



SPECIAL COUNCIL - 27TH JULY 2021

SUBJECT: FORMATION OF A GWENT PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR- EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report discusses the formation of a Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) from September this year and reports on the views of Partnerships Scrutiny Committee. This report also gives further information on the proposals for Local Delivery Groups in each of the constituent local authority areas. It gives information on the proposed regional scrutiny and continued scrutiny within the Council arrangements both pre and post 2023.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The appended report is a single 'Gwent' report that is being presented to the relevant scrutiny, Cabinet and Council arrangements in each of the five local authority areas in the Gwent region. It details the arrangements for a Gwent PSB from September this year and confirms the decision of the board members across the five existing public services boards to dissolve and merge as a single Gwent PSB.
- 2.2 The future arrangements will include Local Delivery Groups comprising each of the statutory and invited members, plus other local partners, with sufficient seniority to direct resources and take decisions. The Gwent PSB will have oversight of these Local Delivery Groups and the report sets out further detail on this and the continued delivery of the current 'Caerphilly We Want Well-being Plan' 2018-2023.
- 2.3 The report explains that the Caerphilly PSB's annual report will run from September 2020 until September 2021 and that it will be agreed by the residual Caerphilly PSB and shared with Partnerships Scrutiny Committee, as a statutory recipient, as part of an Information Item report.
- 2.4 The report also notifies committee that Caerphilly County Borough Council will provide the facilitation support to the Gwent PSB in its first two years.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That Council note this report and provide any views on its content as part of engagement with elected members.

3.2 That Council note the full set of recommendations in the appended report:

Recommendation 1: To note the proposal to move to a regional PSB as outlined in the report and the importance of maintaining strong local partnerships.

Recommendation 2: To note the requirement to establish regional Scrutiny and to receive further details on this as appropriate.

Recommendation 3: The local assessment of well-being to be agreed by 5th May 2022 will be added to the forward work programme for sign off.

Recommendation 4: To note the proposed changes to terms of reference, and to make any relevant changes to committee structures, terms of reference and constitution.

Recommendation 5: To support the development of Local Delivery Groups and ensure that these are considered in local Scrutiny work programmes.

Recommendation 6: To note the developing arrangements to establish Regional Scrutiny.

Recommendation 7: To continue to support Scrutiny of the current Well-Being Plans to 2023 through existing local partnership Scrutiny arrangements.

3.3 The appended report, and this covering report, are being presented to full Council and Council are invited to provide any views on the recommendations above. Noting that the decision to form a Gwent PSB has been taken by the constituent partners across the region, in collaboration.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To inform and update members on the creation of the Gwent PSB and explain the proposals for local scrutiny and delivery of the remaining well-being plan and the replacement Gwent well-being plan.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Appended to this report is a detailed regional report that updates on the progress towards the development of the Gwent Public Services Board. A common report is being provided across the region to all local authority elected member forums. It sets out in detail:

- Background and existing structures across the region
- A proposed regional partnership structure
- The drivers for change
- Progress to date
 - a. draft terms of reference

- b. development of a regional well-being plan
 - c. proposed Local Delivery Partnerships
 - d. expansion of the membership of the Gwent PSB
 - e. developing regional scrutiny arrangements
 - f. links to other regional board structures
 - g. performance and reporting
- A set of recommendations which are reproduced at 3.2 above

5.2 This report to Council explains in a little more detail how the transition to a Gwent PSB will be achieved and what the implications will be for local delivery and continuing local authority scrutiny.

5.3 Local Delivery Group/Partnership

As set out in the Gwent report a Local Delivery Group will be set up to continue the delivery of the existing Caerphilly well-being plan, until 2023. Thereafter, the Local Delivery Group will be responsible for any local activity and actions under the Gwent well-being plan and any contribution to regional PSB activity. To give some examples of how this would work in practice the Caerphilly PSB has worked on both local and regional projects. Under current arrangements a significant amount of partnership effort has gone into the Lansbury Park area. Such local projects will continue under a Gwent well-being plan as the legislation defines that 'community areas' still need to be a focus of activity. Regional projects are likely to include projects such as the installation of electric vehicle chargers across Gwent which has been achieved through collaboration. As such, it is envisaged that the new Gwent well-being plan will be two-tier, with both local and regional projects.

The membership of the Local Delivery Group will be senior officers from the PSB statutory and prescribed invited member organisations. These are currently represented on the Lead Officer Delivery Group and this group will become the new Local Delivery Group. All LDGs across the region will operate under a common set of terms of reference that will allow for the inclusion of local well-being partners not able to sit and represent at the regional level. For our area this will mean that a representative of the Town and Community Council, who currently sits on the Caerphilly PSB, will become a member of the Local Delivery Group.

5.4 Regional and Local Scrutiny

There is a requirement to convene an overview and scrutiny committee to oversee the work of the PSB. Steps are being taken by the responsible committee services officers across Gwent to put in place a regional scrutiny committee to undertake this role. In the context of Caerphilly work there will be an ongoing requirement to scrutinise activity under the current well-being plan, until 2023. As such Partnerships Scrutiny Committee will continue to meet until this time, with the last meeting being in January 2023.

Thereafter, local activity will continue under the Gwent well-being plan 2023-2028. There are two options for scrutiny of this work:

1. Partnerships Scrutiny Committee continues to sit/ additional meetings of Policy and Resources Committee are convened to cover the activity, or
2. Local PSB activity is referred to the most relevant sitting committee, depending on the project

This decision will need to be taken after the next local government elections in May 2022.

Caerphilly PSB will maintain a local website which will host local performance reports until 2023. A Gwent PSB website will be developed and run in tandem until it supersedes local websites.

5.5 Caerphilly PSB Annual Report

Last year, due to the pandemic and disruption to PSB meetings and governance cycles, the annual report was agreed in September 2020 rather than July. As the Gwent PSB will form from September 2021 Welsh Government have agreed that this year's Caerphilly PSB annual report will run from the period September 2020 to September 2021.

Partnerships Scrutiny Committee are a statutory recipient of the annual report. This will be provided to committee as an Information Item report when it is complete and shortly after the end of September 2021. It will be agreed virtually by the residual Caerphilly PSB and shared virtually with scrutiny members as last year.

5.6 Support for the Gwent PSB

Members will note from the appended report that the facilitation and coordination of the new Gwent PSB will be shared among the constituent local authorities on a two-yearly cycle. The role for the first cycle will be with Caerphilly Council and officers are currently putting place the arrangements to form the Gwent PSB and convene the first meeting.

5.7 Minor changes to the Council's Constitution

The current constitution includes references to the Caerphilly PSB and Well-being Plan. This will need to be altered to reflect the Gwent PSB and the Gwent Well-being Plan after 2023.

5.7 Conclusion

The appended report is detailed and intended for multiple member forums across the region. The points made in this covering report set out how the arrangements will work in practice within the county borough area to provide assurance that local well-being activity will continue, and will continue to be scrutinised.

The report was presented to Partnerships Scrutiny Committee on the 15th July and the notes below reflect the views of scrutiny members. Members of the scrutiny committee expressed their concerns that the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB) has not carried out any public consultation on the formation of a Gwent Public Services Board before making their decision. This decision to form a Gwent PSB will mean that decision making will be further removed from local authority areas. Reference was made to the consultation that was carried out on the Caerphilly Wellbeing Plan, which gave the public ample opportunity to feed into the plan. However, in this case the Caerphilly PSB has taken a decision without taking public views into account.

It was explained that Caerphilly County Borough Council is one member of the Caerphilly PSB, and there are three other statutory partners, which are Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Natural Resources Wales and South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. There are also invited representatives, with equal status and voting rights, from the Gwent Police, Police and Crime Commissioner, Public Health, Welsh Government, GAVO, Town and Community Councils and the Probation Service. The Council has no more ability to influence decisions of the Caerphilly PSB than any

other member. Members informed that the five Gwent PSB's have all taken the decision to merge.

Members were informed that consultation with the public on the new well-being plan would happen over the summer months.

The scrutiny committee were advised that Caerphilly PSB had taken on board an Audit Wales report that stated that PSB's across Wales would do better to align with other boards on a regional basis and a strong suggestion of Welsh Government to support regional PSB's, and the wish of the G10 group to take a strategic lead on partnership activity at the regional level. The aim is for the Gwent PSB to be more strategic and align with other regional arrangements.

In view of the concerns of the lack of consultation before making the decision to form a Gwent PSB the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee urged the Caerphilly PSB to undertake public consultation to explain the reasons for the formation of a Gwent PSB in the forthcoming period.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 There are no assumptions made in this report

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The integrated impact assessment shows that the Gwent PSB will, through its statutory responsibilities, be required to contribute to the well-being goals for Wales and will need to abide by the sustainable development principle in its activities. The intention is to create Local Delivery Groups who will ensure that local actions and activity, particularly in community areas, will continue.

Link to full Integrated Impact Assessment:

https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/CaerphillyDocs/IIA/IIA_GwentPSB_May2021

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The views of all consultees have been included in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

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Consultees: Councillor Philippa Marsden, Leader of the Council and Chair of the PSB
Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive
Councillor Jamie Pritchard, Chair of Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Gez Kirby, Vice Chair of Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director, Education and Corporate Services
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy
Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer
Rob Tranter, Head of legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Regional Progress Report- Formation of a Gwent PSB