



## **SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022**

**SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY CARES YEAR ONE EVALUATION**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND  
HOUSING**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update on progress and a first-year evaluation of the Caerphilly Cares Service as a follow up to the report received by Scrutiny Committee on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 As a result of the pandemic our communities have and will continue to suffer from economic, health and other social challenges. Well-being issues and inequalities existed in our communities before the pandemic, which has only served to exacerbate these and the coming months and probably years could prove particularly difficult as a result. However, conversely, the pandemic also resulted in strengthening of resilience both individually and at community level.
- 2.2 In February 2021 Cabinet endorsed the establishment of the Caerphilly Cares service and associated resources. The service was subsequently launched in April 2021 and the following report provides both an update on its implementation and an evaluation of the service to date.
- 2.3 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 underpins the delivery of Caerphilly Cares, providing support at the earliest point to reduce the need for statutory intervention and helping people to help themselves. Ensuring the 'what matters conversation' is intrinsic to all support offered and is relevant and directed by the individual not the professional deciding what someone needs.
- 2.4 The ethos of Caerphilly Cares is about a changing relationship with our residents and communities, it's about mobilising assets within communities, promoting independence and increasing people's control over their own lives. It is a key strand within the Council's Strategic Recovery Framework Principle four, which aims to wrap support around individuals and communities and enable them to help themselves prosper and grow.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the content of this report.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 The introduction of Caerphilly Cares has seen a significant number of people present themselves to the Council for the first time. Individuals have requested support directly due to COVID-19 but also people have been identified with unmet need who could have 'fallen through the net'.

### **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 Caerphilly Cares (CC) was officially launched in April 2021 and the following implementation processes have since been established.

Member seminars have been held and an information package with referral contact numbers was provided. Members have started signposting and directly referring to Caerphilly Cares and the numbers and issues are being monitored as part of the monitoring process.

A community services directory has been created containing details of universal services, as well as more localised community provision. Public and staff pages have been developed and these are now live on Dewis providing a Caerphilly Cares professional view as well as a Caerphilly Cares public view.

A 'What Matters' briefing session has been developed for staff, to support their conversations with vulnerable people to ensure that the discussions are person centred with 'how can you help yourself' being the starting point. Alongside this members of the team have completed the Connect 5 train the trainer course, which is a Health Board brief intervention course for mental wellbeing. Both are initially being delivered to Caerphilly Cares staff and then included in the programme of training available to volunteers. This will mean the reach of the training will be much wider, not only benefitting the volunteers and their personal development but also the people they are supporting in the community.

The Caerphilly Cares team has undergone a range of training both formally and informally. All members of staff are at least Level 2 trained in Safeguarding, with 3 Co-ordinators/managers having completed train the trainer to deliver Safeguarding to staff & volunteers. They are part of the bi-monthly Peer Mentor group for Safeguarding training. As well as delivering training to staff, the Co-ordinators have delivered Level 2 Safeguarding to groups of volunteers from the Buddy Scheme and lead volunteers from local charities.

Mental Health Awareness/First aid is a core requirement for the team and a refresher is due this year. It has been identified that all team members need more enhanced training around Suicide Prevention and how to support people living with suicidal thoughts. The need for a coordinated approach to staff training is required moving forward for consistency and to maintain high standards of service.

The team has been trained to use and now has access to Abavus, Capita, WCCIS and Volunteering Wales so they can access existing data on individuals referred to the

service. A new Abavus recording system has been developed with support from the Customer Services team to help document the resident journey and cross reference to any existing issues elsewhere within the authority. Case studies are continually being compiled.

A forum for volunteer led organisations across the borough to network and encourage peer to peer support has been established. As has a network of all organisations supporting the food insecurity agenda. The groups established common goals, issues and identified areas for joint working/delivery such as training for volunteers and leaders of the community organisations to support their volunteers and sharing foodbank stock.

Collaborative working is also being developed with Health through the Integrated Well Being network and Neighbourhood Care network, which includes health and social care services including GPs. Caerphilly Cares will form part of the workplan for the Integrated Partnership Board.

Over the last year Caerphilly Cares has evolved into three key interconnected areas and the report will provide an update on progress of each strand as well as Caerphilly Cares response to new and immediate demands because of the constantly changing landscape as well as our initial findings and conclusion so far. The key areas are as follows:

### **Caerphilly Cares Gateway**

Since its inception, the Caerphilly Cares Duty Team has received over **1200** calls and **500** emails asking for help. The team has made **330** referrals to appropriate partners & services to provide relevant support. Of the **1200** calls received, over **850** have been direct from residents who have learned of the service over the past several months, it is extremely encouraging that knowledge of the team and the support they provide is becoming more widely known.

Further to the daily one to one support provided by the team, we have also helped in supporting the Benefits team in taking calls around both the Isolation grant and Winter Fuel payments as well as supporting people with transport for their vaccinations. From speaking to these residents, we have been able to identify a plethora of other issues that may not have been reported and have helped to resolve many outstanding problems as part of our case-loaded approach.

There are several key themes identified through caseloads to date, the most common ones being:

- Financial insecurity
- Mental health (all tiers)
- Bereavement
- Physical mobility
- Drug and Alcohol dependencies
- Fibromyalgia
- Obesity
- Isolation
- Domestic Abuse

Due to the impact of the pandemic on the lives of vulnerable people and the needs presented, the focus to date has been within the Social Services and Housing Directorate, where process mapping sessions have been completed with various teams to help shape and develop Caerphilly Cares as a service area that can directly respond to identified need.

- Housing

Several networks have been created at both a management and operational level. There are some strong examples of how the team has worked with individual housing officers and how this has had a positive outcome for several residents. Case studies for these are included in appendix 1 of the report.

Excellent links and referral pathways have been established with the Caerphilly Homes Rents team, which now has a dedicated team with a number of staff funded directly through Caerphilly Cares. In the 12-month period to January 2022 the team has supported eligible residents to claim substantial amounts of additional income. This has been achieved through a two-fold approach:

- For “at risk” residents the team reacted to their immediate crisis by carrying out an analytical review of the benefits in payment and the potential additional entitlement.
- A more proactive approach was also developed using key datasets from the Council systems to identify residents not claiming their full entitlement to benefits. This model has shown that, without support, vulnerable tenants are often unable to fully claim their entitlement to a range of benefits.

Since January 2021 the team has supported **788** eligible residents in gaining additional annual income in excess of **£3m**. This support has been life changing for many of our residents and the quotes highlighted in the appendix give an insight into the difference the team is making to resident’s lives.

The focus moving into year two will be to ensure a seamless transition for residents moving between the two. Management and staff meet regularly to respond to local and national need and any trends that have been identified.

Co-location has been vital to this success in community hubs such as Hafod Deg in Rhymney. Having holistic support and advice on hand has enabled Housing and Caerphilly Cares officers to provide ‘warm handovers’ for sensitive cases, which not only offers excellent customer service but also reduces the risk of disengagement with the person.

With the quality of housing such a key area in a person’s well-being plans are now in process to map how we enhance working together moving forward. There are opportunities to work more collaboratively and incorporate support from Caerphilly Cares within the Common Allocation Policy, as well as supporting the wider customer engagement agenda. Plans to develop pathways for referrals with the Common Housing Register and Housing Solutions Team are being developed and workshops are to be arranged to take this forward. All of which will be explored further with the Head of Housing and the Housing Management team.

- Community Connectors

Supporting isolated people is a key component of the Community Connectors role. With several services across the Council also addressing social isolation, it is crucial to avoid duplication. There are several service areas now working closely to avoid this. Process mapping sessions have been undertaken and the delivery teams are working well together in the community to ensure people receive the most appropriate support. The management team has arranged to meet regularly as have the delivery teams to discuss specific cases and to shape working patterns moving forward.

For example, the Caerphilly Cares team has agreed that the more complex cases will be referred to the Community connectors for an intense period of support. For the less complex cases the CC team will refer/work with the community element of CC to empower people to be part of projects in the community and get involved where appropriate. The team offers a 'warm handover' whenever referrals are made.

The IAA Duty team - Positive working relationships have developed with appropriate referrals moving in and out of each team. Both teams are clear on what / how to refer between each other.

Mental Health Multi-Disciplinary teams – As this theme is reflected across most referrals to varying degrees discussions between teams is on-going, with an agreement to work jointly on individual cases. Support is being provided to the Caerphilly Cares team on a case-by-case basis to enter formal mental health support services when needed. For example, there are several people living with suicidal thoughts waiting sometimes up to six or seven months for support. More work needs to be done around mental health and the emerging gaps. There may be an opportunity to provide a specialist post between Caerphilly Cares and the Mental Health Wellbeing team to support individuals who are on the Caerphilly Cares caseload, and this will be explored further.

Customer Service team - Process mapping sessions have taken place to ensure appropriate referrals are made, the front facing staff have been briefed and the teams are in regular contact. Regular briefings will take place moving forward.

**Strengthening communities – where approaches involve building on community capacities to take action together**

The Caerphilly Cares team has been maintaining and supporting existing community groups over the past year as well as the new 'Covid' self-help groups which set up in the first phase of the pandemic. The 2 Covid specific groups, the Trethomas based CARE project and the Risca CV19 (RCV UK) group have made great strides not only in the emergency food supplies and pharmacy collections, but, in this past year diversifying into social supermarkets and community transport for hospital appointments at the Grange and the Royal Gwent. This has been in addition to the many community organisations that have diversified their activities to suit the loneliness agenda and self help support locally. Some examples of these, where restrictions have permitted, and risk assessments carried out are:

- Trinity church in Ystrad Mynach has been supported to become a food Co-op.
- Evolution Fitness Community Interest Company in Ystrad Mynach has been supported to install a wellbeing kitchen into the gym, once completed the gym will run wellbeing projects for vulnerable people.
- Bargoed Community Hub has been supported to apply to the Food Poverty Grant.
- Suits You - Project to provide suitable work and interview wear, training opportunities now working with The Working Wardrobe.
- Supported the Parent network to host virtual cooking projects during lockdown periods. Food was delivered to families by a Parent Network member of staff and a check in on the doorstep took place. Several safeguarding referrals were made as a consequence of these doorstep calls, demonstrating the need people had for face-to-face support.
- Worked with Derwen deg primary school in partnership with CCBC Waste management to develop a community book written by children for children explaining the importance of reducing our plastic consumption and encourage the reuse/green culture.
- Worked with Upper Rhymney primary school in partnership with Welsh Water, who had community benefits funding, to write a book to help people understand how to stop the block and only flush the three 'P's down the toilet. (Pee, Poo and Paper)
- Worked with White Rose primary school to develop a book which explored the community development world. This book will now become part of the core Parents Engaging To Raise Expectations (PETRA) books in the range that will be a teaching resource for all the schools in Caerphilly.
- Supported Philipstown Forever to administer financial support to local people who may be experiencing hardship due to furlough, or loss of a job during the lockdown periods.
- Supported Philipstown community house to establish a community hub with several partner agencies running an outreach session. These include Caerphilly Cares, Housing tenancy support, Estate management officer, Careers Wales, Foodbank.
- Rhymney Men in Sheds group has continued in several formats throughout the year. Online sessions took place to maintain a supportive relationship and nature walks have continued when lockdowns ended.
- A mental health art group has been running from Hafod Deg resource centre, restrictions permitted.
- Basic skills classes have been running from Hafod Deg each week, where a mixed approach to learning English literacy and numeracy has been taken.
- Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) has been running appointments from Hafod Deg resource centre allowing people to have face to face supportive appointments.
- The TLC Café in Risca- with successful funding from WG Keep Wales Tidy created a small wildlife friendly garden filled with a variety of habitats for pollinators to thrive.

- The TLC Café has restarted the woodworking classes which tackle loneliness and isolation in the community whilst encouraging them to craft things from recycled wood.
- Secured Food Poverty Grant for the building of 2 bespoke raised beds and established a Fare Share scheme and community fridge scheme in TLC café.

The team has also been doing extensive work setting up and assisting foodbanks, Fareshare schemes and other food poverty initiatives, obtaining Welsh Government funding to employ a Food Development Officer to focus specifically on this area. Foodbanks came under significant pressure as volunteers self-isolated and donations dried up. A system has been put in place to support provision with vouchers, donations, and delivery. Over 2000 people have received foodbank support.

Some of the other food insecurity projects developed to date are as follow:

- Food Bank/Fare Share Directory - being developed in partnership with Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) and the Rural Development Programme (RDP) team to identify community groups and voluntary organisations offering services across the borough. This will be used to provide information to appropriate agencies on need and services required.
- Community Cooking Champion Project / supported by Morrisons - A “Community Cook Champions” project in partnership with the Catering department as part of the corporate volunteering policy. Catering is formulating the 8-week course, and this will be marketed through the Morrison’s Stores and promoted via our communications department. The pilot will be run in February with a view to rolling out across the borough and using our food banks and fare share organisations to enable people to help learn to cook using vegetables and the ingredients they have with basic recipes and cooking skills. Once they have completed the project Morrison’s have agreed to supply a cooking pack to each attendee.
- Food Poverty Grant - To date 12 grants have been awarded ranging from community gardens, youth cooking classes to Food Bank support.
- Food Poverty and Insecurity Grant - Whilst the allocation of this grant was delayed from Welsh Government the draw down has now started.
- Community growing Projects - Working with the RDP team to promote the Community Growing Funding from Welsh Government.
- Celebratory Event for Community Groups and Businesses- An event in partnership with the RDP team, Procurement, and community groups to celebrate local food and produce, which will be the catalyst for developing a co-ordinated approach to tackling food poverty and insecurity across the borough.

It is envisaged that with the easing of restrictions and a return to ‘normality’ that this element of Caerphilly Cares will grow and expand.

## **Volunteering, including corporate volunteering**

### **Background**

The volunteering focused work of the Caerphilly Cares service began with the volunteering scheme known locally as the ‘Buddy’ scheme. This scheme was set up

by Team Caerphilly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 to support the most vulnerable people in the community with practical support (shopping, prescription collection, befriending phone calls etc). Initially delivered using CCBC employees that were either redeployed or came forward as volunteers, the scheme was very much a response to the immediate crisis. However, following the easing of restrictions in the summer of 2020 & staff returning to their substantive posts, it was handed over to the Caerphilly Cares team to manage and has evolved into a wider community support scheme.

### **'Buddy' Scheme Progress & Review**

Implementation of new working arrangements and partnership activity to facilitate the next stage of the project began in September 2020. The initial work of the Caerphilly Cares team was to contact all the volunteers to establish if they were still providing support to vulnerable people. Many had, in agreement with the people they were matched with, ceased support due to the lifting of restrictions. The team also completed follow up calls with the vulnerable people to ensure that everyone who still needed support had access to it. As a result, the numbers registered as part of the scheme were greatly reduced.

GAVO contributed funding to a post to lead on the administration & co-ordination of the volunteers, signing all volunteers up via Volunteering Wales (online system). The *Community Response Volunteer Co-ordinator* post is currently employed by GAVO but managed in partnership with the council.

During the year, the demand for volunteers has largely remained stable. In the early part of the year (March-April 21) the number of available volunteers was higher than the number of vulnerable people needing support and as such the project was left to 'tick over' as demands on other areas of Caerphilly Cares work took precedence (opening of venues, establishing reporting systems & referral pathways etc.). However, as the team has become more established in the organisation, the incremental increase in self-referrals & caseloads for the Caerphilly Cares team has had an impact on increased demand for the support of volunteers as part of the 'Buddy' scheme. In recent months (October 21 – January 2022) this has 'tipped the balance' and there is currently a waiting list of people requesting a Buddy volunteer. The recruitment of new volunteers will be a priority as we enter 2022.

Discussions with GAVO regarding the future of the *Community Response Volunteer Co-ordinator* post were held during January 2022. The post is fixed term until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, when funding secured by GAVO to contribute the salary ends. An agreement has been made to use external funding secured from the WCVA's Strategic Volunteering Grant to transfer this resource to support the administration of CCBC's Employee Scheme. The Buddy Scheme will be merged with the Social Services Befriending Service by the end of the financial year (details in section below).

It has become apparent that whilst GAVO has been managing the volunteers there is a gap in a point of contact for support for the vulnerable people they are matched with. This is more so the case for people who have retained their 'Buddy' from the initial lockdown. As many directly contacted the council for support, there is no 'case manager' to refer to, which would be the case for individuals referred by officers internally or externally. Therefore, if/when queries have arisen (hospital admissions, welfare concerns etc) the team have had to respond in an ad hoc fashion. Going forward this process will be formalised and access to the WCCIS system will support the team in identifying if/when services are involved with a vulnerable person.



Linked to this, close relationships with the wellbeing (caseload) arm of the team will be vital, particularly for self-referrals into Caerphilly Cares. Whilst the volunteers can provide some practical and emotional & social support, it is likely that vulnerable & isolated community members will also have wider support needs, even if they are not immediately apparent. Relationships with the community development workers but also key partner teams such as the Community Connectors will be a priority to ensure vulnerable people are actively linked with their communities and/or activities can be developed to meet the emerging needs of isolated individuals. Continued working relationships between the Caerphilly Cares and Community Connector teams will be vital to avoid duplication of effort and resources and make best use of the staff resources working out in the community.

### **Services Volunteer (Befriending) Service**

The Volunteer Service within Social Services is very well established within the Directorate and matches volunteers with individuals referred by Social Work teams from Older People, Learning disabilities and Physical Disabilities/Sensory Impairment (PDSI). The volunteers offered support on a 1:1 friendship basis, pursuing shared interests within the community, in residential/day care settings and social clubs. However due to the high levels of demand on Social Services the service has not been operational during pandemic.

The volunteer service has 2 Co-ordinator posts attached to it, covering volunteer induction & management, training, and active promotion of the service to recruit new volunteers.

During the year discussions have been held with Service Managers within Social Services, as part of the establishment of referral pathways and integration of Caerphilly Cares in the Directorate. During these discussions it became apparent that the incorporation of the befriending service within Caerphilly Cares would be a natural fit given links to the Buddy Scheme and the community development agenda.

Rather than operate two projects Caerphilly Cares will merge the 'Buddy' scheme & Befriending Service into one scheme, which will be open to referrals from Social Services and those individuals not under services. This will ensure the alignment of the schemes and standardise processes and procedures including safeguarding requirements. DBS checks for volunteers will be carried out by HR and Workforce Development service has agreed that volunteers will continue to have access to training opportunities. Safeguarding level 2 training was delivered to groups of volunteers during the year and will continue to be delivered to new volunteers registering with the scheme following relaunch

1:1 friendship with individuals by volunteers could stay within remit of the volunteering work stream. Support for social groups (as separate bodies with own bank accounts, committees etc.) could be picked up within the community development work stream so they would benefit from advice & guidance and access to future funding streams.

The merger is scheduled to take place in April 2022 at the start of the new financial year, when the scheme will be relaunched and promoted linked to the CCBC Employee Volunteering Scheme.

### **CCBC Employee Volunteering Scheme**

Caerphilly Cares has been an active member of the internal working group established by Corporate Policy to develop the Employee Volunteering Scheme during the year.

The scheme was fully endorsed by CMT and finally launched in October 2021. Following discussions with Policy it has been agreed that the Caerphilly Cares team will be responsible for the delivery of the scheme, acting as a point of contact for employee & manager queries. The Caerphilly Cares team will utilise existing relationships with community groups and organisations to identify projects/activities that could benefit from additional volunteers and promote these opportunities to staff. Partnership working with GAVO will also continue in this regard.

The scheme was developed using Volunteering Wales system to record & report on volunteer engagement. This system is used by CVCs on a Wales wide basis and is contract managed by the WCVA. Caerphilly Cares has been set up as a 'provider' on the system, registering volunteers for the Buddy Scheme and other CCBC opportunities including Free School Meal deliveries, as well as opportunities in key partner organisations such as the Foodbanks. Whilst a useful, centralised electronic system for volunteer registration and recording it is not without flaws. During January 2022 was a tender process for a new system, which the WCVA hope will be fit for purpose. Caerphilly Cares has contributed to the design of said system based on the emerging needs of the Employee Volunteering Scheme.

Linked to this, Caerphilly Cares was successful in securing funding from the Strategic Volunteering Grant. The WCVA was very impressed by CCBC's approach to volunteering and whilst issued on a short-term basis (ending in June 2022) they are keen to discover if it can be replicated (pilot) across other local authorities.

Initial discussions have been held with Leisure regarding the identification of Council owned community centres that could benefit from volunteers and almost all committees currently have vacancies. This will be developed as an opportunity & promoted via the Volunteering Wales platform. A volunteer opportunity has also been developed by the Armed Forces Covenant Officer to support the weekly Veteran Hub (run out of the Centre of Sporting Excellence) and has been published on the Caerphilly Cares page.

Monitoring measures for the scheme have been agreed with a date for an annual review during September 2022. Whilst there are qualitative measures in place including number of employees signed up, volunteer hours contributed, leave of absence taken etc. it is worth noting that the level of 'take up' of the scheme needs to be viewed within the context of the current environment and should not be the main measure of its success. Many departments are operating at capacity and the community (including employees) continue to struggle with the implications of the pandemic on many levels, therefore volunteering may not be at the forefront of people's minds. That said, the fact the policy is in place and the support that has and will be developed to support opportunities for staff can only be a positive. Qualitative measures including case studies, will be captured to document the impact of the scheme on both the volunteer and the community.

### **Funding secured**

WCVA Strategic Volunteering Grant - £29,927.50 to be spent by 30/06/22

Welsh Government Isolation & Loneliness Grant - £22,727 to be spent by 31/03/22

### **Future work within the work stream**

The following are suggested routes for development of volunteering work within the organisation, which would be subject to appropriate levels of resources.

- **Co-ordination of schemes** – formation of an internal network group, including the development of a 'bank' of volunteers to respond to short term needs or emergencies.
- **Training** – link with workforce development & other training providers to develop a package for volunteers
- **Standards** - Establish minimum standards/expectations for all CCBC volunteering opportunities following WCVA's Code of Practice.
- **Volunteering as a route to employment** – link with employment support programmes & Workforce Planning to support recruitment into the organisation.
- **Crisis/emergency planning situations** – roles & co-ordination of volunteers in response to emergencies such as flooding etc. in conjunction with relevant departments.

## 5.2 Conclusion

If Caerphilly Cares had not been implemented the pressure on other Council Services is likely to have been far greater. And whilst this is not clearly demonstrable at this point in time, if Caerphilly Cares had not been implemented over **1,700** people could have 'slipped through the net', **788** people would not have had their income maximised and over **2000** people would not have had food. As awareness of Caerphilly Cares grows and the impact of COVID-19 continues to be felt this number is likely to grow substantially.

However, Caerphilly Cares is not a 'service' that operates in isolation, it reflects the ethos of the Transformation Strategy # Team Caerphilly Better Together that influences how we engage with our residents and how our services respond. COVID-19 has created intense pressures on local authorities to respond to unprecedented challenges. Communities have become even more reliant on public services and as a result, building social resilience and self-reliance in citizens is even more important than ever. With potential budgetary pressures due to changing patterns of demands and lingering levels of dependency we will also need to continue to deal with the longer-term impact of the pandemic alongside driving forward any plans for longer-term transformational change. The need for strong networks, effective communication and collaboration across services and programmes that support our residents is essential to achieve this aim.

The vision is for a much larger range of services to work collaboratively 'under the umbrella' of Caerphilly Cares, whether virtually or in holistic service provision hubs in the community.

To date, due to COVID-19, the focus for Caerphilly Cares has been on supporting the most vulnerable directly impacted by the pandemic. Now as we are, hopefully, moving out of the pandemic, we need to re-examine how we intend to support our residents moving forward. To respond to the recovery and build on the work undertaken to date to support our communities, it is felt there is the need to re-establish an anti-poverty group, that can oversee our response and re-focus our activity to citizens, through a more collaborative approach. The group will identify the interface between services internally and make best use of resources to respond to a wide range of community needs to develop further resilience for the Borough.

## 6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 We anticipate our communities will suffer from economic, health and other social challenges as a result of the pandemic for years to come. The gap between the most deprived and the most affluent has widened, and with the increase in living costs, fuel costs, National Insurance, and inflation this is likely to be exacerbated.

This highlights the need to take an in depth look on how we intend to support our communities moving forward to respond to the anticipated growing demand for support.

## 7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is for information only and on this basis an integrated impact assessment is not required.

## 8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Caerphilly Cares has been successful in attracting funding over the last year to ensure elements of support offered to the most vulnerable is able to continue throughout the pandemic. For the 2021/22 financial year, over £1.2m has been secured to fund and further develop the team as well enhance services provided to its residents by CCBC and key partners.

Project	Funder	Amount
Caerphilly Cares	CCBC	£284,000.00
Legacy (CCG)	WG	£587,044.28
Food Poverty	WG	£133,070.39
Food Insecurity	WG	£112,007.90
Covid Hub Support (Rhymney)	WG	£35,000.00
Welsh Procurement Alliance	Community Foundation Wales	£16,666.00
Volunteer Strategic Grant	WCVA	£29,927.50
Loneliness & Social Isolation	WG	£22,727.00
		<b>£1,220,443.07</b>

The above funding has enabled key community-based initiatives to continue throughout the pandemic and offer residents supportive solutions during a turbulent time. We have been able to enhance foodbank provision throughout the borough by providing vital resources to voluntary groups and achieve long term sustainability which has been invaluable to residents and families who have found themselves in financial difficulties.

We have also been able to financially maintain the upkeep of our community hub buildings, which provide bases for key services such as Housing Support, Citizens Advice, Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS), Foodbanks and FareShare sessions to be delivered. These hubs will continue to play a key part of our service as we gradually move back to face to face support and helping to residents to integrate back into their communities. The provision of IT related resources for residents is also a priority going forward and we are working with Education & Libraries to enhance equipment throughout the borough.

We continue to develop our partnership with GAVO around the volunteering agenda and fund several key resources through the grants.

Since the new year, we have rolled out the Loneliness & Social Isolation grant to local groups and organisations to encourage engagement and activity within communities.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 For Caerphilly Cares to respond to growing need additional staff support will be required. Job Descriptions may also need to be amended to reflect changing / emerging need.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

- 10.1 This report has been sent to the Consultees listed below and all comments received are reflected in this report.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 None.

Author: Tina McMahon, Community Regeneration Manager

Consultees: Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive  
Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services and Housing  
Cllr Shayne Cooke, Cabinet Member for Social Care  
Councillor Donna Cushing, Chair - Social Services Scrutiny  
Councillor Carmen Bezzina, Vice Chair - Social Services Scrutiny  
Ed Edmunds, Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services  
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy, Finance  
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer  
Steven Harris, Head of Financial Services & S.151 Officer  
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services  
Nick Taylor - Williams, Head of Housing  
Fiona Wilkins, Housing Service Manager  
Kerry Denman, Housing Solutions Manager  
Jane Roberts-Waite, Strategic Coordination Manager  
Sandra Issacs, Rents Manager  
Viv Daye, Service Manager Commissioning  
Nicola Barrett, Service Manager  
Rod Couper, Senior Social Work Practitioner  
Hayley Lancaster, Senior Communications Officer

Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities, Welsh Language and Consultation)

Background Papers:

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Case Studies and Testimonials