

## **VOLUNTARY SECTOR SUB-COMMITTEE – 19TH JUNE 2013**

**SUBJECT: DIGEST OF CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**REPORT BY: ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE & ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF GAVO**

---

### **GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR PANEL 19TH MARCH 2013**

#### **APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

##### **Statement of Expenditure**

The available budget for 2012-2013 together with the total amounts requested, as detailed within the report, were noted. The Panel requested officers carry forward and ring fence the remaining balance to next year.

##### **Discretionary Rate Relief**

Members sought clarification as to the Council's policy relating to the amount of discretionary rate relief paid to the county borough's colleges and the larger, professional rugby clubs. Officers advised that colleges qualified for payment as they were set up as charities and treated as occupiers of the premises. An award of 80% rate relief was therefore mandatory. The remaining 20% was discretionary and criteria led. However, of that 20% the Welsh Assembly contributed 25% and the local authority contributed 75%. Members therefore noted that should they wish to amend the current policy, this would only affect this small percentage.

The policy relating to the amount of rate relief eligible to rugby clubs was established at least 10 years ago and had regard to whether the sport/recreational facility also had a bar facility. This had to be viewed in tandem with the rateable value of the premises, and accompanying £5000 rateable value threshold. Members were advised that if there was no bar, such as a boxing club, an award of 100% tended to be given. In addition, depending upon the size of the rugby club, a number of criteria elements and different pieces of legislation would apply; for example profit making clubs were excluded.

##### **Welsh Church Act Fund**

Members were reminded that with a carry forward balance from previous years, the total available balance for 2012-2013 is £190,405.00. It was noted however, that due to the current economic climate, the provisional allocation for 2013-2014 will be £40,048.00.

Monmouthshire CBC were yet to confirm if any unspent monies from 2012-2013 could be carried forward.

Members noted the available budget together with the total amounts requested, as detailed within the report. In addition, it was suggested that GAVO be advised of the significantly reduced 2013-2014 budget.

##### **Applications for Financial Assistance: Panel Awards**

Consideration was given to the following applications for financial assistance.

Seven Awards were granted amounting to £800

Resolved that for the reason outlined at the meeting, the follow applications for financial assistance be refused and the applicant be referred to alternative funding arrangements:-

- (a) Bargoed Yoga Group

Resolved that for the reasons outlined at the meeting, the following application for financial assistance be deferred, pending the receipt of further information:-

- (a) The Parent Network - CCBC;
- (b) Eisteddfod y Cymoedd.

Members agreed that upon receipt of the additional information, the Principal Group Accountant - Financial Advice and Support contact them via e-mail to obtain their consensus for future action, including possible approval for financial assistance, in order to expedite the application process.

Subject to the comment above, Members noted the following applications, received since the last meeting, which are in accordance with the agreed criteria, and to be processed by officers:-

£3,305 was granted to twenty-five organisations

#### **Additional Applications For Financial Assistance**

Consideration was given to the following applications for financial assistance, received since the report was published.

£1,620 was granted to another nine organisations

### **HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 26TH MARCH 2013**

#### **Young Carers Service**

The report, which had been requested by the Cabinet Member for Social Services, provided information about the services offered for young carers within Caerphilly County Borough. Caerphilly Children's Services and the Substance Misuse Action Team (SMAT) jointly commission Barnardo's to provide a Young Carers Service within Caerphilly County Borough. Children's Services contribute £76,317.00 per annum and SMAT £36,223.00. The service is targeted at children and young people between the ages of 7 and 25 years who have a substantive responsibility for caring for a sick or disabled parent or sibling. The service provides a range of activities to support young carers including: support to access community based activities; group work activities; individual support packages and signposting to other services.

Members welcomed the report and sought further information on how young carers are identified and supported. Officers outlined the steps they are taking to support young carers, helping them to link with others in a similar situation and get their voices heard. There are various support systems in place and the Barnardo's service is available 24 hours.

#### **Volunteer Scheme**

To provide information to members on the volunteer scheme previously known as befriender service, following a request received at a previous scrutiny committee.

Learning Disability Services currently operates a Volunteer Befriending Service as part of their Community Support Services. This has been in place for over 25 years there are 46 service users matched to a Befriender with a further 30 service users on the waiting list. The aim of the scheme is to provide service users with opportunities to establish and maintain friendships, socialise and access community based activities and services. This is achieved by 'matching' volunteers with service users, who will help them take part in activities of interest to them. Volunteers are also placed within our Establishments and help run social clubs within the community.

In November 2011 members of Adult Services DMT agreed to implement a pilot scheme to provide service users known to the Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment (PDSI) Team with opportunities to access the Volunteer Befriender Service.

This report sets out the financial savings achieved, costs avoided, and outcomes achieved for service users from the pilot.

The review of management structure for Day Services for Older People, which was agreed at Scrutiny in March, established a post for the Volunteer Befriender Service.

## **CABINET – 9TH APRIL 2013**

### **Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Social Services Integration Programme – Decision to Proceed or Not**

The purpose of this report is to:-

- Outline the work completed to date on the programme of integration of Caerphilly CBC and Blaenau Gwent CBC Social Services Directorates;
- Inform Members of the detail of the financial analysis undertaken by the Section 151 officers;
- Recommend a way forward in terms of a decision to proceed or not to an integrated model of working.

The Executive/Cabinet of Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent endorsed mandates to progress with the integration of Social Services in June/July 2011 with the aim of the new Social Services Directorate being to:-

*‘Deliver high quality, citizen centred, integrated Social Services to the residents of Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Councils, which helps them to achieve their potential and keep them safe, and to do this in the most effective and efficient way’.*

Plans were in line with, and support the principles of the Welsh Government’s ‘Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action’. The high level outcomes that the Programme sought to achieve were as follows:-

- Better outcomes for service users (Effectiveness);
- Reduced cost of Service Provision (Economy);
- Better use of existing resources (Efficiency);
- Improved access, range and availability of services (Promoting Equality)

Since commencing in 2011 the programme has progressed well and there have been some significant developments/achievements. In summary these include:-

- The appointment of a dedicated Programme Manager and Team working across Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Councils;
- A Programme Management Delivery Framework has been put in place;
- A Programme Board lead by the Chief Executives of Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly County Borough Councils. Membership includes Council Leaders, Executive/Cabinet Members, Directors of Social Services and other Council Heads of Service. There is also co-opted representation from the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA), and key partners such as Health and Police;
- A Programme Team lead by the Directors of Social Services. Membership includes Assistant Directors/Heads of Service in Social Services, lead officers for Finance and HR and co-opted representation from the Care and Social Services Inspectorate (CSSIW);
- Key documents developed and in place such as a Communication and Engagement Strategy and a Risk Management Strategy.

It is clear from the Financial Analysis, that the overall financial position of both authorities has changed since the inception of this project and there is a considerable distance between both authorities in terms of their current financial positions and their position in terms of Medium Term Financial Planning. An Integrated Social Services would undoubtedly involve pooling of budgets and with any full integration of services on this basis there would always be a risk of one Authority cross subsidising another at some point in time.

To safeguard against this there should be evidence that both Councils can deliver their current and future levels of service from current budgets and there should be medium-term plans that show that these service levels are affordable and sustainable by each Authority.

At the present time, the Financial Analysis would place Caerphilly CBC at significant risk of cross-subsidising services in another Authority. This is not legal.

Hence Cabinet are requested to consider the options in view of the Financial Analysis. That Members note the considerable progress made in scoping the potential integration together with the successful outcome in relation to the Interim Joint Workforce Development Service.

That Members support Option 4 in that the authority does not proceed to work up the case for full integration or a Joint Management Team but explores the potential for further collaboration on an individual Business Case basis.

## **COUNCIL – 23RD APRIL 2013**

### **Armed Forces Community Covenant**

The Minister for Local Government and Communities, Carl Sargeant, wrote to Leaders and Chief Executives of Local Authorities and Chairs of Local Service Boards on July 2012 calling for an Armed Forces Community Covenant (and supportive scheme) to be put in place at a local level. He also asked that an Armed Forces “Champion” (usually an elected member) be identified. The purpose of such a scheme is to ensure that the armed forces community has equality of access to local public services and are not disadvantaged by their military service.

This report recommends a proportionate Armed Forces Community Covenant scheme for consideration, development and adoption by Caerphilly County Borough Council and the Caerphilly Local Service Board (LSB).

An Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement, at a local level, the Armed Forces Covenant introduced nationally by Central Government in 2011, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces Community.

In addition, the Welsh Government have subsequently produced a ‘Package of Support for the Armed Forces Community in Wales’, with the Welsh Local Government Association promoting an Memorandum of Understanding between Local Government and the Armed Forces, and requesting all local authorities to sign a community covenant with the Armed Forces. The aim of an Armed Forces Community Covenant is to encourage local communities to support the service community in their area, and develop an understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community, which includes both serving and former serving personnel (veterans) and their families.

All Armed Forces Community Covenants exist to redress any disadvantages that the Armed Forces community faces in comparison to other citizens, and to recognise the sacrifices that they have made. Pledges set out within Community Covenants define the scope of the Covenant, and are signed-up to by a senior representative from the Local Authority or Local Service Board (e.g. The Leader or the Chair) and a senior representative from the Armed Services, who will sign on behalf of the Armed Forces Community. In areas with a large Armed Forces presence the pledge tends also to be signed by those representing veterans or families groups, such as the Royal British Legion, and the Soldiers and Sailors Families Association (SSAFA), etc.

It is recommended that the Caerphilly Armed Forces Community Covenant scheme include the following features:-

- Identification of an elected member as the Caerphilly Armed Forces “Champion”
- Confirmation of the “lead officer” (Howard Rees, CCBC Programme Manager)

- Development of a Caerphilly Armed Forces Community Covenant. A draft document is attached at Appendix Two.
- Signatories for the Covenant confirmed as being the Leader of the Council (as Chair of the Caerphilly Local Service Board) and the identified military contact. As the scheme develops other partners may wish to become specific signatories. These might include the Royal British Legion, veterans or families groups (e.g. Gwent Veterans Association, SSAFA), reservists, cadet corps, Aneurin Bevan Health Board, Gwent Police, Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner, GAVO, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Caerphilly Business Forum, etc.

### **"Caerphilly Delivers" – The Caerphilly Local Service Board Single Integrated Plan**

Since 2004 Caerphilly County Borough Council, key partners and stakeholders have implemented the Caerphilly Community Strategy, via its various Strategic Partnerships. These Partnerships have evolved and developed over the years, and have a proven track record of success. These Partnerships are namely the:-

- Health, Social Care and Well-being Partnership
- Children and Young People's Partnership
- Safer Caerphilly Community Safety Partnership
- Living Environment Partnership
- Regeneration Partnership

During 2011 the Chairs of the above Partnerships and the Caerphilly Local Service Board (LSB) identified that there was a need and an opportunity to rationalise the Caerphilly Community Strategy Partnership "landscape", reduce bureaucracy, re-prioritise and focus on enhancing Partnership delivery. Recessionary pressures and reduction in public spending at a national level also accelerated the requirement for this change programme.

This work programme was complimented by the publication (on 19th June 2012) by Welsh Government of "Shared Purpose – Shared Delivery: Guidance on integrating Partnerships and Plans". This document provides statutory guidance to and requires LSB's to rationalise their respective Partnership "landscapes" and produce a Single Integrated Plan to discharge statutory planning and delivery obligations.