

Observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Meeting, as referenced in Section 11 of the Cabinet report

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 1ST DECEMBER 2020

County Borough Councillors - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members in attendance:-

Councillor M Adams (Chair)

Councillor W Lewis	Councillor J Bonetto
Councillor P Jarman	Councillor M Forey
Councillor H Boggis	Councillor J Brencher
Councillor E Stephens	Councillor L Walker
Councillor G Caple	Councillor M Griffiths
Councillor G Hughes	Councillor W Jones
Councillor A Cox	

Cabinet Member in Attendance

Councillor G Hopkins, Cabinet Member Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language

Other Members in attendance

Councillor R Yeo, Chair, Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
Councillor G Stacey, Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
Councillor A Roberts, Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Public Speakers

Ms A Tritschler, Chair of the Older Persons Advisory Group (OPAG)
Ms L Corre, Secretary of the Older Persons Advisory Group (OPAG)

Officers in attendance

Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr N Elliott, Director of Adult Services

Both Ms Tritschler and Ms Corre from the Older People's Advisory Group (OPAG) were provided the opportunity to address Committee with the following comments:-

A Tritschler:-

How will the provision of learning disability/autism day services and older people day services currently being delivered at these sites respectively work out and how can we distinguish between complex and standard needs?

Ms Tritschler also commented on the Age Cymru report and on the Welsh provision for Adult Social Care.

Ms L Corre:-

I am pleasantly surprised there are only two residential care homes referred to in the report, Danymynydd and Bronllwyn. A lot of work has gone into this and we appreciate all that the Council has done. I look forward to seeing the Extra Care Housing Development in Pontypridd. We do watch the Council's activity which is doing a good job at the moment.

The following comments were raised by Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee:-

Planning Proposals

Proposed Extra care developments in Bronwydd House and Mountain Ash - Will the two proposals be part of the forward planning on the Council's agenda or not? The plans to develop Bronllwyn are dated 10 months ago, in February 2020, was the future of Bronwydd on the back of the failure to develop Bronwydd House? Are these proposals, both financial and human resources, viable options for the future?

Part of the proposal for Danymynydd and Bronllwyn is to use Bronwydd car park, are we confident that there are no incumbencies around the use of that?

Consultation

There has been continual consultation, the council is adding to and not taking away and redeveloping the two homes for the elderly. I commend that we have more Council Care Homes than any other local authority in Wales.

The plans transform and enhance our current services to meet the current and forecasted need in the coming years. Through consultation we have listened to residents and considered their comments. We have forecasted the challenges that Covid has presented.

The thorough consultation period has meant that this is a million miles away from the original recommendations of Practice Solutions calling on the decommissioning of council homes in RCT.

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The council underestimated the fight to retain Garth Olwg and Ystradfechan and now the communities find themselves on the winning side.

Care Provision in the South of the County Borough

Are we planning for these services in the right place? In the south of the County Borough there aren't many Council provided services. If we do need more services how will they be paid for? Can we keep the assessment of the need for services under review in the South? If there is a change in the South is there the potential to provide more complex care?

Extra Care Facilities

There are lots of Social Housing near the Extra care facility in Pontypridd, would the facility be open to walk-ins? Would that option be available?

This is an excellent report. The population is getting older and the needs are going to be huge for the local authority, the report is trying hard to find adaptable solutions. In traditional Residential Care settings couples are split up and one is left alone often suffering from loneliness and isolation. The Extra Care provision accommodates both and adapts as their condition deteriorates. I support the scheme and I support the recommendations. I am excited about the future and how the service will be able to interact with the community.

The 300 extra care places to be provided by 2025 reflects our demographic.

With regards to quality of staff/monitoring of staff; we have the opportunity with Extra Care facilities to provide a gold standard, can this be put in place?

I worked in the Extra Care facility in Talbot Green, lots of thought went into the early design stage and development such as working alongside the RNIB. The accommodation can be adapted easily with hoists. I watched the residents move in and I can now see them benefitting from the provision.

Will the Extra Care facility eliminate the need for any residents to go into neighbouring authorities? Will it eliminate that?

What does Extra care/ assisted living mean, is it a flexible provision?

Private Care Home Sector

Is the Private Care Home sector sustainable with inherent risks for the local authority to provide services for our residents, but with increasing costs the private sector may be a less attractive option.

Quality Impact Assessment

The Quality Impact Assessment suggests that all advertised roles will need to complete a 2hour session to achieve Welsh Language Level 1 if they do not already

have it, is this not just a tick box exercise and mean we would not be able to provide any services in the Welsh language?

Scrutiny Process

Did the 'Save Care Homes and Day Centre' campaign group have an invitation to make a contribution to today's meeting as they played an active part in other scrutiny meetings?

At the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the 22nd July 2019 I and former Cllr Macey asked for it be recorded that I voted in favour of the lost motion:- "That Cabinet retains the present level of residential care provision" At the time the Cabinet's preferred choice was to retain 7 and decommission four others, today we are scrutinising retaining 9 homes and I think it's an example of public spirit dominating the agenda and making the case for their retention.

Other Comments

In September 2020 there were 206 vacancies, is this a realistic number and is it due to family not wanting elderly relatives going into care due to Covid-19?

Can we consider a lower age limit when providing a services for those with complex needs?

The former Day care provision is now closed but was providing services for people with autism. It's interesting to hear that Bronllwyn will be offering the same service, how will it be different to that which was closed?

This report is saying that all 11 council run residential sites will have a stake in the future provision for elderly services and support for people with learning disabilities in adulthood.

Funding

The schemes are sustainable and that the capital and revenue funding to undertake all remodelling work as well as development will be prioritised in the budget to meet the timescales listed in the report.

CHAIR OF THE HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair of the health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee commented as follows:-

I welcome the comprehensive report which promotes independent living at home for our residents for more complex needs to be catered for. A lot of homes in our ownership and care did not have the facility to cater for this. Under these proposals the residents would have their requirements catered for.

I've no doubt we'll have greater investment from our cabinet for these facilities.

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I welcome the consultation which demonstrates the value and depth of the consultation which is real and it has brought us to this fantastic set of proposals. I do hope that Cabinet will support this.