

**Minutes of the Adults Select Committee held at County Hall, Usk on  
Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at 10.00 a.m.**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor P.S. Farley (Chairman)

County Councillors: R. Chapman, R. Harris, R. Edwards, P. Jones, P. Watts and A. Wintle.

Also in attendance: County Councillors G Burrows, Cabinet Member for Social Care.

**COOPTED MEMBERS:**

D. Hudson

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr. M. Gatehouse	-	Policy and Performance Manager
Mr. M. Howcroft	-	Assistant Head of Finance
Mr. T. Stokes	-	Management Accountant
Mrs. S. King	-	Senior Democratic Services Officer

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1. Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors M. Hickman and P. Jordan and Mr D. Hill (co-opted representative)

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2. There were no declarations of interest.

**MINUTES**

3. We received minutes of the Adults Select Committee:
  - i) We confirmed and signed the minutes of the Adults Select committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014.
  - ii) We confirmed and signed the minutes of the Adults Select Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

**PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

4. There were no members of the public in attendance.

**RISK ASSESSMENT 2018/19**

5. We received the Strategic Risk Assessment which provided members with an overview of the current strategic risks which faced the authority.

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The risk assessment ensured that:

- Strategic risks are identified and monitored by the authority.
- Risk controls are appropriate and proportionate
- Senior managers and elected members systematically review the strategic risks facing the authority.

The risk assessment covered High and Medium level risks. Lower level operational risks were not registered unless they were projected to escalate within the three years covered. These were to be managed and monitored through teams' service plans.

Select Committee had considered the content of the risk assessment at meetings in November and December 2014 alongside the emerging budget mandates. The risk assessment, including the wording of the risk matrix in appendix 2, was updated to reflect feedback received at these meetings.

Risks will be signed off at Cabinet in March 2015. Prior to this, they will be examined by Council on 22 January to inform budget discussions.

The risk log is a living document and will evolve over the course of the year as new information comes to light. This is reflected in the circular diagram given in appendix 2 which shows some of the information that informs the authority's knowledge of risks at different points of the year.

An up-to-date risk log will be accessible to members on The Hub. This will ensure that select committees are able to re-visit the information at any point in the year to re-prioritise their work plan as appropriate.

We debated the report and raised the following:

- Members welcomed the clear and coherent report. However, it appeared that there were some aspects missing e.g. community coordination/care in the community.
- We were informed that previous year requests were brought forward to committees in December and any risks that had been adequately dealt with were no longer included. Where specific arrangements were in place then issues were being appropriately managed. The lower level risk issues would be recognised through the assessment.
- The service was being considered from an operational view, which included linkages and impact on the strategic direction. This was not considered as a risk, particularly as the community coordination project was underway.
- The committee recognised that the report contained an overview of issues and members were advised that further detailed information was available, if required. The information could be obtained through hyperlinks to other documents and statements were supported by evidence.
- Members were reminded that specific detailed information could be provided on request through individuals and officers welcomed enquiries.

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- Training and guidance was provided by external provider Zurich, this ensured that members were equipped with the necessary skills on risk assessment.
- The Cabinet member highlighted that when a risk was identified it would then be subject to assessment, which would result in the risk being discussed and the process would reduce the level of risk and it would be mitigated as a consequence.
- Further information was requested regarding the cost apportionment and residential care at Monnow Vale partnership. It was noted that officers present did not have the specific information, however, details could be provided by officers within the service area.
- The Cabinet member outlined the process for dealing with the risk assessment and explained that the Adults Select committee portfolio covered a complicated range of services which had to be linked. Teams worked collaboratively and line management was operated vertically and laterally. Some areas of risk would be easily encapsulated into day to day work and the Cabinet member would be involved in regular meetings with heads of service and additional meetings, as needed. Meetings would be logged and recorded, this ensured that communication and management of risks was efficient and effective.
- We recognised that issues would arise where a private provider may activate risk for both the public and the authority, we were reminded that it was important to ensure that the right decisions were being made and the authority was comfortable with the decisions. The cabinet member was responsible for discussing issues with officers and there was a need to ensure that information was shared with all relevant bodies and that the solution would be mitigated.
- Partnership working had benefited the process and was highlighted as an important factor, as the authority expected any service delivered by outsourced providers to be of an expected standard.
- The committee were reassured and thanked the cabinet member for contributions.
- A new IT system would be introduced which would underpin all aspects of the service. It was important to ensure that teams had the appropriate tools to be able to communicate effectively.
- We requested that the position of a Medium risk was clarified, which related to harm to vulnerable adult/child due to circumstances beyond control. Officers advised that the risk could not be ignored, in the draft it was considered high and recognised that consequences to individuals was major, however, the likelihood was not almost certain. The risk assessment was downgraded, there were major and substantial consequences but risk was identified as medium as it was not certain to happen.
- Safeguarding was at the forefront of the agenda and the more a risk was discussed the lower it would become. A report was to be presented to Council by the Cabinet member, which included safeguarding on each decision and report.

In concluding comments the Chairman highlighted:

- Appreciation for the contribution and candour that the Cabinet member had made to the meeting.

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- Grateful for responses that had been provided to the committee.
- Welcomed developments that had been provided.
- As the risk log was a living document and ongoing process, we welcomed an alert system which notified when changes are made.
- Some issues raised to be further considered by officers e.g. community coordination, implications of providers.
- Listened with interest to progress on IT side and although not main focus, it was useful and relevant part of discussion and would welcome further detail.
- The Committee were satisfied following information presented and appreciated answers that had been provided.

**REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2014/15 MONTH 6 OUTTURN  
FORECAST STATEMENT**

6. We received the Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring 2014/15 Month 6 outturn forecast statement, which provided members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at the end of month 6 for the 2014/15 financial year and sought to provide summary performance indicator information alongside financial data, which would allow members the opportunity to consider how services were provided and whether resources were utilised efficiently.

Key points within the report were highlighted as:

- 3.1.2 Responsible Financial Officer's Summary of Overall Position, £166k adverse position, has been mitigated significantly by anticipated Council Tax receipts. Net cost of services pressure of £805k. Costs were included, such as redundancy payments, which are not generally a budgeted expense.
- 3.1.9 covered more notable pressures and underspends. Predicted £70k underspend at year end, mandate saving identified £121k.
- 3.4 Capital position less significant to Adults portfolio.
- 3.5.4 Indication of usable capital receipts available.
- Savings achieved on 2015/16 budget, savings were delivered and on track.
- Appendix 4 contained position statement and prospective scrutiny points for the Adults Select portfolio perspective. Provided additional detail and areas of over/under spend. Monnow Vale identified as over spend and therefore highlighted as financial risk, which would be included in financial monitoring.

We debated the report and noted:

- A query was raised regarding domiciliary care and whether there would be an issue with increased staff hours and reconfiguration. In response, officers advised that the team manager with finance would look at widening the Raglan project and methods for future delivery would be considered.
- Processes would be aligned when the Raglan model was rolled out to wider delivery. At present, the team were not salaried, however, delivery needs would be considered with the Raglan project. It was anticipated that there

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would be initial input with training, which would then be curtailed with budget limits.

- The report identified a shortfall in income for community meals and an explanation of reasons for this was requested. Officers explained that there was a mandate to increase income by £30k by providing meals to the private sector. A marketing strategy was being developed, However the predicted figures had not been achieved.
- The committee discussed other companies in the market who provided similar service and had achieved business through successful marketing campaigns.
- Members expressed dissatisfaction that the expectation had not been delivered.
- We recognised the importance of the human element of meal delivery and ensuring that people were not alone. The team were working with communications department to develop appropriate marketing for the product. The team were also considering a variety of budget options.
- It was suggested that the team could look at how other products were promoted and what type of marketing campaigns were used by similar companies.
- There was an anticipated overspend of £50k on net forecast outturn expenditure. There was not a significant variance, however, it was more sizeable for Mardy Park and Monnow Vale. GWICES were in a favourable position, but this would be required to mitigate the unfavourable.
- Further information would be provided in relation to whether the existing budget was well spent and how Monmouthshire compared to other authorities.
- The committee had previously considered a budget mandate for adult education, which was considered through the Enterprise directorate. It was a different area for budget purposes, however, the committee were reminded that they were able to scrutinise any area within the Adults Committee portfolio.
- Adult education was within the Economy and Development select committee, for the basis of the Enterprise directorate. The issue appeared under Community Led Delivery, alongside Libraries. Problems and challenges were onerous, Coleg Gwent had suggested reduced funding to adult education and the service had to be reengineered.
- Further information was requested on Adult Education, which included the significant changes that were ongoing.
- An explanation was requested where Adult unit costs were compared between Councils, Your Life Your Way strategy evidenced the additional benefit of reduced unit cost of provision and that Monmouthshire County Council evidenced a greater proportionate spend for under 65s. In response, we noted that choices were not reflected and that the extent of information required was recognised during benchmarking. This paragraph demonstrated a marker that the issue should be tested. Provision of care would be measured against eligibility criteria.

We agreed that there were a number of issues that had to be re-considered by the committee:

- Budget mandate provision of community meals.
- Pressures surrounding Monnow Vale and Mardy Park.

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- Adult Education

In summing up, the Chairman thanked officers for attending and recognised the continued hard work and efforts of the team to manage financial data and thanked the committee for detail in which the report had been scrutinised. Officers welcomed committee comments as it enhanced the process.

**WORK PROGRAMMING**

7. We received the work programme of the Adults Select committee and noted the following:
  - A special meeting would be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2015, the committee would meet with Aneurin Bevan Health Board.

**SUMMING UP AND DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

8. We agreed dates of next meetings as follows:
  - **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at 10.00am – Special Meeting**
  - **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at 10.00am**

**The meeting ended at 12:05pm**