

**MINUTES OF THE CAERPHILLY LOCAL SERVICE BOARD
HELD ON TUESDAY, 7TH DECEMBER 2010 AT 9.15 A.M.
AT THE INNOVATION CENTRE, TREDOMEN**

PRESENT:

Councillor Lindsay Whittle – CCBC (Chairman)
Anthony O’Sullivan – CCBC
Dr Andrew Goodall – ABHB
Sian Martin – ABHB
Chief Superintendent Paul Symes – Gwent Police
Superintendent Jon Burley – Gwent Police
Mike Bridgman - GAVO
Rory O’Sullivan – WAG

Together with:

Dan Perkins – CCBC
Alison Palmer – GAVO

APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received from Chief Constable Mick Giannasi – Gwent Police

WELCOME

Councillor Whittle welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November were agreed as a true record.

2. MATTERS ARISING

RO’S reported that the extension to the time limit for the production of a Single Plan instead of the HSC& WB Strategy and C &YP Plan in both Powys and Cardiff was an informal arrangement.

3. BUDGET DISCUSSION

LW introduced the topic reminding members that they had agreed to hold a round table discussion to try to understand the current and medium term financial position of all partners and explore common issues.

MB offered to begin by explaining the position of GAVO and circulated a copy of the Caerphilly staff structure for information. He explained that of the 61 staff in GAVO in Caerphilly only 6 were fully or partially core funded through the WCVA/WAG funding to CVCs and through a core funding agreement with CCBC/ABHB for a total of £52,174, plus £24,500 towards the joint community planning coordinator post. The other staff were funded through a combination of project grants, service level agreements and contracts

with partners such as Gwent Police, CCBC and ABHB. The agreement with CCBC would be due for renewal in March 2012, as would the Communities First funding for the development team amounting to £357,000 a year, and the Health and Social Care coordinator post funded by ABHB. There were a number of posts funded through the Cymorth programme which was changing to Families First next year. Staff funded through the Cymorth programme would already have been issued redundancy notices but, thanks to local and national negotiations a transitional period until October 2011 had been agreed, when a tendering process would be instigated, he thanked the Director of Education for her involvement in this process. MB also noted that GAVO received £50,000 a year for the Holiday Scheme coordinator post which was funded until July 2011 but currently under review, funding for a part-time mental health worker from ABHB and the Mentro Allan activities programme with two staff which was due to finish in July 2011. The Volunteer centre and Gateway project were funded through Wales Council for Voluntary Action. There was unlikely to be any drastic changes in the short-term but much of the funding would be coming to an end in 2012.

MB explained that the GAVO training team had been supported by CCBC for two years following the withdrawal of Communities First funding for community training. This funding was coming to an end and there would be the possibility of redundancies if funding applications made were unsuccessful. On a positive note there was a new crime prevention joint post with Gwent Police and with the Community Safety Partnership on drugs and alcohol misuse. Applications had also been made for substantial funding for advocacy in conjunction with Crossroads and a replacement activity programme for the Mentro Allan work. GAVO was also already involved in supporting joint posts, and providing accommodation and administration support for meetings. MB had already started making savings through bringing all the staff into one building, and with a pay freeze in place. He felt that through retirements, the organisation would reduce the number of Assistant Directors across Gwent from four to two.

LW noted the vacancy for the Cwm a Mynydd officer and it was explained that the post would finish in February 2011 and GAVO had been unsuccessful in finding a secondment/ replacement for the monitoring role.

Dr AG reported on the financial position from a health perspective. He explained that as a result of the NHS reorganisation the health board was already in the middle of a process of budget reduction. There were a number of national pressures on budgets including, as an example, the cost of drugs. He felt this required a UK wide approach to the pharmaceutical industry to reduce costs. From a local perspective, many of the opportunities to change the way services are provided have already been taken, with the development of the new hospital replacing the older hospitals in the area such as Ystrad Mynach, Caerphilly Miners etc. This had given a platform for further changes in service delivery such as the new resource centre for the north, which had received board approval recently.

The ABHB was not just looking at making cuts but advocating working differently to provide local services. The locality managers were empowered to have some of those discussions about working locally. Whilst the NHS in Wales works substantially on a national basis it does not preclude health boards from exploring local procurement if there is local benefit. ABHB was currently mapping health facilities across its locality and it was suggested that this could be done alongside other facilities to support physical co-location. He expected there would be some tension around grant funding in these difficult times and it was possible that discussions would need to take place at the LSB. There were a number of

important health and social care services in the area that were grant funded but as a high priority. He felt that no organisation had the luxury of working in isolation, and whilst that was not the case in Caerphilly there was a need to cooperate even more. SM suggested that it was important to involve staff as they may have some of the answers to greater cooperative working. AG noted that staffing costs were the predominant issue and that was the reason for looking at alternative models of service delivery, not to compromise care services but to explore different ways of providing services, such as the Gwent Frailty programme which required a broad partnership approach. AG suggested that it was still important to take advantage of available grant schemes as vulnerable families did not just rely on core funded services for support, much of the support for these families was grant dependent.

LW reported on the recent G7 summit of local authorities, Health and Police covering Gwent. He felt that the meeting should have been open to more people and that more civil servants needed to be present to hear the examples of collaborative working that is already taking place. The event showed the breadth of areas of possible collaboration under discussion such as joint fleet management and asset management. There could be a role for the LSBs to translate this into local action.

JB took the opportunity to provide an update on the ESF bid for partnership support, which had now been submitted alongside the other LSB projects. He reported that another meeting of the statutory partnership chairs had taken place and agreement reached that needs assessments/strategic assessments would be written in compatible forms. They were looking at merging some cross cutting themes, which would then be dealt with collaboratively. The Chairs were progressing with the scoping exercise and acknowledged that there was some duplication across partnerships. The chairs would be meeting again on 15th December to discuss staff/team roles.

He explained the position of funding coming through the Community Safety Partnership and highlighted those areas where funding was finishing. It was expected that the partnership structure would need to change to reflect the changes in funding and a number of the Community Safety posts would need to be absorbed into other work as funding finishes. It was agreed that he would circulate a report on funding streams to members.

It was acknowledged by all members that there were a large number of grant dependent staff across the partners as Caerphilly had always been very successful in attracting grant funding. It was suggested that it would be helpful to have an early steer from the Assembly as to which grants would be reduced and which would be cut. RO'S commented that there was unlikely to be any major changes from the published draft budget. All ministerial budgets had now been to scrutiny and RO'S agreed to circulate more detailed budget information when it became available. He asked members to identify which grant streams they required information about.

AO'S gave an overview of Caerphilly CBC's position. He explained that 900 staff were currently grant funded, a situation that had developed over a number of years. CCBC was already having to make some hard choices and had already done a lot of work around improved efficiency, co-location and shared services. He gave examples including the relocation of staff from Hawtin Park, saving private rental costs, the instigation of charges for bulk waste collection and the reduction in the highway maintenance budget. He acknowledged that the biggest cost was staffing and that the authority was trying not to have to make compulsory redundancies through restructuring and redeployment and by not

re-appointing to posts that fell vacant. LW explained that the settlement letter from the Assembly had made it clear that councils were not expected to raise council tax bills substantially.

PS gave an overview of the Gwent wide picture in relation to Gwent Police. He explained that budget cuts over the next few years had been based on an expectation of an increase in the council tax precepts each year. This was likely to result in some difficult discussions. Uncertainty regarding the funding for PCSO's had been cleared up with funding for the 140 officers being guaranteed for another year. The big issues at present were the 56 posts within community safety across Gwent that impact on communities, such as domestic abuse coordinators and substance misuse advisers, that were dependent on grant funding. The loss of any of these was likely to have a big impact on communities.

PS suggested and it was agreed that where funding changes will have an impact on work in communities there should be continuous dialogue and consultation with partners. PS felt that there was some duplication of work across Gwent in areas such as citizen engagement and policy development. Working at an all Gwent level he felt that there was an opportunity to do some themed work across Gwent if chief Officers could identify some common themes.

Members discussed the work that had been done in organisations around the management of sickness absence and all reported a reduction in sickness absence as a result of the actions taken to support return to work.

LW brought the discussions to a close asking members to suggest areas of work for future consideration. Members suggested giving consideration to the use of shared facilities, one stop shops and joint asset management to look at where property may become available for shared or alternative use.

It was noted that the next meeting would take place at the end of January 2011, which would look at the role of the LSB and its future priorities.

LW closed the meeting with his thanks to all those in attendance.