



## **VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN  
ON WEDNESDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2017 AT 10.30 A.M.**

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PRESENT:

Councillor E. Aldworth (Chair)  
Mrs M. Jones – (Vice-Chair)

Councillors:

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

Together with Representatives from:

Abertridwr Community Church (Mr. L. Clay), Bargoed YMCA (Ms. J. Price), Caerphilly Care and Repair (Mrs P. Jones), Charter Housing (Ms S. Howells), GAVO (Mr M. Featherstone and Mrs G. Jones), Homestart Caerphilly (Mrs M. Snowden), South East Wales Carers Trust (Ms N. George-Titley), Van Road United Reformed Church (Mr J. Wade), Vanguard Caerphilly (Mrs. M. Wade).

Also present:

K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manager), A. Palmer (CCBC/GAVO), V. Doyle (Policy Officer - Statistics and Funding), S. Harris (Interim Head of Corporate Finance), R. Hartshorn (Head of Policy and Public Protection), J. Williams (Assistant Director, Adult Services), A. Bolter (Group Manager - Strategy Funding and Support – Economic Development), S. Millar (Divisional Director - Primary Care and Networks - ABUHB), H. Llewellyn (Town and Community Council Representative), J. Goldsworthy (Natural Resources Wales), A. Dredge (Committee Services Officer).

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, A.G. Higgs, V. James, P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), Mr C. Luke (Caerphilly People First), R. Bevan (Disability Cando Organisation), Ms C. Loring (Right from the Start), P. Staniforth (Chief Inspector – Gwent Police).

### **2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

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

### 3. ANEURIN BEVAN UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD "CARE CLOSER TO HOME" PRESENTATION

Siân Millar, Divisional Director Primary Care and Networks delivered the presentation that provided the Committee with an overview of the Integrated Plan for the Development of Community and Primary Care and the Development of Care Closer to Home. It was explained that workshops had recently been held, jointly planned and led by Directors of Social Services, Director of Primary Care and Community Services and Non Clinical Nurse Leads, to engage all partners and not "write a plan in isolation", so that Principles for Working Together can be agreed.

The Committee noted the key themes associated with the Home Plan that included pooled budgets and integrated working, workforce sustainability, person centred and urgent care triage and management. The vision for the population of Gwent was set out that involves living well, living active lives, independently (for as long as possible) in supportive, resilient communities. Ms Millar summarised the outcomes of the workshops:

- People of all ages are enabled to stay home or close to home despite any vulnerability or frailty.
- People in our communities are enabled to be part of community activities.
- People in our communities are befriended and do not feel lonely or isolated.
- People are not admitted to hospital unless they really need to be there.
- If hospital is required, people are helped through their stay receiving diagnostics, care and treatment but are enabled to return home as soon as possible.
- People are identified early if they need care or support and they are prevented from ill health or decline in wellbeing wherever possible.
- Those who require help from a range of people receive care co-ordination.
- Provision is based on the needs of the community and people are engaged with and listened to.
- Carers are supported in their own right.
- People at the end of their lives are supported and enabled to die where they want to and not on a trolley in A and E by default.

Members were advised of how these outcomes can be achieved through a plan which highlights the following objectives:

- Provision of Integrated Services.
- Developing a different workforce.
- Provision of services which intervene early and aim to prevent reductions in health and wellbeing.
- Provision of universal prevention and population health services.
- Shifting care from Secondary to Primary services as appropriate.
- Supporting people to manage their health and wellbeing.
- Supporting carers.
- Developing community health and well-being hubs and urgent care hubs.
- Developing joint, innovative approaches to housing for elderly people.

In concluding, Ms Millar advised that in terms of 'getting there', sharing the rich resource of skills, competencies, ideas and visions and what do we need to do differently to achieve improvements will help to achieve this plan. We will also need to know how to identify those at risk and intervene early enough to prevent rapid decline and how to ensure we have a means of pulling together our resources in a more meaningful way with more positive results for our communities.

The Chair thanked Ms Millar for her informative presentation and for responding to questions raised during the course of the debate.

In terms of achievable targets, a Member queried the issue of staffing and resources. The Committee were informed that the Health Board are currently working together with Social Services, looking at better solutions. Within the next few months an all Gwent Group will look at pooled budgets in relation to frailty as it was explained the status quo cannot remain.

Clarification was sought in terms of communication and feedback responses. It was confirmed that all suggestions will be accepted from the Third Sector. It was emphasised there should be a representative from the Health Board at every Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee Meeting. Ms Millar apologised for the lack of attendance at previous meetings and confirmed that they are currently appointing in terms of the Integrated Partnership Board, where it is intended Third Sector Representatives will be involved. These will be 'Borough Led' and there will be much more vibrant attendance at future meetings.

Mr Featherstone on behalf of GAVO explained his role and referred to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and in particular the raft of issues in the Act that are important to the Third Sector.

#### **4. MINUTES – 20TH SEPTEMBER 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 20th September 2017 were approved as a correct record.

#### **5. DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2018/19**

The Head of Policy and Public Protection introduced the report that provided the Committee Members with an update on the Council's draft budget proposals totalling £7.205m for the 2018/19 financial year. This follows the announcement of the Welsh Government Provisional 2018/19 Local Government Financial Settlement on the 10th October 2017.

The Committee were advised that at its meeting on the 15th November 2017, the Council's Cabinet agreed draft 2018/19 Budget proposals which are currently subject to consultation prior to the proposals being presented to Cabinet and Council in February 2018. The proposals will deliver a balanced budget for 2018/19 on the basis that Council Tax is increased by 4.52%.

The report provides details of the savings proposals relating directly to the Voluntary Sector.

Members were referred to tables 1 and 2 in the report and it was explained that as in previous years, those savings proposals that are not expected to have an impact on the public have been consolidated into a single line for each service area. These 'nil impact' savings consist in the main of vacancy management, budget realignment and minor changes to service provision.

An overview of the draft 2018/19 savings proposals that have a direct impact upon the Voluntary Sector was provided. Members were also advised of the projections and assumptions as set out in the report in terms of the financial outlook for future years.

Members expressed concerns in relation to how the impact on the reduction in funding will be assessed. The Third Sector representatives extended their appreciation for the support and assistance previously provided by the Council. Officers confirmed that these are firm proposals and reminded the Committee of the Consultation process and the outcome of which will be referred to Cabinet and Council in February 2018.

Clarification was sought in relation to the decommissioning of the Care and Repair Safety at Home Contract of £13k. Officers confirmed this is subject to a procurement process, where Social Services had no choice due to the contract. Due to the implementation of the Act, the

Council will look to reduce the requirement of the service when the only way of achieving someone's outcomes is to commission the work and this will be done via the internal minor works budget.

The Committee were advised that the Third Sector can bid for contracts and that Caerphilly are guided by Welsh Government in terms of funding.

Further concerns were expressed with the cuts being made across the board and the fear that jobs will be lost and the Voluntary Sector will suffer which will impact on people with low incomes.

Reference was made to the reduction in funding to the Community Regeneration Fund and it was questioned how accessible this is. It was suggested that this be made available to the Voluntary Sector to use as match funding to access other sources of funding. It was explained that funds are advertised widely. Applying for funding is challenging, as applicants need to contribute 20 per cent of the contribution. Officers clarified the Community Regeneration Fund has underspent. Sometimes funding is allocated and if unused the funds will come back to the pot. It was confirmed that the budget had been used to match fund European monies to operate a grant scheme specifically for social enterprises (that ended 3 years ago) and only 2016/17 came in as underspend. It was also confirmed that Officers are available to assist applicants with applications. A Member suggested that funding is not just allocated for new work as this would keep organisations running if changes were made to the core fund. This is a crucial point as the Third Sector relies on funding.

A Member referred to the de-commissioning of Hospital Discharge Contract (Age Cymru). He emphasised the importance of sign posting people to the Council's Information, Advice and Assistance Service Team to promote their independence and choice and to enable people to meet their own needs.

In terms of the ceasing contribution to Stroke Association within the report, it was explained that in the last few years the Health Board has received significant funding via the Integrated Care Fund to develop services for neurological conditions and a stroke pathway is in place. The Reablement Service can also be accessed by people who have suffered a stroke.

The Committee were advised that Vanguard Caerphilly is in receipt of Community Funding. They can look at the Welsh Church Fund (with a maximum fund of £2K.) At this stage it is unclear of a submission date of when the panel is due to meet. When the grant was received previously the award was in arrears. Officers confirmed they can discuss the level of Grant and its process with the Welsh Church Fund in the next few months to make potential changes for April 2018, as the criteria is set for the Welsh Church Fund.

The Chair thanked the Officers for presenting the report and responding to queries raised during the course of the debate.

## **6. VERBAL UPDATE ON TREE FELLING - JON GOLDSWORTHY, NATURAL RESOURCES WALES**

Mr Goldsworthy provided the Committee with an update on Tree Felling undertaken across the County Borough. He referred to the progress made at Cwmcarn Forest Drive since felling commenced of the infected larch and confirmed the total area is programmed to be restocked. Members were referred to a map of the borough that highlighted areas of infected larch still to fell that does not include the Darran area as this still requires access provision (this is not a large area). It was also explained that some small operations were planned for Caerphilly County Borough Council over the next 6 to 9 months including the areas of Hollybush and Newbridge.

The Committee were advised that the disease Phytophthora ramorum (P. ramorum) is a fungus-like pathogen called a water mould. It causes extensive damage and death to a wide range of trees and other plants.

In terms of Cwmcarn Forest Drive, half of the trees have been restocked and the project is ongoing. The stock consists of a mixture of species of conifer and broadleaf and this is also considered a cost effective method. Supplementary areas of native broadleaf natural regeneration will compliment restocking and add to species diversity. The programme commenced in 2015 and it is a labour intensive task. Mr Goldsworthy confirmed that there will be no larch trees replanted.

A Member queried if all the trees that had been removed were diseased. It was explained that in the main they were however, it would only be a matter of time before all would become diseased and Members were reassured that NRW are taking all reasonable precautions and that all 'clean' areas are being protected.

The Chair thanked Mr Goldsworthy for the informative update.

## **7. ITEMS OF INTEREST CONCERNING THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR FROM COMPACT PARTNERS - VERBAL UPDATES**

Mrs K. Peters on behalf of Caerphilly Council provided the Committee with an update in relation to the Wellbeing Plan. She confirmed the Draft Plan is currently out for consultation until 18th December 2017. Members were urged to contribute to the consultation and to provide their comments for what is a constantly evolving document.

Members were reminded that the Terms of Reference are yet to be established for this Committee but will be placed on the agenda at a future meeting.

## **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Wednesday, 14th March 2018 at 10.30 a.m. in the Sirhowy Room, Penallta House.

The meeting ended at 12.15pm.