



VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE DIGITAL MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY,
18TH MARCH 2021 AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

Chair: Councillor Mrs E. M. Aldworth
Vice Chair: Ms M. Jones (Parent Network)

Councillors:

A. Collis, K. Etheridge, J. E. Fussell, R. W. Gough, A. G. Higgs, Mrs T. Parry, Mrs E. Stenner, A. Whitcombe, L. G. Whittle and W. Williams.

Also in attendance:

P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), P. Massey (Policy Officer), K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manager), L. James (Principal Planner), V. Doyle (Policy Officer), S. Foley (Policy Officer), B. Jones (Planning Technician), S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer) and R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer).

Together with Representatives of the Voluntary Sector and Compact Partners:

GAVO, Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Care & Repair, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Citizens Advice, Oakdale Community Centre, Parent Network, The Youth Centre, Cefn Hengoed and The Parish Trust.

RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chairperson reminded those present that the meeting was being recorded and would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click here to view.](#)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, S. Cook, D. C. Harse and Mrs D. Price. An apology for absence was also received from Stephen Tiley (GAVO).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs E. M. Aldworth declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6, J. Pritchard (The Youth Centre, Cefn Hengoed) declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4. Details are minuted with the respective item. Councillor A. Higgs declared a personal interest as a representative on the GAVO Executive Committee and as the Armed Forces Champion.

3. MINUTES – 28TH JANUARY 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee held on 28th January 2021 (minute nos. 1 – 7) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. UPDATE ON MOVING TO A GWENT PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD (PSB) - VERBAL PRESENTATION

J. Pritchard (The Youth Centre, Cefn Hengoed) declared a personal interest in the update on moving to a Gwent Public Services Board (PSB), as a Member of the Caerphilly Public Service Board representing Town and Community Councils.

The Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee received a verbal presentation from the Corporate Policy Manager on behalf of the Public Services Board (PSB). Members were informed that the PSB is the collaborative body of the statutory and non-statutory partners across the county borough area who have come together under the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act to develop plans to improve the wellbeing of the area. The Corporate Policy Manager provided Members of the Committee with an update and a timeline for the Wellbeing Assessment Process and the Wellbeing Plan.

The Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee was advised that the Gwent 'G10' Leadership Group has been considering the development of a regional PSB for some time and confirmed their intention, as the statutory partners, to come together to form a Gwent PSB from September 2021. It was highlighted that a report is going to the Caerphilly Public Services Board on 25th March 2021 for the Board to formally consider and decide upon the dissolution of the Caerphilly Public Services Board (Caerphilly PSB) and the creation of a Gwent Public Services Board (Gwent PSB) from September 2021. Such that the June 2021 meeting will be the last meeting of the Caerphilly PSB. The Corporate Policy Manager explained to the Committee how the merging of the 5 existing Public Service Boards would impact on Caerphilly.

Members of the committee raised concerns about the speed of the decision being made, that a Gwent PSB will not reflect local well-being, and concerns around how a Gwent PSB will monitor local projects.

The Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee noted the presentation. A recommendation to the Caerphilly Public Services Board was moved and seconded and supported by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee request that the Caerphilly Public Services Board defer their decision on the creation of a Gwent Public Services Board and request a detailed consultation and engagement exercise prior to any decision being taken forward. The Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee will have serious concerns if a decision goes ahead.

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAERPHILLY LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) – PRESENTATION

The Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee received a verbal presentation from the Principal Planner on the stakeholder engagement in the development of the Caerphilly Local Development Plan (LDP). Members of the Committee were informed that the Council is in the very early stages of preparing the replacement LDP. It was highlighted that there is an adopted LDP in place, which was adopted in 2010, but a new LDP is needed to reflect the different circumstances and to plan the county borough up to 2035. Members were advised

that a replacement LDP will be very different to the adopted plan, both in its content and its approach. It was noted that seminars have been held with elected Members and Community and Town Council representatives, and Members were advised that a key element of the process is going to be stakeholder involvement, including engagement with the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee and other various groups throughout the process to ensure their input forms part of the planning making process. The phases to preparing the LDP was explained to Members including the delivery agreement, initial call for candidate sites, preferred strategy for public consultation, deposit plan and examination process.

Points of clarification were requested on the process of the Local Development Plan and the Officer responded to the points raised.

A County Borough Member highlighted the importance to take the opportunity to get involved and contribute to the Local Development Plan (LDP), as a Member of the Planning Committee. A Member of the Voluntary Sector also highlighted the importance for Councillors to inform members of the public in their local area when the consultations take place and the importance of the LDP. In response to a Member's enquiry regarding the development of greenfield sites and the decision on how many houses need to be built it was confirmed that a workshop will be held in September 2021 to determine the levels of growth, which will be considered before the final recommendation is taken to Full Council.

6. THIRD SECTOR ACTIVITIES PRESENTATION - PARISH TRUST (BMMR CARE PROJECT) - REV. DEAN AARON ROBERTS

Councillor Mrs E. M. Aldworth declared a personal interest in The Parish Trust (BMMR Care Project), as a Trustee of The Parish Trust.

The Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee received a presentation from Rev. Dean Aaron Roberts, Chair of Trustees for The Parish Trust, on the BMMR Care Project which was set up in 2019. Members received a summary of the highlights and milestones since the BMMR Care Project was founded. The Committee was informed that the Care Project operates in the CF83 postcode area and provides help and support to anyone in genuine need including food parcels (fresh and frozen produce), prescription collection and a listening ear. It was highlighted that 9222 people were helped in 2020, 5 tonnes collected monthly, and the project had 14 business partners and over 350 volunteers.

During the presentation Members of the Committee were also informed of The Parish Trust Apprenticeship Programme (Profectus). It was explained that the Profectus programme is a fast paced, 12 month apprenticeship opportunity offering hands on strategic positions in administration, catering, community engagement work, support services and finance. It was highlighted that as a charitable organisation The Parish Trust can provide people with opportunities to look at career options, gain valuable experience and encourage people to consider working in the voluntary sector long-term. Members were informed that The Parish Trust has 5 apprentices to date but are looking to expand over the course of this year and all of the apprentices are key players in the direction and the strategic development of the charity.

In response to a Member's query regarding the apprenticeship programme it was confirmed that The Parish Trust offers NVQ Level 3 and NVQ Level 4 and is attached to ACO Training and Jobforce Wales. It was highlighted that The Parish Trust is hoping to further develop a partnership with Caerphilly County Borough Council in the immediate future.

In relation to National Debt Awareness Week a representative of Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Citizens Advice raised concerns regarding an anticipated significant rise in the demand for debt advice over the next year. The Committee was informed that a discussion would be held after the meeting regarding referral arrangements that can be put in place, whereby people using foodbanks can get longer-term help and assistance with debt.

In response to a question from a representative of the Voluntary Sector it was confirmed that The Parish Trust is working with other churches in the area and the reasons for setting up the foodbank was explained. It was suggested that it is worth mapping the various schemes where people can obtain food throughout the County Borough.

7. ITEMS OF INTEREST CONCERNING THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR FROM COMPACT PARTNERS

The Policy Officer (V. Doyle) addressed the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee to talk about the Census. The role of the Census Support Service and the role of the Census Engagement Manager was explained to Members and it was recognised that not everyone will be able to complete their Census form online. The Policy Officer asked Members of the Committee to highlight the importance of the Census to individuals and their networks.

In response to a Members query it was confirmed that the information provided for the Census is 100% confidential for 100 years, apart from the Office for National Statistics, no-one can access the information. The information that is published is the statistics that are derived from the information people give. It was clarified that the questions on the paper Census and the online Census are the same, however the questions on the online Census are routed so a person will not need to answer any questions that do not apply to them.

The meeting closed at 12.30 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2021, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR