

Minutes



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Date: 24 July 2024

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors J Reynolds (Chair), F Hussain, P Bright, S Marshall, A Screen, J Hughes and B Davies

In Attendance: Councillor Pat Drewett, Sally Jenkins (Strategic Director – Social Services), Tracey Brooks (Head of Regeneration and Economic Development), Kevin Ward (Chairman – Newport Live), Steve Ward (Chief Executive – Newport Live), Caroline Ryan-Phillips (Head of Prevention and Inclusion), Heidi Anderson (Substance Misuse Lead Officer – Torfaen County Council), Katharine Majer (Deputy Democratic and Electoral Services Manager), Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser), Taylor Strange (Governance Officer) and Simon Richards (Governance Officer)

Apologies: Councillors D Davies, J Jones and K Whitehead

1 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jason Hughes declared an interest for the Newport Live Partnership agenda item.

2 Newport Live Partnership

Invitees:

- Steve Ward – Chief Executive – Newport Live
- Kevin Ward - Chairman – Newport Live
- Tracey Brooks – Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

The Chief Executive presented an overview of the report, and a video presentation was shown to the Committee.

Members asked the following:

- The Committee praised the work undertaken by Aspire, and asked how children are referred. The Committee were advised that referrals to Aspire typically come from Llanwern, Llisbury, and John Frost schools, in coordination with other Local Authority services. The programme's limitation to three schools was due to resource constraints, emphasising the importance of a dedicated team for supporting young persons.
- The Committee were advised that Newport Live incorporates the Welsh language into its operations, including promotional work and customer service. The Chief Executive advised that while most sports activities are conducted in English, the importance of delivering services in Welsh is recognised, with specific mention of swimming lessons being available in Welsh.

- The Committee discussed the distribution of Newport Live facilities, noting a lack in Newport West compared to the Central and East areas of the city. The Chairman explained that the facilities were inherited from the Council, with further details in the Council Sporting Report. It was emphasised that Newport Live's role extended beyond sports, significantly impacting the health of Newport citizens across the city.
- Concerns were raised about financial sustainability and the maintenance of infrastructure. The Chairman highlighted that the Capital Asset Management Strategy is a focus area for Newport Live. Despite challenges like inflation and increased living wage impacting costs, efforts were made to maintain concessionary rates. Efficiency savings were sought through methods other than redundancies, such as negotiation with suppliers. The Committee were also advised that while there were challenges, the partnership actively seeks diverse funding sources and is committed to maintaining and expanding its programmes to meet community needs.
- The Committee were advised that Newport Live actively collaborated with various sectors, including health, education, and local government, to maximise the impact of its programmes and initiatives.
- The Committee were advised that Newport Live's engagement with minority and LGBTQIA+ communities included hosting the Pride event and working with various groups that utilised both arts and sports facilities. Staff from diverse backgrounds contributed to this inclusive approach.
- The Committee enquired about the partnership's strategies for engaging with underrepresented groups. The Committee were advised that the partnership employed targeted outreach and tailored programmes to engage with underrepresented groups, ensuring that the benefits of its programmes reach all community members.
- The Committee were advised that Newport Live engaged with communities in Newport, a City of Sanctuary, through initiatives such as introducing refugees with water trauma to safe and enjoyable water activities. Referrals come from teams such as Positive Futures and link with Social Services and The Gap Wales.
- The Committee expressed a desire for more publicisation of Newport Live's positive work and for inclusive programmes to be a key theme throughout Newport Live's plan. The Chief Executive confirmed that Newport Live works with a variety of external body initiatives to support this goal.

The Chair thanked officers for attending.

Conclusions

- The Committee expressed admiration for the presentation and the impactful work Newport Live is doing, especially in engaging with young people and addressing their needs effectively. The Committee particularly noted the passion and dedication demonstrated by staff involved in the Aspire Programme.
- The Committee recommended that the partnership more actively publicised the positive outcomes and work done by Newport Live, especially in engaging with diverse communities and supporting individuals from vulnerable backgrounds.
- The Committee wish to voice the importance in recognising the risk inherent in the assets and infrastructure and for the partnership to ensure their finance allocated to infrastructure is adequate.

3 Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board

Invitees:

- Sally Jenkins – Strategic Director – Social Services
- Caroline Ryan-Phillips – Head of Prevention and Inclusion
- Heidi Anderson – Substance Misuse Lead Officer – Torfaen County Council
- Councillor Pat Drewett – Cabinet Member for Communities and Poverty Reduction

The Head of Prevention and Inclusion (HPI) and the Substance Misuse Lead Officer – Torfaen County Council (SMLO) gave an overview of the report.

Members asked the following:

- The Committee asked the how officers how they viewed the strength of the partnership. The SMLO acknowledged various problems and challenges due to the wide range of partners such as criminal justice and health that work within the 5 Local Authorities covered by the partnership.
- The Committee asked how the partnership would work through a stalemate if one occurred. The Committee were advised that Welsh Government policy and key priorities are used to address a potential stalemate. The HPI added that the Chair, Vice Chair, and the Support Team are there to limit any stalemates that could occur, highlighting ongoing work with the board to limit any issues.
- The Committee queried whether service users were involved in planning and evaluation. The Committee were advised that service users are involved from the very start of their journey and the partnership works alongside Adult Services on this. They have Health Board links as well and go out into the public to facilitate conversation, along with connections with the Youth Ambassador Service and other youth-focused groups.
- The Committee requested future consultation work to be passed onto the Committee.
- The Committee questioned what programmes existed for long-term recovery. The Committee were advised that there is a team of recovery colleagues that use all available resources within the community such as within the Community Connectors team and sporting facilities. The support is both peer-led and staff-led. The importance of having a wide range of support was emphasised.
- The Committee questioned how the partnership works with organisations that focus on mental health and housing. The Committee were advised that this is a huge issue in providing adequate support for the service users, with work constantly being conducted to deal with this issue. The HPI highlighted a variety of boards the partnership works with, such as the Homelessness Board, the Criminal Justice Board, and Safeguarding boards. It was explained that those with complex needs required support from a variety of sources rather than just single issues.
- The Committee enquired what measures were in place for everyone to access services. The Committee were advised that Gwent Drug and Alcohol Services (GDAS) were accessible to all individuals. The focus was to allow everyone to access the services they needed, and stigma was identified as the biggest boundary to access services. The SMLO noted volunteers in Newport sharing positive stories. The HPI highlighted media's role in perpetuating stigma, while the Cabinet Member for Communities and Poverty Reduction (CMCPR) stressed the need for education to help service users feel safe seeking assistance.

- The Committee queried support for families in treatment and recovery. The SMLO advised of a family carers support service offering crisis intervention and smart recovery groups, with a focus on individual treatment.
- The Committee enquired about strategic alignments. The HPI advised that the Gwent model is a recognised best practice, reflecting Gwent's collaborative history.

The Chair thanked the officers for attending.

Conclusions

- The Committee requested that future reports include information on:
 - Understanding and Strategic Alignments: How different organisations with key strategies align and collaborate, and how these alignments are maintained over time.
 - Joint Decision Making: Insights into the structure of joint decision-making processes among these organisations.
 - Outcome Measurements: Details on how outcomes are measured and reviewed, including specific metrics used for evaluation.
 - User and Community Feedback: How feedback from, and consultation with, service users and the community is addressed and incorporated into service planning and delivery.
 - Service Effectiveness and Sustainability: An analysis of the effectiveness and sustainability of services provided, with a focus on how these aspects affect partnerships.
- The Committee were pleased to hear about the positive impact of involving individuals with direct experience in shaping and delivering services. The Committee encourages the continuation and expansion of such practices to further enhance the effectiveness and reach of the services offered.
- The Committee requested for the Head of Prevention and Inclusion to send the evidenced-based report on findings in the homelessness section and needs.
- The Committee recommended for an All-Member seminar to be arranged to advise Members on early intervention with children, adults and housing.

4 Scrutiny Adviser Reports

Invitee:

- Neil Barnett – Scrutiny Adviser

a) Actions Arising

The Committee were advised of Actions Arising

b) Draft Annual Forward Work Programme Update

The Committee were advised of the draft Annual Forward Work Programme. The Committee accepted the dates and agenda items. The Committee suggested to add Royal Foundation Homewards Programme to the forward work programme. The Scrutiny Adviser advised the Committee that they would discuss this with the Head of Housing and Communities.

c) Outcomes Monitoring

The Committee were advised of the up to date outcomes.

5 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Committee accepted the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record.

The meeting terminated at 8.30 pm