



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023-24

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15th JANUARY 2024

BI-ANNUAL CABINET MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To scrutinise any arising matters with the portfolio holder responsible for Public Health and Communities and to ensure that the appropriate mechanisms are in place to effectively scrutinise the Executive.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Scrutinise the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities in respect of matters considered and agreed by Cabinet, and any key decisions taken, during the period 11 May 2023 – 15th January 2024; and,
- 2.2 Identify any areas arising from those matters determined within this period which Committee wish to further scrutinise, as part of revisions to the committees published work programme, in relation to Public Health and Communities.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To provide the Community Services Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge the Cabinet in respect of the decisions taken in the defined decision-making period.
- 3.2 The recommendations seek to provide a structure to these sessions, to enable discussion and challenge to be focused upon a defined period and those individual decisions taken.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 As part of this Council's ongoing commitment to improve the function of Scrutiny as a critical friend of the Council, this item is being brought before the Community Services Scrutiny Committee as part of Cabinet and Scrutiny engagement.
- 4.2 Such an approach will provide Scrutiny Members with the opportunity to further challenge the Executive, as the Cabinet Member can provide details relating to the investments being taken forward within the portfolio and the challenges faced by the Council.

5. SCRUTINY OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

- 5.1 The role that the Community Services Scrutiny Committee can play in holding the Council's decision-makers to account makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy. Scrutinising the Executive serves an important purpose in ensuring that decision makers of the Council are held accountable for their actions and decisions.
- 5.2 By Scrutinising the Cabinet Member Public Health and Communities, the public can gain a better understanding of their decision-making process and hold them accountable, which will promote openness and transparency within the Council. It will also ensure that those in Leadership positions are acting in the best interests of their constituents.
- 5.3 Scrutiny can also identify areas for improvement and drive positive changes, strengthening our governance arrangements. Effective scrutiny helps secure the efficient delivery of public services and drives improvements within the authority itself. Conversely, poor scrutiny can be indicative of wider governance, leadership and service failure.
- 5.4 Under the [Terms of Reference](#) of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, Members have the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge areas that fall under the remit of the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities. The main responsibility areas of the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities cover the following areas:
 - Public Health & Protection
 - Licensing & Registrars
 - Cemeteries & Crematoria
 - Community support and RCT Together
 - Libraries & Adult Education
 - RCT Together & support for the voluntary sector
 - Affordable & Supported Housing

- Asylum response
- Community Safety & Youth Offending
- Domestic Abuse & Victim Support'
- Domestic Abuse Champion
- Cultural Services

5.5 Members should note that future opportunity will be provided to the Committee to scrutinise the Cabinet Member Health Social Care.

5.6 Scrutiny in various forms is essential to ensuring accountability, transparency and fairness and ensures that political decisions are taken in the best interests of our residents.

5.7 **Decisions taken forward by the Portfolio holder during the period 11 May 2023 – 15 January 2024**

The decisions can be found by clicking on the following links below:-

Community Safety Partnership Review – June 2023

[Decision - Approval of Recommendations arising from a review of the Community Safety Partnership arrangements for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Discussed at Community Services Scrutiny Committee (Crime & Disorder) meeting – Monday 24th April 2023

Local Toilet Strategy – Sept 2023

[Decision - Pre-Scrutiny: Local Toilet Strategy Review - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

Discussed at Community Services Scrutiny Committee – Monday 10th July 2023

HMO Licensing Report – December 2023

[Decision - Proposal to declare a new additional Licensing Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation in 2024](#)

Discussed at Community Services Scrutiny Committee – Tuesday 21st November 2023

5.8 Questions should be focussed in respect of the above decisions taken by the Cabinet Member, to enable effective scrutiny of those decisions by committee members. The above decisions do not include exempt decisions considered by Cabinet Committee.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO ECONOMIC DUTY

6.1 None arising as a direct result of this report.

7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

7.1 There are no consultation requirements emanating from the recommendations set out in this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 The report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph Part 4 of the Constitution (Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules).

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 To provide the Community Services Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise, challenge and make recommendations for policy improvement under the remit of the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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COMMUNICATIONS**