

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 28 January 2020 at 5.00 pm at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

County Borough Councillors - Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Members in attendance:-

Councillor R Yeo (Chair)

Councillor G Holmes	Councillor A Roberts
Councillor M Forey	Councillor J Davies
Councillor J Williams	Councillor P Howe
Councillor G Stacey	Councillor M Tegg
Councillor G Hughes	Councillor D Owen-Jones
Councillor E Griffiths	

Officers in attendance:-

Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services

Ms L Davies, Service Director – Public Protection Services
Ms W Edwards, Service Director – Community Services
Ms A Hayes, Arts & Creative Industries Manager
Ms A Lewis, Health & Wellbeing Improvement Manager
Mr P Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Ms C O'Neill, Strategic Arts & Culture Manager

County Borough Councillors in attendance:-

Councillor R Lewis and Councillor S Evans

30 Declaration of Interest

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

31 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 19 November 2019 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

32 Consultation Links

The Chairman advised members of the consultation links which were provided for their information and for the Committee to note any consultations that were

relevant to the Committee

33 Report of the Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture & the Welsh Language

The Cabinet Member Communities, Culture & the Welsh Language provided a [presentation](#) to Members that informed them of the current portfolio of duties.

He explained that within his portfolio included the following service areas:

- Prosperity & Regeneration (including WG/ESF employment programmes)
- Theatres & Arts Development
- Public Health & Protection
- Licensing & Registrars
- Cemeteries & Crematoria
- Community Support & Well-being (including Communities First)
- RCT Together & Support for the Voluntary Sector
- Affordable & Supported Housing
- Community Safety
- Family Support Service

Members were informed of the key themes within the portfolio which included the Cwm Taf Public Service Board, Our Valleys, Our Future Delivery Plan and the Welsh Government's Children's First initiative and ACES

The Cabinet Member Communities, Culture & the Welsh Language also advised members of the following services that fall within his portfolio and provided them with an update on the work undertaken to date.

- WAO Report Environmental Services
- EU Settlement scheme
- Food Hygiene
- PSPO
- Supporting People/Homelessness
- Community Safety
- Agile working

The Cabinet Member also provided information in relation to the following services that he is responsible for:

Community Hubs

- Two new Community Hubs were opened – including Canolfan Pennar and Yr Hwb at Ferndale. These facilities include a range of community services, including a library, access to employment support, community rooms, and a community cafe at Canolfan Pennar and childcare provision at Yr Hwb.
- Both facilities have been embraced by their local communities. Canolfan Pennar has had 85,217 visitors to the end of December 2019, In Ferndale, visitors to the library have increased by approximately 30%.
- Work has commenced on Porth Plaza to reconfigure the building into a Community Hub and the Hub at Llys Cadwyn in Pontypridd will open in March 2020.
- The priorities going forward for Community Development will be the

completion of the next three Community Hubs (Porth, Llys Cadwyn and Treorchy) and work with Awen Cultural Trust to implement a plan of the reopening and restoration of the Muni Arts Centre in Pontypridd.

RCT Together

- Since commencing in 2015, “RCT Together” has received 258 enquiries about community asset transfers; 165 expressions of interest and 64 business plans. These have led to 18 leases being granted and 12 licences/tenancies at will being made for a range of community assets. It is estimated that this has levered in approximately £9million of investment by the third sector.
- The Council has a comprehensive employment programme and employment pathway to support people into work. Communities for Work Plus is funded by the Welsh Government and the programme is the best performing in Wales both in respect of the number of engagements and job entries.

Libraries

- The recent Welsh Public Library Assessment for 2018/19 confirms that the library service meets all twelve core entitlements specified in the Welsh Public Library Standards.
- In 2018/19 the libraries received 727,922 visits and issued 439,094 library materials. The trend in visit numbers since 2013/14 has been downwards, however recent investment in several libraries such as Tonypany, Rhydyfelin and Llantrisant and the developments at the Community Hubs in Ferndale and Mountain Ash may capture this trend.
- Our priorities going forward for Libraries – increase visitor numbers at static libraries and usage of the new mobile library service.

Arts & Creative Industries

- Attendance at targeted events has increased at both theatres with nearly 10,000 attendances at the Coliseum and nearly 6,000 at the Park & Dare during 2018/19.
- RCT theatres are one of only three local authority run theatres in Wales recognised as an Arts Council of Wales Portfolio client and receive funding as a venue and production house.
- The Arts service is also commissioned to provide a range of project to support creative learning and vulnerable children and young people, for example through the Arts & Creative Industries team Youth Arts and SONIG Youth Music Industry programmes.
- Our priorities going forward for Arts – strengthen our public value offer following completion of our participation in the designing public value programme with Arts Council for Wales, piloting an inter-generational project in Treorchy. Develop a vision for the new Studio at the Park & Dare Theatre. Develop a business plan for the next 5 years.

The Cabinet Member concluded his presentation with an update on resilient families’ service. In 2019, the commissioning team went out to tender for the

provision of an RCT wide independent school based counselling service for children and young people aged between 7-25. The contract was reconfigured to close a gap in provision for children aged 7 to 10 years who had experienced a loss or trauma.

He explained that the priorities for the service included:

- Further building a presence of all Community Well-being and Resilience services within the Community Hubs to raise awareness of service on offer for and deliver support to activities within localities.
- Review commissioning activities in light of the further developments around the CCG and funding flexibilities/alignment.
- Secure ministerial approval for the Early Years transformation proposals and the implementation of a universal needs based approach for Early Years services across RCT.

The Cabinet Member concluded that as part of his portfolio he had also been appointed the Climate Change Champion and was a member of the Police and Crime Panel that holds the Police and Crime Commissioner to account.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for the comprehensive presentation of his portfolio and invited questions from the Committee

A Member asked if the Cabinet Member could expand upon the resilient families' service and explain a little more what it was about.

The Cabinet Member explained that the service was very much an early intervention approach to prevent the matter escalating further where we may have had to intervene on a statutory nature. Families are offered an intensive 6 week support package to support them with many various complex issues. Families are provided with a brokerage of support services and could be signposted to various support that is available to them, support can be offered for up to 12 weeks where required and families could also self-refer into the system and can access a number of support services ranging from housing, mental health, financial debt support.

The Chairman stated he thought it was an excellent service to vulnerable families, and with this support enable them to come through difficult and complex issues that they may face to allow them to flourish. It helps to prevent future problems and influence positive manner to families.

A member referred to recent negative posts on social media in relation to a food business in RCT and asked if the officer was able to provide comment on the case.

The Service Director Public Protection advised that she was aware of posts on social media and the service had responded in writing to the business in question. She explained that a routine food hygiene inspection was undertaken, which most businesses welcome but this particular business did not. She added that they had been invited in for discussions with officers about the process and their recent inspection. She further added that legal advice had now been sought following their actions during and after the inspection which the Authority believes constituted obstruction. She reiterated that the Authority's role was to protect the public, and the officers involved were undertaking a statutory duty and where businesses do not comply the Council is left with no choice but to

consider initiating legal proceedings.

A Member queried the homelessness issue around the shops in Llantrisant (later clarified by the Member as being Talbot Green and not Llantrisant).

The Cabinet Member stated that homelessness was a complex issue and had many contributory factors and there was also no clear perception of what homelessness is. He stated there were issues such as “Invisible homelessness” which included sofa surfing which was not visible and therefore not easy to remedy. He added that homelessness was a continually changing picture which is requiring more resource due to the number of people presenting themselves as homeless. He advised members that there was also work undertaken with people who are also at risk of becoming homeless so it doesn’t escalate further.

The Service Director Public Protection added that the Committee would be receiving a report on homelessness in February where Members would be advised how the Authority is implementing the Homelessness Strategy. She advised that they would also receive a report on Housing First which was an alternative model that was being piloted as currently, traditional housing options may not be suitable for clients with complex needs.

A Member asked if the Committee could receive within the report, how the Authority works with housing associations. She was concerned that empty properties were being converted but housing associations were showing no interest in using them for social housing in RCT as they felt the demand was not there.

The Service Director Public Protection advised that strategic housing functions sat within the Regeneration Department and a housing needs assessment was key to the Council and Housing Association. She stated that the housing needs assessment would be re-done next year. She suggested that the Scrutiny Committee could ask Strategic Housing Team to come to scrutiny to discuss the findings with members.

A Member stated that the Library’s in RCT provided a fantastic service. He also added that officers from the Public Health team do a fantastic job in their work with the food hygiene assessments and they should be congratulated. He asked officers how the hygiene rating of food outlets was assessed and what criteria were taken into account.

The Service Director Public Protection advised the Committee that the score reflects the officer’s judgement of competence in management of the premises, practices and systems, and structural factors in premises in deriving the overall score. She advised that in RCT 94% of our food businesses achieve a score of 3 and above indicating they are broadly compliant with food law. Anything lower than a three has intensive intervention from officers to support improvement to scores. She added that the outlet can pay a fee, which at £180 was a nationally set fee to have their premises re-inspected and their score would be reassessed to reflect any improvements made. Otherwise, the outlet would have to wait until their next inspection was due to be re-scored. She further added that that RCT has over 2000 premises to inspect.

RESOLVED: Members noted the presentation and update from the Cabinet Member

The Service Director, Public Protection provided an overview of the Welsh Audit Office Report titled ' Delivering with Less – Environmental Health Services – Follow up Review – Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC (2019)

Members were reminded that the WAO undertook an audit in Spring 2019 assessing whether there had been any budget and staff changes within the Council's Environmental Health services since 2014 and the extent to which it had addressed the recommendations included in the 2014 report.

To inform their findings in a follow up review in 2019, WAO interviewed a selection of Officers and the Scrutiny Committee Chair and Cabinet Member, whose remit includes the Council's Environmental Health arrangements. The WAO also reviewed relevant documentation during the audit review, which took place during the period April 2019 to July 2019.

The follow up review identified 3 proposals for improvement, which were recommended as follows:

1. The Council should refresh its analysis of statutory/discretionary environmental health functions to ensure it remains a relevant and robust information base for any future decisions around budgets and service changes.
2. As part of a fresh analysis of statutory/discretionary services in environmental health, the Council should formally agree what constitutes 'required' and 'better' levels of environmental service provision for each service area. This will enable the Council to reinforce the focus on key statutory priorities and make better-informed decisions around future service provision, whilst increasing transparency for residents.
3. The Council should undertake an annual self-assessment of the effectiveness of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in line with an appropriate framework, for example the FRC Corporate Governance Code, to provide additional assurance to members.

The Chairman thanked officers for the very good report and audit findings and stated that it compared well when benchmarked against other Local Authorities.

A Member asked if officers were confident that we have the resilience within the department to respond to large infectious disease outbreaks.

The Officer responded that there was a lot of emphasis on maintaining officer competence, and there was a lot of resilience throughout Wales where officers had undertaken specific training to be able to support cross boundary if needed. She added that there is a system in place where if someone goes to a GP with an infectious disease, we have a duty to investigate and have to do so within strict timescales.

A Member referred to cost savings and staff reduction detailed in the report and asked how this was achieved. The Service Director Public Protection advised that the efficiencies had been achieved where staff had left the Authority and

had not been replaced and assured members that the natural loss of staff had no impact on the service they were providing. She reminded members of the recent change in management structure and advised that the introduction of fees being introduced for pest control had affected the demand for the service and this had resulted in a reduced team for that service.

A Member asked if the Council has the structure and resource in place for what has been recommended.

The Service Director Public Protection stated that she was confident the Council could deliver all statutory services to a good standard whilst also maintaining discretionary services as the resources were currently at a sufficient level. She added that the Service was also able to invest in staff in their professional development to allow them to undertake the responsibilities placed on them.

The Chairman reassured members that having attended meetings with the auditors that he did not have concerns around investment in Public Health

A Member asked if Public Health Wales (PHW) has experience of liaison with Public Health England (PHE) to deal with cross border outbreaks

The Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services advised that there was a process of escalation within the NHS that linked PHW and PHE and PHW had drawn on experience from colleagues at PHE and reassured members there was resilience in that service. He added that he was confident that the service was robust enough to respond to a large outbreak and there was a strong support network place.

RESOLVED: Members noted the report

35 Positive Impacts On Young People Participating And Engaging With The Council's Arts Service

The Strategic Arts and Culture Manager provided the Committee with a report on the positive impact that participating and engaging with the Council's Arts Service during 2018/19 and 2019 to present, has had on the health and wellbeing of the young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Arts Service consists of the Coliseum Theatre and the Park & Dare Theatre (collectively known as RCT Theatres) and an Arts & Creative Industries Team.

Twenty-three young people participated in the 2018/19 Fortitude through Music programme, with young people improving emotional and mental wellbeing, showing positive changes to lifestyle behaviour, and improved resilience. 100% of participants indicated that they were proud of their involvement, whilst 80% said they felt better about life as a result of the project.

Members thanked the Officer for the report and also thanked the young people getting involved and engaging in youth services.

A Member thanked Callum Morgan for attending the meeting and asked him as a young person that had engaged in these programme what benefits he had gained from the scheme?

Callum Morgan told members that he and his friends didn't have a lot to do

previously and they would get bored. He stated that he had felt benefits from being able to sit in a room where your voice and opinion matters and that he was able to support and help others at the same time.

A Member asked if there was any scope to show extra films on a Saturday in the Park and Dare and Coliseum theatres as they were very well attended but the showings were few and far between.

The Service Director Public Protection advised that they have a kids club that runs on a monthly basis and one would also be commencing at Park and Dare soon and that arts and crafts was currently once a month. She added that due to the success it is for that reason that they are developing at Park and Dare and would take a look and see what's possible.

A Member referred to the Miskin Project at Glyncoed where Children Looked After were provided with opportunities for them to access the provision which helped with their confidence and self-esteem, he stated that he had seen the affect these groups have on the children and it has a very positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing

A Member was pleased to hear about the positive development at the theatres and was looking forward to a chance to attend. He asked if any of the services on offer were provided in Welsh as a large part of the area spoke in the medium of Welsh.

The Strategic Arts and Culture Manager advised that they welcome children speaking welsh to be part of the project and they have children writing and performing in the medium of Welsh. She added they also offer workshops through welsh medium and since eisteddfod in Bridgend looking at opp to offer language in Welsh.

Members praised the opportunities that were available for children and stated that it was great for character building and reiterated excellent work that had been undertaken to date on creating the programme of events.

A Member was concerned that the theatre prices were however too expensive for the area and this priced a lot of people out of being able to attend to watch a show.

The Strategic Arts and Culture Manager stated that there would be a review of the hirer and pricing policy next year.

RESOLVED: Members noted the report

36 Raising Awareness of Dementia Friendly Training across Rhondda Cynon Taf

The Health and Wellbeing Improvement Manager presented a report to inform the Committee of the plans to increase the number of Dementia Friends living and working in our communities so that people living with dementia in Rhondda Cynon Taf are better supported.

The Health and Wellbeing Improvement Manager and Health and Wellbeing Improvement Officer (Older People) of the Public Health,

Protection and Community Services department attended a Dementia Friends Champion Induction in 2019. A Dementia Friends Champion is a trained volunteer who runs Information Sessions for friends, family, colleagues and the wider community. The Information Sessions cover key messages so that those attending know about dementia, and help people to think what they could do to help. Attending the Dementia Friends Champion Induction allows them to deliver Dementia Friends Information sessions.

As a result, a Dementia Friends Information session was delivered for Elected Members in October 2019. Other Dementia Friends Information sessions have been delivered to a small number of frontline local authority staff and in the wider community to date.

A meeting was held with representatives from Cardiff Council and the Alzheimer's Society in 2019. Cardiff Council are working towards Dementia Friendly City status and have developed an e-learning module for all members of staff to complete. The delivery method provides an effective way to track the number of Dementia Friends and to raise awareness of Dementia across the workforce. Cardiff Council gave permission for Rhondda Cynon Taf council to utilise the e-learning resources that they have developed. Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Members are requested to support the roll out of the e-learning module to local authority staff as a mandatory requirement from 2020-2021.

Face to face Dementia Friends Information sessions will continue to be delivered where appropriate and where requested by Members, staff, organisations and the wider community.

A Member thanked the officer for the report and recognised the worrying predicted increase of people living with dementia over the coming decades and that the ageing population was increasing the demand on service and so there was a need to develop greater resilience in all communities.

Members agreed that the e-learning module for staff was a great start as we all may know or come across someone affected by dementia when we engage within our roles.

A member stated that an action for health community group could really benefit from the training and asked if they could utilise this and another member stated that the rollout of e-learning amongst Community groups was important as there were more and more cases of dementia confirmed every day.

The Health and Wellbeing Improvement Manager stated she was happy to deliver training sessions to Community Groups and asked Members to get in touch with her or Democratic Services Team to organise.

RESOLVED: Members noted the report and agreed and supported the roll out of

an e-learning module in relation to Dementia Friends to local authority staff and any other relevant groups.

37 Chair's Review and Close

The Chair advised the next meeting would take place on the 24 February 2020

The Chair also advised that the Cwm Taf Morganwg University Health Board would be in attendance at the next Full Council meeting.

38 Urgent Items

None

This meeting closed at 6.52 pm

**CLLR R. YEO
CHAIR.**