

CWM TAF PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD JOINT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



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DEVELOPING COMMUNITY ZONES IN CWM TAF

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee with a progress report on the implementation of the delivery plan for objective 1 of the Cwm Taf Well-Being Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- Scrutinise the progress that has been made with the delivery of the action plan, and
- Consider if there are any matters arising from the report that Members would wish to give further scrutiny, and
- Consider holding future meetings of the committee at each of the Community Hubs.

3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To provide members of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to examine the progress with the delivery of one of the objectives of the Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan and identify any other matters that Members may wish to further consider in the future.

4. BACKGROUND

Cwm Taf Public Services Board – Cwm Taf Well-being Plan 2018-2023

- 4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a well-being duty on public bodies that they must carry out sustainable

development, including publishing well-being objectives and taking all reasonable steps to meet those.

- 4.3 Following completion of its Well-being assessment, the Cwm Taf Public Services Board (PSB) set the following three objectives:
- To promote safe, confident, strong and thriving communities improving the well-being of residents and visitors and building on our community assets.
 - To help people live long and healthy lives and overcome any challenges.
 - To grow a strong local economy with sustainable transport that attracts people to live, work and play in Cwm Taf.
- 4.3 In addition, the PSB identified that across these objectives it will need to work differently to tackle loneliness and social isolation. In the short term (1-2 years), the PSB proposed to develop Community Zones as an area or place based approach focussing support to improve outcomes for our areas with the greatest challenges.
- 4.4 In determining where the Community Zone should be located, consideration was given to the population size, natural boundaries and town centres, identifiable communities, alignment with school catchment areas, existing community support such as Flying Start and availability of public transport. Two Communities were identified as pilot areas for this approach: The Gurnos and the Rhondda Fach.
- 4.5 Each Community Zone will have a Community Hub. Community Hubs provide a range of services provided by the public and voluntary sector in one or a number of closely located buildings in priority neighbourhoods. These may include services such as a library or community cafe that encourage access and establishes the Hub's status as a valuable community asset. Each Hub will include flexible community rooms that can be used by community groups or partners. The Hub will also provide employment support through the Communities for Work programmes.
- 4.6 Bringing services together will provide a better public service offer and create economies of scale in terms of staffing and building costs. Making better, more cost effective use of our community assets and reinvesting resources in new or retrofitted, fit for purpose buildings will enable services to be sustainable in the longer term. The Hub will, as a minimum, provide information and advice on site to the public and facilitate provision across the wider network of Community Spokes/Satellites within the Neighbourhood Network.
- 4.7 The Spokes/Satellites within the Neighbourhood Network will encompass the wide range of facilities, services, and groups run by public or third sector organisations all locally based in the designated catchment area. The Hub and the associated Spokes/Satellites are intended to work as a network and by working in a more collaborative way, enable the public to navigate all the relevant support available to them in their local area. These facilities will support a preventative approach that enables individuals and families to access support as early as possible to prevent problems from escalating.

Expected Outcomes

4.8 This approach is expected to deliver the following outcomes:

- Better public services that are joined up, cost effective and accessible.
- A community in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised.
- A community that is well connected.
- A community that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.
- A community that promotes and protects its culture and heritage.

Objectives

4.9 This approach will develop an infrastructure to support:

- A single point of contact within communities to access good quality information, advice and assistance.
- A platform to develop community capacity and volunteering.
- Encouragement for older people to stay active and connected to delay or prevent them needing statutory services.
- Opportunities for people to improve their mental health, well-being and confidence.
- Opportunities for people to improve or maintain their physical health.
- Opportunities for parents and families to improve their relationships and parenting skills.
- Opportunities for vulnerable people to seek support and be signposted to other services as appropriate.
- Opportunities for people to learn and develop skills in support of employment.
- Provide flexible community space for people to meet, share interest and socialise, thereby tackling loneliness and social isolation.

5 PROGRESS IN YEAR 1

5.1 A detailed update of progress against the delivery plan is attached at Appendix I for information. The year 2 delivery plan is currently being finalised. Some of the key achievement in each Community Zone are summarised as follows:

The Rhondda Fach – Yr Hwb

6.7 Yr Hwb at Ferndale opened in July 2019 and is led by an anchor organisation, Fern Partnership. It will deliver on the Council's commitments to the Welsh Government Children First Initiative with a focus on the Rhondda Fach 'Community Zone' and the PSB approach to developing "an integrated place based approach to building communities that prevents and mitigates the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences and breaks the intergenerational cycle of adversity".

6.8 Fern Partnership is responsible for childcare provision and for the development of the wider Neighbourhood Network that will ensure the community of the Rhondda Fach is fully involved in the development of services at the hub. Ferndale library has been relocated to the hub building and the Council's employment programmes and learning provision can also be accessed there alongside a rapidly developing range of activities, advice and support for all ages.

6.9 This is an innovative approach where the Council is co-locating its services in partnership with a third sector anchor organisation. It is anticipated that this will be a more cost effective and sustainable model. Fern Partnership have sought external funding to support the development of the Hub alongside a match funding contribution from the Council.

6.10 Key achievements in the first few months include:

- **Little Ferns** – registered 79 children since opening. Feedback from parents continues to be positive with particular reference to developing children's independence skills. Natural Resources Wales funding allowed the children to purchase gardening resources to find out about flowers and vegetables.
- **Library Services** – reported positive developments being based in a shared Hwb space. There has been a 41% increase in visitor numbers compared to the same period in 2019. They have 10 registered new Bookstart borrowers that focuses on enjoying books with your child due to parents/grandparents calling into the library when collecting their child. There has been an increase in adult and children memberships. The ICT Suite and meeting room are proving positive assets for the local communities. Staff have commented on how partnership work between the teams have enabled staff to signpost community members to services/support and information.
- **Community Coordinator** – appointed to support Neighbourhood Network.
- **Sensory Room** - now complete and open for community/organisation booking.
- **Primary CAMHS** - from 9th September, CAMHS have started offering support for anxiety, low mood, self-harm (no suicide ideation) via GP referrals and will have an ongoing presence in the Hwb.
- **Adult Learning** – classes confirmed to start in September (Play work, Food Hygiene, Essential Skills, Welsh, MECC, and Digital Literacy).
- **Dragons Savers Credit Union** – volunteers have shown an interest in supporting the Credit Union
- **Family Information Service** - to host drop-in information sessions.
- **Lullaby Project** – music and song writing project for expectant mothers and parents of pre-school children.
- **Community Gardening Project** – on going project with 8 active members who meet on a weekly basis.
- **Volunteers** – 16 volunteers recruited to support the function of the Hwb – Little Ferns, Storytelling, Garden Project, Credit Union and Marketing.
- There has been a positive impact on **the wider neighbourhood network** through the facilitation by the Community Coordinator of activities outside of the Hwb. For example, the Schools Butterfly Project supported from NRW

funding with two local schools - Llyn y Forwyn and Darran Park; drop-in sessions at the Dementia Café at Seion Chapel, and referrals made to courses and support available at other local facilities.

The Gurnos

- 6.11 Calon Las in the Gurnos officially opened on the 12th of September 2019 however the facility has been operational throughout 2019 and the latter part of 2018. The facility is owned by Merthyr Valleys Homes who are the anchor organisation for the facility however there is a tripartite approach between MVH, MTCBC and the third sector organisations.
- 6.12 Linked to the community hub in the Gurnos is the new Flying start facility 'Gurnos Community Centre' which is managed by MTCBC and the old health clinic which is set to become a creative Arts and media centre which is managed by the 3G's Development Trust. The 3G's have been instrumental in taking forward early involvement with the community and this has continued with additional 3rd sector support through VAMT
- 6.13 Through the agreed approach, led by MTCBC, the facility currently supports the co-location of the following services: Tenants Support(MVH) Health Visitors, Parenting Teams, Youth Support, Family Support (TAF), Employment services (C4W and C4W+), Department Work and Pensions, and a dedicated floor to a Youth Club 'Forsythia'. In January 2020 it is scheduled that the Community Police team will also be located into the facility.
- 6.14 The facility provides a range of drop in and outreach services to the community in addition to the above the facility enables the community to access a range of services locally including: CAB, Smoking Cessation, Careers Wales, Parent Network, Adult Community Learning Skills Clubs, Re Connect 50+, Llamau, Animal Welfare and Protection organisations.
- 6.15 Key Achievements during the initial phase of the project have been outlined below however a notable success has also been the engagement levels now being recorded in the hub, where circa 500 individuals per month are accessing services or information on other services they require.
- **Information and Advice:** Established access to an Information and advice service within the facility 5 days per week in partnership with the third sector. This has also now engaged some of the services housed in the facility to adopt an integrated approach to information delivery by allocating staff time to develop a more sustainable model.
 - **Community Development:** Initial work through the third sector enabled an understanding of services across the community and the building of the embryonic stages of the neighbourhood network. This has been recognised as an area for further focus and a new contract has been awarded to further develop the communities involvement and assist in developing sustainable community groups through a community development model of empowering

and enabling the community. This work has also led to the submission of two further funding bids by the third sector to continue identified programmes

- **Securing Community Resources:** An ICF grant of £40,000 for the facility was approved and this enabled the refurbishment of the Information and Advice area on the ground floor and the refurbishment of dedicated space for the Community. Access to this space will be available for use and currently does not incur additional charges and is supporting a number of community groups e.g. osteoporosis support group and reconnect 50+, PHAB club.
- **Environmental Initiative:** In partnership with Natural Resources Wales, a local third sector group 'Men Only' and MTCBC instigated a consultation with the community on open spaces. This identified environmental changes to residential area through planting schemes and brought play opportunities closer to the community. This initiative met a number of agendas and was funded through Natural Resources Wales (15k).
- **Dementia support** group has been established and currently training is being offered across the hub partners
- **Additional Funding:** The Community hub and partners have secured 2 significant funding allocations from 21st Century Schools, to develop a Coffee Shop as part of the wider offer to the community – to support the learning environment and family support services available. Also secured is the funding to further renovate and complete the Creative Arts and Media Centre which will provide pupils and the community with learning opportunities for careers in the media including the potential establishing of a local radio station for the area. The total allocation secured is £639,817.

6 NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 The second year delivery plan is currently being finalised with partners. It is anticipated that this will focus on consolidating the good progress that has been made with the development of the two Community Hubs and the creation of the Neighbourhood Networks.
- 6.2 Much of the focus of activity in year 1 was on creating each Community Hub and establishing the Neighbourhood Networks. Now these are in place there is a need to focus attention on maximising the benefit of the approach and opportunities for integrated service delivery with partners. In addition, the neighbourhood networks need to establish a new way of working with the communities which sees local residents actively engaged in decisions around the services they need and being involved in their communities.

7 AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND CONSIDERATION BY MEMBERS

- 7.1 Members of the Committee may wish to consider the following issues when scrutinising the progress with this objective:

- 7.2 **Sustainability** – a key risk to the long term future of these facilities is the dependence on external grant funding and the ability to generate revenue through income. Members may wish to consider how we ensure the long term viability of this approach.
- 7.3 **Integration** – the development of this approach will support all of the well-being objectives identified within the Well Being Plan. Members may wish to consider how this approach is integrated with the other well-being objectives.
- 7.4 **Partnership** – the development of each Community Hub and Zone has been led by the respective Councils in partnership with the third sector. Now that the facilities and infrastructure are in place there is a need to maximise the potential benefits of a “one public service” approach. Members may wish to consider what other public services may be able to contribute to the further development of this approach.
- 7.4 **Evaluation** – Data Cymru have been supporting the PSB to develop an evaluation framework for the Well-being Plan. Some progress has been made in regard to this objective but this has yet to be finalised and is necessary to determine the outcomes achieved. Members may wish to consider how we measure the impact and outcomes of this approach.
- 7.5 Members may wish to consider holding future meetings of this committee at the two Community Hubs as this would enable Members to view the facilities and meet with partner organisations working from the Hubs.

8. **EQUALITY OR DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report.

9. **CONSULTATION**

- 9.1 In developing its proposals for Community Zones, the Cwm Taf PSB undertook two community engagement events in November 2017. One of these was held at Tylorstown Sports Centre, the other at The Gurnos. The event in Tylorstown was attended by approximately 60 local residents and the event in The Gurnos by approximately 30 local residents.
- 9.2 Each event took the format of a facilitated workshop where residents were asked what was good about their community, what they would change if they could and how they would like to be involved in deciding what happens in their community. The feedback from the event identified that the greatest strength was undoubtedly the community spirit and how people supported each other. Many residents highlighted the perceived loss of local services and amenities as a key thing they would change.
- 9.3 Those in attendance expressed an interest in being involved in local decisions but would welcome a different approach that kept them engaged rather than what was perceived to be a series of consultations with little or no follow up. Many people provided their contact details.

- 9.4 In relation to the development of Yr Hwb in Ferndale a four week focussed consultation was undertaken from the 19th February to 19th March 2018. The consultation used a range of methods including a questionnaire, four drop-in engagement events, an email to all 1344 library users and promotion through the Older Persons Advisory Group. The proposal received overwhelming support from the respondents.
- 9.5 Community Matters events have been held focussing on getting the community connected and to start identifying the skills and experience of local residents; while a series of informal events have been on-going advertised via posters at local shops, social media and the Our Cwm Taf website.
- 9.6 There are regular Neighbourhood Network Steering Group meetings held, led by the Fern partnership as the anchor organisation. The key theme at present is communication – how best to share activity in the Rhondda Fach and the plans for local events going forward.
- 9.7 Within the Gurnos there has been a series of community consultations branded our Gurnos matters' which have directed the work of partners including the renaming of the facility and the priorities associated with the key achievements. The latest of which is the community reviewing and advising on the development of the Coffee Shop facility. This involvement is underpinned by the communities' role on the local implementation group where community members are represented equally in number to members of local organisations e.g. public sector bodies.

10. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The development of Yr Hwb in Ferndale required the major redevelopment of a former infant school owned by the Council. The building has been leased to Fern Partnership as the third sector anchor organisation and this has enabled them to access significant external funding that otherwise would not have been available to the Council. In addition to the building, the council has made a capital contribution of approximately £300k. This was used as a match funding contribution and has enabled additional funding from a number of sources:
- Pen Y Cymoedd Windfarm (both capital and revenue)
 - Welsh Government Communities Facilities Programme
 - WCVS
 - Integrated Care Fund (ICF)
 - MALD (for the library only)
- 10.2 In total, the capital scheme cost nearly £800k.
- 10.3 The facility in the Gurnos was previously a Communities First facility and reverted to its owner Merthyr Valleys Homes when the Communities First programme ceased. Through its exit strategy MTCBC committed to supporting this pilot programme and ensured the use of the Legacy funding pump primed this approach. Due to this partnership and the vision shared across partners MVH have invested significantly in the facility to bring the facility up to the

required standards and this has been complimented by the investment made from the identified sources below

- Integrated Care Fund
- 21st century Schools
- Flying Start Capital funding
- Children First pioneer funding

11. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

12. **LINKS TO PSB'S WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES**

12.1 This proposal is consistent with the sustainable approach promoted by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act through the five ways of working:

- Long-term – each community zone will seek to achieve long term sustainable change in their community.
- Prevention – this approach is a key element of the PSB and both Councils' increased emphasis on early intervention and prevention.
- Integration – this proposal contributes to a range of strategic priorities in an integrated and coherent approach.
- Collaboration – intrinsic to this approach is collaboration with other public services and the third sector.
- Involvement – communities will be involved through a different approach to engagement and co-production.

12.2 This proposal makes a direct contribution to the seven national well-being goals, in particular a Prosperous Wales, a Resilient Wales, a Healthier Wales and a Wales of Cohesive Communities.