



## **PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF THE DIGITAL MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY 28TH JANUARY 2021 AT 5.30 P.M.**

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillor J. Pritchard - Chair  
Councillor G. Kirby - Vice Chair

#### **Councillors:**

M.A. Adams, Mrs C. Forehead, L. Harding, G. Johnston, C.P. Mann, B. Miles. Mrs M.E. Sargent, R. Saralis and L.G. Whittle.

#### **Together with:**

K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manager), V. Doyle (Policy Officer), P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy) S. Tiley (GAVO), M Jacques (Scrutiny Officer) M. Harris (Technical Support) and C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

#### **Outside Bodies:**

A. Hussey (South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority)

### **RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed but would not be live streamed, however a recording would be available following the meeting via the Council's website – [Click Here To View](#). He advised that decisions would be made by Microsoft Forms.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, Miss E. Forehead, J. Taylor, G. Simmonds and T. McMahon (Community Regeneration Manager).

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **3. MINUTES – 30TH JANUARY 2020**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held on 30th January 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

#### **4. PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Officer introduced the report that informed the Committee of its Forward Work Programme planned for the period January 2021 to July 2021.

The Committee were asked to note a minor amendment in which the report scheduled for 15th July 2021 would be presented by Chief Inspector Amanda Thomas, Gwent Police.

Following consideration and discussion, and in noting the amendment, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By way of electronic voting this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that subject to the changes, the Forward Work Programme for the coming year be approved and published on the Councils' website.

#### **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to the following reports.

#### **5. HALF YEAR PROGRESS UPDATE – THE CAERPHILLY WE WANT WELL-BEING PLAN 2018-2023 (APRIL 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 2020)**

The report provided the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee with the half year performance update presented to the Caerphilly Public Services Board on the 3rd November 2020.

The report also explained that the next cycle of well-being planning will commence in 2021. The precursor data assessment and analysis of local well-being is a 12 to 18-month process that will need to be completed in time to draft the next version of the well-being plan during 2022, in readiness for the next iteration and cycle; 2023-2028. It was noted that a timeline was appended to the report

The report also notified members that a decision had been made by partners to form a regional Gwent Public Services Board from September 2021 that would replace the five current boards in the Gwent area.

The report presented the performance reports examined by the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB) at its meeting on the 3rd of November 2020. The reports covered six-months progress on partnership activity across the 'Caerphilly We Want 2018-2023' well-being plan.

It was noted that as a result of the Pandemic, the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee did not meet in July 2020. The ongoing public health crisis has also affected the Caerphilly Public Services Board meetings as the Board did not meet in June 2020 and cancelled, at short notice, its planned meeting of the 7th September 2020 due to the local lockdown taking effect in the county borough area. The Public Services Board next met on the 3rd November and received reports on six-months partnership activity, instead of quarterly reports, at that time. The six-month performance reports have previously been provided to Scrutiny Committee for their consideration as to which areas they may wish to focus on. The six-month performance reports were appended to the report.

It was noted that due to the disrupted schedules of both Partnerships Scrutiny Committee, and the Caerphilly Public Services Board, the next six-monthly update reports would be provided to the July 2021 scrutiny meeting. These will cover the period October 2020 to March 2021.

The Committee thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued. The Committee discussed the report at length and in noting the decision to Regional Gwent Service Board,

noted that there would be a significant number of projects undertaken on a local, community and Gwent basis, as well as a regional approach.

Concerns were raised due to the variance of Gwent Local Authorities and the areas of affluence and deprivation and the issues that may arise in respect of service delivery. Officers explained that whilst there are some similarities between local authorities, there are several differences, and a working group has been set up across Gwent in order to consider these factors and ensure consistency in service delivery. In addition, it was noted that the Welsh Government has set up several Workstreams in order to assist with these issues.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By show of hands, the Scrutiny Committee unanimously noted the report.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report:

- i) The progress updates provided to the PSB be noted and consideration be given to the plan of scrutiny of thematic areas as part of its Forward Work Programme.
- ii) That the lead in time for drafting a well-being plan for the next 5-year cycle means that the next local assessment of well-being will begin this year.
- iii) The decision of partners to form a Gwent Public Services Board from 2021 be noted.

## **6. VOLUNTEERING AND APPRENTICESHIPS - PRESENTATION**

The Partnerships Scrutiny Committee were asked to note that T. McMahon (Community Regeneration Manager) has been unable to attend the meeting due to unforeseen circumstances, and whilst Officers are available to provide responses, a further presentation can be provided on the work undertaken around Apprenticeships, should the Committee require.

The Scrutiny Committee were provided with a presentation in 2-parts; the first covering the work undertaken around Apprenticeships and the second around the work undertaken in relation to Volunteering.

The Committee were asked to note that there has been little progress in relation to Apprenticeships to date as a direct result of the ongoing pandemic, which has placed significant limits on the capacity of employers (including CCBC) to host apprentices. This downturn in apprenticeship availability is due to both a reduced demand from employers who are experiencing difficulties in the current economic crisis and greater risk implications. However, the Committee were pleased to note that there have been some positive initial conversations with internal CCBC departments and opportunities realised post lockdown. In addition, links have been formed with potential referral routes such as Youth Engagement and there has been some interest from external training providers in working in partnership to deliver apprenticeships.

Scrutiny were asked to note that moving forward there is a greater focus on economic growth and job creation alongside specialised employment support and opportunities across Gwent to work collaboratively to address demand in growth sectors at a regional level, utilising shared resources to respond to available data on growth sectors.

The Committee thanked the Officer for the presentation and welcomed Mr S. Tiley, GAVO to provide a presentation on Volunteering.

Mr Tiley explained that in regards to Volunteering several outline aims have been agreed which include the development of a coordinated approach to volunteering to enable all PSB partners to promote volunteering for well-being effectively, Corporate social responsibility to enable staff of PSB organisations to volunteer, recognise and utilise volunteering as a first step to the employment market and provide volunteering opportunities that are appropriate for all ages and sectors of the community.

Success stories were shared with the Committee which included support of new and old Third Sector Organisations and PSB Partners with the Volunteering Wales Platform, GAVO has supported PSB Partners and Third Sector Organisations in policy and practice support and during the pandemic, advice has support has been given in the recruitment and management of volunteers. This support has helped create new groups to support the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic linked to GAVO development and core responsibilities.

Scrutiny were provided with a list of groups created as a result of the Pandemic, which included Gwent Prescription Riders (dealing with Prescription deliveries across Gwent and linking with pharmacies) and Risca Covid-19 Group (supporting shielded Risca Residents). In addition, it was noted that staff from Caerphilly County Borough Council staff were diverted to volunteering services on the frontline, such as the Buddy Scheme and delivery of Free School Meals to aid the most vulnerable.

Following the success of the Buddy Scheme, the Caerphilly Cares Scheme has been developed, which has been vital in supporting wellbeing, as well as supporting the needs of the most vulnerable groups in Caerphilly. The Model has been developed with the aim to continue providing services and a universal gateway model, to ensure people receive the right support, in the right place at the right time. The Caerphilly Cares Scheme was approved by Cabinet in November 2020 and a phonenumber and inbox has been established. Grant funding has been secured and a process mapping project has been undertaken in January 2021. It is anticipated that the Caerphilly Cares Scheme will be transferred to the Social Services Directorate on 1st February 2021, in which a larger range of services will work collaboratively under the Caerphilly Cares Umbrella.

The Scrutiny Committee thanked the Officers for the presentation and discussion ensued.

Members discussed the report at length, raising queries around the volunteer scheme and anticipated position post Covid. Officers explained that there are lots of opportunities, all of which can assist people with career progression and provide them with significant experience. Members were assured that volunteer roles do not replace paid roles and volunteers can do so for as long a period as they wish. It is hoped that people will continue post pandemic, but it was noted that as a result of furlough schemes, people have had more time to spare for volunteering.

Discussions took place around the Caerphilly Cares Scheme and it was noted that the Tenancy Support Scheme has also been linked and can provide tenants with advice and support in relation to debt management and offer referrals to Citizens Advice Bureau, as well as other partner organisations to strengthen income maximisation.

A Member sought further information on the Social Services Budget and funding for the Caerphilly Cares Scheme. Officers explained that initially Social Services Reserves were used in order to set up the scheme but since this time, Welsh Government have recognised the significance of the scheme and allocated Grant funding. This has provided some security for the scheme going forward.

The Scrutiny Committee thanked the Officers for the detailed presentation and noted the content.

## **7. UPDATE ON REVIEW OF WELL-BEING PLAN ACTIONS AND INCLUSION OF COVID RECOVERY PRIORITIES**

The report provided an update to committee members on the review of action plans under each of the Enablers and Action Areas of the current 'Caerphilly We Want 2018-2023' well-being plan and, additionally, to inform them that the PSB is formulating a set of recovery based priorities to focus partnership activity on supporting the county borough area out of the coronavirus crisis.

It was noted that the current well-being plan was developed over 2017-18 and was agreed by the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB) in March 2018. The plan runs over a 5-year cycle and is therefore at its halfway point in 2021. Prior to the coronavirus public health crisis, the PSB and relevant delivery leads had committed to update action plans for the remaining term of the well-being plan. The coronavirus crisis has given a different impetus to this work; to consider how partnership activity can be directed to help the county borough area recover from economic and societal impacts.

The action plans are currently being reviewed; this is being done in the light of a set of new recovery priorities agreed by the PSB at its meeting on the 3rd November 2020.

The chosen recovery priorities were set out within the report.

The Scrutiny Committee thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

A Member, in noting the report, sought further information into the Pilot of a Hub at Penallta House. Officers explained that the Rhymney Room has been designated as a hub, equipped with desks and computers for use by partner agencies, as a working space if required. It is anticipated that this can be further developed in line with Welsh Government, in that public sector is one estate and can share facilities, which is further supported with staff working in an agile manner as a result of the Pandemic. The Committee were asked to note however, that as a result of the pandemic and the vaccination centre in Penallta House, these facilities are not currently available.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report selected recovery priorities be noted.

## **8. CAERPHILLY PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20**

The Annual Report of the Caerphilly Public Services Board (PSB) for 2019/20 highlighted progress made against the 'Caerphilly We Want 2018-2023' Well-being Plan.

The report covered a longer 16-month period, as all partners have inevitably been involved in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. Taking a longer timeframe has allowed to showcase some of the amazing public and community sector responses to supporting communities through the public health crisis.

A video story was provided within the report, which was structured around the 4 Well-being Objectives the PSB has set itself; Positive Change, Positive Start, Positive People and Positive Places. Objectives are underpinned by Action Areas, with progress on each discussed throughout the report.

It was noted that the past 6 months have been an unprecedented time for public services and local communities. The Caerphilly PSB has responded to these challenges by building on its already strong partnerships working for community well-being.

In addition, the Committee were provided with a demonstration of the report and video using Microsoft Sway.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By show of hand this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report the Caerphilly Public Services Board Annual Report 2019-20 be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.57pm

Approved as a correct record, subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on the 15th July 2021.

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CHAIR