



VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2016 AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

Mrs M. Jones (Presiding as Chair)

Councillors:

Ms L. Ackerman, R.W. Gough, C. Hawker, A. Lewis, D.W.R. Preece.

Together with Representatives from:

Bargoed YMCA (Ms. J. Price), Caerphilly People First (Mr. C. Luke), Carers Trust South East Wales (Mr W Morgan), GAVO – Chief Executive (Mr M. Featherstone), Homestart Caerphilly Borough (Mrs. M. Snowden), The Parent Network (Mrs M. Jones), The Vanguard Centre (Mrs. M. Wade), Town and Community Councils (Mr H. Llewellyn), Van Road United Reformed Church (Mr J. Wade).

Also present:

J. Dix (Policy Unit), P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer), A. Palmer (CCBC and GAVO), P. Diamond (Gwent Transformational Theme Lead), D. Owen (Community Regeneration Co-ordinator), A. Dredge (Committee Services Officer).

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE ENSUING YEAR - JACKIE DIX, CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

It was moved and seconded and unanimously agreed that Mrs M. Jones (Parent Network Co-ordinator) Chair the meeting and consideration would be given to the future position of Chair following the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, J. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, D. Carter (Vice-Chair), Mrs. P. Cook, Mrs. P Griffiths, K. James, G. Johnston, J.A. Pritchard, R. Woodyatt. Abbeyfield (Mr. P. Jones/H. Billington), Abertridwr Community Church (Mr. L. Clay), Age Cymru (Ms. D. Johnston), Caerphilly Business Forum Representative (Mrs D. Lovering), Cruse Bereavement Care (Mrs. C. Williams), Disability Can Do Organisation (Mr R. Bevan), Groundwork Wales (Mrs K. Stevenson), Menter Iaith (Ms L. Jones), Right from the Start (Ms C. Loring), Scope (Mr M. Goldwyn), Volume (Mr D. Brunton), Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (Ms L. Macdonald and Cath Gregory), Gwent Police (C. Insp. N. McLain), Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (Ms J. Tippins), South Wales Fire and Rescue (Mr R. Hassett), Natural Resources Wales (Mr J. Goldsworthy).

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

4. MINUTES – 21ST SEPTEMBER 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on the 21st September 2016 were approved subject to the date of the Compact Action Plan referred to in Minute No. 7, should read 2017 and not 2016. In relation to Minute No. 11, the Voluntary Sector Representatives wished to place on record their appreciation for the valued support, help and guidance received from Mr Bob Cooke by the Committee and wished him a long and healthy retirement.

MATTERS ARISING

DECISION AND ACTION SHEET – (MINUTE NO. 12)

The contact for the Gwent Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Maria Chapman has left her post and has been replaced on the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee by Jessica Tippins. Unfortunately, the Office did not have anyone available to attend this meeting to deliver a presentation in relation to cybercrime. However, there will be a presentation at the 15th March 2017 committee meeting on cybercrime, from Mark Pope (Gwent Police Lead), and on the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner priorities from Neil Taylor (Office of Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner). The committee were advised that as requested by Councillor Gough, the Compact Action Plan Annual Report was taken to the Public Services Board.

5. SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELL-BEING (WALES) ACT 2014 ASSESSING THE WELL-BEING OF PEOPLE WHO NEED CARE AND SUPPORT ACROSS THE GWENT REGION

Mr Philip Diamond from the Greater Gwent Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Partnership delivered the presentation that provided the committee with an overview of the Draft Population Needs Assessment (PNA) prepared in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. He set out the duties of the 5 South East Wales Local Authorities and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and stressed the importance of the partnership linking in with the third sector. It is intended that the PNA will be signed off by full Council in each Local Authority and ABUHB Board, then published by April 2017.

The 8 Core Theme set by Welsh Government include:

- Children and Young People
- Older People
- Carers
- Learning Disability
- Health and Physical Disabilities
- Mental Health
- Sensory Impairment
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

Details of what must be included in a PNA were set out and it was explained that the views of citizens, third sector and providers are key to identifying needs. Pre-engagement has already been undertaken and the priorities will be tested through the consultation process that will identify what services are needed. In concluding, Mr Diamond advised that the

Regional Area Plan required by April 2018 will set out full details on how the PNA needs will be met.

The Chair thanked Mr Diamond for his informative presentation and for responding to questions raised during the ensuing debate.

Members expressed concern in relation to raising awareness in respect of dementia. It was explained that recognition is improving and that there is now an obligation on authorities to accept responsibility in developing dementia friendly communities. It is also hoped that the business sector will become involved and an example of this was given that a local Wetherspoon's Public House has arranged coffee mornings for people living with dementia and carers. It was noted advice on dementia is available from the Alzheimer's Society. The Committee felt that dementia awareness needs to begin through schools. It was suggested that at School events pop up stalls could be provided on dementia, and other information on health. Phil Diamond referred to "school gates" project which gets health and social care messages across to parents.

A Member queried the issue of deprivation and how this would factor in to the PNA. Mr Diamond confirmed that he is working closely with Jackie Dix in aligning the PNA with the Caerphilly County Borough Local Assessment of Well-being, which will be looking in detail at deprivation.

The Caerphilly County Borough Local Assessment of Well-being is out to consultation until 31st January 2017. Screening for prostate cancer was raised as an issue for possible consideration in the Assessment. The importance of tackling obesity and body mass in primary schools was also highlighted as an issue to be tackled in preventing future ill-health.

6. VOLUNTARY SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES QUESTIONS

- (i) Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2017-18 – Nicole Scammell, Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Mrs Nicole Scammell introduced the report that provided the Committee with the draft budget proposals for the 2017/18 financial year that had been presented to Cabinet on the 30th November 2016. As part of the consultation process the report would be presented to each Scrutiny Committee during December 2016, where Members will be asked to consider and comment upon the content of the report prior to a final decision being made by Full council on 22nd February 2017.

Reference was made to the Welsh Government Provisional 2017/18 Local Government Financial Settlement (published on 19th October 2016). The report detailed Whole Authority Cost Pressures (£2.745m), Inescapable Service Pressures (£6.186m), and the Reduction in Welsh Government Funding (£0.608m). Additionally, the report outlined draft savings proposals for 2017/18 (£8.653m) and a proposed Council Tax Uplift of 1% (£0.886) which will ensure that a balanced budget is deliverable for 2017/18.

The report outlined the pressures placed on service areas, with significant pressure on Social Services for essential payments. These relate to the National Living Wage that had an impact on supplier's contract prices to Caerphilly County Borough Council and the ever-increasing demand for services in both Adult and Children's Services. As a result, the report proposed that £3.5m be allocated in the 2017/18 budget to meet ongoing financial pressures within Social Services. It was explained that cost pressures for schools are excluded as these will be funded through a proposed increase of 1.25% that will fund pay and non-pay inflationary increases and will also fund the majority of the cost of the impact of the Apprenticeship Levy in relation to Schools. Members were advised that although the

Levy will be introduced by the UK Government from April 2017 and will be applicable in Wales, it is currently unknown how this will operate in Wales and how funding will be made available in Wales.

The Committee were informed that although the provisional 2017/18 financial settlement is much better than originally anticipated, the emerging cost pressures identified have resulted in a net savings requirement of £8.653m. The proposals do not have a direct impact on service users or the public. It is anticipated that next year's budget proposals will not be as positive as this year. A Treasury Management Seminar has been scheduled for elected Members on the 12th January 2017, which will allow Members to be fully briefed on these proposed savings of £3.5m, ahead of the proposals being presented to Cabinet and thereafter Council for consideration.

In planning for future savings reference was made to last year's scrutiny committees that considered a raft of budget proposals, which may have to be re-visited. Martin Featherstone requested to have sight of these proposals. Mrs Scammell agreed for these to be collated to be circulated to the committee, but warned that these are proposals and would ultimately be determined by Elected Members.

Mention was also made of the announcement of Cabinet Secretary for Local Government Mark Drakeford for greater regional collaboration in the delivery of services, which may have budget implications.

The Chair thanked Mrs Scammell for her informative report and for responding to questions raised during the course of the debate.

(ii) Communities First – Damian Owen, Caerphilly County Borough Council

Mr Damien Owen advised Members that on 11th October, 2016 Carl Sargeant (Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children) Welsh Government made a statement which outlined their intention to create a more prosperous nation of resilient communities. The Cabinet Secretary announced that he is "minded to phase out the Communities First Programme while establishing a new approach to meet the challenges of the future" focusing on three priority areas – Employability, Early Years and Empowerment. A final decision on the proposed programme will not be made until wider engagement with communities, staff and strategic partners has been completed.

On 24th October 2016 the Welsh Government initiated their engagement programme by calling on people all across Wales to have their say in the development of building resilient communities through participation in an online survey. They are also seeking feedback from people who have experience of Communities First, particularly on how the Programme can be focussed on employability and the way in which Lead Delivery Bodies may provide alternative ways of maintaining health and learning elements of Communities First. All Council Members and staff have been made aware of the consultation and been provided with hyperlinks to facilitate their participation.

The Committee noted these are uncertain times for the future of Communities First and the many staff employed to deliver the Programme. Credit was afforded to the Communities First Team for the important work they undertake within the Community. A further Ministerial Statement on the future of the Communities First Programme will be made post consultation in February 2017.

The Chair thanked Mr Owen for the update and responding to questions raised during the course of the ensuing debate.

7. OPEN DISCUSSION: WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COUNTY BOROUGH

The Committee were advised that *Cancer Careline* based in Blackwood would be closing on the 31st December 2016 as running costs have increased and reduced funding made available for 2017, from Caerphilly County Borough Council and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. Members noted this closure as 'indicative of the time we're in' and thanked the charitable organisation for the work it has undertaken in the community for over 30 years.

8. ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMPACT PARTNERS

The Committee received and noted the reports as information items that had been received from Aneurin Bevan University Health board, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations and Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.

9. COMMUNITY PLANNING QUARTERLY BRIEFING OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2016

The above report was received and noted as an item for information.

10. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS:

15th March 2017
28th June 2017
20th September 2017
6th December 2017

The meeting ended at 12.05pm.