

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

13TH MAY, 2014

REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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COLLABORATION OF THE RHONDDA CYNON TAF AND MERTHYR TYDFIL YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform and update Cabinet of the progress in relation to the Youth Offending Service (YOS) collaboration project since the last update in November 2013 and seek agreement to the proposed new implementation date of 1st July 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 Agree the revised implementation date of 1st July 2014, subject to the finalisation of the legal agreement and financial arrangements underpinning the joint service and the completion of the staff transfer in line with TUPE legislation.
- 2.3 Agree that the Cwm Taf YOS Management Board continues to oversee the collaboration project and the ongoing implementation plan.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A recommendation was made by the Cwm Taf Regional Collaboration Board in April 2013 to create a Cwm Taf YOS by April 2014, or at the earliest point thereafter. The Cwm Taf Regional Collaboration Board also approved the establishment of a Cwm Taf YOS Management Board to oversee the creation of the service and to provide future governance.
- 3.2 Progress was last reported to Cabinet on 18th November 2013, when the recommendation that Rhondda Cynon Taf became the host Authority for the new Cwm Taf YOS was approved. Cabinet also agreed the proposed service delivery model alongside various recommendations to progress the human resources, finance and legal work necessary to establish the new service.

4. HUMAN RESOURCE, FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND IT IMPLICATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CREATION OF A CWM TAF YOS

- 4.1 Human resource staff in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil have worked jointly to advise on the issue of hosting the new service and how to proceed with associated TUPE arrangements. This has proved to be a complex issue, and as Cabinet will be aware, there are some differences in terms and conditions, particularly in relation to salary grades between the two Authorities. Due to TUPE legislation the potential for future harmonisation of terms and conditions will be limited which will lead, in salary terms, to some differentials in the workforce in the short to medium term.
- 4.2 A consultation process has now been agreed with the Trade Unions representing the local authority YOS staff group in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil. The consultation process is likely to run for a six week period, following which staff can expect to have a response to any issues raised before the final Cwm Taf staffing structure is agreed. The consultation period commenced on 31st March 2104 and human resource advice confirms that a total of three months should be sufficient to complete the consultation and make any changes that are required. A Cwm Taf YOS service delivery model and associated draft structure has been used as a basis for entering into a formal 'first phase' staff consultation period which was completed on 25th April 2014. A final service structure will be produced and a 'phase two' consultation exercise will be undertaken with staff who will be asked to nominate their preferred role and location within the new structure. It is anticipated that following the completion of TUPE, a second 'management of change' period will commence which will focus on making minor changes to the staff structure to ensure that it most accurately reflects changing workload demands and service user need.
- 4.3 Members will be pleased to note that there are no specific Youth Justice Board related legal considerations in creating a new Cwm Taf YOS and the Youth Justice Board are supportive of the project. The advice from the Youth Justice Board is that a single integrated YOS will receive the combined total grant of the two current services as long as it meets the grant eligibility criteria, i.e., that it produces a single set of Cwm Taf performance data. Rhondda Cynon Taf's Service Director, Children's Services and Merthyr Tydfil's YOS Principal Officer have met with the Youth Justice Board and will be considering the options available as the work progresses.
- 4.4 As a consequence, this will require the new Cwm Taf YOS to have a single information system and integrated IT network. A dedicated joint local authority IT project group is overseeing progress of this work as well as a wider review of IT infrastructure to meet current demand and ensure the sustained running of the new Cwm Taf YOS. The IT project group has commissioned a detailed survey of IT requirements which has identified the key tasks, resources and costs to providing a joint IT solution for the new Cwm Taf YOS.
- 4.5 Rhondda Cynon Taf's Legal Department has developed a draft legal agreement which is currently being considered by all interested parties and once finalised will underpin the new Cwm Taf YOS.

- 4.6 Rhondda Cynon Taf's Finance Team, in collaboration with their Merthyr Tydfil colleagues, are finalising the necessary financial framework to allow for the creation of a pooled Cwm Taf YOS budget and the other associated financial agreements for the future service. A financial agreement setting out contributions of 75% (Rhondda Cynon Taf) and 25% (Merthyr Tydfil) has been reached between the two Authorities for 'cash funding' the service for 2014/15, which has been based on existing estimated budget allocations. Funding arrangements will be managed by the new Head of Cwm Taf YOS under the direction of the Cwm Taf Management Board, and the Board will be provided with regular budget updates.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND OTHER KEY AREAS

- 5.1 A series of task and finish groups involving YOS operational managers have been meeting since September 2013 to agree future Cwm Taf YOS working practices and develop associated policies and procedures. These are progressing to schedule and are subject to regular review by members of the Management Board. The aim is to have a core set of policies and procedures in place in time for the defined operational go live date. It is recognised that many of these will continue to evolve throughout 2014 as new teams are established, for example, the prevention and restorative justice teams, and as the practice framework develops through the creation of the new Cwm Taf YOS.
- 5.2 The new Cwm Taf YOS will be located across the two currently used office bases in Treforest and Merthyr Tydfil. In order to accommodate to this, some reorganisation of the Merthyr office will be needed to accommodate additional staff members. It is envisaged that this can be completed in required timescales at minimal cost.

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Arrangements are in place in order to sequence the ongoing preparations for the full implementation of the new Cwm Taf YOS in a manner that adheres as closely as possible to the original timescales identified. Rhondda Cynon Taf, as the host authority, in consultation with key managers in Merthyr Tydfil, are in the process of recruiting to the new Head of Cwm Taf YOS post, who will help oversee the on-going progress of the implementation plan.
- 6.2 As outlined earlier in the report there are some key tasks with clearly defined and immovable timelines; for example, completion of the staff consultation exercise, the implementation of associated TUPE arrangements and the creation of the IT infrastructure that must be completed before the new Cwm Taf YOS can become operational. Taking all these into account, it has been assessed that in order for all remaining these tasks to be completed that the planned date for the creation and commencement of the new Cwm Taf YOS be revised to 1st July 2014.
- 6.3 The implementation plan has been updated to ensure all preparatory tasks are sequenced appropriately to achieve the revised 1st July 2014 deadline. A revised version of the implementation plan and timeline will be distributed to all Cwm YOS Management Board members so that they are kept informed of the latest developments.

