



VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE - 17TH JUNE 2015

SUBJECT: VOLUNTARY SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES QUESTION

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a response from Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) to question proposed from Voluntary Sector Representatives sitting on the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report presents the CCBC response to a question received from the Voluntary Sector Representatives sitting on the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee on how the Voluntary Sector can be proactive and supportive in engaging in dialogue with Heads of Service in relation to budget cuts in offering solutions to support service delivery, particularly in relation to the new Leisure Strategy, and around community centres.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Compact Partners are signed up to the Compact Agreement entitled *Delivering Together 2013-2017 Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector in the County Borough of Caerphilly*. The Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee brings together the Voluntary Sector with the Compact Partners in providing a means of working together recognising the complementary and distinct role the Voluntary Sector plays in meeting the needs of local communities.
- 3.2 The Compact Agreement is delivered and monitored through an annual Compact Action Plan, which provides a detailed programme of work for shared activities. The Compact Agreement and Compact Action Plan align with the five outcome priorities of *Caerphilly Delivers the Single Integrated Plan 2013-2017*, which are: Prosperous Caerphilly, Safer Caerphilly, Learning Caerphilly, Healthier Caerphilly and Greener Caerphilly.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Voluntary Sector Representatives note that at previous meetings of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee there were two positive Voluntary Sector offers to work with CCBC around Learning Disability Day Services and Care Homes regarding service delivery. The clear commitment is noted from the Interim Chief Executive for open dialogue to look at joint solutions to budget cuts and the Voluntary Sector is keen to be proactive and supportive and engage in dialogue with the relevant Head of Service.

4.2 The Voluntary Sector Representatives have proposed the following question to CCBC:

How can the Voluntary Sector go about offering third sector solutions to support service delivery with the new Leisure Strategy, and to assist community centres in keeping community services running?

4.3 **Written Response from Jeff Reynolds (Sports & Leisure Facilities Manager)**

Many thanks for the Voluntary Sector Representatives Question. I am delighted to hear that the Voluntary Sector has shown such an interest in the future of Sport & Leisure Services. With regards the Leisure Facilities Strategy, the document is a ten year strategy aimed at ensuring that the facilities provided are not only fit for purpose but also meet the needs and ever changing requirements of the residents of the county borough.

4.4 The strategy focuses around the authority delivery of a four leisure centre model. The leisure centres would be situated at Newbridge, Risca, Caerphilly and a new facility in the Upper Rhymney Valley area (Northern Connection Corridor). The primary focus for the service at present is the future of Caerphilly Leisure Centre and that forms the initial stages of the strategy. Newbridge and Risca Leisure Centre's are already in place and the longer term element of the strategy focuses upon the development of a new facility in the Upper Rhymney Valley (or Northern Connection Corridor) area.

4.5 Regarding the facilities that fall outside of the strategy document, the service is exploring alternative delivery models in the first instance. Examples of this include discussions with Bedwas High School around transference of the leisure element of the campus to school management. A further example is the 21st Century Schools strategy that will see the development of a new secondary school in Oakdale supported by appropriate leisure facilities. This will support the closure of Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre but allow for all existing users to be seamlessly transferred.

4.6 As stated above, the strategy aims to develop a new facility in the Upper Rhymney Valley area in the longer term to replace the outdated facilities that currently support this area of the county borough. There is the potential for Voluntary Sector involvement in the delivery and management of stewarding at the new Centre for Sporting Excellence, Ystrad Mynach. The facility hosts a range of high level sporting events, for example, Wales v Australia Schoolboy Football International, supported through two 600 seat stands and associated standing areas. There is a requirement for these events to be appropriately stewarded in line with the facilities licensing requirements. As a service we are in a position to provide appropriate training to any volunteers who may wish to be involved.

4.7 I trust this clarifies the position and I am also more than happy to answer directly any questions that the group may have. My contact details are telephone: 01495 235225 / 07903426600 Email: reynoj@caerphilly.gov.uk

4.8 **Written Response from Steve Hawkins (Community Centres Service Manager)**

Each of the Caerphilly borough's 38 community centres are managed on a day to day basis by voluntary management committees, all of which are Charities. Each committee has on average 10 -12 members, so throughout the network, we have in the region of 400 volunteers (all trustees) involved in the delivery of the service. Unlike professional staff, it is not normal for volunteers to have any specific knowledge of facility management, charity law, health and safety, maintenance and other statutory requirements. Therefore, my main responsibility is to advise, guide and support every committee to ensure that they manage each facility safely and correctly.

4.9 Although the quality and ability of each committee is far more important than its size, there is no doubt that it is becoming much harder to recruit new members. The problem is exacerbated by the proliferation of volunteer groups in recent times which has diluted the volunteer base. This is widely acknowledged throughout the third sector media.

4.10 Therefore, the greatest help would be in the recruitment of new committee members by whatever means. If we have those, the rest will take care of itself. For further discussions my contact details are telephone: 01443 863348 Email: hawkisw@caerphilly.gov.uk

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Equalities are fully embedded into the shared values and principles of the Compact Agreement. Promoting equalities and compliance with the equality legislation are shared activities areas in the annual Compact Action Plan.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None directly arising.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None directly arising.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 Not applicable as report is a response to question submitted to CCBC from the Voluntary Sector Representatives sitting on the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To note CCBC officers' response to question submitted to CCBC from the Voluntary Sector Representatives sitting on the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Report is for information only.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

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