



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Virtual meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 24
April 2023 at 4.00 pm

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

**County Borough Councillors – The following Community Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillors were present:-**

Councillor J Bonetto (Chair)

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| 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 D Parkin |
| Councillor A Roberts | Councillor G Stacey |
| Councillor T Williams | |

Officers in attendance:-

Ms C Miles, Childcare Solicitor
Mr P Nicholls, Service Director, Legal Services
Ms A Beckham, The Head of Service, Learning Disability Mental Health and Substance Misuse
Ms S Nowell, Head of Transformation
Ms J Nicholls, Principal Scrutiny Officer
Ms J Daniel, Democratic Services and Engagement Officer

44 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

45 MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 20th March 2023 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

46 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.

47 LEARNING DISABILITY DAY SERVICES OFFER

The Democratic Services and Engagement officer presented the Cabinet report relating to the Learning Disability Day Services Offer and advised Members that the purpose of this item was for Members comments and feedback to be fed

back to Cabinet in their meeting on the 15th May 2023.

Following this, the Head of Service, Learning Disabilities Mental Health and Substance Misuse presented their report to Members providing further detail and context around the details of the draft strategy and future consultation proposed in section 5 of the report.

One Member expressed concern that Children transitioning into adult services sometimes can slip through and have limited contact and looked to have reassurance of how the proposed strategy will ensure inclusion for all. The Head of Service, Learning Disabilities Mental Health and Substance Misuse directed Members to the Additional Learning Needs Bill and informed the intentions of this will capture all of the strategies as part of it. The Officer noted Members concerns regarding this and assured Members reference will be added to the Cabinet report to ensure it is covered as part of the proposals.

Members discussed the impact of Community Hubs and the opportunities they can provide for activities, employment, and volunteering. The Head of Service, Learning Disabilities Mental Health and Substance Misuse highlighted that following the discussion at the previous meeting surrounding this this aspect now forms part of the proposed strategy in recognition of the additional benefit they can provide. Members were pleased to see this addition and felt it is important to utilise the links available in the community.

Members acknowledged the extensive consultation carried out to date and the need to move away from the current model considering the powerful feedback provided from service users, staff, parents, and carers to provide more meaningful activities and opportunities.

One Member questioned how the service area plans to measure the success of the proposed strategy and ensure that progress is monitored. The Head of Service, Learning Disabilities Mental Health and Substance Misuse acknowledged the challenge in changing mindsets but highlighted the success of the engagement events held and the inclusion of individuals in the development of the proposals to date having a say in their own services. Members were informed that at the heart of the draft strategy and future offer is co-production with people leading and developing their own services. The Officer continued explaining that the proposed model ensures inclusion of all, including all service users, parents and carers and the key priorities will aim to combat all areas of discrimination and unconscious bias. Members were informed that in measuring the success, ongoing engagement will be key and monitoring the progress of individuals through either direct communication or through engagement with parents, carers and staff will be key. The Officer also informed Members that Committee will be kept up to date with progress and the results of any future engagement will be fed back to Members.

Another Member asked about the employment opportunities outlined as part of the strategy and asked how it will ensure employers are engaged with and supportive. The Head of Service, Learning Disabilities Mental Health and Substance Misuse told Members that connections have already been made with colleagues within the Local Authority who offer opportunities for employment to individuals with a learning disability and of connections with Elite who the Council have commissioned to utilise the offers available to support people to gain employment in an area of their choice. The Officer acknowledged there are still some barriers to work through but that the links already secured and the

inclusion of key contacts in the virtual transformation team as part of the programme provide a good foundation. Members were informed that the intention of the strategy is to strengthen and develop the pathway further to build upon the employment offer and support available.

A Member also raised the challenge of accessing suitable transport to fulfil employment / volunteering opportunities and questioned how the strategy will support this. The Head of Service, Learning Disabilities Mental Health and Substance Misuse emphasised that good transport links will be key, and it is recognised as part of the strategy the importance of individuals being able to confidently use transport. Members were informed that the strategy will look to continue with the travel training scheme and provide opportunities for people to be supported to get to employment, activities if they are unable to utilise public transport.

One Member referenced a local community charity providing childcare, holiday clubs, support for unemployed/elderly and asked how the proposed strategy will utilise projects like this who are already recognised and well trusted in community. The Head of Service, Learning Disabilities Mental Health and Substance Misuse assured Members that community projects such as the one referenced are key to the strategy being a success ensuring connections are made within the community to identify what is currently on offer and how these can be utilised to provide opportunities for people with a learning disability. Members were informed that officers are developing a network of community projects capturing the details and will look to link in with them individually as part of the proposed strategy.

Following discussion, Members **RESOLVED** for the comments and feedback of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee to be fed back to Cabinet at its meeting on the 15th May 2023.

48 CHAIR'S REVIEW AND CLOSE

The Chair thanked Officers for attending and presenting the information for Committee and acknowledged the scale of work that had been carried out to date and welcomed further involvement should Cabinet agree to the recommendations when it is presented in May 2023.

49 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

This meeting closed at 4.24 pm

**Councillor J Bonetto
Chair.**