



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REPORT IN RESPECT OF THE AUTISM NOTICE OF MOTION

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATIONS

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' agreement on the method to progress the Notice of Motion in respect of Autism and how the Council and partners may support children and parents further. The motion as amended was adopted by the Council meeting on the 27th March 2019.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny:

- 2.1 Agree to the progress this matter on behalf of Council as outlined in the report
- 2.2 Consider how best to work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders on what more the Council can do to support those living with autism in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 2.3 Task the Director of Democratic Services to bring forward relevant information to progress this matter, to a future meeting of this committee.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of Council held on the 27th March 2019, the following of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors J. James and L Hooper was received by the proper Officer in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.1(b) :-

This Council notes its disappointment at the recent defeat of the Autism Bill at the National Assembly for Wales, a bill that was developed in

partnership with the National Autistic Society and received Cross-party support.

Though this Council of course recognises the legislation alone is not the answer to improving access to services for those with autism in our communities, by simply rejecting the Bill and without bringing forward a credible alternative, the Welsh Government is sending the wrong signal on this important subject.

This Council therefore resolves to

- Request that the Leader of the Council writes to both the First Minister and the Minister for Health and Social Services, outlining this Council's concerns at the recent defeat of this Bill, whilst also seeking reassurance that the Welsh Government will be bringing forward its own legislation on this issue.
- Request that the Health and Wellbeing Committee of this Council produce a piece of work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, on what this Council can do to support those living with autism in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

3.2 At the meeting of the Council Members supported in amendment to the above-mentioned Notice of Motion, standing in the names of County Borough Councillors M.Adams, J. Bonetto, R. Bevan, H. Boggis, S. Bradwick, J. Brencher, A. Calvert, G. Capel, A. Crimmings, A. Davies-Jones, L. De-Vet, J. Elliott, S. Evans, M. Fidler Jones, M. Forey, A. Fox E. George, M. Griffiths, J. Harries, G. Holmes, G. Hopkins, G. Hughes, G. Jones, R. Lewis, W. Lewis, C. Leyshon, A. Morgan, S. Morgans, M. Norris, D. Owen-Jones, S. Pickering, S. Powderhill, S. Powell, S. Rees, A. Roberts, J. Rosser, R. Smith, G. Stacey, M. Tegg, G. Thomas, W. Treeby, R. Turner, M. Webber, D. Williams, T. Williams, C. Willis and R. Yeo.

The amended motion was adopted by Council, which read:

This Council notes that recent defeat of the Autism Bill at the National Assembly for Wales, a Bill that was developed in partnership with the National Autistic Society and received cross party support. The Council also notes the concerns of the five Colleges of Medicine and the Welsh NHS Confederation's concerns that the Bill was not the best route for improving outcomes for individuals with ASD.

Though this Council of course recognises that legislation alone is not the answer to improving access to services for those with autism in our communities, steps to improve outcomes for individuals with ASD should be a priority for Welsh Ministers.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Request that the Leader of the Council write to both the First Minister and the Minister for Health and Social Care to seek assurances from the Welsh Government that alternative solutions are put in place.

- Request that the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee of this Council produce a piece of work in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, on what more the Council can do to support those living with autism in Rhondda, Cynon, Taf.

4. PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

- 4.1 In order to advance the matter as expeditiously as possible it is proposed that an overview of the services that are currently provided to individual living in Rhondda Cynon Taf with autism be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in the first instance
- 4.2 It is considered that the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee will assess this information and identify the most practical and effective way to improve outcomes and access to services for those in our communities who are living with autism in response to this information.
- 4.3 To support this progress the proposer and seconder of the original motion will be invited to participate in these consideration. Council also agreed for Cllr Sera Evans to be included in these discussions, following her support for the original motion.
- 4.4 As a courtesy, the proposer and seconder of the amendment will also be invited to contribute to the committees discussions on this matter.
- 4.5 It is proposed that during its deliberations, the committee consider receiving evidence from parents and residents in respect of the current provision of service. Through this work, members of the committee subsequently consider developing recommendations to improve the delivery of services from a local authority perspective in the future, by making specific recommendations to the Cabinet.
- 4.6 If appropriate, where necessary, authorise the Director of Democratic Services & Communications to provide Council's Cabinet with the relevant interim report on progress.
- 4.7 That the committee consider taking evidence from relevant stakeholders, support groups and other public service agencies to secure a broader view of the support available, challenges presented and opportunities for improvement.
- 4.8 Through this element, members may wish to consider arriving at a view on how best to highlight and communicate any issues raised through this evidence, to support delivering upon the wider focus of the Notice of Motion. This work would be supported by the Council's Communications Department.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Equality and diversity implications will be considered as part of the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations and any subsequent implementation arrangements

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 There are no consultation implications arising, as yet, from this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial and resource implications will be considered as part of the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations and any subsequent implementation arrangements

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The information presented to the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee seeks to propose appropriate arrangements, by utilising previous good practice, in order to develop a future policy proposal. It is important that this report also seeks to ensure that there is sufficient opportunity for any future recommendations made by the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to be implemented.