



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 16 March 2021 at 5.00 pm .

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

Councillor R Yeo (Chair)

Councillor S Evans	Councillor A Roberts
Councillor P Howe	Councillor G Stacey
Councillor D Owen-Jones	Councillor W Jones
Councillor E Griffiths	Councillor L De Vet
Councillor G Jones	Councillor S Powderhill

Officers in attendance:-

Mr P Nicholls, Service Director, Legal Services
Ms L Davies, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Mr G Black, Community Safety and Strategic Partnerships Manager

County Borough Councillors in attendance:-

Wendy Lewis – Vice Chair Overview & Scrutiny

24 Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.
Apologies were received from County Borough Councillors J Williams, J Davies

25 Declaration of Interest

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

26 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 12th January 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

27 Consultation Links

The Chair 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 – Members **RESOLVED** to note the information.

Report on the progress of the Integrated Substance Misuse Service in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil.

Members were provided with a report on the implementation and progress of the Integrated Substance Misuse Service in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil.

The Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services explained that in Cwm Taf Morgannwg the responsibility for the strategic planning and commissioning of services for the treatment and prevention of substance misuse rest with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Substance Misuse Area Planning Board. It was explained that the majority of substance misuse services within Cwm Taf Morgannwg are funded through two Welsh Government Funding Streams,

- The Substance Misuse Action Fund (SMAF) £4M;
- The Local Health Board ring fenced substance misuse allocation £3.5M.

Members were informed that RCT is the nominated banker and grant recipient for the Substance Misuse Action Fund allocation on behalf of the Area Planning Board.

The Officer highlighted that all services currently commissioned for substance misuse within Cwm Taf fall within a 4 –tier conceptual framework, which refer to the level of intervention provided.:

- **Tier 1:** Consists of a range of drug-related interventions that can be provided by generic providers, depending on their competence and partnership arrangements with specialised substance misuse services;
- **Tier 2:** Interventions are provided by specialist substance misuse providers and include a range of harm reduction interventions and interventions that engage, retain and support people in treatment. Support for families and concerned others, are also considered to be a tier 2 interventions;
- **Tier 3:** Specialist provisions including all clinical functions. substitute prescribing programmes and community detoxification;
- **Tier 4:** Services provide substance misuse inpatient detoxification and residential rehabilitation programmes.

The Chair thanked the Officers for a very comprehensive report and opened up the meeting for Members questions and observations.

A Member also commended the service for the work that has been done especially with the area that he resides and thanked Barod Service provider for all their hard work and looks forward to working with them in the future.

Members requested information regarding a single point of contact number for future reference which would help in Members signposting residents to the correct areas for help and support. Officers provided detailed information to the Committee.

A Member asked a question regarding the figures within the table and asked for clarity on lower number of referrals during 2017. Officers explained that during

this point there had been a transfer from a National data base to a single point of contact data base where by there is now a more streamlined and there had been a of service and referrals are tracked in one place and the clients journey progression is followed.

Members put questions forward in relation to various scenarios, Members wanted clarity on the type of service user the County Borough along with age profile. It was explained that the main substance of misuse referrals is alcohol at 65% and in terms of age range it showed to be 35- 45 year old. Over 50's services have been brought in to deal with the long term effects of drug misuse. In respect of areas of concern regarding police response the Overview and Scrutiny Committee sitting as the Crime and Disorder Committee would deal with many of these issues.

Members were reminded that if Members had any specific questions relating to their ward Officers would be able to address these issues out side of the meeting.

After further discussion Members **RESOLVED** to

- Acknowledge the content of the report
- Receive data in respect of service use profile.

29 Homeless Strategy 2018/2022 Progress Report

The Temporary Head of Community Safety and Community Housing provided Members with an update on the progress made by the Housing Service in relation to the RCTCBC Homelessness Strategy 2018 – 2022 and the Action Plan supporting the Strategy.

Members were reminded that the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to effect on 27th April and placed a number of duties on local authorities in respect of the homeless which included:

- Provision of advice and assistance to anyone threatened with homelessness;
- Provide appropriate help and support to any homeless person to help secure a suitable home;
- New powers to local authorities to discharge their homelessness duty into private rented sector.

Officers explained that Rhondda Cynon Taf Homeless Strategy and Action Plan 2018 – 2022 sets out its vision for RCT where homelessness is prevented and where it does occur, people are supposed to secure accommodation and support as part the objectives set out below:

- Preventing homelessness and repeat homelessness from occurring , wherever possible , therefore reducing homelessness;
- Ensuring the appropriate support and accommodation is available to meet needs of homeless and potentially homeless people ;and
- Ensuring people with housing support needs have these fully assessed and have access to services to help sustain independent living.

Members acknowledge that over the last year the Covid 19 pandemic triggered no immediate overall increase in homelessness applications. Officers confirmed that most individuals who presented as homeless required interim accommodation which triggered a surge in Bed and Breakfast placements.

The Head of Service highlighted that single people aged 25 and over accounted for 70% of all homelessness applications and placements in bed and breakfast accommodation in RCT. The main reason seems to be breakdown of relationships with family and friends.

The Committee were informed that due to unprecedented demands, we have experienced a 29% increase in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation in 2020/21 with 701 households placed in 2019/20 and 659 as at 1/03/21. The Officer continued to highlight that Storm Dennis and the pandemic has had a significant impact on the service which has increase demand for both temporary and permanent accommodation.

Officers provided Members of the Health and Wellbeing Committee with an overview of the progress made against each objective set out in the strategy, and highlighting some of the projects and initiatives that the authority has in place going forward.

In conclusion the Temporary Head of Community Safety and Community Housing stated that the impact of the key policies such as raising the LHA and suspending evictions have had some impact on preventing homelessness . Despite this progress, the pandemic has further exposed the severe shortages of affordable homes.

The Officer continued and explained that post lockdown we are expected to see an increase in the level of homelessness which will be particularly relevant to people being evicted from private rented sector and an increase in newly unemployed people being made homeless because of the pandemic.

Member continued to acknowledge the work that is being undertaken to address the effects and will continue to consider the work being done by the service to address any up and coming issues.

Members thanked Officers for a very informative report and put forward their questions and observations.

Members wanted to express gratitude to the services for work that had been carried out within his area and was pleased to see the forward planning that has been put in place by the service.

Members raised concerns relating the lack of 1 bedroom accommodation which is a challenge put forward their views.

A Member commented that it was pleasing to see the use of the Housing First project and wanted clarity of any gaps in the service which needs to be filled. The Director explained that

Officer explained that this had been an interesting year and we know there is a lack of 1 bedroom accommodation however this year the challenge has been the enormity of complex needs clients coming through the doors and sometimes

housing in the sense is not always the right model. Members were provided with an example of the services available.

After further discussion and questions Members **RESOLVED** to

- Acknowledge the content of the report;
- Monitor the work of the Service over the next 12 Months ;
- Receive an updating report at a future meeting.

30 Chair's Review and Close

The Chair thanked Members for a very interesting debate and brought the meeting to a close.

This meeting closed at 6.05pm

**CLLR R. YEO
CHAIR.**