



VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY 20 JUNE 2018 AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

A. Collis, K. Etheridge, R.W. Gough, D. Harse, A.G. Higgs, Mrs B.A. Jones, Mrs T. Parry, R. Whiting, L.G. Whittle and W. Williams

Together with Representatives from:

Abertridwr Community Church (Mr. L. Clay), Bargoed YMCA (Ms. J. Price), Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Care and Repair (Mrs P. Jones), Cruse Bereavement Care (Mrs. C. Williams), GAVO (Ms G. Jones), GAVO (Mr M. Featherstone), Caerphilly Groundwork Trust (Mrs K. Stevenson), Menter Iaith (Mrs L. Jones), The Parent Network (Ms. M. Jones), Van Road United Reformed Church (Mr J. Wade) and The Vanguard Centre (Mrs. M. Wade)

Also present:

K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manager), P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), V. Doyle (Policy Officer) A. Palmer (CCBC/GAVO), Rebecca Barrett (Committee Services Officer) and K. Houghton (Committee Services Officer).

ABUHB (Jonathan Lewis) and Natural Resources Wales (Mr J. Goldsworthy).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, S. Cook and V. James. Apologies also received from Abbeyfield (Caerphilly) Society Ltd (Mr H. Billington), AMBITO (Mr M. Goldwyn), Caerphilly People First (Mr C. Luke), Charter Housing (Ms. S. Howells), Citizen's Advice Bureau (Ms J. Channing), Disability Cando Organisation (Ms. N. Perkins), Drugaid Young Persons Service (Ms L. Tibbs), Homestart Caerphilly (Mrs M. Snowden), Right From The Start (Ms C. Loring), South East Wales Carer's Trust (Ms N. George-Titley, YMLAEN (Mr D. Brunton), Gwent Police (Chief Inspector N. Mclain), Office Of The PCC For Gwent (Ms J. Tippins), South Wales Fire And Rescue (Mr R. Hassett) and Caerphilly Business Forum (Mrs D. Lovering)

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES –

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th March 2018 were deferred to the 19th September 2018 meeting for approval.

Items of interest concerning the Voluntary Sector from Compact Partners

4. PRESENTATION BY GROUNDWORK WALES

Mrs K. Stevenson, Chief Executive for Groundwork Wales delivered a presentation to the Committee on the work Groundwork undertakes.

She outlined their mission and strategy as a trust. Informing the Committee that 17 trusts exist in the UK but is an international organisation with the 'Changing Places, Changing Lives' overarching objective. This is done through supported volunteers working on environment based projects to develop a range of social, life and employment skills.

The services they offer are split into the following three categories;

- *Green Academy* – this offers traineeships to volunteers developing their life and social skills along with increasing their employability or professional development opportunities. Future plans are to develop this area by formalising these traineeships, developing apprenticeship opportunities, providing support services and volunteering opportunities to refugees and continuing the work in 'Green Teams' which run across a broader area and often support local authorities objectives.
- *Green Services* – works with private sector organisations to run initiatives in the community to promote health and wellbeing along with supporting community groups. A successful example of which being the Tesco Bags of Help initiative which provides grants to community groups across the UK, utilising the Carrier Bag Levy funds. There are further initiatives planned particularly the Go Green for Health project which will see Groundwork working with health boards and working across 5 local authorities to encourage the use of the outdoors for gentle exercise.
- *Green Enterprise* - This is where the trust works with their volunteers to develop green based businesses for example the Furniture Revival scheme where old furniture is renovated and sold. It also works with businesses to promote green processes in their work practices. This has the potential to be expanded and become a revenue raising area of the trusts work.

Mrs K. Stevenson offered several case studies and testimonies from the volunteers they engage with, providing further details of the nature of work undertaken by the trust.

5. CAERPHILLY PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD WELL-BEING PLAN

Mr P. Cooke updated the Committee on the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB) Well-Being Plan.

He informed the group that the plan was published on 2 May 2018 and work continues on its implementation. The following areas of well-being, under the overarching scope of the 'Positive Change' required, are being focussed on;

- Positive Change
- Positive Start
- Positive People
- Positive Places

These actions will be delivered through the following change enabling approaches;

- Working Together
- Communications and Engagement
- Procurement and Commissioning
- Asset Management

The listed approaches have been applied to five key action areas. Each of the action areas will have PSB member Champion, lead officer/s, a delivery working group and an identified CCBC Corporate Policy officer. The five action areas are as follows;

Mr Cooke referred to the five action areas as detail in the presentation. These included;

- Best start in life
- Volunteering and apprenticeships
- Good health and well-being
- Safer and resilient communities
- Protect and enhance the local natural environment

Reporting on progress made in these areas will be 6 monthly. These will be presented to the PSB by the PSB Champion. There will be an annual report on progress across the whole well-being plan. In addition to reporting there will also be the PSB Annual Conference and the annual 'Future Scenarios' event which will provide opportunities to reflect on work completed and still to do. Initial action plans were approved by the PSB on 5th June 2018 and a detailed action plan will be delivered on 4th September 2018.

Following the presentation, the Committee discussed the need to fully engage with the third sector throughout the delivery of this plan and support the sector in understanding what their role is in this process. It was suggested that a forum be held to address third sector group's questions and concerns. Interest was also expressed in attending the PSB Annual Conference and annual 'Future Scenarios' event.

ACTION: Mr Cooke to advise members of the Committee of details and dates for these events.

6. WELSH CHURCH FUND

Ms V. Doyle informed the Committee that the CCBC Policy Unit have now taken over responsibility for the Welsh Church Fund. There has been a change to the grant criteria. These have been changed to address the high level of carry forward of the annual allocation given to CCBC through Monmouthshire CC as lead authority. An annual sum of around £62,000 (depending on investment) is given. However this has not been spent in full in previous years resulting in a carry forward of £263,000. The revised criteria was endorsed by the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel on 17th January 2018 and approved by Cabinet on 28th March 2018. They are as follows;

- Applications of up to £5,000 to be fully grant funded.
- Applications over £5,000 subject to a grant rate of 75% on the sum in excess of £5,000, with a maximum grant payable of £10,000.
- Grants are restricted to community organisations and community based projects in the first instance and this position will be reviewed in 12 months' time.
- Payment of grants to be expedited where possible, including staged payments as appropriate.
- Grant applications can be submitted at any time during the financial year.

Ms Doyle provided the Committee with examples of grant amounts that can be awarded and clarified that grants can be used for Capital costs only and not revenue costs.

Following the presentation, members discussed timescales for applications and grant spending. From application to funds being awarded should be in a matter of weeks with a condition that the funding is spent within 18 months of receiving the grant.

7. VERBAL UPDATES FROM PARTNERS

Mrs P. Jones on behalf of Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Care and Repair informed the Committee that the group received an 'Enterprise Of The Year' business award for their work. The Committee congratulated the group on their success.

Ms M. Jones representative for Parent Network updated the Committee on current projects and advised that they had been invited to speak at the Hay Festival, as part of the Parents Engaging to Raise Aspirations (PETRA) Project. The speaking slot and supply of PETRA books was sold out and was a great achievement for the group of parents that accompanied the Network to the event.

An exhibition called 'Hour Eyes' has launched and will be touring the area. This is a community cohesion project supported by the Rural Development Fund. It exhibits 3000+ photographs taken by members of the community on the theme of 'how and why we love our community'

Mrs L. Jones from Menter Iaith informed the Committee that Fillifest 2018, held at Caerphilly Castle, was a great success, growing significantly in size from last year with 5000+ visitors and a variety of community groups and schools taking part. Feedback from town centre businesses was positive. Menter Iaith is looking forward to organising next year's event.

Mrs M. Wade informed the Committee that The Vanguard Centre have held 7

concerts so far this year with another 13 planned for the future. These events take place at varying times of the day with additional activities taking place around the concerts, for example there will be a strawberry afternoon tea after a concert being held in August. Other upcoming events will be the Caerphilly Flower Festival in the town centre and a Gala Concert in July, in association with the Tommy Cooper Society which will be raising funds for town centre defibrillators. An email for all those interested in the event will be sent out for additional information.

Mr J. Lewis on behalf of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) introduced himself to the Committee as the new representative for the board. There has been a restructure within the organisation resulting in him now attending the Committee. It is hoped that there will be an improvement and strengthening of the Board's relationship with the voluntary sector. Further to this an invitation was extended to the third sector to attend workshops being planned to discuss care navigation in GP practices. This is a scheme where funding is provided to GP practices to set systems to direct patients straight to the relevant care providers when they call in.

The Chair welcomed Mr Lewis to the Committee and it was noted that she requested that a representative from ABUHB attend the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis.

Ms A. Palmer on behalf of GAVO spoke to the Committee with regards to a solar and wind energy grant schemes available to grass roots third sector groups. 3 schemes have been awarded within the borough at Croespenmaen, Argoed and Crumlin ward and Mynyddislwyn. This is a 'one-off' fund so once the funding is gone; there will be no continuing scheme.

GAVO have been working in conjunction with the ABUHB to provide grass roots groups with support from the Health and Well-being fund. This is focused on the Wellbeing of Future Generations Plan and will be launching next week.

Mrs M. Jones of the Parent Network made enquires with regards to the grant process for small groups under their network who were not constituted. Many groups are so small that going through this process could cause them to disband. Mrs M. Jones was advised that smaller groups can apply for the funding if supported by the overarching organisation as long as the work they undertake can be identified as being in the name of the overarching organisation. There was also support available to help them become constituted.

V. Doyle informed the Committee that funding support from the Technical Assistance Fund is available for groups undertaking large scale capital projects with costs relating such as transfers of assets and the drawing up of plans. If any group is interested in this funding then please contact V. Doyle.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, 19th September 2018 at 10.30am in the Sirhowy Room, Penallta House.

The meeting ended at 11:56 .