



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 20 March 2023 at 5.00 pm

This meeting was live streamed, details of which can be accessed [here](#)

This meeting was recorded, details of which can be accessed [here](#)

### **County Borough Councillors – The following Community Services Scrutiny Committee Councillors were present in the Council Chamber:-**

Councillor J Bonetto (Chair)

Councillor G E Williams	Councillor S Bradwick
Councillor R Davis	Councillor A J Ellis
Councillor D Evans	Councillor A Fox
Councillor H Gronow	Councillor N H Morgan
Councillor D Owen-Jones	Councillor A Roberts
Councillor G Stacey	Councillor T Williams

### **The following Community Services Scrutiny Committee Councillors were present online:-**

#### **Co-Opted Members in attendance:-**

#### **Officers in attendance:-**

Mr N Elliott, Interim Director of Social Services  
Ms A Beckham, Head of Service Learning Disabilities Mental Health and Substance Misuse  
Mr P Nicholls, Service Director, Legal Services

#### **County Borough Councillors in attendance:-**

#### **Apologies for absence**

Councillor D Parkin

#### **37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from County Borough Councillor D Parkin.

#### **38 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

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

## 39 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

## 40 CONSULTATION LINKS

Members acknowledged the information provided through the consultation links in respect of open consultations, Welsh Government consultations and those matters being consulted upon by the local authority.

## 41 LEARNING DISABILITY DAY SERVICES OFFER

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse began by outlining the purpose of the report to provide an update on the engagement and co-production activity undertaken in the development of a new draft Day Services operating model and Strategy for people with a learning disability in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse showed the Development of new draft day services operating model and strategy focusing on the priorities for people with a learning disability. A Presentation was shared with Members providing the outcomes of the engagement and co-production activity.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse started the presentation by informing Members that the Learning disability transformation programme builds upon the work of the Cwm Taf Statement of strategic intent and promotes the following: -

- Modern services that promote independence.
- Helpful and useful services.
- Quick and responsive support to prevent crisis.
- Person-centred outcomes including well-being and choice.

Members were taken through the timeline of the programme with the Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse pointing out that it is a 3-5 year Transformation Programme highlighting to Members that the required change will take time to implement properly. Members were informed the service area is currently in year 3 of the programme and details were shared of the partnerships involved in the programme including a partnership board, RCT Transformers, Virtual Transformation Team and Workstream Leadership groups.

Members were taken through the workstreams of the programme, with detail provided on each one: -

- Coproduction
- Governance and Leadership
- Communication
- Commissioning
- Health and Well-Being
- Workforce and Culture
- Finance
- Transition

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse highlighted the theme of 'Co-production' and how this interweaves throughout each of the workstreams.

Members were shown information relating to legislation that impacts the area and ensures the service area follows due regard when drafting the strategy. The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse continued the presentation showing a timeline for Members outlining the project was set up back in 2020 through to current date providing an overview of the work undertaken throughout the programme.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse discussed how the transformation programme has been received so far. There was acknowledgement that change can be challenging but the presentation also highlighted the range of reactions received from positivity, uncertainty, 'suspicious minds' and reflection. Members were informed that the reflection aspect has helped build stronger relationships.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse provided Members with an overview of the work undertaken regarding Learning Sets and Stakeholder engagement. It was highlighted that co-production is at the heart of the programme, making the greatest difference to people's lives by not just engaging with people but drawing in on their experience and views. Need to work with people effectively to bring about change.

Members were informed that Social Care for excellence recognised the work of the Learning Disability Transformation Programme as an excellent example of Coproduction and were directed to a podcast and article from SCIE about the work undertaken in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse outlined that the heart of the programme was around changing the conversation using the phrase from the engagement 'No decision about me without me'. Members were informed that the service area is looking to ensure everyone is involved, when possible, by looking at what they want to achieve, positive risk taking, strengths-based conversations and a move away from the Local Authority being the only answer.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse took Members through the stages of the engagement project highlighting phase 1 looked at providing daytime opportunities offer which started in August 2020. By November 2021 launched 'My Day My Way' engagement and from December 2021- June 2022 the service area worked with all of their stakeholders, held workshops / feedback events to develop strategy. Members were informed that the next steps are looking to gain approval for the strategy. Members were provided with detail about the 'My day My way' engagement process through the Rhondda Cynon Taf 'Let's Talk' site and shown some of the various material methods used during the process and provided with the final number of responses received.

Members were provided with details of responses received during the engagement process and the Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse highlighted some key themes that emerged from

the results including wanting to try new things, finding a job to suit interests, meeting new people and building relationships. Some barriers that were highlighted in the results also included accessing transport.

Members were shown a video which provided detailed feedback and results from the My Day My Way engagement project and shown how this will feed into the draft strategy.

The video showed the 7 themes utilised throughout the engagement and the responses received for each section: -

- Choice & Control – Having accessible and more options for daytime / evening opportunities.
- Health & Well Being – Being safe and healthy.
- Employment – More paid employment / volunteering opportunities.
- Travel – The importance of travel training.
- Friendships & Relationships – The importance of social connections.
- Impact of Covid-19 – Having the right support.
- Accommodation – Having a good place to live in.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse informed Members that following the engagement project there were a range of workshops held to work together to develop the strategy. Members were informed that these workshops were well attended by individuals with learning disability, people being supported, parents and Carers.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse shared some key priorities that were identified as a result of the engagement that the service want to focus on within the strategy including the following: -

- To develop a flexible service meeting the needs of users including on evenings and weekends.
- To provide support to build relationships / friendships and avoid social isolation.
- To promote skills development to learn new skills.
- Make people feel safe and have good health & well-being.
- Provide support to help make decisions and choices.
- Provide support to help gain meaningful paid employment.
- Information sharing gateways.
- And to provide support for people to access a wide range of opportunities in their wider community.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse shared the proposed model of daytime opportunities through a visual diagram. It was highlighted to Members at the top of the diagram is the Community & Employment element, looking at what the community can offer and maximising these connections so people can access what they want to within the community with the right support. The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse explained the Council's Offer as part of the proposed model providing outcome focused and enablement focused support to people with complex needs ensuring people can access a

range of services / outcomes that they wish.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse finished the presentation by reminding Members that the overarching message that was received as a result of the engagement process was the service should provide meaningful activity for people, what they choose to do and what this means to them. The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse then informed Members how the service area need to work with a range of partners, individuals with a learning disability, parents and carers about how the Council co-produces services before pausing for questions from Members.

A Member noted that they felt this is the right way to go providing services that the individuals say they need rather than ones decided by the Council. They asked if the Officer could outline the composition of the RCT Transformers group and how they will drive the programme. They also questioned the number of individuals attending day services compared to those pre-covid noting there has been a drop and queried whether this has now recovered? The Member also commented that it was good to see the work has been recognised by the Social Care Institute for Excellence.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse advised Members that the RCT Transformers are a group of citizens that has been developed from individuals who have an interest in learning disability services and shared that the plan is that they will be engaged with further once the strategy has been developed. The Officer confirmed that they will be involved in all workstreams that were outlined in the presentation. The Officer also confirmed that attendance figures have dropped since covid but that they were starting to see slight increase in requests for daytime opportunities but informed Members that the service area will look to see what support can be provided in line with what the individuals want to achieve. The Officer stated that numbers are increasing but not to levels pre-covid due to people wanting to do something slightly different therefore the service area see this as a positive thing.

A Member questioned the Equality and Diversity implications section of the report which stated there were no implications arising directly from this report and requested clarification on this information. The Member also questioned whether there were enough going on with other Council departments and how the Council could lead the way on opportunities for employment.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse clarified that this section of the report is written as there are no service changes being introduced at this time. The Officer also confirmed that as part of the virtual transformation team there are a wide range of representatives from within a vast number of Council areas not solely Social Care. Members were informed that through these representatives including HR, employment and Community Services they can provide information previously unknown about volunteering opportunities for individuals if requested which has proven successful.

A Member noted the impact of education on individuals lives and outcomes and queried the limitation of SEN places in schools. Also concerned about the transition from Child to Adult Services and the possibility of being lost in the system. How can we ensure a continuation of care.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse noted the importance of education and referred to the regular contact with colleagues in education regarding young people going through the transition in services. The Officer outlined to Members details of engagement undertaken with individuals in schools who would be going through the transition of services and ensuring their views were captured and support in place. Members were provided with further information regarding the Transition service from an Adult Services perspective.

A Member asked a question regarding the availability of volunteering opportunities at Community Hubs throughout the borough noting these premises were increasing in number. The Member asked a further question regarding employment and travel noting that this could be a barrier and sought clarification on the support available.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse acknowledged the importance of Community Hubs and the support they can offer the Service Area regarding volunteering and daytime opportunities. The Officer highlighted to Members that this is an area they would like to develop further to provide more opportunities and confirmed that work will be undertaken to look to expand the support available. Regarding employment, the Officer informed Members that the service area work with an employment agency to make referrals for people who want to be employed and provided detail regarding internal employment support services within the Council. Members were given examples of success stories of individuals being supported by the service area to gain successful employment within the Council. The Officer emphasised to Members that whilst there is a focus on developing opportunities there is also a need to focus on areas and employers within RCT who provide opportunities to ensure the right support is provided to them to ensure more placements are available.

The Head of Service for Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse responded to the question regarding transport acknowledging that transport is a key area and referred Members to the Travel Training scheme which is an accredited scheme to promote independent safe travel that can support individuals to access public transport.

The Chair thanked Officers for attending the meeting and for the comprehensive and diverse presentation. The Chair acknowledged the good work completed so far and noted the future intentions for the work requesting for the Committee to be kept involved and updated.

Following consideration by the Committee it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the information contained within the report and undertake pre-scrutiny of the strategy when it is available.

The Chair thanked all Members for attending the meeting and reiterated thanks to Officers for a comprehensive and engaging update report. Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee (Crime & Disorder) would take place on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April, at 5pm with an additional meeting of Community Services Scrutiny Committee to undertake pre-scrutiny on the strategy reported tonight to take place beforehand at 3:30pm.

**43 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**This meeting closed at 6.00 pm**

**Councillor J Bonetto  
Chair.**