



CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

A meeting of the
RCT CHARITY FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED CABINET COMMITTEE
will be held at
Block F, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX
WEDNESDAY, 19TH DECEMBER, 2018 at 2.00 PM

Contact: Emma Wilkins - Council Business Unit (Tel No. 01443 424110)

Non Committee Members and Members of the public may request the facility to address the Committee at their meetings on the business listed although facilitation of this request is at the discretion of the Chair. It is kindly asked that such notification is made by **Monday 17th December, 2018** on the contact details listed above, including stipulating whether the address will be in Welsh or English.

LIST OF ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct

Note:

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest: and
2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chairman when they leave.

2. MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th February, 2017.

(Pages 3 - 6)

3. RHONDDA CYNON TAF TRUST FUND FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE

To receive the report of the Group Director, Community & Children's Services, updating the Trustees on the current service provided to citizens within Rhondda Cynon Taf by Cardiff Institute for the Blind and seeking a way forward in respect of funding.

(Pages 7 - 12)

4. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any items, which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.



Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services

Circulation:-

Members of the Cabinet Committee:

County Borough Councillors Councillor G Hopkins (Chair), Councillor C Leyshon, Councillor R Lewis and Councillor M Norris

Mr C Jones, Director, Legal & Democratic Services

Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services

OFFICIAL ATTENDANCE OF RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL'S CHARITY FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED CABINET COMMITTEE.

Minutes of the meeting of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Charity for the Visually Impaired Cabinet Committee on the 28th February 2017 at 2pm at the Council Headquarters, Clydach Vale.

County Borough Councillors in attendance:-

G Hopkins – Chairman

M Norris

M Forey

RCT Council:-

L Bridgman, Y Powell, S Evans

Cardiff Institute for the Blind:-

K Harris – Director of Operations

4. UPDATE TO THE LEADER'S SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Head of Legal – Corporate & Democratic Services informed Members that he had been notified of an amendment which had been made to the Leader's Scheme of Delegation (under Part3A of the Council's Constitution) namely that Councillor M. Norris had replaced Councillor R. Bevan on the Committee.

5. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations of interest made pertaining to items contained within the agenda.

6. MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of 7th July, 2016 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

7. UPDATE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, CARDIFF INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND

The Director of Operations, Cardiff Institute for the Blind, Mr K Harris, provided the Trustees with an update on the success of a recent Big Lottery Fund bid and wider service developments.

It was explained that following the success of a recent application, the organisation had been awarded £500,000 with excellent feedback which complimented their consulting and evidencing. The award would fund a sustainable four year project which would run from April 2017, to work with existing sports and leisure organisations to ensure they are better available and accessible to people with sight

loss. This would include a range of different improvements such as ensuring venues are accessible, better lighting, large print signage and welcoming staff who have an understanding of their needs. Mr Harris advised that the project would entail the recruitment of three new members of staff; one for the Swansea area, one for Cardiff and one for RCT. It was explained that the interview process has already taken place but unfortunately, due to the skill demands, they were still recruiting for the RCT post.

The Chair questioned the responsibilities of the role and it was explained that the successful applicant would be pro-active in speaking to facilitators of voluntary organisations about ways in which they could make simple changes which would not only benefit people with sight loss, but potentially increase their customer intake and revenue. The applicant's main focus would be to work with different teams to ensure people with sight loss know of the opportunities and facilities available.

The Head of Service, Short Term Intervention emphasised the need for the Council and CIB to work in unity, to avoid duplication of the work conducted by the Sensory Service Team. Mr Harris spoke positively on this idea commenting that it would be beneficial to utilise all available contacts to ensure the services in RCT for visually impaired residents continues to be delivered competently.

The Trustees recognised the importance of the duties and the desire to recruit the correct candidate. Questions formulated around the recruitment process and whether all avenues were being utilised. Mr Harris assured that the post was advertised on a number of recruitment websites with officers adding that it would be made available on the RCT website also.

One Trustee questioned whether the funding awarded was allocated to three areas proportionally depending on the size but it was advised that there were no separate allocations per area and that the target was as a whole.

The Chair recognised that the advice given to the groups and centres could range from small improvements such as larger printed signs to greater improvements which may require funding and questioned if the bid would cover these. Mr Harris explained that if improvements should require investment, they would look into further funding such as Community Chest Grants and Sports Council for Wales Grants.

The Head of Service, Short Term Intervention, drew attention to self running groups such as tennis and walking groups which have the potential to be developed as the visually impaired community do not currently have access. The officer recommended DEWIS as a well-populated informative website, commenting that the use of existing frameworks would save time and add value to small groups in the local community.

Trustees agreed that it would be beneficial to first establish the interests of the visually impaired person, and then advise of the local services available to them.

One Trustee raised concerns in respect of the hard to reach individuals, commenting that not all individuals would feel comfortable attending groups which identify with them for their sight loss. The officer agreed that this is the case with many individuals but the concept of the proposed project meant there was a focus to improve all community groups, not ones specifically arranged for people with sight loss.

The officer advised the Committee of another staffing change which would take place at the RCT office, as the case manager had been successful in her application for the Cardiff project role. The Trustees were assured that to maintain the growing success of the office, the handover was being closely managed to ensure a coherent approach. It was explained that due to various new initiatives such as the launch of the National Council Service and Time to Talk telephone service, the role had evolved so it was important to ensure the individual is clear in their duties.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank the Director for his update and congratulate him on the successful lottery bid, commenting that it would be beneficial for the project to be launched across Cwm Taf, in line with the duties of the new Future Generations Act.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- a) That a meeting be held in September, 2017 to discuss progress of the project and future funding options

8. RHONDDA CYNON TAF TRUST FUND FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE

The Head of Service, Short Term Intervention, updated the Trustees of the 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Trust Fund for Blind and Partially Sighted People in RCT' on the service that 'Cardiff Institute for the Blind' was delivering within Rhondda Cynon Taff.

The officer first took the opportunity to update the Trustees regarding the charity's success in obtaining alternative funding and undertaking multiple funding bids to sustain services within Rhondda Cynon Taff.

It was explained that there were currently 342 people RCT citizens signed up to the CIB contact list which provides continuous support and engagement. The Trustees were referred to section 5.4 of the report where a range of services provided were outlined:-

- CIB continue to facilitate and support social groups in Aberdare, Mountain Ash, Pontypridd, Rhydfelin and Ferndale for people who are blind or partially sighted.
- CIB continue to address any issues resulting from home visits and the service continues to provide emotional support to service users. In addition CIB have recently developed a new service called ('Time to Talk' (TtT)) similar to the telebefriending service currently provided but aims more to focus primarily on supporting those people who are newly diagnosed.
- CIB continue to work in partnership with RNIB (in order to signpost individuals to the organisations Counselling and welfare rights services), the Council's sensory impairment service and the Cwm Taf UHB eye clinic liaison officer.
- CIB continue to signpost individuals to relevant agencies and accept referrals for services from the Council's sensory and rehabilitation Team.

- CIB continue to raise awareness of the services they provide by attending and facilitating promotional events. Between August and October they visited Prince Charles Hospitals, Festivals, Tesco stores Community Centres and Council events (e.g. Big Bite Welsh Bite 2016)
- CIB continue to provide information and advice about the services they provide via a quarterly newsletter, telephone, website, facebook and twitter.

The officer advised that RNIB had a range of literature available which was not currently promoted in RCT but that this could be an aspect to improve on in the future.

The Trustees were pleased with contents contained within the report, commenting that it would be useful to receive further information in respect of the number of visually impaired residents signed up to the contact list in comparison to the number who actively engage with the service it provides.

The meeting adjourned at 14:40pm

**Councillor G Hopkins
Chair**

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

RHONDDA CYNON TAF CHARITY FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED CABINET COMMITTEE

19TH DECEMBER 2018

RHONDDA CYNON TAF TRUST FUND FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR GERAINT HOPKINS

Authors: Luisa Bridgman- Head of Service, Short Term Intervention,
Community Care-Tel No: 01443 425442
Yvonne Powell, Contracts Officer, Purchasing and
Commissioning Team - Tel No: 01443 425434

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The Board of Trustees of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Trust Fund for the Visually Impaired (the 'Trust Fund') comprises three Cabinet members. This report seeks to update the Trustees regarding the services currently provided by Cardiff Institute for the Blind (t/a RNIB Cymru) to citizens within Rhondda Cynon Taf, which are funded from the Trust Fund, whose reserves are now diminished.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Trust Fund approve the release of the remaining CCLA (Church Charities and Local Authorities) investments in order that these funds can be used to support the existing service for (approximately) an additional year 2019-2020;

2.2 That the Council's Finance (Treasury Management Department), which manages the Trust Fund on a day to day basis, be instructed to release the remaining funds in accordance with 2.1 above;

2.3 Subject to 2.1 above, to note that due to the limited funds available the Trust Fund would thereafter be 'wound up' during the period January-March 2020;

2.4 Trustees are requested to note that once the Trust Fund has been 'wound up' there will be no Cardiff Institute for the Blind (t/a RNIB Cymru) office base (currently in Courthouse Street Pontypridd) within the Rhondda Cynon Taf area; and

- 2.5 Trustees are requested to note that whilst the 'New Places, New Experiences' project funded by the Big Lottery Fund and delivered by an RNIB co-ordinator, will still provide a service to people within Rhondda Cynon Taf, this service is different to that which is being delivered by the Trust Fund monies.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Since April 2012 Cardiff Institute for the Blind (CIB) t/a RNIB Cymru have been providing services to visually impaired people in RCT at an annual cost of £33,000.

- 3.2 At a meeting between CIB and the Trustees on the 28th February 2017, an update was provided on the success of a new initiative funded by Big Lottery Fund. This is a project to engage with visually impaired clients in RCT and Merthyr which encourages participation into mainstream community leisure sport and interest activities.

4. OPTION/ISSUES

- 4.1 At a meeting in October 2018 between Senior Officers of the Council and the Director of Operations for CIB, CIB confirmed that, once the Trust Fund is no longer available, they do not have alternative funding to continue the current service that they are providing within Rhondda Cynon Taff.

- 4.2. CIB did confirm at the meeting that, as part of their contingency plan, they would explore the option of continuing the RCT Contact line service by providing a volunteer staff member, this person to be based within their Cardiff branch. Further confirmation will need to be sought to confirm whether or not this option remains deliverable.

- 4.3 CIB confirmed that the community social groups that CIB assist in supporting (i.e. Cynon Valley Vision, Pontypridd Group, the Mountain Ash Group and the SIDS group) could become self-running.

- 4.4 The Trust Fund monies support the running of CIB accommodation costs within Pontypridd. They have confirmed that without continued funding they will not be able to remain within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

- 4.5 There has been no confirmation that CIB will be able to help in providing a percentage of monies to help support the continued provision of the services in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

5. CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 Services provided through the Trust Fund to visually impaired people in Rhondda Cynon Taf continue to be delivered competently. These include;

- The contact lines continue to operate to support people who are blind or partially. During 2017-2018 377 RCT citizens were on the CIB contact list, 64% of the clients on the contact list were successfully contacted. Continued attempts were made to communicate with the remaining 35% via house calls.
 - CIB continues to facilitate and support social groups in Aberdare, Mountain Ash, Pontypridd, Rhydfelin for people who are blind or partially sighted.
 - CIB continues to address any issues resulting from home visits and to provide emotional support to service users. During 17-18 a total of 65 home visits were undertaken.
 - CIB continues to work in partnership with RNIB (in order to signpost individuals to the organisations Counselling and welfare rights services), the Council's sensory impairment service and the Cwm Taf UHB eye clinic liaison officer.
 - CIB continues to signpost individuals to relevant agencies and accept referrals for services from the Council's sensory and rehabilitation Team.
 - CIB continues to raise awareness of the services it provides by attending and facilitating promotional events. During 17-18 they visited Treorchy and Tonyrefail comprehensive schools, attended the Trivallis open day and facilitated a sensory loss event in order to provide visual impaired awareness to children and adults in RCT. **(this list is not exhaustive)**
 - CIB continue to provide information and advice about the services they provide via a quarterly newsletter, telephone, website, Facebook and Twitter.
- 5.2 The Big Lottery funded project New Places, New Experiences project delivered in Cardiff, the Vale, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, RCT and Merthyr commenced in RCT and Merthyr in May 2017.
- 5.3 The 'New Places, New Experiences' project engages with and influences the delivery of local sports, leisure and interest services resulting in enhanced, more accessible community services that meet the needs of people with sight loss. It aims to give blind and partially sighted people the knowledge, skills and confidence to try and then continue participating in leisure, sport and interest activities.
- 5.4 The project continues to work with existing mainstream sports and leisure organisations and in close partnership with the local authority to make use of the expertise of local sports development officers, leisure and community services.

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Whilst Trust Fund monies continue to be available, Senior Officers of the Council will work collaboratively with the Director of Operations for CIB to continue exploring options to sustain the current service that they provide for visually impaired people in RCT.
- 6.2 It is proposed that the Trust Fund releases the remaining CCLA (Church Charities and Local Authorities) investments in order that these funds can be used to support the service for (approximately) one additional year 2019-2020 and the Council's Finance (Treasury Management Department) which manages the Trust Fund on a day to day basis, be instructed to release the remaining funds.
- 6.3 If such funds were released for this purpose then due to the limited funds subsequently available the Trust Fund would be 'wound up' during the period January - March 2020. A trust is wound up (brought to an end) when all of the trust's assets are distributed to the beneficiaries or to another trust.
- 6.4 If the Trust Fund is 'wound up' there would be no Cardiff Institute for the Blind (t/a RNIB Cymru) office base (currently in Courthouse Street Pontypridd) within the Rhondda Cynon Taf area.
- 6.5 Whilst the 'New Places, New Experiences' project funded by the Big Lottery Fund and delivered by an RNIB co-ordinator, will still provide a service to people within Rhondda Cynon Taf, this service is different to that which is being delivered by the Trust Fund monies.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Equality impact assessment has not been undertaken at this time as no change to service is proposed.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 As part of the ongoing monitoring of the service contract CIB have provided evidence that they have undertaken consultation on user satisfaction with service users. This evidence has been reviewed as part of the monitoring arrangement by officers of the Council.
- 8.2 Additionally the Council's Monitoring Officer has sought feedback from the Council's Sensory Services Team.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 Please refer to point 2.2 above.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

10.1 Any provision of services commissioned from CIB is considered in accordance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (the "Act"). Local Authorities have a general duty under the Act to promote wellbeing. This duty applies when considering decisions in respect of an individual but also when considering broader strategic issues that do not relate to an individual. In doing so, the overall purpose is to produce a **sustainable and diverse range of care and support services to deliver better**, innovative and cost-effective services and support and promote the wellbeing of every person, and carer.

11. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

11.1 This report supports the [Council's corporate priorities](#), namely:

- People - promoting independence and positive lives for everyone

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 The report seeks to outline the services currently provided by Cardiff Institute for the Blind (t/a RNIB Cymru) to citizens within Rhondda Cynon Taf in order for Trustees to establish a way forward.

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