



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

19TH APRIL 2018

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY HUBS IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DEPUTY CABINET MEMBER FOR PROSPERITY & WELL-BEING, COUNCILLOR, RHYS LEWIS

Authors:

Paul Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Sian Nowell, Head of Adult Care & Support
Angharad Stephens, Community Hub Development Project Graduate Officer

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report proposes a programme of investment in community services across the County Borough through the development of Community Hubs as part of the Council's approach to building resilient communities and early intervention and prevention.
- 1.2 In addition, this report seeks approval from Cabinet to develop Community Hubs at Mountain Ash Day Centre and the former Ferndale Infants School.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves the proposed approach for the phased development of Community Hubs across Rhondda Cynon Taf over a three year period.
- 2.2 Considers the responses to the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the Mountain Ash Day Centre and determines whether any amendments are required to the proposals.
- 2.3 Subject to 2.2 above, approve the development of a Community Hub at Mountain Ash Day Centre.

- 2.4 Considers the responses to the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the Ferndale Community Hub and determines whether any amendments are required to the proposals.
- 2.5 Subject to 2.4 above, approves the development of a Community Hub at the former Ferndale Infants School, subject to Fern Partnership successfully securing external funding to support the development.
- 2.6 Subject to 2.5 above approves capital investment as a match funding contribution towards the Fern Partnership's application for external funding in support of the development of the Community Hub in Ferndale, and
- 2.7 Subject to 2.5 and 2.6 above, the Council enters into a leasehold agreement with Fern Partnership in respect of the former Ferndale Infants School.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Council's approach to building resilient communities and early intervention and prevention includes the development of Community Hubs that provide a range of citizen based services in one or a number of closely located buildings in priority neighbourhoods. These facilities will support a preventative approach that enables individuals and families to access support as early as possible to prevent problems from escalating.
- 3.2 Community Hubs will include a range of services provided by the public and voluntary sector. Bringing services together will provide a better public service offer and create economies of scale in terms of staffing and building costs. Making better, more cost effective use of our community assets and reinvesting resources in new or retrofitted, fit for purpose buildings will enable services to be sustainable in the longer term.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The proposal to develop Community Hubs across the County Borough has developed in response to a number of strategic priorities:

Cwm Taf Public Services Board – Cwm Taf Well-being Plan 2018-2023

- 4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a well-being duty on public bodies that they must carry out sustainable development, including publishing well-being objectives and taking all reasonable steps to meet those

objectives. Following completion of its Well-being assessment, the Cwm Taf Public Services Board (PSB) has set the following three objectives:

- To promote safe, confident, strong and thriving communities improving the well-being of residents and visitors and building on our community assets.
- To help people live long and healthy lives and overcome any challenges.
- To grow a strong local economy with sustainable transport that attracts people to live, work and play in Cwm Taf.

4.3 In addition, the PSB has identified that across these objectives it will need to work differently to tackle loneliness and social isolation. In the short term (1-2 years), the PSB proposes to develop Community Zones as an area or place based approach focussing support to improve outcomes for our areas with the greatest challenges.

The Cwm Taf Regional Plan 2018-23

4.4 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 requires each area to develop an Area Plan. In Cwm Taf this is called the Regional Plan. This five year plan sets out how the Cwm Taf Social Services and Well-being Partnership Board will respond to the findings of the Population Needs Assessment completed in 2017.

4.5 A number of cross cutting priorities have been identified for regional action. This includes ensuring consistent, timely and easy access to information, advice and assistance that supports resilience and well-being. This priority includes developing Community Hubs and associated links with the Cwm Taf PSB Community Zones pilot.

Our Valleys, Our Future Delivery Plan

4.6 In July 2016, the Ministerial Taskforce for the South Wales Valleys was set up by the First Minister. On 20th July 2017, the Taskforce published its high-level action plan Our Valleys, Our Future. The plan had three key priorities:

- Good quality jobs and the skills to do them.
- Better public services.
- My local community.

4.7 On 1st November 2017, The Taskforce published a delivery plan setting out how these priorities will be achieved, who will be involved, the expected benefits and timescales for completion.

- 4.8 The priority for better public services includes an action to use existing, and create new, community hubs, in which public services work together with the third sector to provide services for local communities. The expected outcome is that public services will be more responsive to people's needs. In addition to the action concerning community hubs, the delivery plan includes a range of actions that will improve the health and well-being of communities, including developing an integrated Early Years system, tackling ACEs, improving access to mental health services, promoting social prescribing and the enhanced community use of school buildings.

Welsh Government's Children First Initiative

- 4.9 In October 2016, the Cabinet Secretary for Children and Communities invited organisations to express an interest in developing "Children's Zones" in Wales. This is a place based approach, bringing together different organisations to improve outcomes for children and young people. The aim is that through a shared strategic vision, long-term sustainable reductions are achieved in the inequalities experienced by children in disadvantaged communities when compared to those in more socially advantaged areas.
- 4.10 In response to this challenge, the Cwm Taf Public Services Board (PSB) submitted an expression of interest to Welsh Government. Whilst the proposed approach will have tackling adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) at its heart, the building of resilience to achieve sustainable change will require a whole family approach. This whole family approach will tackle ACEs through building the resilience of the child at the same time as challenging and changing the behaviours of parents.
- 4.11 A resilient community requires the engagement and investment of the whole community and as such any place based approach should be inclusive. It was therefore proposed that the approach in Cwm Taf was to develop and pilot "Community Zones" in two communities in Cwm Taf, namely The Gurnos in Merthyr Tydfil and Ferndale in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 4.12 The expression of interest to Welsh Government was approved in June 2017 and Cwm Taf is now one of five Children First pioneer areas in Wales developing this approach.

Funding Flexibilities Pathfinder Project

- 4.13 This Council is one of eight local authorities in Wales that is currently part of a Funding Flexibility pathfinder project with Welsh Government. This project brings together ten previously separate grant funding streams together into a single Early Intervention and Prevention

Support Grant. The aim is to allow local authorities, as the lead delivery bodies, to have greater flexibility on how the grants are spent to meet the Welsh Government's strategic outcomes. This will allow for strategic commissioning of services to meet local needs; greater efficiency through a single approach to commissioning, contract monitoring and evaluation delivering better value for money; and encouraging innovative approaches to service delivery. The ten programmes included in the pathfinder project are:

- Supporting People
- Flying Start
- Families First
- Communities First Legacy Fund
- St David's Day Fund
- Homelessness Prevention
- Rent Smart Wales Enforcement
- Childcare and Play
- Promoting positive Engagement (for young people at risk of offending), and
- Communities for Work Plus

4.14 In the application for flexible funding, the Council has proposed that funding flexibility will be utilised to support:

- **The Resilient Families Programme** – which brings together a range of strategic work streams and priorities to provide a single focus for all partners to engage with and commit to the delivery of family focussed intervention support services that strengthen the resilience of families.
- **Integrated Family Support Framework** – which organises the operational delivery of supporting services to families and identifies where different service provision fits within a continuum of family support.
- **Resilient Families Service** – a new and improved model for Team Around the Family that enables us to respond to the needs of families swiftly and effectively.
- **Community Zones/Children First** – the development of a network of community zones across Cwm Taf that focus on tackling adverse childhood experiences through co-location of public and third sector service and co-production with local communities.
- **Early Years Integration** – in collaboration with Welsh Government, Cwm Taf UHB and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council create a fully integrated Early Years system in Cwm Taf.

5. DEVELOPING COMMUNITY HUBS IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

5.1 In response to the strategic priorities identified in section 4, it is proposed that the Council develop a number of Community Hubs across the County Borough. These Community Hubs will support and be at the centre of ten neighbourhood networks each reflecting a recognisable community in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Expected Outcomes

5.2 This approach is expected to deliver the following outcomes:

- Better public services that are joined up, cost effective and accessible.
- A community in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised.
- A community that is well connected.
- A community that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.
- A community that promotes and protects its culture and heritage.

Objectives

5.3 This approach will develop an infrastructure to support:

- A single point of contact within communities to access good quality information, advice and assistance.
- A platform to develop community capacity and volunteering.
- Encouragement for older people to stay active and connected to delay or prevent them needing statutory services.
- Opportunities for people to improve their mental health, well-being and confidence.
- Opportunities for people to improve or maintain their physical health.
- Opportunities for parents and families to improve their relationships and parenting skills.
- Opportunities for vulnerable people to seek support and be signposted to other services as appropriate.
- Opportunities for people to learn and develop skills in support of employment.
- Provide flexible community space for people to meet, share interest and socialise, thereby tackling loneliness and social isolation.

Identifying the Neighbourhood Networks

- 5.4 In determining where the Community Hubs should be located, consideration was given to the population size, natural boundaries and town centres, identifiable communities, alignment with school catchment areas, existing community support such as Communities First and Flying Start and availability of public transport. On this basis, ten geographical areas were identified and a community profile prepared of each area, including demographic, socio-economic, housing and educational attainment data.
- 5.5 It is proposed that a phased approach over three years be taken to the development of the Hubs and neighbourhood networks based on the analysis of this information and evidence of greatest need. The following catchment areas are ranked accordingly:
- Rhondda Fach
 - South Cynon
 - North Rhondda
 - South Rhondda
 - Mid Rhondda
 - North Cynon
 - North West Taff Ely
 - North East Taff Ely
 - South East Taff Ely
 - South West Taff Ely
- 5.6 It is proposed that for each area potential Hub buildings are identified following a mapping exercise of existing public and third sector assets and services. It is proposed that over a period of three years eight to ten Hubs are developed across the County Borough. Some of these may be run by the Council, some by other third sector organisations and others in partnership. This will depend on the needs of the community and the opportunities available in each area.
- 5.7 All Community Hubs will have a number of services located together that are responsive to local needs. These may include services such as a library or community cafe that encourage access and establishes the Hub's status as a valuable community asset. Each Hub will include flexible community rooms that can be used by community groups or partners. The Hub will provide information, advice and assistance on site and link with other facilities and provision across the wider network of community support in the area run by public or third sector organisations. The Hub will provide employment support through the Community for Work programmes.

6. PROGRESS AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS

- 6.1 Members will be aware of the work already undertaken to locate services together at Porth Plaza and this will continue as the centre develops into the Community Hub for Rhondda South.
- 6.2 In Aberdare, through the RCT Together programme, the Council has agreed a leasehold transfer of St Mair's Day Centre to Age Connects Morgannwg (ACM) who will develop a Community Hub with a range of services including a social enterprise bistro, community space for local groups to hire, childcare provision and a headquarters for ACM to provide community outreach, befriending and information, advice and assistance for older people.

Mountain Ash Day Centre

- 6.3 It is proposed to develop the existing Day Centre as a Community Hub to provide a range of Council services from the same location. This will provide direct access to many of the services residents need on a daily basis as well as providing opportunities to receive employment support and information, advice and assistance on a range of issues that affect people's quality of life and well-being. There will also be potential to develop links with the proposed Primary Care Hub to be developed in Mountain Ash by the Cwm Taf UHB.
- 6.4 The Day Centre is currently under utilised. On average 23 meals are served per day and the breakfast and afternoon tea provision has low usage. The existing library in Mountain Ash, although well used, cannot accommodate space for community use or an education/IT training suite.
- 6.5 The co-location of services will enable the Council to provide a community cafe where food is available throughout the day, including hot meals. Residents and community groups would continue to have access to rooms to meet and these would also be available for use by partner organisations. There would be a significantly enhanced library service, ICT suite and support for employment and skills development.
- 6.6 A four week focussed consultation was undertaken from the 26th February 2018, the results of which are discussed at section 8.

Ferndale Infants School

- 6.7 It is proposed to work in partnership with a third sector organisation, Fern Partnership, to develop a Community Hub in Ferndale that will serve the Rhondda Fach. The Community Hub would include a range of community based services including the relocation and enhancement of Ferndale Library. Fern Partnership would provide a comprehensive

childcare offer from the Hub and a range of information, advice and assistance will be available to the community together with employment support programmes. It is anticipated that the Ferndale Community Hub will deliver the Council's commitments to Welsh Government's Children First initiative.

- 6.8 Fern Partnership will be the anchor organisation and have overall responsibility for the Community Hub. It is proposed that the Council enter into a leasehold agreement with Fern Partnership whereby they will take responsibility for the building and then sub-let part of the building to the Council.
- 6.9 This is an innovative approach where the Council will be co-locating its services in partnership with a third sector anchor organisation. It is anticipated that this will be a more cost effective and sustainable model. Fern Partnership will be seeking external funding to support the development of the Hub. The Council will need to make a match funding contribution in support of these funding applications.
- 6.10 A four week focussed consultation was undertaken from the 19th February 2018, the results of which are discussed at section 8.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared in relation to the proposal to develop a Community Hub at the former Ferndale Infants School. This concludes that the proposal will have a positive impact and therefore a full equality impact assessment will not be necessary. The screening form can be accessed by contacting the author of the report or the Cabinet Business officer.
- 7.2 In relation to the proposal to develop a Community Hub at Mountain Ash day centre a full equality impact assessment has been undertaken. This was undertaken given the proposal will affect persons with a protected characteristic, particularly age and disability. The full equality impact assessment is presented at Appendix 1 and shows that although there are areas of concern it is possible to take steps to mitigate any adverse impact, for example through the provision of a setting down point for disabled passengers outside the building and by continuing to provide subsidised hot meals for older people as part of the services at the Community Hub.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 In developing its proposals for Community Zones, the Cwm Taf PSB undertook two community engagement events in November 2017. One of these was held at Tylorstown Sports Centre, the other at The Gurnos. The event in Tylorstown was attended by approximately 60

residents and took the format of a facilitated workshop where residents were asked what was good about their community, what they would change if they could and how they would like to be involved in deciding what happens in their community. The feedback from the event identified that the greatest strength was undoubtedly the community spirit and how people supported each other. Many residents highlighted the perceived loss of local services and amenities as a key thing they would change.

- 8.2 Those in attendance expressed an interest in being involved in local decisions but would welcome a different approach that kept them engaged rather than what was perceived to be a series of consultations with little or no follow up. Many people provided their contact details and it is proposed that the event is followed up as part of establishing an ongoing dialogue with the community.

Mountain Ash Consultation

- 8.3 A four week focussed consultation was undertaken from the 26th February to 26th March 2018. The consultation used a range of methods including a questionnaire, five drop in engagement event, an email to all 1974 library users and promotion through the Cynon Valleys Older Person Advisory Group.
- 8.4 The responses to the consultation exercise in Mountain Ash are presented at Appendix 2 and can be summarised as follows:
- In total, 148 responses were received to the survey and 94 people attended the five drop in events.
 - 1 petition was received with 261 signatures, objecting to the “*change of use of Mountain Ash Day Centre and the closure of Mountain Ash Library*”.
 - 43.8% agreed with the proposal, 52.1% disagreed with the proposal.
 - 52.2% of Mountain Ash residents that responded to the survey stated that they would access the Community Hub.
 - 57 young people responded to the survey in Mountain Ash Comprehensive School, 93% agreed with the proposal.
- 8.5 The full consultation report is presented at Appendix 2 and includes comments received from respondents during the consultation exercise. Many of the comments relate to a perceived loss of service; either that the library will have less space/poorer facilities or that there will be a loss of service to older people, primarily the loss of hot meals.
- 8.6 There appears to be some misconceptions that the space allocated in the Community Hub for library use is less than that in the existing library. In fact the space will be comparable to the existing library and

slightly larger with the inclusion of the community meeting rooms. The space will be configured in such a way as to provide additional enhanced services such as a dedicated IT suite, rooms available for community use and an improved children's area. Some library users expressed support for the proposed enhancement to service provision but would prefer that this was done from the existing premises.

- 8.7 In relation to the provision of services for older people at the day centre, it was perceived that the move to a community cafe type provision would lead to a loss of hot meals. The proposed kitchen would have the capacity to provide hot meals as well as a range of other food and would be open for longer periods. It was clear however that some older people that currently use the Day Centre value the structure provided by the existing service model whereby a set hot meal is available each day between 12:30 and 13:30.
- 8.8 The space allocated to the library in the community hub will be available for flexible use as much of the furniture can be moved. Consequently many of the community activities held at the day centre can continue and the loss of the stage can be mitigated through the provision of a temporary stage that can be erected as required.
- 8.9 Following the closure of the job centre in Mountain Ash, the Council has hosted a drop in provision at the existing library. This will be able to continue in the new community hub with the additional enhancement of being co-located within the Council's employment support programme.
- 8.10 The concerns expressed during the consultation exercise highlight the value that service users have for the existing services available from both the library and the day centre; however, these views need to be balanced against the wider interests of the community and the need to ensure that services are sustainable in the long term.

Ferndale Consultation

- 8.11 A four week focussed consultation was undertaken from the 19th February to 19th March 2018. The consultation used a range of methods including a questionnaire, four drop-in engagement events, an email to all 1344 library users and promotion through the Older Persons Advisory Group.
- 8.12 The responses to the consultation exercise in Ferndale are presented at Appendix 3 and can be summarised as follows:
 - In total, 33 responses were received to the survey and 34 people attended the drop in events.
 - 94% agreed with the proposal, no one disagreed with the proposal.

- 93.9% of respondents who were Ferndale residents stated they would access the community Hub.
- 45 young people responded to the survey in Ferndale Comprehensive School, 100% agreed with the proposal.

8.13 The full consultation report is presented at Appendix 2 and includes comments received from respondents during the consultation exercise. The majority of the comments are positive and welcome the proposals. Amongst the few concerns expressed the potential impact on parking was highlighted.

8.14 Overall, the proposal was well received by the local community and responses to the consultation were positive.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Detailed plans have been prepared for the reconfiguration of both Mountain Ash Day Centre and the former Ferndale Infants School to create Community Hubs.

9.2 Budget costs have been prepared for each scheme. In Ferndale the total cost of the proposals will depend on the availability of external funding but is likely to cost in excess of £550k. This will include an estimated contribution by the Council of £256k. In Mountain Ash the estimated full capital costs are £625k, which will need to be fully funded by the Council. These costs will include necessary refurbishment of the fabric of the building, including partial external rendering, improvements to the electrical and heating installation, fire alarm and internal/external decoration.

9.3 An allocation of £500k has already been made in the Council's corporate investment priorities detailed in the report to Council on 29th November 2017. The development of Community Hubs has also been identified as a strategic capital investment priority in the report presented to Cabinet on 25th January 2018, *Delivering the Corporate Plan – "The Way Ahead" – Investing for the Future*.

9.4 The additional budget requirements to develop the two schemes in 2018/19 will be identified as part of the end of year financial arrangements and reprioritisation of resources.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

11. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/FUTURE GENERATIONS – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 11.1 The development of Community Hubs across the County Borough will contribute to the Council's corporate priorities:
- Economy – building a strong economy.
 - People – promoting independence and positive lives for everyone.
 - Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work.
- 11.2 Community Hubs will deliver better public services that are joined up, efficient, coordinated and located close to the point of need. A focus on tackling adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and supporting early years will assist in giving children the best possible start in life. The Hubs will help people to access the support they need to develop skills and confidence so they can access employment and support our local economy.
- 11.3 Each Community Hub will support a neighbourhood network with local residents, businesses and services where there is an ongoing dialogue between the community and public services, creating a platform to support volunteering. Communities will be able to access information, advice and assistance at the Hubs that enables residents to maintain or improve their health and well-being.
- 11.4 This proposal is consistent with the sustainable approach promoted by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act through the five ways of working:
- Long-term – each community hub will seek to achieve long term sustainable change in their community.
 - Prevention – this approach is a key element of the PSB and Council's increased emphasis on early intervention and prevention.
 - Integration – this proposal contributes to a range of strategic priorities as described in section 4, in an integrated and coherent approach.
 - Collaboration – intrinsic to this approach is collaboration with other public services and the third sector.
 - Involvement – communities will be involved through a different approach to engagement and co-production.
- 11.5 This proposal makes a direct contribution to the seven national well-being goals, in particular a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities.

11.6 In addition to contributing to the Council's corporate priorities and the well-being goals, this proposal will meet the council's commitment to the Welsh Government Children First initiative and contribute to the priorities in the Our Valleys, Our Future Delivery Plan.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 This report sets out proposals to redesign and enhance community based services on offer across the County Borough. By bringing aligned services together into Community Hubs, there is potential to increase the usage of some of our valued but underutilised assets and to enhance the services on offer to residents by modernising and extending the range of services and information, advice and assistance on offer from a single accessible location.

12.2 Where possible the Council will explore opportunities to work with partners or the third sector as anchor organisations. This will enable a more sustainable approach to delivering community services, maximise opportunities for the third sector to access external funding and further enhance the offer to local residents.

12.3 Each Hub will support a neighbourhood network, linking with other services and third sector organisations to ensure services are complimentary and joined up. Community engagement will be central to the approach, with each Hub acting as a platform to reach out to vulnerable people in the community and support opportunities for volunteering and skills development.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Public Service Delivery, Communities & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
Health and Well-being Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer

Paul Mee (01443 425513)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

19TH APRIL 2018

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DEPUTY CABINET
MEMBER FOR PROSPERITY & WELL-BEING, COUNCILLOR RHYS
LEWIS**

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY HUBS IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Background Papers

None

**Officer to contact: Paul Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection &
Community Services. Tel. No. 01443 425513**

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Please ensure that you refer to the 'Equality Impact Assessment Guidance' when completing this form. If you would like further assistance please contact the Equality & Diversity Team.

Details

Name of initiative to be assessed: Mountain Ash Community Hub proposal

Name of responsible officer: Paul Mee

Group/Directorate: Children and Community Services

Service Area: Library Service and Day Services

Date: 27 March 2018

a) What are you assessing for impact?

Service/ Function	Policy/ Procedure	Project	Strategy	Plan	Proposal	Information/ Position statement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b) Please name and describe below:

The Council currently delivers library services at Mountain Ash from a building at Knight Street that was built in 1997. The Library has 3,484 registered members, 2,893 of whom have used the library during the last year. In addition to providing a range of library services, the venue also provides a part-time One4All advice service and facilitates the provision of jobsearch and employment advice by partners and other Council services. The library is open for 31.5 hours per week spread across 6 days. In 2016/17 visitor numbers to the library were 45,203 and the number of books issued to customers was 21,764. Public access PCs were used for 30% of the available time. The usage figures have remained relatively constant over the past three years.

The library is open-plan with one small consultation room that is used to deliver the One4All advice service for 3 days of the week and used by other partners at other times. There is a Children's area, 13 public access PCs, a good selection of books and materials and the building also houses an impressive First World War Book of Remembrance in its original presentation display cupboard and the Nos Calan Board. There are two disabled car parking bays immediately outside the library.

In terms of the delivery of library services, the current library lacks a dedicated IT/Training room that would enable the delivery of a range of community learning classes for residents, and also a meeting room that can be used by local community groups, self-directed learning groups, clubs or societies. These are facilities that are generally available in libraries nowadays.

The Council also owns a building at Oxford Street, Mountain Ash, an open access centre for the use of adults aged 50 and over. It is open from Monday to Friday from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and provides a subsidised meal service

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

and social activities for its users. Currently, the numbers attending the breakfast and afternoon tea service are low and lunch-time provision has an average of 23 customers per day.

The Local Authority does not have a statutory duty to provide a Day Centre service with subsidised meals and activities for people over the age of 50. The proposal under consideration is to merge these Council services onto one site - the current Day Centre site - and to invest in the expansion and refurbishment of the building to accommodate the needs of both service-users. In addition to maintaining services for current users this would allow opportunities to develop further partnerships for the benefit of residents and to attract more people to the venue.

- c) Is the delivery of this initiative affected by legislation or other drivers such as codes of practice?
If so, please identify what and how**

Legislation:

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 indicates that local authorities must provide a 'comprehensive and efficient library service' but does not stipulate how this is to be achieved. In Wales, the Welsh Government has introduced the Welsh Public Library Standards that indicate the range of provision that a modern library is expected to provide to its customers outlining 18 core entitlements that need to be achieved as well as 7 quality indicators that must be aspired to. The potential relocation of the library from its current location to the proposed new site will enable the library to better meet its obligations under the Welsh Public Library Standards, specifically by offering a community meeting room and training room so that a wider range of activities can be facilitated to meet the needs of all ages.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places an emphasis on the principle of sustainable development. This proposal makes a direct contribution to the seven national well-being goals, in particular a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities. Making better, more cost effective use of our community assets and reinvesting resources in new or remodelled, fit for purpose buildings will enable services to be sustainable in the longer term.

Other drivers

The development of community hubs are identified as strategic priorities in the following plans and projects:

Cwm Taf Well-being Plan 2018- 2023 - the Public Service Board's aim to promote safe, confident, strong and thriving communities improving the well-being of residents and visitors and building on our community assets can be achieved through the development of community hubs. The proposed hub at Mountain Ash can help to reduce loneliness and social isolation by creating a town centre venue where a wide range of activities and events can be facilitated and a programme developed in partnership with all of its users.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

The Cwm Taf Regional Plan 2018-2023 - This five year plan sets out how the Cwm Taf Social Services and Well-being Partnership Board will respond to the findings of the Population Needs Assessment completed in 2017.

Evidence gathered from talking to people for the Population Assessment demonstrated that the following are important to the wellbeing of people with care and support needs:

- Making connections with others
- Access to Information and advice
- Organisations working better together
- Stopping problems before they start or get worse

The needs of vulnerable people and families can sometimes escalate into statutory services because there are limited opportunities available for people to seek help earlier. Good practice research has identified that strong community based initiatives are effective in providing low level support options and these are usually available from a community hub or open access facility. It is intended that the proposal to create a hub in the town centre at Mountain Ash will provide wellbeing opportunities for those who are most vulnerable in the community as well as providing a wider range of activities for current users of the library and day centre.

Our Valleys, Our Future - this plan's priorities for ensuring better public services includes an action to use existing, and create new, community hubs as well as a range of actions that will improve the health and well-being of communities.

d) Does the initiative directly affect service users, employees or the wider community?

Yes
No

Continue assessment

No need to continue screening or carry out an EqIA

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Screening/Relevance Test: Is an equality impact assessment required?

Screening is used to decide whether the initiative you are responsible for has a high or medium impact on any of the protected groups and will require a full EqIA.

Please provide details of the possible impact your proposal may have on the following groups, this may not necessarily be negative, but may impact on a group with a particular characteristic in a specific way.

You should also identify whether this constitutes a high, medium or low impact.

Please refer to Equality Impact Assessment Guidelines for further information.

Protected Characteristic	Impact
Age	<p>High. Overall there is a disproportionately higher risk of impact on adults aged over 50 and they have shared their specific anxieties around the proposed changes to existing services. In particular older customers of both the Day Centre and Library who attended the consultation events and completed the customer surveys expressed concerns regarding the impact on their respective services. Some Day Centre users indicated that they would stop using the Centre if the provision was changed. See mitigations in the full Equality Impact assessment below for how this will be addressed.</p> <p>57 young people responded to the survey in Mountain Ash Comprehensive School. 93% said that they agreed with the proposal. 72% of Mountain Ash young people that responded to the survey stated that they would access the Community Hub.</p>
Disability	<p>High. There are potentially negative and positive impacts on people with disabilities. The current library has two disabled bays adjacent to the building. There are no disabled bays adjacent to the Day Centre although there are a significant number of disabled bays in the public car park within the town centre. The proposed relocation will potentially have a negative effect on disabled drivers who are used to parking next to the library. In contrast there were some comments that the suggested location of the hub would make it more accessible:</p> <p>....."affect will be positive, easy to park, very accessible".</p> <p>"I go to mountain Ash every week, having all this put in one building on the flat will make it easier for me"</p>

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Gender Reassignment	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Race	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Religion or Belief	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Sex	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Other Characteristics	
Welsh Language	Low positive - access to a training room will facilitate the delivery of Welsh language classes or other community learning classes in the medium of Welsh if there is a demand for these locally.
Carers	Neutral - there is no evidence to suggest that an impact is likely.
Armed Forces Community	High positive - access to a meeting room will enable Veteran advice services to be delivered at the venue.

If after completing the EqIA screening/relevance test, you determine that this service/function/policy/project is not relevant for an EqIA you must provide adequate explanation below. (Please use additional pages if necessary).

Are you happy that you have sufficient evidence to justify your decision?

Yes

No

Signed: W. Edwards
28/3/18

Position: Head of Community Services

Date:

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

N.B. If the initial screening process has identified actual or potential high or medium negative impact on a particular group or groups then you MUST carry out a full EqIA.

Approved by Head of Service or Director

Signed:

Position:

Date:

Full Equality Impact Assessment

You should use the information gathered at the screening stage to assist you in identifying possible negative/adverse impact and clearly identify which groups are affected.

In terms of any disproportionate/negative/adverse impact that the proposal may have on a protected group, what steps (if any) could be taken to reduce that impact for each group identified. Attach a separate action plan if necessary.

Age

Concerns were raised by Day Centre users about potential changes to the meals provision specifically the possible loss of 'cooked dinners' and potential impact on the cost of meals provided. There was also a concern that the space available for their activities would be considerably reduced and would lead to reduced provision. Some indicated that they would stop using the facility if the provision was changed. This could lead to increased social isolation and a decrease in well-being.

Older library users also expressed concerns regarding the potential impact that co-location at the Day Centre site would have on their library service, and noted among other things, the reduced space available in the main library area for books, the current condition of the Day Centre building and their preference to remain at their current location.

Actions to address the issues:

Relevant Council Officers will continue to engage with customers about the current proposals to allay their anxieties. Ways in which a subsidised hot meal can be provided under the current proposal will be considered to address the concerns of Day Centre users.

In order to address anxieties relating to the loss of Day Centre activities, continued engagement will take place with relevant stakeholders and customers to develop an agreed programme of activities that will meet the needs of the majority of service users at the hub.

In addition to the co-production of a programme of activities, engagement with library customers will focus on ensuring that the book stock is refreshed so that their fears regarding lack of relevant stock is allayed. The service will also promote the availability of the inter-library loan service and e-books for those who are interested.

Disability

A major concern for library customers is the fact that relocating to the Day

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Centre will result in the loss of disabled parking spaces for library users. Although the Day Centre is more centrally located in the town and within easy access of free public car parking, people who rely on being able to park right next to the library will, under the current proposal, be unable to do so. In some instances this will affect their ability to access library services.

Actions to address the issue:

The nearest car parks to the Day Centre are Henry Street North and Henry Street South. There are 15 disabled parking spaces available in these car parks - 4 in Henry Street North and 11 in Henry Street South. However, these would require a disabled person to walk from the car park to the Day Centre, as opposed to the current situation where parking is right outside the library.

This will be seen as a reduction in provision to many disabled customers.

However, if there are more than 2 disabled people wanting to use the library at the same time, then currently the third person would need to park elsewhere and walk up an incline to reach the library.

Legislation stipulates that provision should be made for car parking spaces for Blue Badge holders wherever conventional parking spaces are provided.

According to 'Inclusive Mobility' where 'the provision of designated parking spaces close to [a] building is not possible, a setting down point for disabled passengers should be provided on firm and level ground close to the principal entrance to the building.' (5.1)

A setting down point will be included as part of the development of the community hub.

If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible, please explain why they are not possible.

.

Evidence Sources

(i) Give details of any data or research that has led to your reasoning above, in particular, the sources used for establishing the demographics of service users.

Service usage data held with Adult Services was used to ascertain service level and activity data for the Day Centre.

Service usage data held with the Library Service was used to ascertain activity data for the library.

(ii) Give details of how you have engaged with service users on the proposals and steps taken to avoid any disproportionate impact on a protected group and how you have used any feedback to influence your decision.

Consultation events took place on the following dates:

6th March (4-6 p.m.) - Mountain Ash library

9th March (12 - 2 p.m.) Mountain Ash Day Centre

14th March (12 - 2 p.m.) Mountain Ash Day Centre

20th March (4.30 - 6.30 p.m.) Mountain Ash library

21st March (10 -12)) Mountain Ash library

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Full details of the consultation are provided in the Consultation Report produced by the Consultation team.

Key feedback from the consultation events were as follows:

- concern about the effect the proposal would have on the provision of subsidised hot meals for Day Centre users was raised.
- concern was raised regarding the potential loss of activities currently held at the Day Centre. Under the proposed community hub model co-production of a programme of activities with service users is planned to ensure that a wide range of activities will be maintained and additional activities can be developed to meet the needs of current Day Centre and Library users
- some residents indicated that the Day Centre building was not in an ideal state of repair. During the consultation it was explained that the Council will be investing in a programme of extension and refurbishment to ensure the building will be fit-for-purpose for the new proposed hub.
- Library users expressed concern regarding the lack of disabled car parking spaces near the Day Centre. The decision has been made to ensure there is a setting down point near the entrance to the Day Centre.
- Library users identified the reduced space for shelving and the potential impact on book selection as an issue. It is planned to refresh the book stock to ensure it meets the needs of current users, and also to promote access to inter-library loans and e-books to ensure customers have the fullest possible range of materials to choose from.

Are you satisfied that the engagement process complies with the requirements of the Statutory Equality Duties?

Yes

No

Decision Log - detail how Elected Members and Senior Managers have been involved in the decision process (give dates of key meetings and decisions made).

Delegated decision notice to initiate a consultation process on the development of a community hub at Mountain Ash (12th February 2018)
Rhondda Cynon Taf Cabinet -

Review

Date of Next Review:

If review is not required, explain why:

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

--

Completed by:	Wendy Edwards
Signature:	
Job Title:	Head of Community Services
Date:	28 th March 2018

This assessment must be approved by an appropriate Head of Service or Director

Approved by:	Paul Mee
Signature:	
Job Title:	Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Approval date:	28 th March 2018

Please return a copy to:

Equality & Diversity Team
The Pavilions
Cambrian Park
Clydach Vale
CF40 2XX

Email: equality@rctcbc.gov.uk



Mountain Ash Community Hub Consultation Report

March 2018



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

CONTENTS

		Page
	Executive Summary	3
1.	Introduction	5
2.	Background	6
3.	Methodology	8
4.	Questionnaire Results	10
5.	Engagement Event Results	21
6.	Young Person Views	24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report presents the findings of the consultation on proposals to develop the first Community Hub in Rhondda Cynon Taf, co-locating a number of important services in one building for the benefit of the community. It is proposed that the Council reconfigure the existing provision at Mountain Ash Day Centre to develop the Community Hub, including moving Mountain Ash Library from its current venue to be located alongside employment support services, One4All and a community cafe
- The targeted Mountain Ash consultation ran for 4 weeks, from the 26th February to the 26th March, 2018.
- The following methods were used to consult with stakeholders;
 - A questionnaire, available in the Day Centre and Library, as well as a tablet version at various events.
 - Plans available to view in the Day Centre and Library
 - 5 Drop in Engagement events were held as follows;
 - An email was sent to 1974 library service users
 - An email to the groups that use Mountain Ash Day Centre.
 - Posters to advertise the events.
 - Promotion through the Cynon Valley Older Persons Advisory Group.
 - A dedicated email address and freepost address
- The following responses were received;
 - 148 questionnaires were returned
 - 2 letters
 - 94 people attended the drop in events.
 - 1 Petition (261 signatures)
 - 3 Pre-completed letters
- Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the opening of a Community Hub in Mountain Ash Day Centre. 52.1% said that they disagreed (41.8% strongly disagreed). However, 43.8% of respondents did agree with the proposal. Comments can be summarised under the following themes;
 - Positive
 - Good to have services in one place – One stop shop
 - Community Facility for all ages
 - More cost effective and more efficient use of public money
 - Use any cost savings to maintain frontline services
 - Will improve the town centre

Concerns

- Hot meal availability in the new Hub
 - Lack of disabled parking
 - Desire for the location of the library and Day centre to remain the same. There already exists a purpose built Mountain Ash Library
 - Mountain Ash older people/vulnerable will have nowhere to go
 - Those in favour on the basis that hot food is kept and the library opening hours remain the same and there are no job cuts.
-
- Respondents were provided with a list of services/facilities that could be provided from the Community Hub. The results show that the majority of respondents thought each of the services would provide a benefit to the community, with the highest being 81.3% for community meeting spaces.
 - 52.2% of Mountain Ash residents that responded to the survey stated that they would access the Community Hub. 29% stated that they would not.
 - Respondents were provided with a list of potential priorities for the Community Hub for the next 2 to 3 years. 85.7% of respondents felt that “activities and events for adults” was the top priority.
 - 31.2% of respondents stated that they were a user of Mountain Ash Day Centre.
 - A number of respondents said they did not use the day centre as they found it an unwelcoming place to visit and eat and the building itself did not look inviting.
 - 33 respondents said that they would be willing to support a local Community Hub by volunteering to help deliver the activities outlined in the table below.
 - The majority of respondents were residents (92.5%).
 - 29 respondents stated that they would be impacted upon because of a disability.
 - 57 young people responded to the consultation in Mountain Ash Comprehensive School. 93% said that they agreed with the proposal.

Note: All comments from all responses will be provided to Cabinet Members and Officers to inform the decision making process.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the consultation on proposals to develop the first Community Hub in Rhondda Cynon Taf, co-locating a number of important services in one building for the benefit of the community. It is proposed that the Council reconfigure the existing provision at Mountain Ash Day Centre to develop the Community Hub, including moving Mountain Ash Library from its current venue to be located alongside employment support services, One4All and a community cafe
- 1.2 Section 2 outlines some brief background.
- 1.3 Section 3 details the methodology.
- 1.4 Section 4 presents the results from the questionnaire.
- 1.5 Section 5 presents the views that were received at the engagement events and from any written responses.
- 1.6 Section 6 outlines the views of young people from Mountain Ash Comprehensive School.

2. BACKGROUND

The Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is to develop the first Community Hub in Rhondda Cynon Taf, co-locating a number of important services in one building for the benefit of the community. It is proposed that the Council reconfigure the existing provision at Mountain Ash Day Centre to develop the Community Hub, including moving Mountain Ash Library from its current venue to be located alongside employment support services, One4All and a community cafe.

Background

- 2.2 The Council is committed to providing the best possible public services and to improving the health and well-being of its residents. It is important that we make the best use of our assets and that where it is appropriate to do so, we locate community services together so that a joined up approach is taken to supporting our communities and building community resilience in a sustainable way.
- 2.3 The development of a Community Hub would provide direct access to many of the services our residents need on a daily basis as well as providing opportunities to receive employment support and information, advice and assistance on a range of issues that affect people's quality of life and well-being. The co-location of services would enable the Council to provide facilities where food would be available throughout the day, residents and community groups can continue to meet as well as access to an enhanced library service and support for employment and skills development, all of which help tackle social isolation and loneliness and promote economic growth.
- 2.4 The Day Centre is currently underutilised. Current meal provision is a breakfast service, available from 10 a.m. to 10.30; a lunch provision, available from 12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.; afternoon tea provision from 3.15 p.m. to 3.45 p.m. Numbers attending the breakfast and afternoon tea service are low and meal take-up averages 23 per day.
- 2.5 There is potential to make better use of this valuable community asset by bringing a number of services together at the premises to create a Community Hub. The proposals would include an area where groups could continue to meet and a community café. With a café style service, food and beverages would be available throughout the day allowing individuals to have more choice as to when they use this facility, so ensuring a constant throughput of customers.
- 2.6 The current Mountain Ash library was built in 1997. The size of the library and the facilities it offered reflected local circumstances and also

the priorities of library provision at that time. In the intervening years there have been significant changes to the public libraries serving Rhondda Cynon Taf alongside major changes in what libraries are expected to offer their customers.

- 2.7 Since 1997 the Welsh Government has been responsible for overseeing library services in Wales and ensuring that all public library services adhere to the requirements of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The Welsh Government's strategic development framework for libraries in Wales, *Libraries Inspire*, has outlined the vision and expectations for library services. The priorities of the strategy include:
- Work together to review current models of service delivery in response to the current economic climate, and develop innovative models of service delivery;
 - Modernise public library buildings to meet the changing lives of users;
 - Maximise the contribution of libraries to developing peoples' skills to help everyone reach their potential, reduce inequality and improve economic and social well-being.
- 2.8 The increasing emphasis on libraries as facilitators of learning that provide access to the development of skills, support for job-searching, internet access and a venue for community meetings, require libraries to have additional facilities. These include space for community meetings and an education/IT training suite that will facilitate classes as well as providing a quiet area for people who need to apply for jobs or update their CVs.
- 2.9 The current library building at Mountain Ash has no separate room for community meetings or training. Consequently, the delivery of adult learning opportunities is limited. The current consultation room is already in constant use and there is no capacity to provide confidential space for other providers to meet with customers to offer advice and support on a wide range of issues.
- 2.10 Feedback from customers who use the library have indicated the need for a dedicated room for meetings and training and for more activities and learning opportunities to be facilitated at the library.
- 2.11 This proposal would provide the library with a town centre location that is more visible and is more convenient for parking than the current location. It also provides an opportunity for ensuring the future sustainability of the library and day centre while providing added value and greatly enhancing the public service offer for the local community.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The targeted Mountain Ash consultation ran for 4 weeks, from the 26th February to the 26th March, 2018.

3.2 The aim of the consultation was to gather the views of local residents in Mountain Ash and library and day centre service users, on the following;

A proposal to develop the first Community Hub in Rhondda Cynon Taf, co-locating a number of important services in one building for the benefit of the community. The proposal would lead to the Council reconfiguring the existing provision at Mountain Ash Day Centre to develop, including moving Mountain Ash Library from its current venue to be located alongside employment support services, One4All and a community cafe.

3.3 The following methods were used to consult with stakeholders;

- A questionnaire, available in the Day Centre and Library, as well as a tablet version at various events.
- Plans available to view in the Day Centre and Library throughout the consultation period.
- 5 Drop in Engagement events were held as follows;

1. Mountain Ash Library	6 th March 4-6pm
2. Mountain Ash Day Centre	9 th March 12-2pm
3. Mountain Ash Day Centre	14 th March 12-2pm
4. Mountain Ash Library	20 th March 4.30-6.30pm
5. Mountain Ash Library	21 st March 10-12 (rearranged from 2/3/18 due to weather)

- An email was sent to 1974 library service users (adult borrowers that had used the library in the last year) and groups that used the library with details of how to take part in the consultation.
- An email to the groups that use Mountain Ash Day Centre.
- Posters to advertise the events.
- Promotion through the Cynon Valley Older Persons Advisory Group.
- A dedicated email address (consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk) and freepost address for any postal correspondence.

3.4 The following responses were received;

- 148 questionnaires were returned
- 2 letters
- 94 people attended the drop in events.
- 1 Petition (261 signatures) –

“We the undersigned object to the change of use of Mountain Ash Day Centre and the closure of Mountain Ash Library”.

- 3 Pre-completed letters (see below)

3.5 Pre-completed 1 – I wish to object most strongly to the Council’s Plan to merge the Library in Mountain Ash with the Daycentre in the town to form a Community Hub (no. = 23)

Main objections include;

- Proposals would see a reduction in services
- Less floor space and books in library
- Concern the existing library will remain empty
- Lack of disabled parking in plan
- No mention of costs

3.6 Pre-completed 2 – I wish to object to the proposal to form a Community Hub with the Day Centre and the library being combined into one building. (no. = 21)

Main objections include;

- Day centre losing space with just the cafe
- Could increase the use of the Day Centre rebranded as a Community Hub, without the library
- Concern about the Job club moving to the centre
- Would be better to move services to the Town Hall.

3.7 Pre-completed 3 – Proposed move of Mountain Ash Library to Mountain Ash Day centre. (no. = 6)

Main objections include;

- The current library meets needs and provides a quality provision in a modern, central, attractive building.
- and meets the “Connected and Ambitious Libraries:6th Quality Framework of Welsh Public library Standards 2017-2020”
- The current building has an upper floor, serviced by a lift that can be used to develop services further if required.

4 Questionnaire Results

- 4.1 148 responses were received to the survey.
- 4.2 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the opening of a Community Hub in Mountain Ash Day Centre. 52.1% said that they disagreed (41.8% strongly disagreed). However, 43.8% of respondents did agree with the proposal.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	146 100.0%
Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the open...	
Strongly agree	50 34.2%
Agree	14 9.6%
Neither agree or disagree	4 2.7%
Disagree	15 10.3%
Strongly disagree	61 41.8%
Don't know	2 1.4%
I do not wish to comment	- -

- 4.3 Comments can be summarised under the following themes;

Positive

- Good to have services in one place – One stop shop
- Community Facility for all ages
- More cost effective and more efficient use of public money
- Use any cost savings to maintain frontline services
- Will improve the town centre

Concerns

- Hot meal availability in the new Hub
- Lack of disabled parking

- Desire for the location of the library and Day centre to remain the same. There already exists a purpose built Mountain Ash Library
- Mountain Ash older people/vulnerable will have nowhere to go
- Those in favour on the basis that hot food is kept and the library opening hours remain the same and there are no job cuts.

4.4 Respondents were provided with a list of services/facilities that could be provided from the Community Hub and asked if they thought they would benefit the community. The results show that the majority of respondents thought each of the services would provide a benefit to the community, with the highest being 81.3% for community meeting spaces.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
	Base 96 100.0%
Q2. Do you feel the community would benefit from the foll...	
Employability support	67 69.8%
Cafe facilities	66 68.8%
Library provision	69 71.9%
Computer and IT facilities	70 72.9%
Community meeting spaces	78 81.3%
Information, Advice and Guidance sessions	75 78.1%
Other	17 17.7%

Other services suggested included;

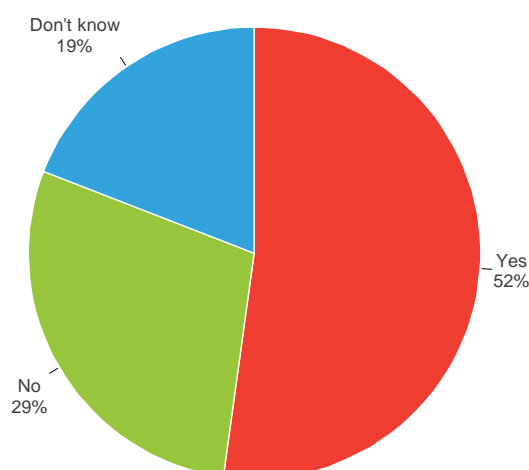
- Space suitable for 60 plus
- Yoga classes
- U3A facilities and courses
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Health, Wellbeing and Education
- Cinema

4.5 The other comments provided for additional services that could be placed in the HUB repeated those already mentioned in section 4.3 above, with the addition of;

- The space is not big enough to fit all services in
- All generations and people will be able to come together
- The more facilities the better
- Need to keep One4All service, vital to the community
- Concern over competition with other cafes in Mountain Ash.
- Support for more cafes in mountain Ash
- Would be good for young people
- More activities needed
- More promotion/advertising needed
- Adult courses
- Makes sense to put all advice sessions together and the One4All
- Would be very beneficial to the community

4.6 52.2% of Mountain Ash residents that responded to the survey stated that they would access the Community Hub. 29% stated that they would not.

Q3. As a Mountain Ash resident would you access the Commu...



Comments included;

- Useful to the community
- Everything in one place
- If the library has to move
- No disabled parking
- If there is no alternative will have to
- Will need a much more open community feeling
- More promotion
- Depends what facilities were there
- Communities and the Council need to diversify in the range of services it offers.
- Nice to have a modern facility for the residents of mount and where community members can meet

- 4.7 Respondents were provided with a list of potential priorities for the Community Hub for the next 2 to 3 years. The table shows that 85.7% of respondents felt that “activities and events for adults” was the top priority.

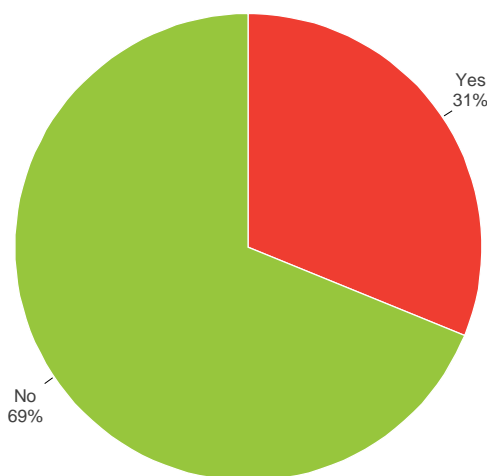
Counts Analysis % Respondents	
	98 100.0%
Base	
Q4. What do you think should be the priorities for the Community hub	
Improved stock (books, audio books, DVDs etc.)	64 65.3%
Improved digital and online services (including e-books and e-audio)	58 59.2%
Improved computers, ICT facilities and Internet access	66 67.3%
Activities and events for children and families	68 69.4%
Activities and events for adults	84 85.7%
Improved opportunities for volunteering	46 46.9%

- 4.8 Comments again reflected those in section 4.2, of those that answered the question on priorities, they included;

- The needs of the elderly must be provided for
- Family History research
- Activities for adults, children and families should be separate from library computer use, as they can be a noisy distraction.
- Health, wellbeing and advice sessions
- Housing Associations drop in clinics
- Something for all
- IT classes for the elderly
- The Day Centre was always known as the old age centre and that has put people off going there. We don't have a community centre that everyone can use.

4.9 31.2% of respondents stated that they were a user of Mountain Ash Day Centre.

Q5. Are you a user of Mountain Ash Day centre?



The reasons why people access Mountain Ash Day Centre are shown in the table below;

Counts	Analysis %
Respondents	
Base	48 100.0%
Q6. What are your main reasons for accessing the Day cent...	
Meet friends/socialise	39 81.3%
To have lunch	34 70.8%
Member of a group that is based at the Day Centre	21 43.8%
To take part in an activity that is provided at the Day Centre	24 50.0%
Other reason	9 18.8%

Comments on why people use the Day Centre included;

- Group activities (Bingo, curling, computer lesson, quizzes, knitting, armchair aerobics)
- Hot lunches/meals
- Book club meetings
- Watching school performances

- Social get togethers
- Feeling of belonging
- To vote
- Age Action
- Bingo

4.10 A number of respondents said they did not use the day centre as they found it an unwelcoming place to visit and eat and the building itself did not look inviting.

4.11 11 respondents said that they accessed other Community Day Centres;

Those stated were;

- St Mairs
- Communities First
- Feel Good Factory

4.12 The reasons they accessed other Day Centres are shown in the table below;

Counts Respondents	
Q8. If so, for what reason? (Please tick all that apply)	
Meet friends/socialise	10
To have lunch	9
Member of a group that is based at the Day Centre	5
To take part in an activity that is provided at the Day Centre	9
Other reason	1

Other

Snooker

The people who used other day centres' further comments included;

- Went for dancing
- Why go to other when it's great in Mountain Ash.

- 4.13 33 respondents said that they would be willing to support a local Community Hub by volunteering to help deliver the activities outlined in the table below.

Counts Respondents	
	Base 33
Q9. Would you be willing to support your local Community ...	
Assisting with events and activities for children, young people and families	19
Assisting with events and activities for adults	21
Assisting with the library service	9
Helping people to learn basic ICT skills	8
Marketing and promotion of Community Hub services	11

The main comment received was “no”, others included;

- I already volunteer
- Unable at the moment due to work or other commitments
- I feel people should be employed and paid for their labours, there is too much unemployment in the area
- I am not able to help
- Not in good health/carer
- Sorry too old
- Family History
- Music and Arts based activities
- Library

- 4.14 The following is a list of local voluntary organisations that respondents felt the Community Hub could work with in Mountain Ash;

- Local charities/community groups
- The newly formed Mountain Ash Historical Society
- CAB
- Communities First/Communities for Work
- Cynon Valley Church
- Age Cymru
- Rowan Tree Cancer
- YMCA
- Stroke Association
- Diabetics

- Local schools
- Homeless groups

4.15 The following are a list of further comments that were made at the end of the questionnaire. Many were similar to those stated throughout this report.

Positive Comments

- “A desire to give my time for a worthwhile project within limits”
- “More scope to do different opportunities”
- “As long as it keeps ticking over with things we’ve suggested and does what it says its’ going to do”
- “easier access with wheelchair”
- “provide a wider range of activities for retired people.
- “everything will be in one place, which makes it easier for the community”
- “I think it will have a positive impact on all the family”
- “It would impact my children, generations mingling”
- “new modern place to go, would use the cafe area and library”
- “have small children, so good location for parking”
- “..easy to get to”

Concerns

- “Loss of hot Meals in the Day Centre”
- “Further to Travel”
- “Prefer things to stay the same”
- “Loss of activities that take place in the Day Centre”
- “Nowhere for older people to go”
- “the cafe would affect local cafes”
- “flat roof in day centre”
- “no open areas for activities in the Hub”
- I feel I would be excluded as I can’t walk far and get there.

Note: All comments from all responses will be provided to Cabinet Members and Officers to inform the decision making process.

Respondent Profile

4.16 The majority of respondents were residents (92.5%).

4.17 The tables below show the gender and age profiles of respondents.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	105 100.0%
Q16. Gender;	
Male	41 39.0%
Female	64 61.0%
Prefer not to say	- -

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	111 100.0%
Q17. Age;	
Under 16	- -
16-24	5 4.5%
25-34	10 9.0%
35-44	13 11.7%
45-54	15 13.5%
55-64	19 17.1%
65-74	22 19.8%
75+	27 24.3%

DRAFT

- 4.18 Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have particular characteristics. The table below shows the number of respondents that stated they would be impacted.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
	Base 29 100.0%
Q19. Please tell us if you think these proposals will aff...	
You are male / female	9 31.0%
Your age	16 55.2%
Your ethnicity	1 3.4%
You are disabled	21 72.4%
Your sexuality	2 6.9%
Your religion or belief	4 13.8%
Your gender identity	- -
You are single / married / cohabiting / in a civil partnership / divorced	4 13.8%
You are pregnant	- -
The language you prefer to communicate in	1 3.4%

- 4.19 29 respondents stated that they would be impacted upon because of a disability. Comments included;

"Find it difficult to walk due to gout. Library would be too far away to access with ease."

"Can't walk that far, use a walking stick and too far from car park. Harder when lots of people about."

"Existing library has disabled parking outside doorway. The walk from the centre is too long for people with disabilities. Car parking at front of centre is required."

"Can't walk very far, difficult to attend now"

- 4.20 In contrast there were some comments that suggested the location of the hub would make it more accessible;

“affect will be positive, easy to park, very accessible”

“I go to mountain Ash every week, having all this put in one building on the flat will make it easier for me”

DRAFT

5 Engagement Events

5.1 94 people attended the 5 drop in Engagement events. The events were used to explain the plans and answer questions, as well as to encourage people to have their say via the questionnaire.

5.2 The following themes summarise some of the conversations that were had;

Positive Comments

- Good to have a separate IT room due to the noise currently in Mountain Ash Library when there are classes on.
- Good that it means the day centre won't close.

5.3 A number of suggested improvements were made in relation to the existing plans that were on display, including;

- The proposed meeting rooms are too small and should be combined with the ability to have separate partitioned off rooms for smaller meetings if needed.
- Include a partition that allows the library to be safely closed off at night and allow the meeting rooms and cafe area to be open and available to the community.
- Use the cafe area in the evening for community groups.

Library Themes

5.4 There was some concern around the library **opening times** and if they would they stay the same in the proposed Hub, as well as questions surrounding the jobs of the staff employed within the library.

“what about people’s jobs”

5.5 Some of the attendees questioned why there was a need to move the library from the original location and what the Council would do with the empty building.

“Fit for purpose library already- what will happen to this?”

Day Centre Themes

Hot Meals

5.6 The Day Centre users were keen to stress that they wanted the continuation of hot meals *not* cafe food. They questioned whether this

would be the case and what the price of such meals would be. Some suggested the Cafe was not big enough, however others agreed that it would provide enough space for the current service users who attend the centre for a subsidised meal.

Group Activities

- 5.7 The groups that use the day centre wanted reassurance that the groups would still be able to meet and that there would be adequate space and availability.

“Will the groups still carry on e.g. Kurling club, Dancing, Bingo, Quiz, Singing and chair aerobic”.

“How can we still play bingo when we won’t fit everyone who wants to play in the cafe area”.

“Bus/transport only available on certain days therefore, timings of activities can’t change”

Impact on Vulnerable People

- 5.8 Concerns were raised around the possible increase in social isolation, for those who would no longer attend the day centre.

“Vulnerable people attend day centre – most people using it will have an affect / impact on those vulnerable people”

“The current daycentre is a safe place for the elderly and vulnerable to go; will the new hub offer/guarantee this?”

Accessibility/Disability Requirements

- 5.9 A number of comments were made with regards to the plans not considering the needs of disabled people, including the lack of disabled parking spaces.

“No accessible parking for the community hub”

“Where will the parking be?”

- 5.10 Some of the attendees suggested that it would be difficult to get into the HUB building from the car park, which is behind the facility and involves a set of steps. However, others suggested that the current Day Centre site was easier to access than the current Library site.

Other Themes

5.11 The following are a selection of other comments that were made at the drop in events;

- Concerns around the intergenerational aspect of the hub, some of the Day Centre users believed that young people and the older members of the community would not mix and it would turn people away.
- Impact on the shops in the town – reduced footfall at top end of town
- Concerns around cafe competition (5 existing cafes)
- Where will the school concerts be held? What about a stage?

Alternative Options

5.12 A number of alternatives were suggested at the events, including;

- Keep the library where it is and move the day centre to that building, making use of the space upstairs.
- Make use of the empty Town Hall instead

6 Young People Views

Mountain Ash Comprehensive

- 6.1 57 young people responded to the survey in Mountain Ash Comprehensive School.
- 6.2 Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the opening of a Community Hub in Mountain Ash Day Centre. 93% said that they agreed with the proposal.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	57 100.0%
Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the open...	
Strongly agree	34 59.6%
Agree	19 33.3%
Neither agree or disagree	4 7.0%
Disagree	-
Strongly disagree	-
Don't know	-
I do not wish to comment	-

- 6.3 Comments included:

"I think it would be a great idea"

"Sounds good"

- 6.4 The young people were provided with a list of services/facilities that could be provided from the Community Hub and asked if they thought they would benefit the community. The results were high (over 75%) for each of the options provided and are shown below.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	57 100.0%
Q2. Do you feel the community would benefit from the foll...	

Employability support	50 87.7%
Cafe facilities	53 93.0%
Library provision	51 89.5%
Computer and IT facilities	54 94.7%
Community meeting spaces	45 78.9%
Information, Advice and Guidance sessions	43 75.4%
Other	6 10.5%

Other services suggested included;

“WIFI”

“Outdoor activities”

“Youth club”

6.5 The other comments provided included;

“I think it would be a good opportunity for people to access these facilities.”

“For young people”

“Focus on school aged people”

“Football, Rugby”

“I think teens would really like a youth club”

6.6 72% of Mountain Ash young people that responded to the survey stated that they would access the Community Hub.

- 6.7 The young people were provided with a list of potential priorities for the Community Hub for the next 2 to 3 years. The table shows that 89.3% of respondents felt that Activities and events for children and families was a priority followed by Improved computers, ICT facilities and Internet access by 78.6% of respondents.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
	Base 56 100.0%
Q4. What do you think should be the priorities for the Co...	
Improved stock (books, audio books, DVDs etc.)	32 57.1%
Improved digital and online services (including e-books and e-audio)	33 58.9%
Improved computers, ICT facilities and Internet access	44 78.6%
Activities and events for children and families	50 89.3%
Activities and events for adults	30 53.6%
Improved opportunities for volunteering	24 42.9%

- 6.8 Comments included;

"Not sure"

"There's nothing for young people, Youth Club has closed down"

- 6.9 5 of the young people stated that they were a user of Mountain Ash Day Centre.

The reasons the young people access the Day Centre were;

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
	Base 5 100.0%
Q6. What are your main reasons for accessing the Day cent...	
Meet friends/socialise	5

	100.0%
To have lunch	1 20.0%
Member of a group that is based at the Day Centre	- -
To take part in an activity that is provided at the Day Centre	3 60.0%

6.10 7 young people said that they use other day centres for the following reasons;

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
	8 100.0%
Base	
Q8. If so, for what reason? (Please tick all that apply)	
Meet friends/socialise	2 25.0%
To have lunch	1 12.5%
Member of a group that is based at the Day Centre	- -
To take part in an activity that is provided at the Day Centre	3 37.5%
Other reason	2 25.0%

Comments about where they go and what they do included:

“Ceiber”

“Youth club/drama”

“Abercynon”

“Ceiber youth centre”

“Pem Youth Project Community Centre”

“Abercynon Library”

“Youth club”

“Activities”

- 6.11 A number of the young people said that they would be willing to support a local Community Hub by volunteering to help deliver the following activities;

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
	Base 36 100.0%
Q9. Would you be willing to support your local Community ...	
Assisting with events and activities for children, young people and families	33 91.7%
Assisting with events and activities for adults	8 22.2%
Assisting with the library service	12 33.3%
Helping people to learn basic ICT skills	12 33.3%
Marketing and promotion of Community Hub services	7 19.4%

The main comments received were;

- No (n=4)
- No thank you (n=2)
- Worried for young people and passionate to help (n=1)

- 6.12 The following is a list of local voluntary organisations that the young people felt the Community Hub Services could work with in Mountain Ash;

- Drug Organisations / TEDS
- Adref
- Girl Guiding
- School

- 6.13 The following are a list of further comments that were made at the end of the questionnaire.

Positive Comments

“Good development”

“Good idea for the community”

“Good Idea!”

“Good place to be with friends”

“Great idea!”

- "It would help to bring the community closer together."*
"More opportunities for people to get them out of the house."
"Nice development to bring everyone together"
"People won't be hanging round streets"
"Positive impact on community"
"Really good idea, but needs wifi"
"Sound Good"
"This is a good thing"
"Would really help to keep kids off the street and keep safe"
"Yes, we need it!"

Activities and ideas

- "Activities(n=3)"*
"Art sessions"
"Bring everyone together and meet friends"
"Day trips/activities"
"Entertaining."
"Football activities"
"More activities"
"Food"
"Would be fun to have"
"Sports Clubs"
"Youth Club"
"Wifi (n=5)"

Education / study

- "Better resources to study from."*
"Give me a place to finish work"
"Help with homework"
"Help with homework after school or weekends"
"Homework club Art Club"
"It could be a good resource for a student."
"open to A-Level Students"
"Open to A-Level students to use"
"Revision for exams"
"Book club would be good"
"More books"
"New Books Advice"



Ferndale Community Hub Consultation

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

March 2018

CONTENTS

		Page
	Executive Summary	3
1.	Introduction	5
2.	Background	6
3.	Methodology	8
4.	Questionnaire Results	9
5.	Engagement Event Results	18
6.	Young Person Views	19

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report presents the findings of the consultation on proposals to develop a Community Hub at the former Ferndale Infants School, including a proposal to move Ferndale Library from its current location to the Community Hub.
- The targeted Ferndale consultation ran for 4 weeks, from the 19th February to the 19th March, 2018.
- The following methods were used to consult with stakeholders;
 - A questionnaire, available in the Library, as well as a tablet version at various events.
 - Plans were available to view in the Library throughout the consultation period.
 - 4 Drop in Engagement events were held
 - An email was sent to 1344 library service users (adult borrowers that had used the library in the last year) and groups that used the library with details of how to take part in the consultation.
 - Poster to advertise the events.
 - Promotion through the Older Persons Advisory Group.
 - A dedicated email address (consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk) and freepost address for any postal correspondence.
- 33 responses were received to the survey.
- 94% agreed with the proposal.
- Respondents were provided with a list of services/facilities that could be provided from the Community Hub. The results were high (over 80%) for each of the options provided.
- 93.9% of respondents who were Ferndale residents stated that they would access the Community Hub.
- Respondents were provided with a list of potential priorities for the Community Hub for the next 2 to 3 years. All of the options were seen to be high priorities, with the top priority being Improved Computers, ICT facilities and Internet access (84.4%).
- 81.3% of respondents agreed that a joined up approach between childcare services and community services has a positive impact on children, young people and adults?
- A small number of respondents (12) said that they would be willing to support a local Community Hub by volunteering.

- The following are a selection of further comments that were made;

Positive Comments

- At last something for Rhondda Fach! I hope this plan will go through for the people of all generations.
- Put positive aspirations back in Ferndale.
- Good luck with the development
- This will be a good community hub if it actually happens and people use it

Concerns

- an excuse for redundancies because of this centralisation of RCT services in this community.
 - I am very concerned about parking in this area.
- The majority of respondents were residents of Ferndale (93.3%).

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the consultation on proposals to develop a Community Hub at the former Ferndale Infants School, including a proposal to move Ferndale Library from its current location to the Community Hub.
- 1.2 Section 2 outlines some brief background.
- 1.3 Section 3 details the methodology.
- 1.4 Section 4 presents the results from the questionnaire.
- 1.5 Section 5 presents the views that were received at the engagement events and from any written responses.
- 1.6 Section 6 provides the views of young people to the proposal.

2. BACKGROUND

Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is to develop a Community Hub at the former Ferndale Infants School, including a proposal to move Ferndale Library from its current location to the Community Hub.

Background

- 2.2 The Council's approach to early intervention and prevention includes the creation of Community Hubs that provide a range of community based services in one or a number of closely located buildings, which best serve the community. These Community Hubs will include a range of service providers including key Council services, voluntary sector, local businesses and other public sector providers. Bringing similar services together will create economies of scale, in terms of staffing and building costs, which will enable the Council to continue to provide a comprehensive range of services within key communities.
- 2.3 The current Ferndale library was opened in 1989 to serve the community of Ferndale. The size of the library and the facilities it offered reflected local circumstances and also the priorities of library provision at that time.
- 2.4 In the intervening years there have been significant changes to the public libraries serving Rhondda Cynon Taf alongside major changes in what libraries are expected to offer their customers.
- 2.5 Since 1997 the Welsh Government has been responsible for overseeing library services in Wales and ensuring that all public library services adhere to the requirements of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The Welsh Government's strategic development framework for libraries in Wales, *Libraries Inspire*, has outlined the vision and expectations for library services. The priorities of the strategy include:
- Work together to review current models of service delivery in response to the current economic climate, and develop innovative models of service delivery
 - Modernise public library buildings to meet the changing lives of users
 - Maximise the contribution of libraries to developing peoples' skills to help everyone reach their potential, reduce inequality and improve economic and social well-being
- 2.6 The increasing emphasis on libraries as facilitators of learning that provide access to the development of skills, support for job-searching,

internet access and a venue for community meetings, require libraries to have additional facilities. These include a community room and an education/IT training suite that will facilitate classes as well as providing a quiet area for people who need to apply for jobs or update their CVs.

- 2.7 Each library also needs a dedicated Children's Area to encourage reading and enable activities to be held that support the development of a child's literacy and support their interest in books and literature and technology.
- 2.8 The current library building at Ferndale has no separate room for community meetings or training and there is no space to allow seating areas for customers to use their own devices. In addition there is a general lack of space that affects the provision of Children's activities and the amount of stock available for browsing.
- 2.9 Recent changes to library provision (2014) has increased the problems faced by the library as customers who once used Ynyshir, Maerdy and the Tylorstown libraries now use Ferndale library. The lack of customer parking, not previously an issue when the library just served the Ferndale area, is a problem for some users.
- 2.10 There is a need to improve library provision at Ferndale. From a library perspective, this can only be achieved by investigating the opportunities available to move from the current building that is no longer fit-for-purpose.
- 2.11 The Council is exploring the opportunity to develop the former Ferndale Infants School into a Community Hub in partnership with Fern Partnership, a local third sector organisation. In addition to the provision of enhanced library services the Hub would also provide childcare, community engagement and employment support. By co-locating these services with a third sector anchor organisation there is an opportunity for added value and to greatly enhance the public service offer for the local community.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The targeted Ferndale consultation ran for 4 weeks, from the 19th February to the 19th March, 2018.

3.2 The aim of the consultation was to gather views on the proposal to develop a Community Hub at the former Ferndale Infants School, including a proposal to move Ferndale Library from its current location to the Community Hub.

3.3 The following methods were used to consult with stakeholders;

- A questionnaire, available in the Library, as well as a tablet version at various events.
- Plans were available to view in the Library throughout the consultation period.
- 4 Drop in Engagement events were held as follows;

1. Ferndale library	7 th March, 10-12pm
2. Ferndale library	9 th March, 4-6pm
3. Ferndale Infants School	13 th March, 10-12pm
4. Ferndale Infants School	13 th March, 4-6pm

- An email was sent to 1344 library service users (adult borrowers that had used the library in the last year) and groups that used the library with details of how to take part in the consultation.
- Poster to advertise the events.
- Promotion through the Older Persons Advisory Group.
- A session with young people in Ferndale Comprehensive School.
- A dedicated email address (consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk) and freepost address for any postal correspondence.

3.4 The following responses were received;

- 33 questionnaires were returned and 34 people attended the drop in events

4 Questionnaire Results

4.1 33 responses were received to the survey.

4.2 Respondents were asked to what extent they **agreed or disagreed with the opening of a Community Hub in the former Ferndale Infants School?** 94% agreed with the proposal.

Base	33 100.0%
Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the open...	
Strongly agree	22 66.7%
Agree	9 27.3%
Neither agree or disagree	2 6.1%
Disagree	- -
Strongly Disagree	- -
Don't know	- -
I do not wish to comment	- -

4.3 The small number of comments included;

- “As so many Libraries have been closed by the RCT council it is very important to keep Ferndale Library open”
- “It is an excellent facility and will be a much needed focal point for the community.”
- “Makes use of and maintains the school which would deteriorate if left unused.”
- “We could have a wider range of books”

4.4 Respondents were provided with a list of services/facilities that could be provided from the Community Hub and asked if they thought they would benefit the community. The results were high (over 80%) for each of the options provided and are shown below.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	33 100.0%
Q2. Do you feel the community would benefit from the foll...	
Employability support	32 97.0%
Childcare provision	27 81.8%
Library provision	33 100.0%
Computer and IT facilities	31 93.9%
Community meeting spaces	30 90.9%
Information, Advice and Guidance sessions	27 81.8%
Other	7 21.2%

4.5 Respondents listed other services/facilities that could be provided from the community Hub;

- Counseling
- Council Tax
- Demonstration area for assistive technology (telecare and telehealth)
- Disability Groups
- Family History
- Footsteps
- Leisure activity
- Youth clubs
- Youth sessions and older persons services

4.6 93.9% of respondents who were Ferndale residents stated that they would access the Community Hub.

	Base	33 100.0%
Q3. As a Ferndale resident would you access the Community...		
Yes		31 93.9%
No		1 3.0%
Don't know		1 3.0%

4.7 Comments included;

- “Especially for library and IT Services”
- “For the library service and as a community meeting place”
- “For the library, staff are very friendly and helpful”
- “I regularly borrow books and am a member of the book club”
- “I will attend everything”
- “These premises would remain a vital asset to the community.”
- “Only if the library was there”

4.8 Respondents were provided with a list of potential priorities for the Community Hub for the next 2 to 3 years. The table shows that all the options were seen to be high priorities, with the top priority being Improved Computers, ICT facilities and Internet access (84.4%).

	Base	32 100.0%
Q4. What do you think should be the priorities for the Co...		
Improved stock (books, audio books, DVDs etc.)		21 65.6%
Improved digital and online services (including e-books and e-audio)		21 65.6%
Improved computers, ICT facilities and Internet access		27 84.4%

Activities and events for children and families	25 78.1%
Activities and events for adults	24 75.0%
Improved opportunities for volunteering	20 62.5%

4.9 Comments included;

- “As Ferndale is the only Library as far as Porth, A High standard and varied stock should be available to residents of the Rhondda Fach.”
- “Great idea as long as the proposal is properly funded for its proposed 2.3 year term”
- “Innovative projects that build skills, confidence, sense of community”
- “Interlink RCT would be very keen to support you to develop voluntary opportunities”
- “Internet access would be a great asset to myself and others without their own computers”
- “More opportunities needed for volunteering in Ferndale”
- “option for volunteering for young children for work experience and to enhance their future employability.”

4.10 81.3% of respondents agreed that a joined up approach between childcare services and community services has a positive impact on children, young people and adults?

Base	32 100.0%
Q5. Do you agree that a joined up approach between childcare services and community services	
Yes	26 81.3%
No	- -
Don't know	6 18.8%

4.11 Comments included;

- “any sort of joined up approach can only have a positive impact”
- “As long as any and all relevant information is shared by all services enrolled.”

- “Children should learn from an early age that they are part of a community the world doesn't revolve around them.”
- “Closing RCT Libraries has a massive impact on children and young people, RCT should be made aware.”
- “Hard to say whether this has a positive impact because it does not exist in Ferndale”
- “Improve understanding between generations - reduce fear of youth by older people - engender respect between age groups with intergenerational projects.”
- “Potentially but the services must positively engage with fathers as well as mothers”
- “The Fern Partnership has been involved in child care and the provision of community services and has been extremely successful.”

4.12 A small number of respondents (12) said that they would be willing to support a local Community Hub by volunteering to help deliver the following activities, shown in the table below.

	Base	12 100.0%
Q6. Would you be willing to support your local Community ...		
Assisting with events and activities for children, young people and families		7 58.3%
Assisting with events and activities for adults		4 33.3%
Assisting with the library service		6 50.0%
Helping people to learn basic ICT skills		2 16.7%
Marketing and promotion of Community Hub services		4 33.3%

4.13 Comments included;

- “Currently involved with the Fern Partnership and would gladly support the proposed HUB.”
- “I would never commit myself to volunteering in these fields unless trained to do so.”
- “Libraries should be run by experienced and committed staff, as now proven volunteers with no library experience drive people away.”
- “Maybe at a later date”

- “Not qualified in any of these areas”
- “Sorry - no time - I travel a lot with my work”

4.14 The following is a list of local voluntary organisations that respondents felt the Community Hub Services could work with in Ferndale;

- Arts factory
- Food Bank / Grass Roots / Red Cross
- Village and Valleys Community Transport
- Dementia friendly is a Maerdy local organisation helping local people living with dementia (i.e their families etc) we are always looking for room space for meetings and for holding events.
- Grass roots Eco Project
- Inter link RCT, communities for work, local education providers - all services that work in RCT.
- Organisations offering counseling, such as MIND.Org or similar
- The Fern Partnership Grass Roots
- Use of meeting space - free of charge would be welcome to local groups.
- Welsh Language Tutoring.

4.15 The following are a list of further comments that were made at the end of the questionnaire;

Positive Comments

- “At last something for Rhondda Fach! I hope this plan will go through for the people of all generations.”
- “Put positive aspirations back in Ferndale.”
- “Good luck with the development”
- “Ferndale residents would benefit greatly from this project. It is hard to believe that Ferndale was once a flourishing town, it was regarded as the "Capital" of the Rhondda Fach hopefully this venture will put Ferndale back on the map. If this plan comes to fruition Ferndale & surrounding areas would be a place people would be proud to live in.....”
- “This will be a good community hub if it actually happens and people use it”

Concerns

- “an excuse for redundancies because of this centralisation of RCT services in this community.”

- “I am very concerned about parking in this area. As a resident of North Rd it is often difficult to park outside or near your home this will add to the problem (plus the pollution).”

Additional Uses/suggestions

- “A One for All Centre (as Treorchy Library) part time would be useful”
- “Create their own voluntary groups and become partners of bigger organisations e.g Age UK, Heart Foundation, Tenovus, Animal Charities etc.”
- “I would like to see more adult education courses but not welsh... I believe there are sufficient number of these available.... to the detriment of this.”
- “It would be extremely useful to have a HUB, where older people can obtain info which at present seems to be only available by E-Mail or on line. I can not use either of these services and feel I'm at a serious disadvantage.....”

Respondent Profile

4.16 The majority of respondents were residents (93.3%). The other response was from someone who works in the community.

Base	30 100.0%
Q12. Are you a...? (tick one only)	
Resident	28 93.3%
Business owner	- -
Visitor	1 3.3%
Prefer not to say	- -
Other	1 3.3%

4.17 The tables below show the gender and age profiles of respondents.

	Base	30
		100.0%
Q13. Gender;		
Male	13	43.3%
Female	17	56.7%
Prefer not to say	-	-

	Base	27
		100.0%
Q14. Age;		
Under 16	-	-
16-24	1	3.7%
25-34	2	7.4%
35-44	1	3.7%
45-54	2	7.4%
55-64	7	25.9%
65-74	13	48.1%
75+	1	3.7%

4.18 Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have particular characteristics. The table below shows that 7 respondents stated that they would be impacted.

	Base	7
		100.0%
Q16. Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Eq...		
You are male / female	4	57.1%
Your age	3	42.9%
Your ethnicity	-	-
You are disabled	-	-
Your sexuality	-	-
Your religion or belief	1	14.3%
Your gender identity	-	-

You are single / married / cohabiting / in a civil partnership / divorced	- -
You are pregnant	- -
The language you prefer to communicate in	3 42.9%

4.19 However, looking at the associated responses the question has either been misunderstood or the impacts reported would seem to be positive;

“Developing the school into a local HUB will prove to be extremely beneficial to the community.”

“Libraries are open and welcome everyone.”

“These proposals give me greater access to the activities proposed for the use of the old school should I wish to take part in them.”

5 Engagement Events

- 5.1 34 people attended the 4 drop in Engagement events. The events were used to explain the plans and answer questions, as well as to encourage people to have their say via the questionnaire.
- 5.2 The following themes summarise some of the conversations that were had;

Positive Comments

- The school building is being utilized
- Access to I.T facilities
- Bigger library
- Investment in the area
- More space for community engagement
- Great to see the school being opened back up for the community
- Inside activities for children in the winter
- New books for the library

Negative comments/concerns:

- Lack of parking
- Disabled parking
- Security of the hub when the library is closed- One attendee suggested having CCTV.
- A lot of this is aimed at the younger generation.
- Mapping of current services, fill in gaps – don't duplicate

6 Young Person Views

- 6.1 45 young people responded to the survey in Ferndale Comprehensive School.
- 6.2 They were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the opening of a Community Hub in the former Ferndale Infants School?
100% agreed with the proposal.
- 6.3 The young people were provided with a list of services/facilities that could be provided from the Community Hub and asked if they thought they would benefit the community. 52.4% agreed that Computer and IT facilities would benefit the community.

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	42 100.0%
Q2. Do you feel the community would benefit from the foll...	
Employability support	13 31.0%
Childcare provision	16 38.1%
Library provision	10 23.8%
Computer and IT facilities	22 52.4%
Community meeting spaces	8 19.0%
Information, Advice and Guidance sessions	3 7.1%
Other	10 23.8%

- 6.4 They listed other services/facilities that could be provided from the community Hub;

Please specify 'Other'

Under 18 Party/Club

Under 18 disco

Gym

Activites after school
Night club
Netball youth club
Gymnastics
Night Club
Under 18 Disco
Under 18 disco
Comments:
Netball
Youth activities
youth clubs and drop in
Youth Clubs and Trips
Trips and Youth Club
Youth Club and After School Activities
Play Area
Netball and Dance
Youth Activities
Netball and Youth Club
Netball and After School Activities
Netball and Youth Club
Activities after school
Gym

6.5 91% of young people who were Ferndale residents stated that they would access the Community Hub.

6.6 Comments included;

Depends on the day
Depends
As long as it had a under 16 night club
Depends on what days

6.7 The young people were provided with a list of potential priorities for the Community Hub for the next 2 to 3 years. The table below shows that the top priority was Activities and events for children and families (79.5%).

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	44 100.0%
Q4. What do you think should be the priorities for the Co...	
Improved stock (books, audio books, DVDs etc.)	9 20.5%
Improved digital and online services (including e-books and e-audio)	11 25.0%
Improved computers, ICT facilities and Internet access	15 34.1%
Activities and events for children and families	35 79.5%
Activities and events for adults	3 6.8%
Improved opportunities for volunteering	6 13.6%

6.8 Comments included;

Comments:

Summer holiday activites

Gym

gym

Sports

Summer Holiday Activities

6.9 88.6% of young people agreed that a joined up approach between childcare services and community services has a positive impact on children, young people and adults?

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	44 100.0%
Q5. Do you agree that a joined up approach between childc...	
Yes	39 88.6%
No	- -
Don't know	5 11.4%

6.10 77.8% of young people responding said that they would be willing to support a local Community Hub by volunteering to assist with events and activities for children, young people and families

Counts Analysis % Respondents	
Base	27 100.0%
Q6. Would you be willing to support your local Community ...	
Assisting with events and activities for children, young people and families	21 77.8%
Assisting with events and activities for adults	4 14.8%
Assisting with the library service	5 18.5%
Helping people to learn basic ICT skills	6 22.2%
Marketing and promotion of Community Hub services	4 14.8%

6.11 Comments included;**Comments:**

show/competitions

shows and competitions e.g. dance and cheerleading

shows and competitions

gym

shows and competitions

6.12 The following is a list of local voluntary organisations that young people felt the Community Hub Services could work with in Ferndale;**voluntary organisations**

Pontygwaith Community Centre and Youth Club

Youth Club

Bike club for advice and a Bike Park

Kids r Us, local councillors

Youth Club

Youth Centres

Youth Club

Nightclub for under 16's

No
