

Shadow Dorset Council

SHADOW OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2019

Present: Cllrs S Bartlett, K Brookes, R Bryan, S Christopher, C Finch, S Gibson, B Goringe, N Lacey-Clarke, J Sewell and J Tanner

Apologies: Cllrs T Jones, C Brooks, M Byatt, R Nowak, J Somper and M Wiggins

Also present: Cllr P Batstone, Cllr S Butler, Cllr K Garcia, Cllr R Knox and Cllr M Penfold

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Keith Cheesman (LGR Programme Director), Tom Cornwall (Communications Lead), Jennifer Lewis (Communications), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer, Designate), Fiona Napier (Communications and Engagement Manager), Mary Taylor (Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Standards (DCC)), Lee Ellis (Scrutiny Officer), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the committee it was proposed by N Lacey-Clarke, seconded by S Sewell

Decision

That J Tanner be appointed as Chairman for this one meeting of the committee.

82. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

83. Minutes

Members received the minutes of the meetings held on 3 January, 8 January and 21 January 2019.

3 January 2019 – A point was noted that the decision taken in respect of transfer of services and assets, had not been unanimous but had been a majority vote. Subject to this point being noted it was proposed by N Lacey-Clarke seconded by S Sewell that the minutes of the meeting of the 3 January 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8 January 2019 – Reference was made to the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) that had been produced for the item on Readiness of critical/key services. A point was raised that these had not been circulated to members in advance of

the meeting and that this had created difficulties in scrutinising the item at the meeting. Members asked that KLOEs were circulated to members in advance of the meeting in future. The Chairman asked members of the committee to contact the Scrutiny Officer with regard to the formulation of KLOEs for future meetings. Subject to this point being noted, the minutes of the meeting of the 8 January 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21 January 2018 – It was proposed by R Bryan seconded by B Goringe, that the minutes of the meeting of the 21 January 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

84. Public participation

There were no representations from members of the public.

85. New Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements

The committee considered a report with regard to new Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements. The report noted that significant changes had been made to multi-agency working as part of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The Act abolished Local Safeguarding Children Boards and created new duties and a system of collective accountability for Clinical Commissioning Groups, local authorities and police to make arrangements locally to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area. Senior Leaders from the relevant authorities had overseen and engaged in an option appraisal to consider potential models and the outcome of this was that a Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership would provide the most effective mechanism for addressing current and emerging safeguarding children challenges.

A report was to be considered by the Shadow Executive Committee on 11 March 2019 to formally approve the proposal and the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee was invited to consider the proposals and support the recommendations to be presented to the Shadow Executive Committee.

Members considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion the following points were raised:

- Members noted the list of relevant agencies identified within the document and a question raised as to whether this should include people who had gone through the care system? It was noted that engagement with service users was in the plan, however this point would be reported back to senior leaders
- It was noted that children were sometimes looked after in police custody when there was no other safe place for them to be placed. A point was noted that responsibilities in this area needed to be reviewed. In response to these points, members noted that work had been completed and a protocol was in place
- In respect of child death reviews, new legislation and guidance had increased the number of deaths that each panel had to review in a

year. Discussions were currently being held with Somerset to establish cross border working opportunities

- A discussion was held in respect of the training function in this area and it was noted that it wasn't anticipated that extra funding would be required for this
- Reference was made to funding from Dorset Police for the partnership and it was noted that the police had been part of the discussion that had agreed the arrangements. A request was made for this point to be taken back to senior leaders as there may be a risk to funding moving forward
- Lead members would be involved in the safeguarding partnership arrangements. Scrutiny of the arrangements would be undertaken through each bodies' scrutiny arrangements. Scrutiny arrangements for the Dorset Council had been considered by the Governance Working Group. One of the scrutiny committees in the Dorset Council would provide focus in this area in addition to focus through the lead member
- Ensuring and increasing the involvement and input of children and families was currently being looked at and arrangements in other areas who were early adopters of the new arrangements, were being reviewed
- A point was raised with regard to the promotion of mental health, early identification and intervention to address mental illness in children and young people. Although this was recognised as an important issue, it was outside of the scope of the report being considered
- A request was made for kinship carers to be included in engagement as well as foster carers
- Issues around dispute resolution had been considered during the consultation period but had not been included within the document. This issue would be reviewed as the partnership was formed and started to work together and a policy formed as to how disputes were resolved
- The safeguarding plan sought to establish an effective working relationship between the agencies. The responsibilities of the different agencies under relevant Acts were unchanged by the production of the plan
- A point was raised with regard to liaison with agencies in other areas of the country where this was required and again it was noted that the day to day workings in this area remained unchanged. The document set out how the agencies would work together
- The partnership arrangement set out the responsibilities of agencies and provided a facility for the agencies to look together at particular areas and see where lessons could be learnt. There may be a role for the Dorset Council People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake a review once the new arrangements had been in place for a period of time
- A recent review had shown that further work was required in particular areas such as county lines and child exploitation and a

joint agency action plan had been put together to address these issues

- Reference was made to the developing vision and priorities set out in the plan. The aim of the partnership was to provide an overview of what each agency was doing in order to meet need and where there was a need to collaborate in order to make improvements.

It was proposed by N Lacey-Clarke seconded by J Sewell

Recommendation to the Shadow Executive Committee

1. The Shadow Executive Committee is requested to approve the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Plan
2. The Shadow Executive Committee is requested to provide delegated authority to the Executive Director – People (Children) for the plan to receive independent scrutiny ahead of submission to the Secretary of State for Education by 29 June 2019.

86. Communications

The committee received a presentation with regard to current communications in the Shadow Dorset Council and future communications in the Dorset Council. The presentation covered:

- Programme communications
- Communications timeline
- Different audiences including those directly affected (employees and elected members), those with a close interest in the programme e.g. town and parish councils, stakeholders e.g. business community, media and the wider community
- Dorset Council preparations including branding and various communication channels and the Dorset Council communication campaign

Members considered the issues arising from the presentation and during discussion the following points were raised:

- In response to a question, members were informed that it was hoped to use existing pages on sites such as Twitter and Facebook with renaming and branding to be undertaken. Work was ongoing and there were some current issues that needed to be resolved. Information on the updated pages would be provided at the appropriate time
- A point was made that it was felt that there had not been enough communication with town and parish councils. A comment was also made with regard to the Communications Task and Finish Group which had been suspended
- In response, the Leader of the Shadow Council, Councillor R Knox, noted that there had been an ongoing Communications and Engagement Workstream which included members from all 6

councils. A lot of effort had been put in to ensure engagement with various audiences including town and parish councils. Communications had been undertaken with the Dorset Association of Town and Parish Councils (DAPTC) with the Leader and Chief Executive of the Shadow Council attending meetings, regular contact with the Chief Executive and Chairman of the DAPTC and the production of a regular newsletter. There was also a responsibility on councillors to ensure effective two way communications with town and parish councils in their area. The availability of information on social media was also recognised and an example provided of useful information provided in the recent period of snow

- A comment was made that some parish councils in the east of the area did not feel that they had been engaged with and that this had been raised at a DAPTC meeting
- A comment was made that councillors had a duty to engage with town and parish councils in their area in addition to the work being undertaken by the DAPTC. Examples were provided of parish councils and areas where it was felt that information was being disseminated and where people felt well informed
- A comment was made as to whether there was a feeling that some parish councils felt that they were not sufficiently involved or part of the decision making process in the programme as opposed to not receiving communications?
- In response to a question, it was confirmed that communications were being undertaken through local media. In respect of BBC Radio Solent, work was being undertaken in respect of editorial in this area
- Information provided to councillors from the Shaping Dorset Council Programme Team could be disseminated out by councillors. The point was noted that Dorset County Councillors may receive confidential information which could not be passed on
- A question was raised as to whether parish councils who were not members of the DAPTC would receive relevant information? It was hoped that these councils would be receiving information from some source
- Future communications in respect of the Dorset Council would be for the council to determine. A comment was made that arrangements in the Shadow Council were good
- A question was raised with regard to the Intranet for the Dorset Council and it was noted that interim arrangements would be put in place until this would be available from October. A request was made for this issue to be looked at by the committee at their next meeting and for this to include information on IT linked to this issue
- The March meeting of the committee would also include discussion on the consultation on transition arrangements
- A copy of the presentation would be circulated to members.

87. **Programme Highlight Report**

The committee considered the latest Programme Highlight Report which was to be considered by the Shadow Executive Committee on 11 February 2019. The report provided an update on progress since the January meeting of the Shadow Executive Committee. Key achievements in the last period were set out in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

A comment was made with regard to the need to ensure a smooth transition for IT in terms of members being able to access information and programmes from the previous sovereign councils in addition to all the information for the new Dorset Council. The Corporate Director Legal and Democratic (Designate) would take this point back to IT colleagues.

In response to a question with regard to the mitigation of risks, the Programme Director noted that there was an active risk register which was reviewed on a regular basis. An example of work being undertaken in respect of risks associated with data disaggregation was provided.

A request was made for outcome information to be included in the report with regard to actions that had been marked as complete.

In response to a question, the Programme Director explained that services on day 1 would not be very different to how they currently looked, with the emphasis being on ensuring services continued to be delivered safely and legally. Transformation work would be commenced within phase 3 to follow the elections to the Dorset Council.

88. **Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Officer noted the following items for the next meeting of the committee:

- Consultation on transition arrangements
- Intranet
- IT and bringing systems together
- Programme Highlight Report

The Scrutiny Officer would contact all members of the committee with regard to the items for the next meeting and to request input into the Key Lines of Enquiry for the items. Information of Key Lines of Enquiry submitted would be provided to committee members.

89. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

Duration of meeting: 9.30 - 11.50 am

Chairman

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