

# Minutes



## Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

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Date: 12 July 2024

Time: 2.30 pm

Present: Councillors P Hourahine (Chair), D Jenkins, M Linton and L James

In Attendance: Samantha Schanzer (Scrutiny Adviser), Mark Bleazard (Digital Services Manager), Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director - Transformation and Corporate Centre), Ross Cudlipp (Service Manager - Climate Change), Silvia Gonzalez-Lopez (Waste Recycling Strategy Manager), Paul Jones (Strategic Director - Environment and Sustainability) and Tariq Slaoui (Information Manager)

Cllr Y Forsey (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Bio-diversity)

Apologies: Councillors C Baker-Westhead, J Harris, S Cocks, D Mayer and M Evans. Cllr D Batrouni (Leader of the Council) and T McKim (Head of People, Policy and Transformation)

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### 1 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

### 2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Committee requested the discussion which took place around Welsh speaking Contact Centre staff be included in Item 4. Councillor Linton asked that his apologies be noted. The Chair asked for a grammatical error to be rectified under item 5b.

The minutes of the previous meeting held **7<sup>th</sup> June 2024** were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

### 3 **Annual Information Risk Report 2023-24**

**Invitees:**

- **Rhys Cornwall (Strategic Director: Transformation and Corporate)**
- **Mark Bleazard (Digital Services Manager)**
- **Tariq Slaoui (Information Manager)**

The Strategic Director (SD) introduced the report, and the Digital Services Manager (DSM) gave an overview.

The following discussion took place:

- The Committee enquired about costs incurred with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. They informed Committee that if an enquiry would take over 18 hours to provide a response, these can be rejected. They advised the cost is approximately £25,000-£30,000 per annum based on officer time. It was reiterated that responding to FOI requests is a statutory requirement.
- The Committee enquired about the reduction in Social Services training attendance rates and queried whether Information Security training was recorded or delivered differently/elsewhere. The DSM informed the Committee that clarification on this data would be provided. They informed Committee of an incident which resulted in the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) acting and which led to a specific focus on training and catching up on training. The Committee queried whether it would be more appropriate to omit the data if it was not properly representative. The SD highlighted that corporate training is required to be done every two years, so the figures for this year would not include all Social Services staff. The DSM informed the Committee that complementary e-learning is provided but there are classroom-style training courses. The Information Manager (IM) informed the Committee that the data is specifically for Social Services professionals without access to technology and therefore they are provided with in-person courses instead, but this would be clarified.
- The Committee asked what "technical security failings" were. The IM explained that this term is where a system has failed rather than being due to human error. The Committee requested more detailed information regarding technical security failings.
- The Committee stated that they were pleased that targets for Subject Access Requests (SAR) were being met and queried how many SAR's in total were considered complex and required extension. The DSM informed the Committee that the complex SAR's are normally records for children who have previously been in care which can involve a lot of data and historical paper records. The IM added that complex SAR's can be extended for a further two calendar months if necessary, but guidance does state this should be done sparingly. The DSM assured the Committee that the data identifying SAR's could be provided.

#### **Comments and recommendations:**

- The Committee requested a more detailed explanation of and response regarding "technical security failings".
- The Committee requested further information on what proportion of SAR's were complex and required extensions.
- The Committee recommended that training data within the report is clarified.
- The Committee were pleased with the contextualising information within the report.
- The Committee were content with report.

## **4 Climate Change Plan Annual Report 2023-24**

### **Invitees:**

- **Paul Jones (Strategic Director: Environment and Sustainability)**
- **Silvia Gonzalez-Lopez (Head of Environment and Public Protection)**
- **Ross Cudlipp (Service Manager for Climate Change)**
- **Councillor Yvonne Forsey (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Bio-Diversity)**

The Strategic Director (SD) for Environment and Sustainability gave an introduction, and the Head of Environment and Public Protection (HEPP) gave an overview.

The following was discussed:

- The Committee queried how to submit a request for tree planting at suitable sites. The HEPP informed the Committee that the Tree and Countryside Team are the best contact via Members contact email addresses.
- The Committee stated that they were pleased with the level of information in the report and the progress demonstrated. The Committee queried why the target for reviewing democratic report templates to incorporate climate and decarbonisation has been missed. The SD informed the Committee that staff turnover and elections were the cause of the delay.
- The Committee felt that the rainwater gardens located around the city were a success. The HEPP informed the Committee that this action was marked as amber due to a delay in delivery but is being worked on.
- The Committee enquired about the methods for sharing savings from greening initiatives between all schools. The Service Manager for Climate Change confirmed that there was as the overall integrated schools budget that encapsulated all schools and this is where the savings would be aggregated.
- The Committee queried the Red, Amber, Green (RAG) ratings for objectives where mixed progress had been reported, as no clarity was given as to how many workstreams were included in the overall rating or what percentage of the workstreams didn't meet targets. The Service Manager for Climate Change informed the Committee that the full project list was in the appendix of the report but agreed to add further information to the summary table to clarify the positions.
- The Committee enquired whether the installation of ground source heat pumps and solar panels was prioritised for modern schools rather than the older school buildings where installation may be more difficult. The Service Manager for Climate Change informed the Committee that in the first instance the more modern schools would be fitted due to ease of installation and reduced risk. They noted that this work is universally novel and not many schools in Wales had undertaken this work to date. They informed Committee that working on Bassaleg and Caerleon school in the next few years would be a different challenge and would provide useful information on how to tackle older buildings going forward.
- The Committee queried whether any grant funding would be available to upgrade other areas to increase efficiency. The SD informed the Committee that grant funding would be used to replace glazing to help reduce heat loss and install more energy efficient boilers, but recognised the challenge that improvements to older buildings represented. The Service Manager for Climate Change added that they would work with schools to ensure that work undertaken would not become obsolete in the near future.
- The Committee queried whether the differentiation between red and amber ratings was difficult to quantify. The Service Manager for Climate Change informed the Committee that the justification for some of the red ratings is that the work had not started yet.
- The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Bio-Diversity highlighted the objective to provide carbon literacy training to all Members and felt that it would be positive to see all Elected Members take advantage of this training.

#### **Comments and recommendations:**

- The Committee recommended that figures are added to RAG rating summary tables to provide more detail regarding their total percentage of completion, and ensure that the difference between red and amber status is clear.
- The Committee were pleased with the improvement in the report following previous feedback from Scrutiny.

The Committee were content with the report.

**Invitees:**

- **Samantha Schanzer (Scrutiny Adviser)**

**a. Actions Arising**

The Scrutiny Adviser informed the Committee that the majority of the actions were complete and had chased for the outstanding actions.

**b. Forward Work Programme Update**

The Scrutiny Adviser informed the Committee that the Anti-Poverty Strategic Plan has been added to the meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

**c. Outcome Monitoring**

The Scrutiny Adviser informed the Committee that the Welsh Language Report had been published in draft on the website and will be considered by Cabinet this month. They also provided a verbal update to the Committee from the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager regarding the Scrutiny Annual Report.

The meeting terminated at 3.20 pm