

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

(Remotely via Teams)

Members Present:

21 May 2020

Chairperson: **Councillor M.Harvey**

Vice Chairperson: **Councillor S.Rahaman**

Councillors: S.apDafydd, S.E.Freeguard, S.K.Hunt, S.A.Knoyle, A.Llewelyn, S.Miller, R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, L.M.Purcell, S.M.Penry, S.H.Reynolds and A.N.Woolcock

Officers In Attendance C.Morris, S.Phillips, A.Evans, A.Jarrett, H.Jenkins, N.Pearce, C.Griffiths, K.Jones, M.Shaw, J.Burge, C.Furlow-Harris, S.Blewett, A.Manchipp, S.Curran, T.Davies and C.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors D.Jones, L.Jones, R.G.Jones, E.V.Latham, A.R.Lockyer, P.A.Rees, P.D.Richards and A.Wingrave

1. Declarations of Interests

The following member made a declaration of interest at the commencement of the meeting:

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| Councillor P.Richards | Re Capital/Revenue Outturn 2019-20(cabinet board papers), as his spouse Manages an After School provision at Blaenbaglan Primary School. |
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2. Pre-decision Scrutiny

The committee scrutinised the following cabinet items:

Annual Governance Statement 2019-2020

Discussions took place around the focus for scrutiny committees to scrutinise specific collaborative and regional working arrangements detailed within the statement, however, members felt that this required broader consideration, such as, procurement and shared services in co-operation with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

Members were concerned at how the Council can effectively implement the improvement work that was planned for 2020-21 due to the recent impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. It was highlighted that the areas of improvement were an accurate assessment of where we were prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and the report detailed the priorities of improvement which would need further review during the recovery stage of the pandemic. Following this members asked that Cabinet consider amending the third recommendation detailed within the report, to consider an early and urgent review of the objectives within the corporate governance improvement work, due to the impact of Covid-19.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that Cabinet be asked to consider the following recommendations

1. Members note the progress made on the corporate governance improvement work undertaken during 2019-2020
2. Approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019-2020 attached at Appendix 1.
3. Approve the proposed corporate governance improvement work to be undertaken during 2020-2021, subject to early and urgent review of the objectives, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Capital/Revenue Outturn 2019-20

Members chose to discuss the Capital and Revenue Outturn reports as one item. The Director of Finance gave a brief overview of the reports. It was queried whether the budget would need to be reconsidered due to the effect that the outbreak of Covid-19 may have had on the budget. Members were advised that information relating to Covid-19 would be brought at a later date giving members an opportunity to scrutinise this element further.

Following scrutiny, the committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by Cabinet.

Decarbonisation and Renewable Energy Strategy

Consideration was given to the responses received following a consultation on the draft Decarbonisation and Renewable Energy Strategy. Members commended the number of public responses that were provided to the consultation.

Clarity was provided on the launch of the Citizen's Panel and the request for a Citizens Assembly. Members noted that the Citizens Panel had launched in January 2020; 500 people had signed up to take part in the panel and a scoping exercise would be required to consider the best options on involving the public.

Discussions took place around the unexpected effects from the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the reduction in carbon emissions and improvements in air quality. Members encouraged Local Authorities and Governments to seriously consider the concept of a Green New Deal as part of economic recovery, by learning from this change and not simply taking return to a business as usual approach.

Reassurance was provided on the development of the narrative and branding that 'Heavenly' have been commissioned to undertake. Officers highlighted that there would be careful consideration around the translation of acronyms to Welsh to ensure that it is not just a direct translation but the meanings are the same.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by Cabinet.

CHAIRPERSON