



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 3 December 2020 at 10.30 am

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

Councillor M Webber	Councillor R Bevan
Councillor A Crimmings	Councillor M Norris
Councillor J Rosser	Councillor R Lewis
Councillor C Leyshon	Councillor G Hopkins

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Mr P Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Mr N Elliott, Director of Adult Services

Others in attendance

Councillor J Williams
Councillor W Jones
Dr L Arthur – Member of the Public and representative of the SCHAC campaign

37 Declaration of Interest

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

38 Modernisation of the Council's Residential Care Home Service for Older People

The Group Director, Community and Children's Services provided the Cabinet with the report, which detailed the outcome of the consultation on the preferred options for the future of the Council's eleven residential care homes for older people and to make further recommendations that, if agreed, would increase the number of retained Council residential care homes to nine, including Garth Olwg and Ystradfechan and redevelop Danymynydd and Bronllwyn to meet identified need for additional accommodation with care and support, including extra care housing.

The Group Director outlined to Cabinet the extensive journey of the Council's intention to improve and modernise the future service delivery model for the Council's residential care homes (and day care services), which had initiated in September 2017, when Cabinet approved a £50m investment plan to develop, in total, 300 extra care beds across Rhondda Cynon Taf and to deliver modern accommodation options to meet the needs and changing expectations of the growing older population.

The Group Director informed the Cabinet that, since the beginning, the approach was based on the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014, which imposes market shaping duties upon the Council and guidance provides that local authorities are required to ensure that there are sufficient, quality services available in the area and that these services are sustainable. The Group Director felt that expectations and needs were changing and that the residents of RCT deserved better.

The Group Director spoke of the results of an independent review commissioned by Practice Solutions Ltd, which Cabinet considered in 2018, which challenged the Local Authority to transform all its facilities to extra care, on the assumption that residential care was not needed. The Group Director explained that in September 2019, Cabinet considered the outcome of the consultation on the proposal to retain a level of residential care home provision and approved a further consultation on the preferred option to retain a level of residential care home provision focussed on complex needs (including dementia), residential respite and respite care. The Group Director referred the Cabinet to appendices B and C, which outlined the full consultation details for consideration.

The Group Director was of the view that the level of consultation and public engagement carried out, along with the number of changes made to the proposals throughout, evidenced that the Local Authority was focussed on ambition, rather than austerity and investment, rather than savings. The Group Director advised that the priority was to ensure older people receive the highest level of services to suit their needs, whilst retaining in-house provision.

Cabinet Members were informed that the report had been considered by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 1st December 2020. The officer advised that following challenge from the Scrutiny Committee Members, they were of the view that the recommendations would result in positive outcomes for the community.

The Group Director referred Members to the appendices of the report, which detailed the proposed site plans for consideration.

The Group Director concluded his initial presentation by extending his thanks to the Director, Adult Services for his tireless work in producing the transparent report before the Cabinet, Practice Solutions for its independent review and to the community for their engagement.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services and the Welsh Language took the opportunity to thank officers for the detailed report and members of the public for their engagement in the extensive consultation process.

The Deputy Leader praised the robust consultation process, which had been carried out and commented that it was vital that the Cabinet considered the

views of the public before making any changes. The Deputy Leader also referred to the observations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and was pleased to note their overall support of the proposals.

The Deputy Leader continued and acknowledged that modernisation and improvements to facilities was necessary and that older people deserve the best outcomes. The Cabinet Member spoke of her visits to the extra care housing such as Ty Heulog in Talbot Green and commented on the superb facilities. The Deputy Leader questioned what provision RCT has for its older people in comparison to other Local Authorities. The Group Director advised that many Local Authorities have opted for a commitment to the Independent Sector entirely or to extra care facilities entirely.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services spoke of the pressures placed upon the Local Authority in terms of austerity and budget cuts and was pleased to note that millions had been invested into facilities for older people and that the intention was to continue with an in-house provision. In addition, the Cabinet Member acknowledged that the needs of older people were changing with many looking to be independent, with greater opportunities to socialise and be active and was of the view that the extra care provision would facilitate their needs. The Cabinet Member added that if the Local Authority fail to modernise its agenda for older people, it would be at the detriment to future generations.

The Leader spoke of the initial independently commissioned report, which suggested that residential care was not needed and the Cabinet's decision to resist this option and to support a mix of both residential care and extra care facilities. The Leader stated that the extensive consultation had been helpful and noted that the recommendations contained within the report had been amended significantly to retain nine residential council homes as a result of feedback. Furthermore, the Leader acknowledged that needs differ between older people and felt that a mix of accommodation, ranging from residential care homes, extra care facilities and sheltered complexes with housing associations was the best way forward.

With the agreement of the Chair, County Borough Councillor J. Williams and Dr L. Arthur, a resident of RCT and representative of the SCHAC campaign, spoke on the item.

In response to questions posed by County Borough Councillor J. Williams about the timescale of the Danymynydd development and the planning implications identified at the Bronwydd site, the Leader advised that, subject to agreement of the recommendations, a report would be presented to Cabinet in early 2021 with the intention to move at pace with the development. In respect of the reasons for changing the location from the Bronwydd site to the Danymynydd site, the Leader advised that there was potential for the listed building at Bronwydd to be overbearing, which would possibly mean the loss of outdoor space at the facility.

In response to the concerns raised by the public speaker, the Group Director advised that the Local Authority had been flexible throughout the process and had gathered robust evidence to form its conclusion. The Group Director spoke of conversations with Welsh Government in respect of the future of adult social care, and advised that the work undertaken by RCT had been commended and was in line with the direction of travel set out by Welsh Government and the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

The Group Director stated that, if approved, the proposals would mean an increase the number of rooms available to people across the spectrum, whilst retaining a significant proportion of in-house residential care provision that would focus on complex needs. The Group Director acknowledged the important role of the Independent Sector, who had also worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to provide care to residents and would continue to provide services, such as nursing dementia, to retain a whole system of care throughout the Borough. The Group Director concluded by emphasising that the proposals seek to transform and improve the services for older people and would not take any facilities out of the system.

The Leader sought clarity on a point which had been previously raised by members of the public in terms of the restrictions on homes. The Leader noted that throughout the pandemic, the Local Authority had been careful about admissions, to ensure the period of isolation had been taken into consideration, but confirmed that over a two year period, the Local Authority had been admitting to homes by exception.

The Leader also took the opportunity to respond to a comment made by the public speaker in respect of the overall bed position. The Leader advised that overall, there would potentially be an increase of approximately 30 beds across the remodelling of supported living and extra care proposals.

The Deputy Leader spoke of the regular meetings held with Trade Union colleagues in relation to the proposals. The Deputy Leader believed that it would be an inaccurate observation to suggest that the approach had been undertaken as a result of austerity, and emphasised that the investment would substantially cost the Local Authority in both capital and revenue.

The Cabinet Member for Enterprise Development and Housing echoed earlier comments, stating that the proposals were about investment and planning for the future. The Cabinet Member referred to the Danyrnynydd proposals, commenting that it would transform the unit into a modern facility for those who need it. In respect of the planning constraints identified at Bronwydd, the Cabinet Member was pleased to note that alternative options for the site had been explored such as bungalows for a different level of care.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services and the Welsh Language wished to place on record his thanks to the staff working in the Independent Sector, who in addition to the Council's in-house staff, had worked tirelessly and faced significant challenges as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Cabinet Member also paid tribute to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its debate and to the Director, Adult Services for his commitment to the consultation exercise and for the informative report.

The Cabinet Member spoke of the Council's desire to deliver an exciting programme of expansion of the type of residential setting the residents of RCT deserve. The Cabinet Member spoke of his visits to extra care facilities, namely Ty Cwm in Merthyr and Ty Heulog in Talbot Green, and how impressed he was with the standard of accommodation offered and the pride of residents who had care packages tailored to their needs. The Cabinet Member continued, speaking of the second extra care development in RCT, namely the Maesyffynnon site, which following significant investment, had been developed from a dilapidated site, into high standard and modern housing.

The Cabinet Member was encouraged by the proposals to decommission Danymynydd, Porth as a residential care home for 30 beds and to redevelop the site to provide for a new 60 bed extra care housing scheme and to decommission Bronllwyn, Gelli as a residential care home for 12 beds and to approve the redevelopment of the site to provide specialist accommodation with care to support people with learning disabilities in adulthood.

The Cabinet Member went on to emphasise the importance of the consultation process and the views of the residents of RCT. The Cabinet Member believed that the consultation process debunked any claims that consultation is unnecessary as the recommendations before Members, were significantly different to those in 2017.

The Leader acknowledged the work undertaken throughout the process, particularly at a time when social care staff and senior officers have been working tirelessly to support staff and the Independent Sector in dealing with the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To consider:

- the responses to the consultation on the future service delivery model for the Council's residential care homes;
- the information provided in this report;
- the Equality Impact Assessment;
- the comments, observations and/or recommendations arising from the pre-scrutiny undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the 1st December 2020.

2. To proceed with the preferred option to retain residential care home provision, at the seven Council residential care homes detailed below, which would be refocussed on complex needs (including dementia), residential reablement and respite care:

- Clydach Court, Trealaw
- Ferndale House, Ferndale
- Pentre House, Pentre
- Tegfan, Trecynon
- Troedyrhiw, Mountain Ash
- Cae Glas, Hawthorn
- Parc Newydd, Talbot Green

3. To retain the two residential care homes at Garth Olwg, Church Village and Ystradfechan, Treorchy, which would be refocussed on complex needs (including dementia), residential reablement and respite care;

4. To proceed with the preferred option to decommission Danymynydd, Porth as a residential care home for 30 beds and to redevelop the site to provide for a new 60 bed extra care housing scheme in line with the Council's Strategy to modernise accommodation options for older people and deliver extra care

housing, as outlined in paragraph 6.4 of the report. Danymynydd residential care home currently has no residents living there;

5. To a further report being presented to Cabinet setting out a costed redevelopment proposal for Danymynydd at the January 2021 Cabinet meeting;
6. To proceed with the preferred option to decommission Bronllwyn, Gelli as a residential care home for 12 beds and to approve the redevelopment of the site to provide specialist accommodation with care to support people with learning disabilities in adulthood and older age to meet changes in need and demand, as outlined in paragraph 5.16 of the report. Bronllwyn residential care home currently has no residents living there;
7. To a further report being presented to Cabinet setting out a costed redevelopment proposal for Bronllwyn at the February 2021 Cabinet meeting;
8. To a further report being presented to Cabinet setting out a comprehensive modernisation programme for the Council's nine residential care homes proposed to be retained;
9. To immediately recommence permanent admissions to the Council's nine residential care homes proposed to be retained;
10. To a further report being presented to Cabinet at its January 2021 meeting setting out the proposal for the re-provision of learning disability and autism day services currently delivered at Danymynydd in line with service models and need; and
11. To a further report being presented to Cabinet at its February 2021 meeting setting out the proposal for the re-provision of older people day services currently delivered at Bronllwyn in line with the new service model agreed by Cabinet on 11th September 2019.

(Note: County Borough Councillor M. Norris abstained from voting due to him experiencing technical issues throughout the officer's presentation of the report)

This meeting closed at 11.20 am

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**