

Draft Minutes

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: 21st January 2022

Time: 10am

Venue: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Present: Councillors L Lacey (Chair), P Hourahine, M Al-Nuaimi, Y Forsey, C Ferris, M Evans, Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director for Transformation and Corporate), Joanne Gossage (Service Manager Environment and Leisure), Heather Powell (Connected Communities Manager), Hywel Jones (Language Policy Officer), Connor Hall (Scrutiny Officer), Anne Jenkins (Governance Team Leader), Samantha Schanzer (Governance Support Officer)

Apologies: Jennie Judd, Cllr Hussain

1. Apologies for Absence

Jennie Judd and Councillor Hussain.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: held 29th October 2021

The committee asked that the Cllr C Evans be named on page 3 to avoid confusion.

The minutes of the previous meeting held 29th October 2021 were **accepted as a true and accurate record**.

4. Welsh Language 5 Year Strategy

Invitees:

Rhys Cornwall – Strategic Director for Transformation and Corporate

Heather Powell – Connected Communities Manager

Hywel Jones – Language Policy Officer

The Strategic Director introduced the report.

The Strategic Director informed committee that it was now out of the consultation phase but that they were still taking comments.

The Strategic Director informed committee that the timeline for the report was for it to go to Cabinet in February and Council in March.

The Connected Communities Manager noted that there were some specific regulations required under the current standards including a target for growth in Welsh speakers in Newport, which aligned with the Welsh and Education Strategic Plan. The Connected Communities Manager informed committee that these centred around 3 strategic themes – education, visibility and engagement. The Connected Communities Manager informed committee that this was out for consultation, being sent to Welsh language partners and live on the Newport City website on Monday. The Connected Communities Manager highlighted that a reception survey had also been taken over the summer.

Questions:

A comment was made on the lack of Welsh used in the report

Did the demand for Welsh schools meet up with the provision of places?

- The Language Policy Officer informed committee that there had been a planning and school places meeting the previous day and this was a long standing item on its agenda. At present, they were just under prescribed in primary, but provision would be there until 2032, though was being reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- The Language Policy Officer informed committee that they were trying to increase uptake for the new Welsh language school in Pillgwenlly.

What costs were incurred through translation and other Welsh Language initiatives?

- The Strategic Director informed committee that they would be happy to provide actual figures for this.
- The Strategic Director informed committee that when they were originally given the Welsh Language Standards that applied to Newport, part of the process of consultation with the Local Authority was around the proportion of the costs of implementing some of those standards, primarily regarding translation costs. The Strategic Director informed committee that the current budget for translation was £101,100 per year and was the bulk of the cost associated with the implementation of these standards. The Strategic Director informed committee that this doesn't consider any development of Welsh education provision as that is included in the Education Capital Programme for schools. The Strategic Director informed committee that other costs included provision for the Language Policy Officer and a Promotion Officer for the Welsh language.

- The Strategic Director informed committee that there was work being undertaken to recruit more Welsh speaking staff and to encourage staff to learn Welsh.
- The Connected Communities Manager felt that the wording of the question relating to the statistics on Welsh speakers in Newport and the contact centre's engagement with Welsh speakers could be reworked.

What were the plans to increase visibility, engagement, and employment for Welsh speakers?

- The Connected Communities Manager highlighted the need to increase visibility within the Council despite current standards ensuring translation of documents, dual language email signatures and out of office messages etc. The Connected Communities Manager also noted that there was also a need to increase visibility outside of the council for members of the community to interact with the Welsh language outside of settings they would expect to see Welsh used such as schools and colleges. The Connected Communities Manager informed committee that they were focused on looking at community partnerships that were not traditionally Welsh language partners to encourage this. The Connected Communities Manager cited the Newport Gwent Dragons were going to offer bilingual match programmes and increase Welsh language visibility on match days as a step to encourage Welsh in less formal settings.
- The Language Policy Officer noted that the work being done was to increase visibility of Welsh within the community. The Language Policy Officer noted that there were two strands to their approach in addressing skills and employment; internally where staff would be encouraged to learn and use Welsh within the Council, how to employ more Welsh speakers into the council, and increasing visibility of Welsh within the Council. The Language Policy Officer noted that the other strand was working with the Right Skills Board and public sector partners to increase the Welsh language as a skill. The Language Policy Officer informed committee that this would tie in with the Welsh Education Strategic Plan promoting it within all schools, not just Welsh speaking schools. The Language Policy Officer informed committee that a small group that would report back to the Welsh Service Board. The Language Policy Officer also hoped that there would be a resulting standardised way of measuring skills in Welsh.
- The committee member asked for an explanation regarding work done for the private sector.
- The Language Policy Officer informed committee that the private sector aren't subject to the same standards, but that they were working to incentivise them.

5. Parks – Dog Control PSPO

Invitees:

Joanne Gossage (Service Manager Environment and Leisure)

The Service Manager introduced the report. The Service Manager noted that the report had been amended and that they had engaged with stakeholders regarding the amended report and were able to construct a comprehensive consultation exercise. The Service Manager explained that banners and notices had been produced and the consultation exercise had been linked through social media and the Newport City Council website. The Service Manager informed committee that the report would be shown to Cabinet Members before being brought back to the committee.

The Service Manager informed committee that over 3000 people viewed the PSPO page and there was engagement from all wards in city.

A committee member noted that there had been a good number of responses and commended the team for using such a varied approach to collecting consultation feedback.

Questions:

In what way would the PSPO be enforced?

Are there plenty of bins available for dog walkers to place waste in?

- The Service Manager noted the purpose of the PSPO was not to be draconian. The Service Manager felt that the phrasing used within the order would be used to dissuade people from certain activities and become self-policing to an extent. The Service Manager felt that measures should be proportionate and only increase in severity when absolutely necessary.
- The committee member asked whether there was staff to enforce the order.
- The Service Manager informed committee that softer measures were for Council officers to enforce, whereas persistent problems could be referred to Community Safety Wardens, Dog Wardens or the Police to monitor those problems.
- The committee member asked whether there would be on the spot fines.
- The Service Manager confirmed that there would be.

How would the service area recommend the public report violations of the order?

- The Service Manager informed committee that if the order was successful, provision would be made within the existing website and contact centre to report issues.

Whether signage would be erected to inform the public of the order?

- The Service Manager confirmed that it was being formally advertised in all park spaces.

How should residents report dog bites?

- The Service Manager confirmed it was a police matter.

Would there be any further provision of waste bins?

- The Service Manager informed committee that they had reviewed this and placed more bins on sites as they had had additional funding from the Welsh Government. The Service Manager encouraged committee to inform her if there were any specific sites they wished the team to review for bin provision.

If too many pitches were being marked out?

- The Service Manager informed committee that pitches are booked within sports seasons through an existing system with Newport Live. The Service Manager appreciated that sometimes booked events are called off or rescheduled but that they only marked pitches as per diary bookings and for the benefit of the public.

Whether the bins being installed were general use or specifically dog waste bins?

- The Service Manager confirmed that most bins are general use.

What was being done regarding dogs on cycle paths?

- The Service Manager informed committee that cycleways are all shared use unless on a dedicated highway and that pedestrians had right of way over bicycles.
- The committee member agreed that all parties should be mindful but felt that dogs were unpredictable and provision for dogs being on leads on some paths would be beneficial.
- The Service Manager explained that the onus was on the owner to control the dog when using shared routes or highways and did not feel that there should be restrictions placed on owners to have dogs on leads. The Service Manager informed committee that there was signage to encourage responsibility.

6. Conclusion of Committee Reports

Welsh Language Strategy

- Committee would like accurate costing figures on all aspects of the Welsh Language Strategy.
- Committee would like the statistics as to number of Welsh speakers and how many are accessing Contact Centre through the medium of Welsh clarified.
- The Committee recommended that more of the report be written in Welsh to reflect its content.

Parks PSPO

- The use of social media and the number of responses were praised by the Committee.

For both reports, the committee were overall very happy with the content, format and clarity of the reports.