

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale on Wednesday, 16th November 2016 at 5 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor M.J.Watts - Chair

County Borough Councillors

S.Evans	R.W.Smith	E.Webster
P.Griffiths	B.Stephens	C.J.Willis
(Mrs) C.Leyshon	(Mrs)J.S.Ward	R.Yeo
(Mrs) S.Rees	P.Wasley	

Also in Attendance

Mr.R.Hull – Chair of Audit Committee
Mr.J.Fish – Elected Parent/Governor Representative
County Borough Councillor L.M. Adams – Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Officers in Attendance

Mr.P.J.Lucas – Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Mr.P.Griffiths – Service Director, Performance & Improvement
Ms.A.Richards – Head of 21st Century Schools
Mr.N.Owen – Schools Facilities Manager
Ms.Z.Lancelott – Head of Engagement and Participation
Ms.C.Hutcheon - Acting Service Manager for the Youth Engagement and Participation Service
Ms.K.May – Head of Democratic Services
Mr.M.Jones – Democratic Services Officer

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors S.Bradwick, C.Davies (Vice Chair of Audit Committee) and Co-oped Member S.Jones.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – to note that in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct there were no declarations of interest made at the meeting pertaining to the agenda.

28. PRESENTATION – COMMUNITY MEALS SERVICE

In advance of the presentation, the Members were informed that at the Meeting of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee held on the 4th November, 2015, it was agreed that a number of issues be addressed by the Meals on Wheels Service. A handout was circulated at the meeting reminding Members of the issues that were raised at that meeting and as set out below:

- Improved engagement and consultation with clients;
- Improved information for clients e.g. through the Council's website;
- Explore the creation of a customer service contact Ty Elai to help improve the handling of telephone queries;
- Review menus following consultation;
- Monitor uptake especially at weekends;
- Explore opportunities to improve meal quality; and
- Explore options to provide a reward system for regular users.

With the aid of PowerPoint slides, the Head of 21st Century Schools and the Schools Facilities Manager provided Members with a presentation in respect of Community Meals Service which addressed the above issues, and they gave their observations under the following headings:

- Communication with Clients.
- Outcome of Consultation.
- New Menu Options and Other Meals Provided.
- Consultation with Day Centre Clients and Meals on Wheels Clients.
- Taster Sessions.
- Trend Information.
- Meal Numbers Before/After New Menu Introduced.
- Meal Numbers.
- Cost of Meals.
- Next Steps for Service.

The Head of 21st Century Schools explained that the Service had improved its communication with clients through more efficient engagement of frontline staff to listen to clients' views as well as undertaking a number of surveys with clients. She reported that the Meals on Wheels operatives had been very supportive throughout the service changes and had contributed significantly to help with the development of the service.

The Head of 21st Century Schools informed the Committee that the outcome of the consultation was very successful and positive feedback had been received. Taster sessions for a new menu had taken place directly with clients in Day Centres and at home for those in receipt of Meals on Wheels. She also explained that Christmas services and activities had taken place in day centres which was also successful.

Members were informed that following the taster sessions a revised menu had been produced which had changed from a 4 week menu to a 2 week menu which was now of better quality with locally sourced ingredients and a wider choice of dishes similar to restaurant choices. She explained that following the revised menu being introduced there had been a slight rise in the number of Meals delivered to customers on a Saturday and this trend was being monitored.

However, in response to a question raised by a Member in respect of the downward trend in the number of meals being provided, the Head of 21st Century Schools stated that whilst there is a downward trend during 2014/15, 2015/16 and to the present date, it was not due to the quality of Service. There was a dip in the up take naturally and it was felt that this was primarily due to individuals having more of a choice e.g. commercial providers offering a range of ready prepared processed foods.

In response to a question raised in relation to the costs of providing meals, the Head of 21st Century Schools confirmed that the average cost of a meal is £3.45; however, this was subsidised with the overall production cost being £7.35.

A Member felt that the Community Meals Service is an area that could be reviewed by the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

A Member asked how is the Meals on Wheels Service advertised.

The Schools Facilities Manager explained that the service is advertised through word of mouth and that leaflets had been produced; however, it would be necessary to explore other alternatives to help promote the service.

The Committee agreed that overall the report was very positive and they were happy with the responses they had received together with the next steps proposed for the Service as shown below:

- Continue to engage/consult with Clients.
- Improve information e.g. Website etc.
- Continue to review menus with Clients.
- Continue to monitor uptake.
- Continue to review the Service to support the delivery of a cost effective and quality provision.

The Committee thanked Ms.A.Richards and Mr.N.Owen for their informative presentation and it was **RESOLVED** that the Head of 21st Century Schools be requested to pass on the Committee's thanks to the staff within Meals on Wheels for the efforts made in improving the Service.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING

29. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVICE CHANGES – RCT YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION SERVICE

The Head of Engagement and Participation and the Acting Service Manager for the Youth Engagement and Participation Service provided Members with an update on the implementation of the service changes in respect of the Youth Engagement and Participation Service to assist the Finance and Performance Committee in the assessment of the impact of these changes, and gave their observations under the following headings:

- Service Change One – January 2014 (implemented June 2014).
- Impact of Service Change One.
- Review of Service Change one with Staff.
- Service Change two – February 2016 (Implemented June 2016).
- Impact of Service Change Two.
- Impact on Council Priorities.
- External Regulation and Recognition.
- Future Priorities.
- Conclusion.

Members were informed that the Council has a statutory duty to provide youth services for 11 – 25 year olds to help young people achieve their full potential and overcome barriers to learning and progression.

The Acting Service Manager for the Youth Engagement and Participation explained that following a public consultation, Cabinet agreed to reconfigure the Service around the 17 secondary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, in line with the new Welsh Government Youth Work Strategy, which delivered a saving of £2.2M (50% reduction). She reported that there was a requirement for staff changes to be made; however, despite the Service changes and a 50% budget reduction, Rhondda Cynon Taf was benchmarked second in Wales for core budget allocation for youth services in 2015-16.

The Acting Service Manager for the Youth Engagement and Participation reported that following the 2nd phase of the Service change during the academic year 2015-16, the Service had engaged with 67% of young people identified as 'amber' as its targeted cohort, which was a decrease of only 4% from 2014-15, despite the reduction in the budget and staff changes.

It was reported that through both Open Access provision and the provision of one to one support the Service had engaged with 13,181 individual young

people and 80% of the young people identified as amber on vulnerability profiling during the same period, which provides evidence that the Service had undertaken positive work in targeting young people who are at risk of disengagement from learning.

Members were informed that following the two Service changes the Youth Engagement and Participation Service continues to support the delivery of positive outcomes and is an effective Service.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED** that as Members were satisfied with the response to the questions raised, it was felt that no further Scrutiny was required, at this time.

**M.J.WATTS
CHAIR**

The meeting closed at 6.25 p.m.

These minutes are subject to approval at the next meeting.

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