



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 24 February 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 A Roberts Councillor J Davies
Councillor P Howe Councillor M Tegg
Councillor G Hughes Councillor D Owen-Jones
Councillor W Jones

Officers in attendance:-

Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr N Elliott, Director of Adult Services
Ms L Davies, Service Director – Public Protection Services
Ms C Emery – Supporting People and Housing Options Manager

County Borough Councillors in attendance:-

Councillor S Evans

39 Declaration of Interest

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

40 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors M. Forey, J Williams, G Stacey, C. Willis, G. Holmes and E.Griffiths.

41 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 7th January 2020 and 28th January 2020 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

42 Consultation Links

The Chair advised Members of the consultation links which were provided for their information and for the Committee to acknowledge any consultations that were relevant to the Committee.

43 Understanding the Council's 2019/20 Budget

The Senior Democratic Service Officer explained to Members that the budget

report would be postponed until 30th March 2020.

44 Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection of Older Adults in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Director of Adult Services provided Members of the Health and Wellbeing Committee with the Outcomes of the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection of older adults in Rhondda Cynon Taf and the progress made since the inspection along with any associated actions in place to ensure continued focus on the areas for improvement identified by CIW.

Members considered the Inspection Outcomes and commented on the outcomes and thanked the officer for a very informative report.

Members **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the information contained in the report and agreed to monitor the progress in the future.

45 Homeless Prevention Strategy Action Plan

The Service Director Public Protection explained to Members that the report provides an update on the delivery of the RCT Homelessness Strategy 2018-2022 that was approved by Cabinet on the 18th December 2018.

The Service Director Public Protection highlighted that Members would recall the Draft Strategy was subject to scrutiny by the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the 6th December 2018.

Members were reminded that the objectives of the Strategy, are:

- **Objective 1.** Preventing homelessness and repeat homelessness from occurring, whenever possible, therefore reducing homelessness.
- **Objective 2.** Ensuring that appropriate support and accommodation including temporary and emergency accommodation is available to meet the needs of homeless and potentially homeless people.
- **Objective 3.** Ensuring people with housing support needs have these fully assessed and have access to services to maintain independent living.

The Officers explained that the Homeless Strategy has a 4 year delivery plan and Members were updated on where we are against the targets.

The Service Director concluded her report by explaining that the homeless review found that our existing services and prevention activity have helped deliver effective results in the face of increasing demands on the services. It is anticipated there will be further increasing demands on Housing Advice, Homelessness and Supporting people going forward.

With regards to the strategic objectives officers explained that the objectives will allow the Council to meet its statutory duties to homeless people and to prevent homelessness in accordance with Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and build on the good work already in progress.

The Chair thanked the Service Director Public Protection for a very comprehensive report and opened up the meeting for Members questions and

observations.

A Member commented on lack of cooperation with outside bodies. He went on to say that trying to access rooms within new developments is a struggle.

In reply the Service Director Public Protection explained that there a range of different housing projects, and we are aiming to move away from emergency accommodation. The Director of Adults Services also explained that with the extra care facilities have temporary beds that accommodated housing rest bite.

Discussions continued and a Member asked if any change to residents on housing benefit and the impact of the Welfare benefit reform, which could cause resident to find themselves in financial difficulty and becoming homeless. It was explained that the local authority are working on early intervention and prevention to limit any effect.

Another Member asked for data on how many homeless people do we have at present in RCT. Officers explained that there are 150 live various cases.

Members commented on the latest flood issues within RCT, Officers explained how the service has responded to the immediate housing needs of flood victims and that we continue to have staff dedicated to supporting displaced households..

A Member commented on the application process for housing and felt that some people would not put themselves forward as on the application form for housing you have to give the landlords detail and many are reluctant to do so as they feel there could be a backlash from them. They were also concerned about any rent arrears being taken into account by the Council allocating social housing.

The Officer explained that when doing the eligibility check debt is not an automatic reason for refusal and understanding the individual circumstances enabling the service to put the right support in place.

Members discussed the report further and **RESOLVED:**

- Acknowledge the report
- To monitor the action plan going forward.

46 New Housing Models related to Housing First

The Supporting People and Housing Option Manager presented Members with an overview of Housing First Developments in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Members were provided with the principles of the “Housing First” Housing Model and update on the delivery of pilot Housing First projects in Rhondda Cynon Taf, along with outcomes achieved to date.

The Officer explained that Housing First is an evidence-based approach to successfully supporting homeless people with high needs and histories of entrenched or repeated homelessness to live in their own homes.

Members were presented with the principles of the Housing First philosophy, which is to provide a stable independent home, and intensive personalised

support and case management to homeless people with multiple and complex needs. These were explained in detail within the report.

The Supporting People and Housing Option Manager highlighted to Members that in Rhondda Cynon Taf the Wisdom Project was set up in 2018 and was the first project in RCT to be developed based on the principles of Housing First. The need for the project was identified through recognition of high-risk individual leaving prison, who would otherwise have been faced with homelessness.

Members were provided with other housing first projects along with examples of the Assertive Outreach Project, Rapid Response Project and Housing First for young people (16-24).

Members found the report very encouraging and asked for clarification on a number of aspects of the schemes with regards to placing individuals with older residents in many complexes. It was explained that this is closely monitored. Members found the case studies the officer's referred to as very enlightening and look forward to seeing the project develop further.

After robust discussion, Members **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the information contained within the report and agreed to receive a progress report at a future meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

47 Chair's Review and Close

The Chair thanked the entire Committee, along with officers for their Reports and recapped on the outcomes of the meeting.

This meeting closed at 7.10 pm

**CLLR R. YEO
CHAIR.**