

CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

5 December 2018

Chairperson: Councillor A.N.Woolcock

Vice Chairperson: Councillor S.Rahaman

Councillors: M.Crowley, S.E.Freeguard, S.K.Hunt,
S.A.Knoyle, A.Llewelyn, S.Miller, J.D.Morgan,
S.Paddison and S.M.Penry

Officers In Attendance S.Phillips, A.Jarrett, G.Nutt, K.Jones, C.Griffiths,
C.Furlow, J.Stevens, A.Thomas and C.Davies

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

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The following Members made declarations of interest:

Councillor D.W.Davies Re: Report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer in relation to the Strategic Equality Plan 2017-2019, as he is a Trustee of the Neath Port Talbot Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Community Association.

Councillor S.Rahaman Re: Report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer in relation to the Strategic Equality Plan 2017-2019, as he is a Trustee

on the Neath Port
Talbot Black and
Minority Ethnic (BME)
Community Association.

2. PRE-SCRUTINY

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:-

Cabinet Board Proposals

2.1 Smart and Connected - A Revised Digital Strategy

Members received the final version of the Digital Strategy – Smart and Connected, following feedback from the public consultation on the draft version of the Strategy, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members queried how the Authority would deliver this strategy to ensure it was fit for purpose. Officers explained a delivery plan would be developed which would contain more detail on how the Strategy would be delivered within the resources available.

Members queried how many responses were received during the consultation period. Officers informed Members that there were a range of different methods used to gather feedback from the consultation and confirmed all consulted parties were listed on page 22 of the circulated report.

Members shared concerns that the strategy would encourage officers to work from home when they are not fit enough to attend work.

Members queried the reference to a Citizens Account. Officers explained it was a portal the public could use. Following sign up a member of the public would be able to access services, however when accessing personal information it would require a password for security reasons.

Members questioned whether officers had considered how people with disabilities were able to access online services. Officers informed Members that there was technology available such as voice technology for people to use.

Members queried whether online sites would be accessed via a mobile application or website. Officers clarified that any future developments would now be available through all methods.

Members questioned what procedures were in place for those that did not have English as a first language, Members referred to Syrian refugees as an example. Officers confirmed that there was specific support available to support Syrian refugees and if there were any specific families that were struggling, this would need to be discussed separately with the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer outside of the meeting.

Members queried if there were any safeguarding measures in place to prevent any hacks or viruses via internet usage. Officers informed Members that there were preventative measures in place to protect users when using the internet within the Council's premises. However, when the internet was accessed via a tablet device it was then more difficult to protect. Officers added that if there was a breach there were ways of auditing events to view where errors had occurred.

Members questioned whether the Authority could deliver IT skills in communities with the partners referenced within the Strategy. Officers explained when grants were awarded to organisations via the Council's Third Sector Grants Scheme it would provide an opportunity to review the impacts and strengthen the way the Authority worked with the organisations, which would then identify funding and any training requirements.

Members questioned the longevity of the Strategy and queried whether the Authority had considered the impact of the Strategy in 25 years' time. Officers explained that it was set in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that a long term view of the strategy was required and highlighted that it would be difficult to do this within current budget constraints.

Following scrutiny, the Committee were supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board

2.2) Strategic Equality Plan 2017-2018

Members received information on the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report for 2017- 2018, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members asked whether the Strategic Equality Plan 2017-18 would be cross referenced with the Welsh Language Standards as they felt they should complement each other. Officers would amend the report, cross referencing the report with the Welsh Language Standards.

Members referred to the Equality Objective Measure 4.1 on the reduced number of Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) undertaken, and suggested a different officer to complete the EIA to the officer that would write the report in order to have a fresh view of the EIA. Officers explained that currently the same officer completed both the EIA as the report.

Members queried whether the equality legislation applied to just Wales or was it a United Kingdom wide legislation. Officers clarified that the Equality Act 2010 was one piece of legislation for the whole of the United Kingdom, and that it protected people from discrimination in the workplace and had nine protected characteristics including age, disability, pregnancy, and maternity.

Members stated the progress on page 92, relating to Education performance attainment between boys and girls at foundation phase and key stages 2 and 3 was confusing. Officers informed Members the summary of progress would be raised with officers and amended accordingly.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted, however requested that the cross referencing of the Strategic Equality Plan 2017-18 and Welsh Language Standards be considered.

2.3) Provision of Loan Funding to Celtic Leisure Limited

The Committee received information in relation to the provision of loan funding to Celtic Leisure Limited, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members asked whether there would be a negative impact on the other Celtic Leisure sites, due to Celtic Leisure Limited focusing their priorities on improving the gym facilities in Pontardawe. Officers explained that the service requirements were necessary in Pontardawe and this would help Celtic Leisure Limited to meet their saving targets.

Members queried whether other bodies would be able to enter into a similar agreement. Officers explained that circumstances would not be the same, therefore other bodies would not be able to request a similar agreement.

Members asked that the Business Plan proposed for the Pontardawe site be circulated to the Committee.

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

3. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 18/19**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

CHAIRPERSON

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