committee felt that there was a need for the Authority to establish a clear Waste Strategy document, and associated action plan for actions to be implemented to achieve the strategic aims. The Committee asked the Officers to confirm if a Waste Strategy document would be created, and when it was anticipated that it would be finalised.

The Committee requested that the Waste Strategy be circulated to Scrutiny Members once finalised.

The Committee agreed to forward these comments to the Cabinet Member – Street scene and the relevant officers for consideration.

The Committee noted that the role of monitoring the performance of the implementing the strategy, and the recommendations within the WAO report was not within its remit

under the Committee's terms of reference. Ongoing monitoring of this would be referred to the Performance Scrutiny Committee – Place and Corporate for inclusion in its work Programme for next year as appropriate to avoid duplication of work,

4 **Scrutiny Adviser Reports**

Attendees:

- Elizabeth Blayney - Scrutiny and Governance Manager

a) Forward Work Programme Update

The Scrutiny Adviser presented the Forward Work Programme, and informed the Committee of the topics due to be discussed at the next committee meeting:

18 April 2019, the agenda items;

- Economic Regeneration
- Corporate Safeguarding

The Scrutiny and Governance Manager outlined changes to the work programme that the Committee had previously agreed. Corporate Safeguarding was due to be considered at this meeting, however the Chair had agreed to defer pending changes to the report.

Economic Regeneration – the Committee would now be receiving a WAO Review of Economic Regeneration prior to a review of the strategy.

The Committee approved the updated work programme.