

Mae'r cofnodion hyn yn amodol ar gymeradwyaeth yng nghyfarfod priodol nesaf y Pwyllgor.

These Minutes are subject to approval at the next appropriate meeting of the Committee,

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL PUBLIC
SERVICE DELIVERY, COMMUNITIES & PROSPERITY SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE SITTING AS THE COUNCIL'S DESIGNATED CRIME & DISORDER
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Under Sections 19 & 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006)

Minutes of the meeting held at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Clydach Vale
on Thursday, 25th October 2018 at 5.00pm.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor S. A. Bradwick – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

A. Chapman	W. Treeby
D. Owen-Jones	M. Weaver
M. Fidler-Jones	T. Williams
G. Stacey	M. Diamond
E. George	S. Pickering
G. Hughes	E. Stephens

Other Members:

R. Lewis – Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services

OFFICERS:-

Mr. P. Mee –Director Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Mr. G. Black – Community Safety & Licensing Manager
Mr S. Humphreys- Head of Legal - Planning & Environment

Also in attendance:-

Superintendent Phil Ashby, South Wales Police

12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology of absence was received from County Borough Councillors D. Grehan and W. Owen

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED to note that in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, there were no personal declarations of personal interests made, pertaining to the agenda.

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee held on the 22nd February 2018

15. PRESENTATION ON DIVERT AND WISDOM.

Members received a presentation from the Community Safety and Licensing Manager and Superintendent South Wales Police in respect of the following programmes:

- DIVERT 18-25: and
- WISDOM (Wales Integrated Serious & Dangerous Offender Management)

Members were asked to scrutinise the content of the report, and presentation delivered, and consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth any matters on the current performance of the Divert 18-25 and WISDOM projects.

The presentation began by focusing on the DIVERT project.

Members were advised by the Community Safety and Licensing Manager that the DIVERT project offers eligible young adults (aged 18-25, resident of RCT or Merthyr, first offence/previous caution, low level offence, admission of guilt, no previous referral to DIVERT), a voluntary referral to the scheme at the point of custody. Successful completion of the project leads to the individual receiving an 'Out of Court Disposal' for their crime, rather than a criminal record. If the young adult had been involved with a crime which includes violence, alcohol or drug use, they are also required to attend an additional workshop, which addresses this type of behaviour before they receive their disposal.

Members were advised that the scheme has been successful and that at the end of the 2018 financial year, there had been a 96% non-reoffending rate when monitored over a 12-month period. Members were then provided with a case study to demonstrate how the project works.

In January 2017, after realising that there were a high number of 18-25 year olds entering custody who did not meet the DIVERT criteria, but were still in need of support, the project was expanded to include a spin off scheme called SUPPORT. The project offers a needs assessment and onward referral to appropriate support services for all 18-25 year olds. The aim is to refer these young adults to appropriate support services and thereby reduce the number of risk factors in their lives and in turn, the likelihood of re-offending.

To conclude, Members were provided with information regarding the future of the project.

Members were advised that the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner has decided to consolidate everything into one service that will serve all of South Wales and Gwent. This is currently out for tender. Members were told that, as of the 1st of April 2019, the Local Authority will not be leading on nor will they be eligible to submit a tender to lead on the DIVERT project and that it will instead be managed by a company in the private sector.

Members scrutinised the presentation in detail and put forward their questions.

A Member began by commenting that the DIVERT project appears to be hugely successful and appears to be working well for 18-25 year olds. A number of Members agreed that the project needs to stay with the Local Authority and should not be referred out to the private sector. Members agreed that the Senior Democratic Services Officer would send out a letter to the Commissioner, on behalf of the committee, asking him to reconsider the proposal and asking him to keep the project within the remit of the Local Authority.

A Member then questioned whether any data was available to show the number of people who were re-offending prior to the implementation of the DIVERT Programme. Members were advised that data has only been collected by the department since the implementation of the DIVERT programme

A Member commented on Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and stressed that anti-social behaviour often starts in the 13-14 age group and often ends in minor offences being committed. The Member was advised that the focus is on looking at the background of the young person in order to give them support. The idea is that this will result in a positive impact being made to prevent re-offending. The Chair commented that he has seen a vast improvement in schools in terms of anti-social behaviour.

A Member commented about the night-time economy in the County Borough and asked if alcohol consumption results in an increase in referrals onto the project. Members were advised that many students in Bridgend are referred onto the project due to alcohol related crimes; however this is not the case in RCT. South Wales Police are promoting a responsible drinking campaign and are working with local businesses to get them on board. The Community Safety and Licensing Manager advised that a location breakdown will be sent out to Members.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services agreed that the project appears to be working well and advised the Committee that he would be happy to write a letter to the Police Commissioner asking him to reconsider his proposal and asking him to keep the project within the Local Authority.

Following discussion, Members **RESOLVED:**

- To Acknowledge the report on DIVERT
- To Agree that the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services would send out a letter to the Police Commissioner asking him to keep the project within the Local Authority.

Members were then provided with a verbal update from the South Wales Police Superintendent regarding the WISDOM Housing Project.

To begin, Members were advised that the WISDOM Project is a partnership with Rhondda Cynnon Taf CBC, Trivallis, Gwalia, South Wales Police and the National Probation Service. There are currently 34 individuals in Cwm Taf on this project.

The National Probation Service leads the project. Their key aim is to reduce risk and therefore to reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

The project provides independent and permanent accommodation for people with chronic and complex needs. The purpose is to better protect the public and to optimise collaboration in the day-to-day management of offenders who pose a high risk and threat to the public.

The project will be in place until at least 2020 and the intended benefits of the WISDOM Housing Project are:

- Reduced re-offending by people convicted of serious and organised crime;
- Reduced re-offending by people convicted of domestic abuse;
- Attitudinal changes pre and post intervention to measure positive outcomes;
- Shifts in category/type of re-offending;
- Reduction in seriousness of offence;
- Greater efficiencies realised through better integrated services and reduced duplication;
- Provision of flexible support tailored to individual need.

The aim is that, by 2020, the team will be able to show that these benefits have come to fruition.

To conclude, the Superintendent emphasised that the scheme actively contributes to keeping the communities of Cwm Taf safe and that the project outlines the scale of the work that is being done for both low level and high-risk offenders.

Members were then given the opportunity to scrutinise the report and ask questions.

The Chair began the discussion by commenting that it appears to be a successful project and that he hopes the success continues.

A Member queried how long the young adults are part of the system. Members were advised that this is dependent on the type of offence they commit. A team of professionals will come together and discuss the individuals' case. A decision is then made based on the risk posed by the young person. It may be that they are kept in the system for 2-3 years. If, however, South Wales Police and the National Probation Service decide that the young person is to come out of the system, then they can always be put back into the process at a later date. Members were advised that the process is flexible and can include up to a maximum of 50 young adults. Members were reminded that there is also a forensic psychologist available at all times.

Following consideration, Members **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the progress made with developing the WISDOM Housing Project.

16. PACT REVIEW UPDATE

Members received an update from the Superintendent of South Wales Police in respect of PACT.

To begin, Members were advised that there has been a national review of PACT and that changes will be made to the current model. .

The College of Policing had previously advised South Wales Police that the current system needed a two-way flow of engagement with communities, particularly in light of the principles contained within the Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015.

In February 2018, a survey began in relation to PACT. Members were informed that the survey ends on the 1st of November 2018. To date, there have been 38 respondents. At present, 40% of respondents think that PACT is worthwhile, whilst 48% think it is not worthwhile.

Members were told that South Wales Police have a scheduled meeting in November to discuss changing its approach to PACT. The aim will be to take things back to a problem solving approach and to help people understand why things are happening in their communities. Members were advised that community hubs would be a key part of this change.

The idea is to promote a problem solving approach to crime in the community. The Superintendent emphasised that the PACT process should be about creating an audience for an opportunity to discuss matters that are important in the community. The process needs to be about South Wales Police being more responsive to the community. Members were advised that when the survey ends, the results will be sent out by email.

Members scrutinised the information in detail and put forward their questions.

A Member began by commenting that it had been a year since the last PACT update and nothing had improved. A number of Members stated that Police Officers do not attend PACT meetings; only PCSO's. The Member queried what help can be offered to Councillors to assist them in making PACT meetings more interesting. The Superintendent noted his agreement and stated that a wider engagement strategy needs to be adopted, such as the use of social media to engage residents.

Another Member commented on the lack of Police Officers in PACT meetings. The Member praised the work done by PCSO's and commented that sometimes PCSO's attend PACT meetings even if they are off duty. The Member also emphasised that PCSOs are very friendly and approachable and work well with Councillors. The Chair noted his agreement.

A Member argued that 38 responses to the survey could not be classed as a good response. The Member urged caution and argued that the survey should not hold

much weight. The Superintendent advised Members that the survey is about how the Police engage with the community. The survey analyses the validity of the engagement mechanisms being used and looks at how the Police are getting the message out to the community.

A Member queried whether the survey had been linked to all Councillors. Members were informed that the survey had been sent out to 75 Councillors in RCT and 34 Councillors in Merthyr Tydfil. A quarter of Members have returned the questionnaire.

The Superintendent reminded Members that it is about engagement and in particular, making the process more responsive to the individual. The Chair commented that 12 years ago, PACT meetings were very popular in the community and that meetings could go on for over two hours. However, gradually, over time, the popularity decreased and residents started to get annoyed with the same issues being discussed at every meeting.

A Member noted the difference between PCSO's in different wards. A Member stated that in some wards, PCSO want to come in on their rest days. The Member gave an example of a PACT meeting that is working well. The meetings are held the same time every month and guest speakers are booked in advance. The Member stated that 30-40 residents attend every month and as such, the meetings are a success. The Member queried whether a paper questionnaire was available, as many residents do not use the internet. The Superintendent advised the committee that these issues are being reviewed. The priority is to go back to the community and encourage people to speak at meetings.

Following discussion, Members **RESOLVED**;

- To acknowledge the update on PACT and;
- To receive an update on the PACT survey once the results have been collated.

17. CWM TAF COMMUNITY SAFETY DELIVERY PLAN 2018-21

Members were provided with a progress update on the Cwm Taf Community Safety Delivery Plan 2018-21 by the Community Safety and Licencing Manager.

Members were reminded that it is a three year plan and subject to quarterly monitoring.

The Community Safety and Licensing Manager set out the six specific priorities of the plan:

- Priority A: Reduce the impact of alcohol and drug misuse on our communities
- Priority B: Divert offenders and reduce re-offending
- Priority C: Tackle violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Priority D: Promote safe and confident communities
- Priority E: Protect vulnerable groups from harm and victimisation
- Priority F: Improve our environment by reducing environmental crime

They key priority will be to improve communication and engagement with communities. Members were reminded that each agency has a specific target date.

Members were informed that the plan would be viewed as a success if:

- More people in Cwm Taf feel safe in their community
- Less people in Cwm Taf report substance misuse
- Less people in Cwm Taf are victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence
- Less people in Cwm Taf are victims of anti-social behaviour
- More people in Cwm Taf are prevented from being homeless
- Less people in Cwm Taf are first time entrants to the criminal justice system.

Members were advised that the next update in relation to targets would be the quarter 3 update in February 2019.

Members were then given the opportunity to scrutinise the report in more detail.

The Chair noted his agreement with the plan and the priorities that it sets out.

A Member queried whether any priorities were now in practice since the update in February 2018. The Community Safety and Licencing Manager advised that some actions are now in practice and working towards the priorities. Members were advised that target details are not yet available, however they will be ready for the quarter 3 update in February 2019.

Following consideration, Members **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the progress made with developing the Cwm Taf Community Safety Delivery Plan 2018-21.

The meeting closed at 6:05pm

S.A.Bradwick
Chair

