

Cwm Taf Public Services Board Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Cwm Taf Public Services Board Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Friday, 17 December 2021 at 10.00 am.

County Borough Councillors - Cwm Taf Public Services Board Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee Members in attendance:-

Councillor G Caple (Chair)

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councillors

Councillor Sammon

Councillor Gibbs

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Councillors

Councillor J Bonetto Councillor W Jones

Officers in attendance

Miss K Smith, Cwm Taf PSB Support Officer

Mrs S Handy – Members Researcher & Scrutiny Officer RCTCBC

Co-opted Members in attendance

Mr Mel Jehu, Local Health Board Representative

Ms Lewis – RCT Citizen Representative

Others in attendance:

Dr Brendan D’Cruz – Chair of the Community Assessment Data Sub Group

14 Welcome

The Chair welcomed Members to the final meeting of the Cwm Taf PSB Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 2021.

15 Apologies

Apologies of absence were received from County Borough Councillors (Rhondda Cynon Taf) A. Fox and A. Cox and County Borough Councillors (Merthyr Tydfil) T. Skinner, J. Davies and D. Isaac.

16 The 5 core statutory functions of the Cwm Taf Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Chair asked Members to note the 5 core statutory functions of the Cwm Taf Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

17 Declaration of Interest

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

18 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 17th September 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

19 AN UPDATE ON THE QUARTER 1 PSB WORK PROGRAMME

Kirsty Smith (KS), Senior PSB Support Officer, provided Members with an update on the Quarter 1 PSB Work Programme.

The Senior PSB Support Officer thanked Members of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Cwm Taf PSB for allowing us time and opportunity to provide them with an update on Board activity since we last met in September 2021. Members were informed that the PSB Chair, Mark Brace, sends apologies and is unable to attend this rescheduled JOSOC meeting and has worked with the PSB Support Team to prepare this update.

The Senior PSB Support Officer continued the update and outlined key points as follows:

PSB: Future Focus

- PSB last met in October and the agenda was very much focused on the future – both in terms of the focus and structure of Public Services Boards in Cwm Taf Morgannwg. As Members will be aware, the current period is something of a transition as we manage undertaking an Assessment of Well-being in the context of a pandemic and Covid restrictions as well as looking to the creation of one Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board. It's also important that we consider the Board's existing Objectives and what the PSB can do this year, as well as what work carries forward in preparing for the new Cwm Taf Morgannwg Well-being Plan to be published in 2023.
- The October meeting had representatives from the Community Safety Partnership, the Substance Misuse Area Planning Board and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board in attendance to hear their experience of working within the regional partnership structures. Following discussions, Members agreed that way forward needs to be based on a foundation of information and suggested discussion with the RPB in terms of alignment and delivery mechanisms. There is full support the direction for one Cwm Taf Morgannwg PSB operating with strategic intent. An action was taken back to work with representatives from the PSB and delivery boards to draft a timeline for the merger and identify work that would need to be undertaken.
- PSB welcomed the JOSOC recommendation, given via the Chair at the October meeting, that over the medium term the Public Service Board must demonstrate its value and role in improving the delivery of public services and that its purpose makes a positive difference to the residents of Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf. We feel that the work underway

regarding the Assessment helps this and the engagement work has given PSB officers the opportunity to speak with residents and groups about what that positive difference could look like. The Committee will appreciate that, as with most other areas and organisations, the ambitions of the PSB have been curtailed by the challenges of the last couple of years where focus has, quite rightly, had to be on the response to the pandemic. However, the Community Impact Assessment commissioned into the impact of COVID by both PSBs and RPB was an example of how we are able to react to circumstances and this has provided good information on the current and future needs for communities and will feed into the current Wellbeing Assessment work.

Well-being Assessment and Regional Working

- As Members will be aware, the PSB needs to undertake an assessment of well-being to be published in May 2022. This will be a joint assessment with Bridgend PSB, resulting in one Cwm Taf Morgannwg Wellbeing Assessment.
- As previously mentioned, we also collaborating with the Regional Partnership Board as much as possible. They need to undertake and publish a Population Needs Assessment by April 2022 so resources, intelligence, information and opportunities for involvement will be shared as much as possible. The support teams have also been working closely on the developing draft documents to ensure the same sources are used, and key messages 'read across' both documents.
- We decided to extend the period of engagement beyond the 100 days initially discussed through our work with Co-Production Network Wales. December 17th (today) is the official end of the work, and the online conversation tool will be closed this afternoon. The Co-Production Network have also been asked to provide additional support to analyse all of the engagement notes and products. An engagement report will be produced summarising key findings and reflecting the scope of the conversations held.
- The draft data report has been produced by Practice Solutions Limited (available as an embedded document in the pack – page 22). It was received by Bridgend PSB on 13 December and has been shared virtually with Cwm Taf PSB members for comment.
- The Assessment is still on schedule to be published at the end of April 2022 with the Data and Engagement Reports will be shared as supporting documents.

Ongoing work

- Given the reporting pattern of the PSB, the October meeting did not feature quarterly updates from Objective leads on the existing Well-being Objectives: Thriving Communities, Healthy People, Strong Economy and Tackling Loneliness and Isolation.
- Time is being given on the agenda for January's PSB for updates to be

given on a highlight/exception basis where and we will also be asking for Objective Leads, and members, to look at how we can refocus existing workstreams for the future (and the new Wellbeing Plan) so that work is not lost or overlooked.

- Work continues against the current Objectives, as set out to members in the Update on Quarter 1 PSB Work Programme (page 13 of the document pack). As mentioned, further detail will be expected following the January PSB but of note:
 - The Community Hubs and neighbourhood networks initiated under the 'Thriving Communities' objective continue to be used as part of the Covid response and supporting vulnerable residents. PSB Officers have also been making use of the networks and Hubs as part of the engagement work for the Well-being Assessment. As set out in the update report, sustainability of the Hubs continues to be a concern and will likely be at the heart of the January update for this Objective. The Chair has met with the Community Zone Implementation Group about the sustainability of this project, and the PSB will work with the group to explore funding opportunities to maintain the benefits of this work to the communities involved and to explore how to widen these initiatives to other areas.
 - The ongoing work of the Vulnerability Profile work being piloted in RCT. This is nearing completion and a final analysis is expected before the end of the financial year, and rollout across the region.
 - The PSB, through colleagues in Merthyr Council, have been involved in Public Health Wales' 'Participating in good, fair work for health, well-being and Equity Panel', now known as the 'Fair Work Panel'. This has been looking at the wider benefits of employment on health. Views are being sought from Board members as to how the work can best support partnership action and where there are opportunities to collaborate to achieve mutually beneficial goals of creating, supporting and normalising fair work, improving skills and access to fair work as well as monitoring and evaluating the impact of efforts to increase participation in fair work, using data and intelligence to direct their efforts.
 - RCT and Merthyr have both submitted bids for the National Lottery Community Fund's 'Mind Our Future' grant programme around children and young person's mental health, as well as the impact of loneliness and isolation. £10million is available to create and implement a vision for a more resilient and mentally healthy future for young people in their community. The PSB supported and were involved in shaping both applications and we await news.
- The Board continues to look for opportunities to maximise contribution to the seven national well-being goals and received a presentation from

Brecon Beacons National Park and their Management Plan at their last meeting. This sparked an interest in members looking to collaborate as much as possible, as well as suggesting that the January PSB meeting devotes some time to the Climate and Nature Emergencies so that we collectively understand what is already underway in the region, and where potentially the PSB can add value, with a view to informing the future Well-being Plan.

- Similarly, the PSB have supported a bid to the National Institute for Health Research for the creation of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Determinants Research Collaboration. The funding is available to create a research infrastructure with a focus on the determinants of health inequalities. If successful, the funding will allow the region to establish the first regional multidisciplinary research team in Wales and provide the learning and experience to develop a model that can be rolled out nationally. JOSC will be provided with an update on any progress or success with the funding bids.

Following the update, Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions.

The Chair referred Members to page 10 of the minutes from the last meeting of the JOSC and sought an update on the RAG system update in future PSB reports to Scrutiny. The Senior PSB Support Officer advised Members that this is in relation to the Wellbeing Plan, which will be going to the Board meeting in January 2022. However, it was emphasised that when this was discussed with the objective leads there was a feeling that a RAG system update may not be informative given the long-term focus of the objectives.

Discussions continued and the Chair referenced page 24 of the report and the risk factors for young children and queried whether this is a high priority for the Board. The Senior PSB Support Officer advised Members that concerns and risk in relation to children and young people is more the remit of the Regional Safeguarding Board, but that as the PSB looks towards the regional structures that need to be in place the Board is looking to work closely with the operational boards and critical concerns will be escalated to the PSB. It was emphasised that engaging children and young people is something that the Board is looking to do more work around.

The Chair further referenced page 14 of the report and praised the fact the community hubs have been prioritised and queried if it was a priority of the Board to move towards community resilient hubs. The Senior PSB Support Officer reminded Members that the community hubs were started with one in RCT and one in Merthyr Tydfil, with the models having been rolled out across RCT, however, the roll out isn't looking to be replicated in Merthyr Tydfil as the Calon Las hub has been a heavy demand on the Local Authority. The sustainability of these hubs is a concern for the Board and it would be remiss to look to develop this further before securing what is already in place. The Chair noted that this is an aspect of work that the Scrutiny Committee can look into in

future meetings.

Discussions ensued and Mr Mel Jehu referred Members to the tragic deaths of children being covered in the media, and assured Members of the JOSC that safeguarding has been addressed in a formal way at the South Wales Police and Crime Panel, where Mr Jehu sits as Vice Chair.

Mr Jehu then queried how best practice is being identified in one area and passed on to other areas and also referenced the Gellideg Hub in Merthyr Tydfil as an example of a community hub that works well. The Senior PSB Support Officer advised Members that it's vital that we recognise that these hubs are community owned and run with no involvement from the PSB. However, the Board would be interested to see how they've been so successful and able to sustain, and where that could be replicated. The Chair noted that it would be worth a visit to the Gellideg Hub and asked if this can be added in to JOSC Work Programme for the 2021-22 Municipal Year. In respect of the community hubs, Councillor Bonetto also noted that important work being done across the region and referenced the hub in her ward, particularly in respect of men's mental health. Councillor Bonetto emphasised that the hubs are working for the communities themselves and assist community needs. Councillor Will Jones noted that communities adapt and that community hubs are doing an excellent job in supporting changing needs. Councillor Jones noted that it is support the hubs need rather than total involvement of the PSB. The Chair noted his agreement and noted that this should be a key focus for Scrutiny going forward.

Following discussion, Members **RESOLVED** to note the update in respect of the Quarter 1 PSB Work Programme.

20 AN UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT ACTION GROUP

The Chair welcomed Dr Brendan D'Cruz to the meeting and thanked him for his attendance.

Dr Brendan D'Cruz began by thanking the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Cwm Taf PSB for allowing him the time and opportunity to provide them with an update on the work towards the Community Assessment Action Group.

Dr Brendan D'Cruz continued his update and outlined the key points as follows:

The Approach

As set out in the briefing paper, there is a requirement under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act to undertake an assessment of Wellbeing and the guidance sets out the specific elements that the assessment must contain. The approach being taken in is to jointly undertake the work with both Bridgend PSB and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Board (RPB) so that we collaborate in how we engage with the communities that we all serve. To that end we have established one joint Community Assessment Action Group to oversee the work

needed for both the PSB's Well-being Assessment and the RPB's Population Needs Assessments. We also have the support of Co-Production Network for Wales supporting our commitment to improving how we engage and involve the people and our communities.

Members were reminded of the update from Dr Tom Powell, Chair of the Community Assessment Action Group, at the last JOSOC meeting in September. Work has continued as planned since then, and Councillor Caple was also welcomed to the Group.

- **Engagement Group**

The Engagement Group met on a weekly basis and have produced and shared bilingual toolkits to support colleagues and groups with carrying out engagement work. Through RPB and PSB support teams, alongside members of the Engagement group a broad range of stakeholders have been engaged, ranging from Knit and natter to Brownies, Girl Guides and Rangers. Community Hubs and Neighbourhood Networks, established under the Thriving Communities objective, have been used to speak with people and have promoted a conversation tool for people to fill in as best suits them (online, bilingual and easy read). Officers have also joined with Veterans groups, ASD Rainbows, attended Remembrance Festivals and family fun days as well as bespoke 'hackathon' events such as sessions for older people, people with learning disabilities and mental health.

PSB grant money has also been used to support community level engagement activity through the region's county voluntary councils, namely Interlink RCT, Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil (VAMT) and Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO).

Three 'Better Futures' sessions were held online with young people (aged 15 – 25) from across the region to think about what they want the future to look like, and what needs to change to achieve or create it.

To try and reach as large and as broad an audience as possible, the period of engagement was extended beyond the 100 days initially discussed. December 17th (today) is the official end of the work, and the online conversation tool will be closed this afternoon. The Co-Production Network have also been asked to provide additional support to analyse all the engagement notes and products. An engagement report will be produced summarising key findings and reflecting the scope of the conversations held, this is expected on 14 January and will be fed into the draft Assessment document.

The Engagement Group needs to consider how it wants to continue now that the initial phase of activity has passed. There is an appetite to keep momentum going, but there needs to be commitment and resourcing to allow this to happen, as well as understanding and appreciation from all levels about the value that comes from working in a more co-productive way.

- **Data Group**

The Data Group has met for a total of five times. The first four sessions focused on a different pillar of well-being – cultural, economic, environmental and social –

and the most recent one (26 November) considering the draft data report compiled by Practice Solutions Limited (PSL). There's been a good representation from across the partnership, and broader, bringing together a wide range of information that captures what it means to live, work and be in Cwm Taf Morgannwg.

PSL have produced a Data Report that will form part of the Assessment using information supplied by partners and initial findings have also been discussed as part of the engagement process and 'sense checking'.

This has been shared with Bridgend PSB members at their 13 December meeting as well as Cwm Taf PSB via email. It is available as a background paper for JOSOC (page 22 of the pack). The next stages are for it to be quality assured and go to PSL's design team.

- **What next?**

We are expecting the draft Assessment – bringing together the data and engagement reports by the end of January and have asked for Members to nominate themselves to be part of a small PSB working group to scrutinise and sign off assessment for consultation by 7 February.

This will then be sent for translation, along with all other relevant materials like the fact sheets, to begin our statutory consultation on 14 February. The consultation period will run from 14 February to 28 March and during this time it will be sent to all partners for opportunity to give a formal response, as well as the Office of Future Generations Commissioner and Welsh Government. It will also be shared for comment online and sent to those who have left contact details during the earlier engagement work. We intend on returning to those groups who have contributed so that they can see how their information has been used, and they remain part of the process as part of an ongoing conversation.

We would also welcome involvement from the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee in this phase, and for the committee to act as a consultee.

That then leaves April to undertake any final revisions, respond to feedback and produce, design and translate the final Assessment product ahead of publication on 30 April 2022.

Following the update, Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions.

The Chair began the discussion and noted that he went to the meeting of the Action Group and noted that during the meeting there was some frustration by officers that exercise is undertaken every 5 years but that the policies of Government are not being influenced. Dr Brendan D'Cruz agreed and noted that this is something that's been picked up in his conversations with officers. Members were advised that there is a Community Assessment Action Group meeting in January to start to think about how things can be done differently and where change can be influenced going forward.

The Chair agreed and noted that Scrutiny can consider what influence this change has had on people's lives and what can be done going forward. The

Senior PSB Support Officer acknowledged this point and noted that the frustration is that it can feel like a lip service exercise, and that time is spent engaging with communities on what matters to them but that no real change is then delivered. It was noted that a lot of the good work by community groups is through short term funding and not sustainable. The Chair agreed and felt that this is something the Committee could certainly look at going forward.

Discussions ensued and Mr Mel Jehu, Co Opted Member, commented that a community assessment wouldn't be needed if, on a regular basis, the community needs were actually aligned to the strategic vision of what the organisation was doing and where the community members were actually feeding into that vision. Further to this, Mr Jehu also added that the members of the community regard assessments as processes, when what the community care about is what is actually happening to them on a day-to-day basis. Mr Jehu referenced a document produced by the Health Board titled 'Our Community – Your Health' and urged Dr D'Cruz to link in with Natasha Weeks, the Communications Lead Officer on this project, to enhance the work of the Action Group. Dr D'Cruz acknowledged this point and noted that this will be taken forward. The Chair agreed with the points raised by Mr Jehu and noted that the Scrutiny Committee wants to see what's changed since last time and not to keep repeating the exercise every five years.

Following the update, Members **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the update on the work of the Community Assessment Action Group by Dr D'Cruz.

21 FEEDBACK FROM THE CHAIR OF THE CWM TAF PSB JOINT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair provided feedback to the Committee following a training session in November with Dr Dave McKenna. The following points were noted and it was noted that changes will be implemented for future meetings of the JOSOC:

- A pre pre-meeting of Committee Members (informal discussion on the agenda papers);
- To send out a briefing note to Committee Members in advance of a meetings detailing what is being asked of them on each agenda item;
- To produce cover reports for any verbal updates with clear recommendations attached;
- To write a letter from the Chair of JOSOC to the Chair of the PSB with Committee's recommendations so that there is a clear audit trail and for the Chair of the PSB to respond back in writing with any actions taken forward; and,
- For Members of the Committee to scrutinise one particular issue and to form a Working Group with clear scrutiny outcomes to provide to the PSB.

Following the update, Members **RESOLVED** to note the changes going forward.

22 INFORMATION REPORTS

The Chair noted the Information Reports and advised Members to email any questions to scrutiny@rctcbc.gov.uk.

23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no urgent business to report.

24 CHAIRS REVIEW & CLOSE

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and noted that it had been a productive meeting. The Chair wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

This meeting closed at 10.51 am

**Cllr G. Caple
Chair**