

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Clydach Vale, on Tuesday, 30th January 2018 at 5 p.m.

Present

County Borough Councillor R.Yeo – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

J. Davies, L. De-Vet, J. Elliott, S. Evans, M Forey,
L. Jones, A. Roberts, J. Williams, C. Willis

In Attendance

County Borough Councillor R. Lewis - Deputy Cabinet Member for Prosperity and Wellbeing

County Borough Councillor G. Thomas – Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

Officers

Mr. P. Mee – Director Public Health, Protection and Communities Services

Mr A. Wilkins – Head of Legal – Corporate and Democratic Services

Ms L. Davies - Head Of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Community Safety

Mr N. Pilliner –Pollution and Public Health Manager

Mr P. Howells - Head Of Community Housing Services

Ms J. Ellis – Housing Strategy and Investment Manager

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillor W. Owen

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – that in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct, there were no personal interests made at the meeting pertaining to the agenda.

30. MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on the 26th September 2017.

31. AIR QUALITY UPDATED PROGRESS REPORT AND AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN.

The Pollution & Public Health Manager presented Members with an overview of the 2017 Air Quality Progress Report and an update on the Air Quality Action Plans for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Members were informed that there are some localised areas of RCT which continue to be vulnerable to poor air quality. Members were also informed that local air quality will vary over time in response to changes to local, regional and national sources of pollutants as well as fluctuations in climate and weather.

The Pollution & Public Health Manager went on to explain that the Council has been monitoring Local Air Quality since 1998 and in 2017 the progress report confirmed that there are currently 16 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) in RCT.

Members were given an update on proposed and existing developments and ongoing monitoring. It was reported to Members that a two month consultation was undertaken on the 2017 progress report in October 2017. The submissions have been considered and the report has been widely accepted. It was also explained that the submissions from Welsh Government deemed the report to be well structured. Members were pleased to see this and congratulated the officer for the pleasing report. Members put their questions and observations forward to the officers.

The Pollution & Public Health Manger also took Members through the Action Plan and after scrutinising in-depth Members **RESOLVED** to –

- Acknowledge the content of the report
- Receive an updating report in relation to the Welsh Government Clean Air Plan for Wales when it is complete.

32. HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME REVIEW AND KEY POLICY CHANGES

The Housing Strategy and Investment Manager and the Head of Community Housing Services informed Members of the recent review of the Housing Allocation Scheme and the policy and operational changes to the Scheme that are proposed as a consequence of the findings of the review.

Members received a presentation as well as the report which highlighted the scheme and its key features.

It was explained that the Council as local housing authority, has a statutory obligation under the Housing Act 1996, the Homeless Act 2002 and the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 in relation to the publication of a Housing Allocation Scheme and for ensuring equality of access to social housing for all people with a housing need.

Officers explained to Members the reasons behind the review of the scheme and the process that is followed, Members were informed that the review began in April 2017 and involved all housing association partners. Working groups challenged and reviewed various aspects of the scheme under the following headings:

- Adapted Housing
- Affordability
- Eligibility
- Criteria for each band
- Lettings

Members scrutinised the policy in-depth and put their comments forward in respect of the proposed policy and reasons for the changes. A Member asked what provisions are provided for sensitive letting as it was felt that this is difficult to manage.

In response Officers explained that the Housing Association is able to exercise its discretion around allocation and apply a sensitive let.

After further consideration Member **RESOLVED:**

- That the views expressed by Scrutiny are fed into the proposed scheme.
- Approve the changes proposed to the Housing Allocation Scheme that have been identified by the review.

33. SUBSTANCE MISUSE IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

With the aid of PowerPoint slides, the Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services and the Head of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Community Safety provided Members with a presentation in respect of Substance Misuse in RCT and gave observations under the following headings:

- Current Service Provision Services for Adults
- Current Service Provision for Children and Young People
- Review of the Substance Misuse Services
- Integrated Substance Misuse Service Cwm Taf
- Early Intervention and Prevention

The Director Public Health, Protection and Community Services explained to Members of the Committee that substance misuse continues to be a significant issue within RCT.

It was explained that data from PHW Annual Profile for Substance Misuse 2016 – 17 shows that:

- RCT is in the top 10 L/A in Wales for alcohol specific hospital admissions Cwm Taf UHB was;
 - Highest rate in Wales for Alcohol attributable mortality (60 per 100,000 population)
 - One of the highest rates in Wales for Alcohol specific Mortality (15 per 100,000)
 - Above the Wales average for hospital admissions related to illicit drugs
 - Higher than the Wales average (8 per 100,000) for Drug Misuse deaths
 - On average, 3,000 referrals are received annually into Substance Misuse Services in Cwm Taf.

Members were informed of the current services that are available for support for example. DASPA – single point of access, Alcohol Liaison Service, RISMS, Community Drug and Alcohol Service, Needle and Syringe provision along with many more.

The Director Public Health, Protection and Community Services along with the Head of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Community Safety explained to Members the review of substance misuse services. It was explained that consultation took place in November 2016 with extensive engagement between partners, wider stakeholders, service users, carers and families. It was explained that the review was completed in April 2017 and its findings were used to develop an Integrated Substance Misuse Service Module, which was approved by the PSB in June 2017.

It was reported that the new service is scheduled to commence in April 2019. Members were informed about the Cwm Taf Integrated Substance Misuse Service and its Key changes:

- A single integrated service rather than separate independent services
- New and increased focus on early identification and intervention
- Psychologically informed in recognition that substance misuse and mental health problems are often co-occurring.

Officers took Members through the rest of the presentation and responded to Members questions.

Members raised concerns about what was being done to control the amount of underage drinking in the local communities. Officers explained that there have been many schemes put in place to tackle these issues some of which are community alcohol partnerships, prevention of underage sales which have all contributed to lowering the problem.

Members question what was being done to tackle the anti social behaviour caused by intoxicating substances in the many of the communities within RCT. The Head of

Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Community Safety responded and explained that the proposed Public Space Protection Order 2018 would be a way forward to tackle alcohol related anti social behaviour in public spaces across RCT. It was also explained that specific exclusion zones for intoxicating substances have been proposed for Pontypridd and Aberdare and a public consultation was currently underway to inform a decision by Cabinet in the Spring.

Members considered the presentation put before them and it was **RESOLVED** to

- Continue to monitor the Substance Misuse within RCT
- To receive an update in respect of the Integrated Substance Misuse Service in Cwm Taf.

Meeting closed at 7:10pm

**Cllr R Yeo
Chair**