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## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Date Written	19 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
Report Author	Mark Brace, Chair, Cwm Taf PSB
Service Area	Cwm Taf PSB
Committee Date	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2022

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

### **Update on Quarter 2 PSB Work Programme**

#### **1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This is a standing item on the Cwm Taf JOSOC, in order that members receive timely and relevant updates on the progress of ongoing work of the Cwm Taf PSB. Mark Brace, Chair of Cwm Taf PSB will present the main points.
- 1.2 The Report will include:
- Key progress against the Objectives set out in Delivery Plans 2021-22 during quarter 2;
  - Update on future priorities, based on the work of the Wellbeing Assessment; and
  - Update on future governance arrangements

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 The Committee discusses and comments on the content of the report; and,  
2.2 The Committee identifies any further information relating to the content of the Report that it would like to consider and makes the request to the PSB.

#### **3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 For the committee to have an overview and offer scrutiny to the work programme of the PSB, in order that any questions and recommendations are made to the Board for the benefit of the work and implementation of the Act.

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The work of the Cwm Taf PSB must be designed and delivered to meet the statutory requirements as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015. The Act requires public bodies to carry out sustainable development. Section 2 of the Act defines this as: “Sustainable development” means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals. The Seven Well-being Goals are: A prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, more cohesive, more vibrant culture and Welsh language, and a more globally responsible Wales.

4.2 In the Welsh Government Statutory Core Guidance on the implementation of the Act, ‘Shared Purpose, Shared Future: 1, the following guidance is given for Overview and Scrutiny Committee function and purpose:

*The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will not have a role in relation to the accountability of individual public bodies (apart from the Local Authority itself). The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees designated to scrutinise decisions made or actions taken by the public services board, will be focused on the shared well-being objectives included in public services boards’ Local Well-being Plans, rather than the individual well-being objectives of a public body.*

4.3 **Progress Against the Well-being Objectives** – the work and progress against the four objectives set out in the Well-being Plan continue to be impacted upon by the recovery efforts of COVID-19, and the effects of Brexit. During Quarter 2, we saw the emergence of the COVID-19 new variant Omicron, and this resulted in renewed pressures on partners’ delivery of services. Progress updates on the delivery plans for Quarter 2 were provided at the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022 PSB meeting by the following Objective Leads:

- Healthier People (Angela Jones, CTMUHB);
- Thriving Communities (Paul Mee, RCTCBC);
- A Strong Economy (Alyn Owen, MTCBC),
- Tackling Loneliness and Isolation (Sharon Richards, Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil)

Board members received the progress updates on each Objective by report, and these are provided in the Committee papers.

Key highlights from the second quarter include:

- **Healthier People** – the Vulnerability Profile project, which was piloted in RCT by CMUHB and RCTCBC has required additional time to complete the final analysis report on the pilot. Work is currently ongoing to finalise evidence reviews on indicators such as low birth weight in babies, numbers of children taken into care, families with identified adverse childhood experiences, and children’s school readiness. They have undertaken research by an external body, to overcome the issues of data sharing between organisations, and they have engaged Masters and PhD students to help with the analysis. Plans for rollout across the region are

still in development. This is expected to be presented to the Board by April 2022.

- **Thriving Communities** – the PSB received a written update from the RCTCBC, who lead on the community hub development in RCT. The Board did not receive a written update from MTCBC, due to service delivery pressures. However, Mark Brace, Chair did attend an implementation group meeting of the Gurnos hub, by invitation, in December 2021, which was reported to the previous JOSC meeting in December. The main challenge discussed was sustainability, in terms of financial and integrated service provision. This was raised at the January PSB meeting, and forms part of the challenges outlined by RCTCBC in their written update attached. Key highlights for the RCT hubs include: the development of Community Resilience Volunteers, a legacy from the pandemic, where people stepped up to volunteer in their local communities, and this has continued to strengthen; a resident survey was carried out with 965 residents in RCT, and has been shared with PSB for the purpose of the Wellbeing Assessment, and a steering group of delivery partners was established during the pandemic, and this has continued and strengthened, outcomes from the work of the group are outlined in the update report.
- **A Strong Economy** – a regional approach to strengthening the foundational economy, with the support of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies has progressed, despite the challenges of service delivery throughout the pandemic. This innovative approach has brought together key public organisations, to act as ‘anchors’ in their areas, and this work has begun with a focus on progressive procurement. A dissemination event took place on the 18<sup>th</sup> January, focusing on food procurement, construction and retrofit, and enhancing opportunities for small to medium and social enterprises. The working group for CTM will reconvene in the next quarter. Public Health Wales’ project ‘Fair Work for Health, Wellbeing and Equity’ have called on the PSBs in the region to consider how they can support participation in fair work, particularly when developing the Wellbeing Assessment and Plan. The findings have been fed in to the assessment work.
- **Tackling Loneliness and Isolation** – this objective continues to be greatly impacted upon as a result of the impact of COVID-19. The community and voluntary sector response and mobilisation was, and continues to be, an enormous effort, and widely publicised. A new Tackling Loneliness and Isolation Development Officer has been in post for several months, covering Cwm Taf, and she has made good progress with the Befriending Services Network. They have set up governance structures and based on a workshop carried out in December, they have agreed priorities for forthcoming meetings, to include areas of work such as dementia awareness, safeguarding and substance misuse. The need for essential befriending services has been highlighted over the last 20 months, and continues to be a priority for the region. One of the Network’s first priorities is to establish ‘Befriending Champions’ in the communities of Cwm Taf, both MT and RCT Councils have been approached through their MT’s democratic services and RCT’s Community Development Service. PSB Support Officers have been attending Neighbourhood Networks across RCT and Merthyr Tydfil speaking with groups and partners, as part of the engagement work, to understand feelings of loneliness and isolation in our communities. Links have also been made with the ‘Mind our Future’ project across Cwm Taf, which has a specific focus on children and young people, and the ways in which loneliness and isolation impacts their lives.

The issue of sustainability of these vital services, and the nature of the short term funding cycles that the voluntary sector are subjected to was also raised in this objective report, as well as the Thriving Communities report. Therefore, this is a key priority and issue for the PSB in the coming quarters, and into the next round of planning. It was agreed that a joint letter from the Chair of the PSB and JOSB would be sent to WG, outlining challenges and opportunities for the PSB moving forward, and some of the concerns around sustainable and flexible funding would be included.

4.4 **Emerging Priorities** – this second quarter of the PSB reporting year, the Board have continued to spend time considering changing and emerging priorities, particularly in light of the impact of COVID-19 and Brexit. Partners have agreed that the Board need to take an approach which is more focussed, with fewer priorities, in an attempt to produce greater impact on some of the long standing, systemic issues faced by all our partners in the public sector. Some of the broader priorities have been identified from the impact data which has emerged from the pandemic from various partners, such as mental health, climate change / green recovery and economic recovery. However, the Board are committed to fully utilising the analysis of the data and engagement activities from the Well-being Assessment process before confirming specific areas of focus, in line with the 5 Ways of Working.

4.5 **Future Governance Arrangements** – the PSB continue to develop the strategic direction and focus to ensure alignment with the work of the Regional Partnership Board, and support for a Cwm Taf Morgannwg PSB by 2023 continues to be the focus. Members of the PSB were asked to consider further governance and operational arrangements at the January meeting, and the actions from this item will be reported in the next quarter report, following the ratified minutes at the next PSB meeting.

## 5.0 INVOLVEMENT

5.1 Through the continued work the Well-being Assessment and the setting up of the Community Assessment Action Group, the PSB have committed to the involvement of its wider partners and people in our communities. This will be further developed after the Assessment is completed with support from the Co-production Wales Network project, which will support Cwm Taf and Bridgend PSB to embed the practices of co-production over the next 5 years.

## 6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No equality and diversity implications to report.

## 7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct financial implications for the Board, however, there are financial responsibilities placed on individual public bodies to deliver against the objectives set out in the well-being plan. There may also be financial considerations in respect of the changes to governance and structure over the next 18 months.

## 8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 There are no legal implications to consider in this report. The legislation is considered and reviewed throughout the development of all PSB work.

## **9.0 LINKS TO PSB's WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES**

9.1 The report focus is on the progress of the well-objectives.

## 10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The PSB's work against the delivery of its well-being objectives set out in the Well-being Plan has been significantly affected by the impact of COVID-19 on partners' services. The Joint Scrutiny Committee is requested to acknowledge this disruption when undertaking its duties to scrutinise the delivery plans. It is evident that despite the challenges, the work programme continues to progress, albeit in different and flexible ways to what would have been planned at the outset of the current programme. There are some key challenges, which have been highlighted, particularly around sustainability of some of the work under the Objectives, most notably, Thriving Communities and Tackling Loneliness and Isolation, and this will require a more strategic focus on partnership delivery arrangements, funding mechanisms, and integration of services with a place based approach.
- 10.2 The PSB have identified broader priorities, which have emerged from the data of partners' recovery programmes in response to the pandemic. This work will be further developed by the Well-being Assessment and its findings. The PSB are committed to using the data and intelligence to shape the iteration of the Well-being Plan, with a tighter focus on fewer priorities.
- 10.3 The structure and governance arrangements of the current Cwm Taf PSB will undergo significant changes during this existing reporting year and beyond. Both Cwm Taf and Bridgend PSBs have agreed and committed to a merger, which will create a new Cwm Taf Morgannwg PSB, in time for the preparation of the new Well-being Plan in 2023. Therefore, is requested that the committee acknowledge the programme of work that this will create.

**Mark Brace**  
**Chair, Cwm Taf PSB**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Objective Updates attached.		
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		<b>No</b>