



VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH
ON WEDNESDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 10.40 A.M.**

PRESENT:

Mrs E.M. Aldworth - Chair
Mrs M. Jones (Vice Chair) - Caerphilly Parent Network

Councillors:

A. Collis, K. Etheridge, J.E. Fussell, R.W. Gough, Mrs B.A. Jones, Mrs T. Parry, R. Whiting,
L.G. Whittle, W. Williams

Voluntary Sector Representatives:

Abertridwr Community Church (Mr L. Clay), Bargoed YMCA (Ms J. Price), Caerphilly People First (Mr C. Luke), Citizen's Advice Bureau - Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent (Ms J. Channing), GAVO (Mr S. Tiley - Assistant Chief Executive), Ms G. Jones (GAVO Caerphilly), Homestart Caerphilly (Ms R. Evans), Scope (Mr M. Goldwyn)

Compact Partners:

Insp. A. O'Keefe and DS S. Warden (Gwent Police), PCs A. Marriner and J. Evans (Gwent Police Online Investigation Team), Mr H. Llewellyn (Town and Community Council Representative)

Also present:

P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), T. McMahon (Community Regeneration Manager), A. Palmer (Community Planning Co-Ordinator - GAVO/CCBC), V. Doyle (Policy Officer - Statistics and Funding), R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

It was moved and seconded that Councillor Mrs E.M. Aldworth be appointed as Chair of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee for the ensuing year, and by a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors J. Bevan, S. Cook, A.G. Higgs, V. James and A. Whitcombe.

Voluntary Sector Representatives - Abbeyfield (Caerphilly) Society Ltd (Mr H. Billington), Caerphilly Care and Repair (Ms P. Jones), Charter Housing (Ms S. Howells), Cruse Bereavement Care (Mrs C. Williams), Disability CANDO Organisation (Mr J. Miles), Drugaid Young Persons Service (Ms L. Tibbs), GAVO (Mr M. Featherstone - Chief Executive), Groundwork Wales (Mrs K. Stevenson), Menter Iaith (Mrs L. Jones), Right from the Start (Ms C. Loring), South East Wales Carer's Trust (Ms N. George-Titley), Van Road United Reformed Church (Mr J. Wade), Vanguard Caerphilly (Mrs M. Wade), YMLAEN (Mr D. Brunton)

Compact Partners - Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (Ms S. Millar), Caerphilly Business Forum (Mrs D. Lovering), Gwent Police (Chief Inspector P. Staniforth), Natural Resources Wales (Mr J. Birch and Mr J. Goldsworthy), Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (Ms J. Tippins), South Wales Fire and Rescue (Mr R. Hassett)

Officers - K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manager)

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

4. INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair led the introductions for the meeting and it was explained that Miss Jackie Dix (Policy Officer) has now left the Authority. Vicki Doyle and Paul Cooke will represent the Council's Policy department at future meetings of the Liaison Committee. Members noted the valued contribution that Miss Dix had made to the Committee over the years.

It was also noted that Chief Inspector Paul Staniforth had replaced Chief Inspector Nick McLain as the Gwent Police representative to the Committee. Inspector Andy O'Keefe was in attendance on his behalf and was welcomed to the meeting together with his colleagues from Gwent Police.

5. MINUTES – 28TH JUNE 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th June 2017 were approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

6. Items of Interest from Compact Partners - Natural Resources Wales (Minute No. 7)

It was explained that due to a prior commitment by Natural Resources Wales, it was now intended for them to attend the December meeting to provide an update on the tree felling project at Cwmcarn Forest Drive. Members expressed a need for tree felling across other areas to also be examined and agreed that the item be scheduled for the December meeting.

7. Any Other Business – Medium Term Financial Plan Savings (Minute No. 12)

Tina McMahon (Community Regeneration Manager) provided an update on Communities First, which had been referenced at the June meeting during the course of discussion regarding the Medium Term Financial Plan and expected savings that may impact on the voluntary sector.

Members were advised that a report outlining the set process for the phasing out of the Communities First programme had been presented to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee the previous evening and would be considered by Cabinet on 4th October 2017. Since 1st April 2012, Communities First has been a Community Focused Tackling Poverty Programme, concentrating on the most deprived communities in Wales. The programme is funded by WG and has an annual budget of £2.902m. On 14th February 2017, it was confirmed that Communities First would be phased out between 31st March 2017 and 1st April 2018, and that funding will continue at 70% of 2016/17 levels until 31st March 2018.

It is intended for 2017/18 to be a transition period which secures the legacy of Communities First whilst moving to a fresh approach to building resilient communities. The changes will include two new Welsh Government initiatives (the Employment Support Fund and Legacy Fund) which are successors to the existing Communities First programme and will be funded from 1st April 2018. It was explained that the new Legacy programme will provide the administration and wider support for those with complex barriers to employment, and should influence the realignment of core public sector budgets. Whilst elements of the Legacy fund could be delivered by third sector organisations they would have to be appropriately procured.

Members were advised that these changes will have a significant impact on voluntary sector organisations. The Communities First programme has contributed to the funding of a number of posts across Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO), Groundwork Caerphilly and Senghenydd Youth Drop In Centre (SYDIC), and a reduction in the current funding is likely to have a major impact on the Council's voluntary sector partners. Additionally, from 1st April 2018, it is only Local Authorities that will be awarded the new Legacy and Employment Support Fund. Officers emphasised the importance of more effective and joint working with the voluntary sector moving forward as a result of these changes.

Members expressed a need for more creative partnership working between the voluntary sector and local authority as a result of these changes and for different working approaches to be undertaken moving forward. It was also suggested that the Liaison Committee could be a useful forum for the sharing of ideas in relation to collaborative working.

The Officer was thanked for the update in respect of Communities First.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS - CAERPHILLY WE WANT - FEEDBACK FROM WORKSHOPS AND DRAFT WELL-BEING PLAN

Paul Cooke (Senior Policy Officer) provided an update on the feedback arising from the workshops held during the previous Liaison Committee meeting to discuss the proposed Well-being Objectives for the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB) and the involvement of the third sector.

Each Public Services Board has a duty to prepare and publish a local well-being plan setting out its local objectives and the steps it proposes to meet them. It was explained that at their June meeting, the PSB agreed six areas for action to be developed into Well-being objectives, which have been subject to in-depth investigation by partners as part of the response analysis process. The facilitated discussion by the Liaison Committee during the workshops focused on areas surrounding apprenticeships and volunteering, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Community Safety, Health, Environment and Sustainable Communities.

A summary of the notes from the workshops were included in the meeting papers, which outlined suggestions on how volunteer organisations can contribute to these priorities, what key actions can be taken together, how these can be linked to the other priorities, and what needs to be overcome or done differently. General discussion took place on a number of the priorities and the Liaison Committee noted the outcome of the facilitated workshops.

Members were then updated on the contents of the draft Well-being Plan as contained in the meeting papers which was presented to the PSB on 5th September 2017. The responses analysed from the Liaison Committee and other partner agencies have been used to develop the priorities for collaborative action for the Well-being Plan 2018-2023. The PSB were asked to consider and comment the draft Well-being Plan so that it could be circulated as part of the statutory 12 week stakeholder and public consultation.

Officers outlined the vision of the Public Services Board as set out in the draft Plan and the Well-being objectives that have been adopted in order to achieve “The Caerphilly We Want”. The objectives are intended to bring about a generational shift in focus for public sector activity in the area, in order to bring about tangible improvements in the well-being of current and future generations. The Well-being objectives comprise of Positive Change (a shared commitment to cross-sectoral change), Positive Start (giving future generations the best start in life), Positive People (empowering and enabling all residents to achieve their own potential) and Positive Places (enabling communities to be resilient and sustainable). Achievement of these objectives will differ to previous integrated planning process (such as the Single Integrated Plan) and will place a focus on outcome-orientated action.

The draft Plan also contained a delivery and action plan against each of these objectives. Officers highlighted areas for development, including changes to procurement systems and joint procurement working across agencies, work around early life experiences and building resilience, development of volunteering and apprenticeship programmes, supporting disadvantaged communities, protecting the environment, and work around community safety and community cohesion. Public consultation on the draft Plan is due to commence and a series of community engagement workshops across the county borough have been arranged for October-November 2017.

A number of comments were received from the Liaison Committee on the contents of the draft Plan. It was suggested that accessibility should be identified as an actionable area, particularly in relation to residents experiencing difficulties in accessing their GP surgery via public transport. Officers confirmed that the issue has already been identified and will form part of the feedback to the PSB on the draft Plan. A Member expressed a need for more even distribution of housing developments across the county borough to avoid the infrastructure pressures caused by overdevelopment of certain areas and for this matter to be raised with the PSB.

Discussion took place regarding the Gwent Priorities Project agreed by the G7 Group (comprising the 5 Gwent local authorities together with police, health and fire service representatives), which will examine the 5 local assessments of well-being and derive any commonalities to be listed as a set of Gwent well-being priorities. A Member expressed the need for these priorities to have equal parity and status with the locally-agreed priorities, and the Liaison Committee also discussed how the work being carried out by the Group will link into the aims of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. A Member referenced the strong economic prospects within Cardiff and expressed a need for these to be distributed across the county borough and wider region. Members also suggested it would be useful to attend a PSB meeting to gain a greater understanding of how the identified priorities will be taken forward.

Having given full consideration to the items contained within the draft Well-being Plan, Members agreed that their comments regarding the contents of the draft Plan be forwarded to the Caerphilly Public Services Board.

9. UPDATE ON REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE

It was explained that work is continuing on the revised Terms of Reference, which will enhance the function of the Committee, particularly in relation to partnership working. Officers

outlined the complexities involved in the revision of this document and explained that it was now intended for the item to be presented at a future meeting of the Liaison Committee.

Members noted the details of the update.

10. PRESENTATION BY GWENT POLICE - CYBERCRIME

The Liaison Committee received a presentation on cybercrime from Detective Sergeant S. Warden of Gwent Police, together with his colleagues from the Online Investigation Team (PCs A. Marriner and J. Evans).

Members were advised that there has been a significant increase in cybercrime over the past few years, which has now been identified as a serious and organised crime. Gwent Police are seeing more prevalent cyberattacks on businesses across the region and the use of more sophisticated technologies in these attacks, and this has resulted in more officers across Gwent Police being trained to tackle and prevent such crimes. The Liaison Committee were advised that smartphone users are also particularly susceptible to cybercrime, given the wide use of these devices to access social media and other internet sites such as online banking. Cybercriminals will often use VPNs (virtual private networks) to mask their efforts, which means they are often virtually untraceable. The Police Officers outlined the work carried out by Gwent Police's digital media investigators who will examine major reported attacks to determine access routes or system weaknesses and establish how these can be minimised in the future.

Members were advised of the work carried out by Gwent Police's Police Online Investigation Team (POLIT) which deals with online crime relating to the trafficking of child abuse images, Gwent Police also tackle instances of cyberbullying, which is becoming more prevalent through avenues such as social media. It was emphasised to Members that the public should report any suspected instances of cybercrime (including any strange or unusual online requests) to 101 so that the matter can be investigated and preventative measures put in place if needed.

Discussion took place regarding the matters outlined in the presentation, and a Member queried whether Gwent Police has given consideration to working with vigilante groups to detect offenders involved in online child exploitation. It was explained that a working group has been established to look at this matter, but that there are wide-ranging issues that need to be considered, including the gathering of admissible evidence as a result of these investigations. A query was received regarding available resources in the event of a cyberattack on local businesses, and Members were advised that Gwent Police will endeavour to attend as soon as they can in order to minimise the spread of the cyber infection.

A Member from the voluntary sector indicated that he would find it useful to have additional advice from Gwent Police in relation to preventing cybercrime so that it could be passed to service users within his organisations. The Police Officers agreed to contact the Member following the meeting to discuss this further. Discussion took place regarding instances where local businesses/organisations around Caerphilly have been the focus of cyberattacks, the ease and speed at which these had been carried out, and the time it can take before a company becomes aware of these attacks. It was noted that affected businesses can also contact the Action Fraud helpline who will report the cyberattack to Gwent Police. The Police Officers emphasised to Members that if there is any suspicion regarding a cyberattack or potential attack, then they should not hesitate to call Gwent Police on 101.

The Liaison Committee thanked the Gwent Police Officers for attending the meeting and for their informative presentation and stated that they had found the content extremely useful.

11. ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMPACT PARTNERS

A verbal update was received from the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) and Mr Stephen Tiley (Assistant Chief Executive) provided an update on the latest developments. He explained that funding continues to be a priority for groups in the area and the volunteering team had helped to place 119 volunteers over recent months. There has been some changes to staffing arrangements and GAVO continues to support local community development and explore new ways of working. Mr Tiley also confirmed that GAVO had been included in the consultation process for the new PSB Well-being objectives, and will continue to work with new projects and support small voluntary organisations to be engaged. Mr Tiley explained that the phasing out of the Communities First programme would have an impact across the sector and that the Community Voices Programme will also be ending in June 2018. Any programme underspends were being used to support other gaps in the programme. GAVO are also seeking to review the Compact partnership agreement and support other options that may be available under the Well-being Plan.

The Liaison Committee also noted the contents of a written update from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) from Gwent, a copy of which was tabled at the meeting. The update referenced a recent drive in volunteer recruitment across Gwent police for the Animal Welfare and Independent Custody Schemes, details of the new Chief Constable for Gwent Police (Mr Julian Williams) and the opening of a new police station in Caerphilly.

There were no reports received from any of the other Compact Partners listed on the agenda.

12. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

It was noted that the Safer Caerphilly event will be held on Saturday 23rd September at Cwmcarn High School, the Voluntary Sector Achievement Awards will be held on 19th October 2017 and the next Caerphilly Third Sector Forum will be held on Monday 23rd October 2017.

Members were encouraged to attend the One Beat Roadshow which will be held at the Vision Centre, Newbridge on 2nd November 2017 and it was noted that the GAVO Annual General Meeting will be held on 15th November 2017.

The Committee also noted the dates and locations of the community engagement workshops for "The Caerphilly We Want" being held in Rhymney (3rd October), Risca (10th October), Blackwood (10th November), Ystrad Mynach (21st November) and Caerphilly (29th November), and were invited to contact Vicki Doyle for more information or to book a place.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A voluntary sector Member referred to the closure of a project administered by his organisation under the Community Voices programme and stated that he was unaware that the underspend for this project could have been re-utilised. Officers outlined the process in relation to projects that are coming to an end or close early and explained that any funding underspend would have to be returned to the awarding body. It was also confirmed that the organisation would have been notified of the options available in regards to the underspend. The Member stated that he had not received this information and the Officer offered to discuss the matter with him following the meeting.

The Chair thanked Members for their attendance and apologised for the meeting overrun arising from the delayed start.

The meeting closed at 12.38 p.m.