

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Strong Communities Select Committee held at on Thursday, 12th July, 2018 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: County Councillor J.Pratt (Chairman)
County Councillor A. Webb (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: R.Roden, L. Guppy, V. Smith, A. Easson and
R. Harris

Also in attendance County Councillor(s): S. Woodhouse

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Hazel Ilett	Scrutiny Manager
Paula Harris	Democratic Services Officer
Roger Hoggins	Head of Operations
Mark Howcroft	Assistant Head of Finance
Richard Jones	Performance Manager
Dave Loder	Finance Manager

1. Apologies for absence

County Councillor L. Dymock.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. To confirm minutes of the previous meeting

Confirmed and signed by the Chair.

4. Public Open Forum

5.

Phillip Boyer - Save our Seats Campaign Abergavenny

Mr Boyer addressed the committee regarding the issue of MCC's street furniture policy.

He advised that the local business community look are willing to speak to MCC officers to reach an agreeable outcome for all.

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Mr Rogers – Alltybela Road, Local residents concerns relating to hedgerows, verges, pollutants, highways management and the Section 6 Duty

Mr Rodgers wished to speak to the committee in regard to a case study regarding transport movements through a narrow lane in central Monmouthshire.

Mr Rogers is looking to work with MCC to achieve a solution.

Due to the limited time available the Chair advised Mr Rogers that the issue of HGVs is an agenda item for the September meeting and invited Mr Rogers to return and address the committee on this date.

Mr Rogers asked that we note that his concerns were regarding the implementation of legislation, not simply criticism of large lorries and vehicles.

Mr Peter Sutherland – Llanbadoc Community Council

Usk Island car park – there are 5 litter bins currently sited at Usk Island, there is a wish for more bins and subsequently increased collections.

Also at Usk Island, the increase of anti-social behaviour has resulted in acts of vandalism. Police response has been poor and residents are worried to report incidents due to fears of retribution.

Burger Van - the owner of the business wishes place CCTV cameras at the site and asked if MCC could assist with costs. There are also issues with visitors parking on yellow lines at peak times.

Llanbadoc Island – there is a possibility of the community council obtaining grant funding for resurfacing work and asked that MCC support this.

Mr Andrew Powell – Business Club of Abergavenny

Mr Powell presented the committee with a petition regarding MCC's street furniture policy.

5. Annual Performance Reports 2017/18

Context:

To present the 2017/18 performance information under the remit of Strong Communities Select Committee, this includes:

Reporting back on how well we did against the well-being objectives which the previous Council set for 2017/18.

2017/18 performance information on how we performed against a range of nationally set measures used by all councils in Wales.

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Key Issues:

The council currently has an established performance framework, this is the way in which we translate our vision - *building sustainable and resilient communities* - into action and ensure that everyone is pulling in the same direction to deliver real and tangible outcomes.

The information contained within the report, in many cases will cover the performance of service areas already scrutinised as part of the Select Committee's work programme. The purpose of bringing the information together is to allow Select Committee to understand performance in the context of the strategic plan or performance framework within which it is set. Committee members are encouraged to utilise their time appropriately in consideration of the scrutiny the committee has already undertaken in service areas and has planned on the committee's work programme. The report may identify further areas of scrutiny that committee may want to consider for inclusion on the forward work programme. Activity that contributes to the delivery of some objectives cross cuts select committee remits. Therefore it is suggested members particularly focus their scrutiny on the activity relevant to the committee with consideration of its contribution to the objective as a whole.

In March 2017 full Council set Monmouthshire County Council's well-being objectives for 2017/18. These objectives were set just prior to local government elections in May 2017, in order to meet the legislative requirement of approving and publishing Wellbeing Objectives by 31st March 2017. Given the timing of the publication the latest available evidence from the Monmouthshire well-being assessment, as well as policy and legislation was used to set the Objectives.

The approval of the Corporate Plan 'A Monmouthshire that works for everyone' which sets five priority goals the Council will be working towards by 2022 supersedes the Council's well-being objectives set in March 2017. Despite these objectives being superseded by the Corporate Plan it is important, and we have a duty, to report back on the progress we made in 2017/18 against the well-being objective set in March 2017. The report in appendix 2 provides the progress with the objective that is under the remit of the select committee. This includes progress against areas of work related to the objective, an understanding of key performance information and future activity the Council has agreed as part of the Corporate Plan. As well as being presented to select committees the objectives will be included alongside a fuller evaluation of the Council's performance in 2017/18 that will be reported to Council in September 2018 and published by October 2018.

Performance data and information is essential to our performance framework to track and evaluate the progress being made. One important nationally set framework used to measure local authority performance is 'Public Accountability Measures' set by Data Cymru. Appendix 3 shows the performance in 2017/18 for the performance indicators that are part of this framework and are under the committee's remit. Benchmarking data compared to other Councils in Wales will be published in August 2018 and will be made available to members.

Future performance reporting will be based around monitoring and evaluating progress against the actions set in the Corporate Plan. It is important to consider the information in this report supported by a range of performance information that is part of our performance framework and performance reports that select committees receive and can request as part of their work programme.

Member Scrutiny:

A Member applauded the report and thanked the officer for giving Elected Members the tools in place to evaluate outcomes and provide scrutiny.

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A Member questioned the compliance of food establishments and asked for clarity on the criteria used.

The number of working days lost due to sickness was highlighted and members asked for a breakdown of long term/short term.

The decreased amount of waste going to landfill was applauded, however the increase of fly tipping incidents raised concerns among Members.

Committee's Conclusion:

Members scrutinised how well the authority performed against the objectives it set for the previous financial year and scrutinised performance measured using a range of nationally set indicators that fall within the remit of the committee.

The Committee welcomed the Head of Operations offer to distribute an information paper on the waste collected in Monmouthshire

6. Budget Monitoring Outturn Report

Context:

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the revenue and capital outturn position of the Authority at the end of reporting period 3 which represents the financial outturn position for the 2017/18 financial year.

This report will also be considered by Select Committees as part of their responsibility to,

Assess whether effective budget monitoring is taking place, monitor the extent to which budgets are spent in accordance with agreed budget and policy framework, challenge the reasonableness of projected over or underspends, and monitor the achievement of predicted efficiency gains or progress in relation to savings proposals.

Recommendations proposed to Cabinet

That Members consider a net revenue outturn unspend of £653,000, an improvement of £694,000 on period 2 (month 7) outturn predictions.

Members consider a capital outturn spend of £46.8 million against a revised budget of £47.2 million, after proposed slippage of £11.8 million, resulting in a net underspend of £395k.

Considers the use of reserves proposed in para 3.7.1,

Supports the apportionment of general underspend in supplementing reserve levels as described below, i.e.:

Priority Investment Fund

£155k

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Capital Receipts Generation Reserve	£50k
Balance Invest to Redesign Reserve	£448k
Total	£653k

Members notes the extent of movements in individual school balances placing emphasis on schools to review the extent that recovery plans can be delivered over shortened timescales, and appreciates a net use of balances of only £94k instead of the original budgeted intention of schools to draw on balances by £877k.

Member Scrutiny:

A Member raised the issue of trade waste and asked what MCC can do to combat external competition.

In relation to non-domestic rates it was asked if there had been a drop in the collection rates in Monmouthshire.

Committee's Conclusion:

The Chair thanked officers for the report and Members noted that the low level of earmarked reserves will notably reduce the flexibility the Council has in meeting the challenges of scarce resources going forward.

7. Strong Communities forward work programme

Street Furniture Policy Review - Special meeting 30th July at 10am, public open forum will be added and increased to 30 minutes.

The Chair asked that modern slavery and trafficking is added to the work programme.

8. Cabinet & Council forward work programme

Noted.

9. Date and time of next meeting

30th July 10am 2018 – Special Meeting

13th September 2018 10am

The meeting ended at 11.35 am