

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale on Thursday, 13th December, 2018 at 5 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor L. M. Adams – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

J. Bonetto	J. Harries
J. Brencher	P. Jarman
G. Caple	E. Stephens
S. Evans	

Other Members in Attendance

County Borough Councillor R. Yeo – Chair, Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Non Committee/ Education Co-Opted Members in Attendance

Mr J Fish – Elected Parent / Governor Representative

Officers in Attendance

Mr C. Hanagan – Director of Communications & Interim Head of Democratic Services

Mr G. Isingrini – Group Director Children & Community Services

Mr N. Elliott – Service Director, Adult Services

Mr M. Murphy – Health & Safety Advisor

Mr D. Powell - Service Director, Corporate Design and Maintenance

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Committee Members - County Borough Councillors H. Boggis, A. Cox, E. George, M. Griffiths, D. Macey, S. Morgans and L. Walker.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – to note that there were no declarations of interest made at the meeting pertaining to the agenda.

24. INTRODUCTIONS

Officers were introduced by the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

25. MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on the 22nd October 2018 subject to it being noted that Minute 18 refers to Ynyshir not Ynysboeth.

REPORTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

26. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN SCRUTINY

The Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services presented his report in respect of the promotion of public engagement in Scrutiny. The matter had previously been discussed at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on the 14th November 2017 with a view to Scrutiny receiving a further report on the progress of the proposals in place to enhance the arrangements to promote public engagement within Scrutiny.

The Director outlined the developments since November 2017 such as the establishment of the Council's dedicated Scrutiny web pages which has raised the profile of Scrutiny within Rhondda Cynon Taf. Currently the dedicated pages promote the Scrutiny forward work programmes and feature regular Scrutiny Chair's Blogs, the latest from the Chair of the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee. The blogs serve to inform the activity of the respective Scrutiny Committees from the Chair's perspective such as the recent recommendation to have arisen from the Working Group established to consider the Voluntary Snow Warden initiative.

It was reported that in future the web pages would also include information in respect of the Scrutiny Working Groups and their agreed recommendations implemented by Cabinet so as to keep the residents of RCT fully informed of the Scrutiny process. The Director advised that to date and for the period November 2017-2018 the Scrutiny dedicated web pages had received 933 views which was considered a good performance. He added that consideration was being given to populating the more frequently visited web pages of the Council website with appropriate sign posting to other areas. It was reported that priority given to continuously improving and enhancing the Council engagement pages from a democracy perspective.

An update was provided in respect of the Public Speaking Protocol which had previously been discussed at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the 22nd October 2018. It was confirmed that, as agreed, following its translation it would be incorporated into the Council's Constitution.

Cabinet and Scrutiny engagement sessions continue to be undertaken with positive outcomes and reference was made to the forthcoming Children & Young People

Scrutiny Committee where discussions around 21st Century Schools will be held in collaboration with the relevant portfolio holder.

The Director referenced the significant wider engagement opportunities such as webcasting which will be discussed and progressed subject to the decisions taken by the Democratic Services and Overview & Scrutiny Committees. He acknowledged the cost implications of the webcasting facility and advised that consideration was being given to how other Local Authorities are progressing this matter. It is also proposed that the current process for presenting petitions and providing feedback to the public is reviewed. Reference was made to meeting the potential future statutory requirement for the publication of a Public Engagement Strategy.

Following discussions by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee it was agreed that there is opportunity to receive feedback and updates to this Committee from the Police Crime & Crime Panel and the Public Service Board. In addition it was confirmed that the 2018/19 Scrutiny Work Programmes would be uploaded to the dedicated Scrutiny Web pages.

In response to a query in respect of providing a clearer navigation to the dedicated scrutiny web pages the Director advised that there is now a landing page directly from the Council's homepage. Members discussed changing the term 'scrutiny' to something more user friendly such as "Who is holding the Council to Account?" so as to clarify the role of scrutiny for members of the public.

The Director confirmed that holding scrutiny committees in other more accessible venues other than the Council chamber was being reevaluated as it had not encouraged any further public engagement. The Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee informed Members that his Scrutiny Committee had held meetings in alternative venues such as Abercynon Sports Centre, Llantrisant Leisure Centre and Ty Heulog which had been a worthwhile exercise for members of the Committee but had not generated any public interest.

In conclusion it was considered that further promotion via Twitter and Facebook would be a useful tool in the promotion of the scrutiny process.

It was **RESOLVED**:-

1. To acknowledge the information contained within the report and progress made in promoting public engagement in Scrutiny;
2. That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee receives future updates and feedback from the Police & Crime Panel and the Public Service Board; and
3. To receive further updates in respect of the proposals in place to enhance the arrangements to promote public engagement in Scrutiny.

27. MODERNISATION OF RESIDENTIAL CARE AND DAY CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services presented the recommendations considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on the 21st

November 2018 in respect of the future service delivery model for the Council's Residential Care Homes and Day Care Services within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Members were reminded that further to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee having the opportunity to scrutinise this matter at its meeting in October 2017, it is proposed that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee continues to receive reports in respect of the strategic transformation of residential care and day care for older people in RCT whilst the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee continues its work in respect the provision of extra care for older people and a review of day care services.

The Group Director, Children & Community Services referred scrutiny to the recommendations set out within the report and with the aid of a Power Point presentation provided a summary of the current provision of residential care and day care for older people in RCT. It was reported that due to the increasing demands on the current provision, with population of RCT increasing and living longer Cabinet requested a comprehensive review of residential and day care services for older people to be undertaken in order to assess the adequacy of the current provision (as set out in the attached appendix).

The Group Director reminded Scrutiny of the findings of the independent review, of the recommended option and of the additional option and preferred option for Cabinet's consideration in respect of retaining '*a number of its residential Care Homes that are focused on providing complex care, residential, reablement and respite*'. Scrutiny was reminded that the modernisation of adult social care provision is a key priority for the Council and it recognises that it needs to shape the services to meet current and future demands. The Group Director stated that this is not a cost cutting exercise and no decisions have been made in respect of residential home closures but what has been determined is that a 12 week consultation is undertaken commencing in January 2019 with feedback to be considered by Cabinet.

Scrutiny sought clarification with regards to the role of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in the process and whether there would be opportunity for either to pre scrutinise the reports going forward. The Director of Communications and Interim Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the Overview & Scrutiny would have the opportunity to form part of the Council's formal consultation process, in advance of Cabinet making any decision but it would be for members to determine whether it undertook any pre scrutiny. The Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee considered it appropriate for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to take the lead in this matter but requested that members of the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee are invited to participate in the process.

The Group Director, as requested, provided an explanation of '*exceptional circumstances*' within the third recommendation agreed by Cabinet. The Director confirmed that following the conversation around the 'assessed need' which reflects the issues in respect of what matters to the individual and their family and their choice, consideration would be given to the Council's own provision should an alternative placement not be available. He commented that the goal with regard to the winter pressure is to ensure that individuals return to their own home/provision as soon as possible.

In terms of the 'intelligent consideration' (page 38 12.4) the Group Director referred to the result of the independent review to determine what will be intelligent consideration based on the data that will be collected and considered by Cabinet. The Service Director, Adult Services assured Members that throughout the consultation process advocacy services will be available to help residents say what they want from the services and influence how these services are delivered to meet citizen's needs. It was confirmed that Age Connects Morgannwg will be involved in the process to support advocacy.

In response to a query, the Group Director referred Members to the data in the report relating to dementia and clarified that alcohol related dementia is a specialist provision. The Service Director, Adult Services, outlined the Joint Commissioning Statement for Older People's Services 2015-25 as having identified a new approach to accommodation with care for older people and had published the Cwm Taf Joint Market Position Statement for Older People (MPS) which was approved by Cabinet in November 2017. It forms the basis for future dialogue and stronger partnership between commissioners and providers. The MPS identifies that high quality facilities, to meet the needs of dementia and specialist services, will be required over the next 10 years based on current projections. It was explained that the proposed service models for the delivery of complex care, for those patients with significant, continuing healthcare issues such as dementia will offer an alternative to the traditional residential care support and although care homes will continue to be an important component in the system of care and support, the future service models will avert the need for long term care and offer choice. Members praised the current extra care facilities currently available in RCT.

The Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee confirmed that his Scrutiny Committee had already considered many of the issues such as Detoc and EMI Nursing Bed Provision within RCT (dealt with by means of a Scrutiny Working Group), Adult Mental Health, alcohol abuse and it would continue to review the development of the extra care provision within RCT as previously discussed.

It was **RESOLVED**:-

1. To agree that the matter is included in the work programme of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with its terms of reference;
2. That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee undertakes pre scrutiny of the consultation feedback prior to Cabinet's consideration;
3. That Overview & Scrutiny receive regular progress updates relating to this matter; and
4. That an invitation is extended to the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to attend and take part in the meetings when the matter is discussed.

28. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEW

The Health & Safety Advisor presented the report of the Director of Human Resources in respect of Fire Risk Assessments which review the procedures for Council owned/occupied buildings. Scrutiny was reminded that further to the

Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on the 18th April 2018 Members requested that a progress update is provided within 6 months.

The Health & Safety Advisor provided an update with regards to the action points to be implemented following discussions with officers. The Fire Safety Group (FSWG) has been re-established with the aim of identifying additional members so that all service areas are represented. The FSWG will meet quarterly and identify deputies to ensure a full complement of staff on the Group at all times. A number of other areas were reported as having been progressed since April 2018 such as a review of the schedule of buildings against the Council's property asset list, a quarterly review of fire risk assessments and the health & Safety team to continue to undertake a rolling programme of fire safety audits.

Further to a query in respect of current arrangements in place to risk-assess how building work /maintenance/refurbishment works will affect the safety at the premise with particular reference to contractors on site who work with hazardous materials, the Service Director, Corporate Design and Maintenance explained that the 'hot work permit procedure' is in place and a new signing in process has been set up which validates the contractor's time of arrival and confirms that they have followed the correct processes.

Members queried how the evacuation/fire procedures are practiced in residential homes and schools across the County Borough. The Health & Safety Advisor explained that an annual return is in place which is a 'signing off' procedure to confirm that fire/health and safety checks have been undertaken. Every building is has a site manager who has overall responsibility for undertaking the procedures and in residential homes, staff are well trained and drills are monitored by the Care Standards Agency. Following consideration of the matter, the Chair suggested that an additional recommendation be included that all staff with responsibility for overseeing fire/health & safety procedures should undertake an e-learning course with a final test to ensure that they have completed and understood the processes in place.

A further query in respect of whether Head Teachers should have overall responsibility for the buildings, fire drills and associated procedures, in addition to their day to day responsibilities. The Health & Safety Advisor suggested that the best solution is for the final accountability to rest with those responsible for the buildings, Head Teachers in this case with support available should they feel it necessary.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED**:-

1. To acknowledge the Council's arrangements for fire safety risk assessments; and
2. That an E-Learning module is made available on the Council's Source for all responsible site managers to undertake and complete.

**L.M.ADAMS
CHAIR**

The meeting closed at 6:45 p.m.