

Report on Powys - Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee 1.11.2021

Background

I attended the Board following my nomination at the AGM to represent BBNPA. The Board is convened to scrutinise the implementation of the Public Service Board implementation of the collaborative plan for the 12 Well being Steps. Each Step has a lead identified - BBNPA are lead for Step 2 - 'establish a simple and effective performance framework to monitor progress in delivering the well being steps and achieving the vision'.

I sought input in advance of the meeting from colleagues (both Members and Officers) to ensure I had a clear understanding of our position on the agenda.

Summary

The Scrutiny Committee found themselves unable to fulfil its main function due to lack of meaningful information on both specific items and in general. We therefore unanimously scored the plan at 'red'.

Detail

The Scrutiny Committee reviewed Step 3 in some detail.

The objective of this step is to '*work with and influence others to improve our transport infrastructure, our existing transport links and develop a sustainable and integrated approach for planning and delivery*'. A decision had been made to narrow the focus of the work to map the EV charging points across Powys. The Committee felt this lacked ambition and that there was a need to re-energise the work and seek at a minimum inputs that bought together examples of current practice from partners including cycling and walking and shuttle bus and park and ride. The Step was scored as 'amber'.

The second agenda item was to review the Q2 Highlight Report for the overall programme.

Not all Steps were included as not all lead partners had provided an update. There were common issues across all the items with an absence of performance measures, milestones and even where there was detail of activity it was almost exclusively that of Powys CC rather than from all partners. The Committee saw a real missed opportunity to capture work that was happening, for example in skills, education and training.

The Committee were unclear on Steps 9 and 10 (Market research and infrastructure to support active enjoyment of the environment and adventure tourism and developing a strong brand to promote and attract inward investment) as to their responsibilities given the activities had been rolled into the Mid Wales Growth Deal. We understood that the Growth Deal had separate scrutiny processes and therefore asked 'should they be at this Committee?'

Whilst there were a mix of progress ratings from green to red and individual projects were scored amber at a programme level the absence of detail and the missing updates led the Committee conclude they were unable to scrutinise as they would have wished and therefore to score it at 'red'.

Liz Davis

Deputy Chair, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority