

**NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE JOINT CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS STEERING GROUP – SCRUTINY, AUDIT AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEES**

**14 NOVEMBER 2014 – COMMITTEE ROOM A, COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor S.C. Davies (Chair).  
County Councillors E.Michael Jones, R.G. Thomas, W.T. Jones, and J.G. Morris.

**Officers:**

Clive Pinney (Solicitor to the Council), Wyn Richards (Scrutiny Manager), Lisa Richards (Scrutiny Officer), David Powell (Strategic Director – Resources), Nick Philpott (Director – Change and Governance), Peter Jones (Programme Office Manager).

**1. Apologies**

County Councillors - County Councillor M.J. Dorrance, A.W. Davies and L.V. Corfield.

Officers – Jeremy Patterson (Chief Executive), Paul Griffiths (Strategic Director – Place), and Liz Patterson (Scrutiny Officer).

**2. Notes of Last Meeting**

**Documents Considered:**

- Draft Notes – 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2014

**Issues Discussed:**

- None.

**Outcomes:**

- **Notes Received.**

**3. Discussion with Chief Executive, Strategic Directors / Director Regarding Potential Scrutiny Items.**

**Documents Considered:**

- None.

**Issues Discussed:**

- Community Benefits Funds – there was a question as to how this was being progressed. No further work was being undertaken with regard to the policy as the decision was awaited regarding the possible granting of permissions for windfarms following the Public Inquiry. There was also an issue regarding other major developments and Members were concerned that income was not being gained under the Community Infrastructure Levy / Community Gain.
- This matter to be further discussed under item 9 on the agenda.

**Outcomes:**

Action	Completion Date	Action By
3/1 A note on the current situation regarding the Community Benefits Fund be circulated to the Joint Chairs Steering	January 2015	Jenni Thomas / WR

<b>Group</b>		
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4. **Draft Statement of Intent.**  
6. **Public Consultation Exercise – Budget – Scrutiny Observations.**

**Documents Considered:**

- Statement of Intent 2014-17 (2015 Update)
- Feedback on Budget Consultation Meetings from Members of the Joint Chairs Steering Group and Scrutiny Officers.
- Cabinet Report 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 – Budget / Community Delivery public events.

**Issues Discussed:**

- The draft Statement of Intent is an update to the planning and review process rather than a wholesale rewrite of the document. The public's response during the recent consultation exercise is only one of the issues considered in developing the One Powys Plan.
- Disappointment regarding the attendance at the public consultation meetings and it was felt that the meetings were a waste of time and would not be repeated.
- Need to treat the public's comments with caution, and in future a need for more clear options to be available for the public to consider which will be drawn from the Statement of Intent, but the Cabinet will also need to give greater direction.
- Need to consider the use of focus or user groups in future as possible alternative means of consultation.
- In previous years a more detailed list of options was provided, this year was probably set at too high a level. There is also a probable need to engage on specific matters where there might be a higher level of public interest. A web based tool is being considered for consultation on the budget.
- This year's process is about refining the One Powys Plan – did the public engagement tell us anything to change the plan fundamentally? – probably not.
- Need for the Council to have a better consultation process. Local Members were not well informed about what message the Council is trying to convey and there is confusion also amongst Town and Community Councils. The public do not understand the severity of the level of cuts.
- The focus of planning by the Council continues to be next year rather than looking forward to the end of the decade. Steps are being taken with the Cabinet to develop a 2020 vision. There are examples of good ways of working differently which need to be highlighted.
- The Council needs to look more at growing the economy in Powys thus growing the numbers of jobs available. The focus of the strategic joint needs assessment has been on poverty and the economy.
- The Statement of Intent is the first 6 pages of the document with the remainder being the supporting evidence.
- A question was asked whether the aim of the Council to have the community delivery of services was not being delivered as the Council rather than transferring leisure services to community groups was seeking a commercial partner.

**Outcomes:**

- **Documents Noted.**

**5. Scrutiny Comments to Cabinet and right of scrutiny chairs to speak at Cabinet meetings.**

**Documents Considered:**

- None.

**Issues Discussed:**

- Scrutiny chairs paid to attend Cabinet meetings. New constitution provides the right for scrutiny chairs to speak at Cabinet meetings.
- Currently the scrutiny chair can speak with the permission of the Leader.
- Libraries scrutiny review document – information not imparted effectively to the Cabinet at the meeting as restriction on the chair speaking. If this is the way for the future, the process will need to be reviewed.
- Council Solicitor has spoken to the Leader who has indicated that he is happy for the scrutiny chairs to speak as long as they ask him in advance. The Leader also wants to give parity to both scrutiny chairs.
- There are instances at Cabinet meetings where relevant matters could be brought to the attention of the Cabinet during the debate, and it is hoped the Leader would allow the relevant scrutiny chair to speak.

**Outcomes:**

- **Leader's comments should resolve previous difficulties with scrutiny chairs speaking at Cabinet meetings.**

**7. Scrutiny consideration of Service Improvement Plans.**

**Documents Considered:**

- None.

**Issues Discussed:**

- The Programme Office Manager had concluded that there was little scrutiny of the starting point of improvement plans which is the beginning of the monitoring process. He therefore questioned whether Service Improvement Plans should be considered by the Joint Chairs Steering Group.
- Consideration of whether draft or outline plans should be considered with plans being considered in more detail during the year.

**Outcomes:**

Action	Completion Date	Action By
7/1 Service Improvement Plans to be considered by Joint Chairs Steering Group	May 2015	PJ / WR
7/2 Programme Office Manager and Scrutiny Manager to determine process and timetable.	May 2015	PJ / WR

**8. Proposed Support Project – Budget and Finance Scrutiny.**

**Documents Considered:**

- None.

**Issues Discussed:**

- Training sessions had been held for the Panel. The Panel was now working on detailed matters and it was anticipated would feed back to the Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> December.
- The Panel was asking challenging questions which it was hoped would assist the Cabinet.
- In response to a question about how all 74 Members could be included in the process it was suggested that Member Development Sessions could be used for the Panel to advise Members of the outcomes of their discussions.

**Outcomes:**

- **Noted.**

**9. Assessments of Work Programme Items.**

**Documents Considered:**

- Overview.

**Issues Discussed:**

- Overview document:
  - Corporate Matters Group – would be picking up equalities issues as well.
  - Dog Fouling Group – detail in the document needs to be updated.
  - Add Civil Enforcement (Environment, Infrastructure and Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee) and Regeneration (People and Environment, Infrastructure and Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committees)
- Tourism – People Scrutiny Committee are undertaking a spotlight review in December, subject to Joint Chairs agreeing that this was required. The Strategic Joint Needs assessment backs up the need for this review to be undertaken.
- Community Benefits – it was suggested that the Environment, Infrastructure and Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee should undertake this review, but the matter would need to be assessed following the receipt of the update on the current situation.

**Outcomes:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Action By</b>
<b>9/1 Amend / Update Overview document</b>	<b>January, 2015</b>	<b>WR</b>
<b>9/2 People Scrutiny Committee to undertake a spotlight review of tourism</b>	<b>December 2015</b>	<b>LP</b>
<b>9/3 Assessment form for Community benefits to be considered by the Joint Chairs following receipt of the update on the current situation.</b>	<b>January 2015</b>	<b>WR</b>

**10. Local Service Board.**

**Documents Considered:**

- None

**Issues Discussed:**

- No meetings held recently. Concern expressed regarding the representation on the LSB in view of the moves towards collaboration with Health, although it was

noted that the LSB would not be the final decision making body in respect of collaboration.

**Outcomes:**

- Noted.

**11. Work Programme.**

**Documents Considered:**

- Work Programme 2014-15
- Work Programme 2015-16.

**Issues Discussed:**

- Amendments to include Draft One Powys Plan and Service Improvement Plans.

**Outcomes:**

Action	Completion Date	Action By
11/1 Amend / Update Work Programmes	January, 2015	WR

**12. Dates of future meetings**

- 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2015
- 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2015
- 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2015
- 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2015
- 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2015
- 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2015

**13. LSB Meeting Dates**

- 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2014
- 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2015 (Provisional)
- 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2015 (Provisional)
- 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2015 (Provisional)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2015 (Provisional)

**County Councillor S.C. Davies  
Chair**

**List of Actions Arising from the Joint Chairs and Vice-Chairs Steering Group meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2014.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Completed / Notes</b>
3/1 A note on the current situation regarding the Community Benefits Fund be circulated to the Joint Chairs Steering Group	January 2015	Jenni Thomas / WR	
7/1 Service Improvement Plans to be considered by Joint Chairs Steering Group	May 2015	PJ / WR	
7/2 Programme Office Manager and Scrutiny Manager to determine process and timetable.	May 2015	PJ / WR	
9/1 Amend / Update Overview document	January, 2015	WR	
9/2 People Scrutiny Committee to undertake a spotlight review of tourism	December 2015	LP	
9/3 Assessment form for Community benefits to be considered by the Joint Chairs following receipt of the update on the current situation.	January 2015	WR	
11/1 Amend / Update Work Programmes	January, 2015	WR	