

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Public Service Board Select Committee held
at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Wednesday, 18th October, 2017 at 10.00
am**

PRESENT: County Councillors: M.Groucutt, J.Pratt, S. Howarth and J.Treharne

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Sharran Lloyd	LSB Development Manager
Matthew Gatehouse	Head of Policy and Governance
Hazel Clatworthy	Sustainability Community Officer
Hazel Ilett	Scrutiny Manager
Paula Harris	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

Councillors D. Batrouni, M.Feakins, G. Howard, P.Pavia and F. Taylor

1. To elect a Chair

County Councillor Martyn Groucutt was elected as Chair of the Committee.

2. Apologies for absence

County Councillors D. Batrouni, M. Feakins, G. Howard, P. Pavia and F. Taylor.

3. Declarations of Interest

None received.

4. Public Open Forum

There were no members of the public wishing to address the committee.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting

The following minutes of the Committee were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

- 14th March 2017
- 12th July 2017 – New Member training

County Councillor Simon Howarth spoke of his concerns when sending substitutes to the PSB Select Committee. Due to the nature of the work it was felt that member continuity was essential.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Public Service Board Select Committee held
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6. Well-being Plan - Process and structure

Context:

To provide members with an overview of the process being followed to produce the wellbeing plan; the structure of the plan and some of the actions that could feature within it.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, by taking action in accordance with the sustainable development principle aimed at achieving well-being goals.

One of the responsibilities the Act places on the Public Service Board is to prepare and publish a well-being plan and well-being objectives for the county. This will draw on the evidence in the well-being assessment that was approved by the PSB and endorsed by council in March 2017.

Key Issues:

The Well-being of Future Generations Act aims to ensure that public bodies think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. Each PSB must prepare and publish a local well-being plan setting out its local objectives and the steps it proposes to take to meet them. This needs to be published no later than one year after the last council election.

The plan must describe how the board will improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the county by setting local objectives which maximise its contribution to the seven national the well-being goals. There are two elements to the plan, objectives and the steps to meet those objectives.

Work completed between April and July resulted in the PSB adopting four draft well-being objectives at its meeting on 25th July following scrutiny by this committee on 11th July.

These are based on the well-being assessment that was previously scrutinised by this committee and are shown in the table below:

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Public Service Board Select Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Wednesday, 18th October, 2017 at 10.00 am

Purpose	Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities	
Our aspiration is to:	Reduce inequalities between communities and within communities Support and protect vulnerable people Consider our impact on the environment	
Our (proposed) well-being Objectives are:	People / Citizens	Place / Communities
	Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life	Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change
	Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change	Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
The steps the PSB will take to meet these objectives	A series of workshops will take place in September and October 2017. These will identify and prioritise the initial programmes of work that the Board will consider commissioning to meet its final objectives. More detail will need to be added before the plan is consulted on.	

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The steps the PSB will take to meet these objectives

A series of workshops will take place in September and October 2017. These will identify and prioritise the initial programmes of work that the Board will consider commissioning to meet its final objectives. More detail will need to be added before the plan is consulted on.

The process used to move from the Well-being Assessment to Well-being Plan is summarised in Appendix 1.

The PSB is now responsible for developing the plan that will articulate these objectives and describe the steps that will be taken to meet them. They will be asked to endorse

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Public Service Board Select Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Wednesday, 18th October, 2017 at 10.00 am

the plan when they meet on 8th November prior to a 12 week public consultation. Drafting of the plan will continue into November and so it is not possible to present the committee with a draft at this stage.

Officers from Monmouthshire County Council and other partners are in the process of identifying the steps. As members will be aware the Act describes five ways of working: long-term; integrated; collaborative; involvement and preventative.

The plan cannot be produced in isolation and the process began with a workshop on 9th October attended by officers, partners, community members and other stakeholders. A number of committee members were also invited to observe. At time of writing the outputs from the event are still being analysed, a short overview is shown at appendix 3 and this will be supplemented by a presentation at the meeting, by which time the initial analysis will be complete.

Member Scrutiny:

A Members asked for clarity on MCC's objectives for the next 25 years and what changes elected Members were being asked to look at.

The public consultation phase starts in mid-November 2017 and Elected Members expressed their wish to get involved with this process.

Given the unique geography of the County it was asked if rural areas were going to be given as much consideration as the four main towns.

Members welcomed the work and raised concerns regarding the size of the project.

The role of the devolved Welsh Government was felt to be vital, with an example of healthcare tariffs in regard to hip fractures being cited with standardised care called for.

Members were concerned that the 'easy' issues would be addressed for quick wins, rather than more critical issues and asked for quantifiable standards.

Members were keen that areas of the County suffering from rural deprivation were addressed.

A Member commented on the 5 year plans that Town and Community Councils were looking at as short-sighted and felt that they should be looking at a minimum scope of 25 years.

Committee's Conclusion:

It was felt it is difficult to hold to account and scrutinise partner agencies and this would impact the quality of scrutiny this particular committee could provide.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Public Service Board Select Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Wednesday, 18th October, 2017 at 10.00 am

The Committee were keen to be aspirational but felt that more basic, current issues affecting the county, such as flooding needed to be addressed in the first instance.

In the whole Members felt that the plan was to be applauded, however, commented that with finite resources we would be limited to how effectual we could be.

The authority needs to look at objectives they can actually deliver.

7. Feedback from workshop to develop the plan

County Councillor Groucutt who attended the workshop along with County Councillors Taylor and Pavia spoke of this experience of the day, raising the following points;

Positives

- Meeting partner agencies and understanding their desire to work in a collaborative way.
- Speaking to like-minded people who appreciate the importance of pulling together to improve the wellbeing of the County.

Negatives

- Dominated by County Council affairs, felt Officer heavy.
- Although the CEO and deputy CEO of MCC were in attendance, the same could not be said of other partner agencies.
- It showed we have to do some work on asking people to think outside of their own box with many people only interested in their own contribution.

8. Measuring Well-being: The Happy Communities

Context:

To provide members with an overview of the Happy Communities project and roll out plan for Monmouthshire.

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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Public Service Board Select Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Wednesday, 18th October, 2017 at 10.00 am

One of the responsibilities the Act places on the Public Service Board is to prepare and publish a local Well-being Plan which will set out how public bodies will work together to improve well-being in Monmouthshire.

The July meeting of this committee received a brief overview of three projects being taken forward at a regional level. One of these is the Happy Communities project which will contribute to the plan by providing an insight into the conditions and experiences of well-being of residents of Monmouthshire.

Key Issues:

The five Public Service Boards within the Gwent region have jointly agreed to utilise the Happy Communities tools in order to better measure, understand and improve the well-being of their populations. Currently measuring the local conditions for wellbeing or the experienced well-being of their local populations is largely restricted to data obtained from the 2011 census which lacks the details of well-being, timeliness and the local granularity needed to really inform decision making.

In using the same tools across Gwent PSBs it will be possible to compare well-being across the region and against other parts of the UK. The frameworks and tools are scalable and can therefore be used to inform decision making at a community, ward, neighbourhood or whole authority scale.

Happy Communities provides two tools, the Happy Communities Index which measures the local conditions for community well-being and the Happiness Pulse which is an adaptable and scalable measure of personal well-being.

The *Happy Communities Index* draws on a number of indicators from various sources to understand and assess the local determinants of well-being and where to target interventions to create the conditions for people to thrive. The set of indicators available in Wales is currently being assessed for suitability for inclusion in the Index in Wales. As far as possible, the indicators are the same as, or equivalent to, English indicators so that comparisons can be drawn with areas in England.

The *Happiness Pulse* measures the detailed reality of personal well-being in communities and includes a resident survey which is expected to take place in January and February 2018.

Training for relevant officers will take place during November when more information on project details and rollout will be available.

Member Scrutiny:

A Member asked for clarity on the score and rank table index and was told it did not reflect Monmouthshire County Council data.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Public Service Board Select Committee held
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Committee's Conclusion:

Members looked forward to the January 2018 launch and future scrutiny of the project.

9. Developing Regional Well-being Priorities

We were told that earlier in 2017, through the Gwent well-being assessment group, work had been commissioned to look at how we could look at priorities and come together as a regional group to tackle the challenges.

Extensive research has taken place under the lead of Dr Alan Netherwood with similar themes becoming obvious. These have been rationalised into four key areas which could be served at a Gwent level.

- Using natural resources to promote Wellbeing
- Work towards climate resilience and reducing the region's carbon emissions
- Reduce inequalities with an initial focus on cancer inequities
- Maximise City Deal benefits for Gwent, focusing on improving regional transport.

A paper will follow in 2018.

10. To consider the Select Committee's forward work programme

The programme was noted.

11. To note the date and time of the next meeting as the 16th January 2018

The meeting ended at 12.10 pm