

No.

HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 15th September, 2020.

The Committee Agenda is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor Mrs. J.C. Charles (Chairman), Ms. J. Aviet, O. Griffiths, S.J. Griffiths T.H. Jarvie, Mrs. R. Nugent-Finn J.W. Thomas and N.C. Thomas.

Also Present: Councillors B.T. Gray and N. Moore.

13 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chairman read the following statement:

“May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.”¹

14 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN -

RESOLVED - T H A T Councillor N.C. Thomas be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

15 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 11th February, 2020 be approved as a correct record.

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

17 PRESENTATION - WORKING TOWARDS RECOVERY – SEPTEMBER 2020 –

The Director of Social Services, with support from the relevant Heads of Service, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee which set out the vital work already undertaken by the Social Services Directorate in response to the Covid-19 national pandemic and the transitional corporate approach to recovery going forward.

¹ Due to technical difficulties the recording of this meeting was not available to upload for future viewing after the meeting.

Officers apprised the committee on key points for their service as follows:

Children and Young People Services

- Family Risk Management Plan conducted to assess risk and vulnerability;
- Family support arrangements continue - face to face / virtual;
- Regular management contact to support discussion and decision making;
- Managing placement demand to reduce the movement of children as much as possible;
- Vulnerable children tactical group established and in a better position to provide food and financial support if further lockdowns take place;
- Financial support to care leavers;
- Payments to foster carers;
- Office return for the duty function team to enhance partnership working;
- Virtual Court hearings;
- Bookable office space;
- Meeting room assessments conducted;
- Family contact arrangements had been restricted and now conducted remotely.

Adult Services

- Care Management (Social work and Occupational therapy) & contingency planning to ensure a consistent approach across the service and meet individual care needs in case of a second lockdown;
- Support to the Crisis Support Team
- Telecare installations
- Closure of Day Service & alternative provision just before lockdown with a switch to outreach services. Discussions under way on how to re-establish the service;
- Implementation of regular Discharge guidance;
- Changes to service models (VCRS and IDS) and practice (agile working, virtual case management) made on a temporary basis;
- Suspension of respite care (unless emergency);
- Efficient moving of the Vale Community Resource Service (VCRS) to Ty Jenner (creating bed space at Barry Hospital);
- Liaison with third sector continued;
- Managing integrated services with health colleagues continued.

Resource Management and Safeguarding

- Supporting Care homes & Domiciliary care providers with weekly meetings;
- Outbreak Management was a difficult process for all;
- PPE, supply, distribution and guidance with a Council own equipment store being established in response;
- Testing continues to be an evolving situation and difficult to make comparisons;
- Residential Care has been vital and a high-risk working environment;
- Suspension of DOLS assessments;
- Commissioning & Providing Isolation beds;

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- On the topic of Adults Safeguarding, there had been an unfortunate increase in scams targeting elderly individuals;
- Care Capacity Modelling;
- Carers.

Leisure Services

- Leisure Centres – Initial furlough period followed by reopening strategy.
- Community Centres – Reopening on a needs basis with strong emphasis on health and well-being activities. Support being provided to Voluntary Management Committees.
- Sport and Play – Summer schemes operated for vulnerable groups. Other work continuing with emphasis on planning, developing partnerships, providing support to clubs and performance data.
- Performance Team – provided support to waste, parks and other services. Have also taken opportunities to reevaluate process in terms of effectiveness and efficiency.
- General – move towards flexible working arrangements and provided assistance/ personnel to other services.
- Parks – Service continued throughout the pandemic with an obvious reduction in visitor numbers.

The Director commended his entire directorate for its efficient and early response to the challenging pandemic and for the continued pro-active contact with service users allowing services and staff to adapt in both a fast paced and new environment.

The Chairman echoed the Director's commendation and shared the Committee's appreciation and thanks for the vast effort made by all staff and volunteers to support vital services during a very difficult time.

Following the presentation and subsequent Committee questions, Officers advised members of the following:

- With regards to children and young people, the Service had seen an increase in referrals being made and this was anticipated to rise further following children returning to school. Lockdown had been very challenging for some families and it was recognised as a period where requests for support and safeguarding had increased. In response to a question, the demand was confirmed as being across all age groups.
- The number of children looked after by the Local Authority had continued to rise during the pandemic and the processes for transitioning children out of the Authority's care had been compromised due to the national lockdown. Contact to support foster carers had continued via remote and risk assessed face to face methods and fostered children returning to school had been an additional support for their carers. The Fostering Forum had also been re-established with the introduction of remote meetings.
- The Directorate was expecting a financial overspend at the end of the financial year however this was not expected to go above what was the normal amount of over-spend. There were concerns for care home providers as many were experiencing staffing vacancies that were proving difficult to fill

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and these were essential roles, even more so over the next couple of years in response to Covid-19.

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the Working Towards Recovery presentation for the Social Services Directorate be noted.

18 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES 2019-2020 – CHALLENGE VERSION (DSS) –

The Director of Social Services presented the report, the purpose of which was to ensure that Elected Members received a copy of the Director's Annual Report as part of the challenge process to agree the future priorities for the service.

The challenge version of the Director's report (attached at Appendix 1) allowed Members and stakeholders an opportunity to comment and inform a future final draft which would be considered by Cabinet. Attached at Appendix 2 to the report was the relevant Challenge Feedback Form.

The report before members had been prepared during the Covid-19 pandemic. While this was reflected within the report it was important to note that there had been no change to the expectation that a report be completed. Unfortunately, for the current year it had not been possible, due to pressures as a result of the pandemic, to review the priority setting with service users and carers.

A Member referred to page 10 of the Annual Report and in particular the reference to the opportunities provided by the Woodlands Day Service helping service users to learn new skills and questioned what was meant by the term new. In response, the Head of Adult Services advised that the varied activities were designed to promote the development of life skills to encourage independent living hence a more hands on approach for service users. Therefore, service users may engage with activities that were new to them and develop new independence skills in the process. A second Member then added that the Committee had previously been invited to attend some of the other council run day service centres which highlighted that the activities offered were designed to meet service user knowledge gaps and what the users themselves had requested to learn such as digital literacy.

The Vice-Chairman then asked after the outcomes for the four Children and Young People Service Ombudsman cases as set out on page 12 of the report. The Director advised that it would be necessary for him to gather further information to give a complete response and agreed to share the information with all the Committee Members via the Democratic Services Officer following the meeting.

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the content of the report be noted.

(2) T H A T the improvement priorities for Social Services as set out in the Director's Annual Report for 2019-2020 – Challenge Version be noted.

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Reason for recommendations

(1&2) To provide Elected Members with an opportunity to contribute to the challenge process for the Director's Annual Report 2019-2020 via the Scrutiny Committee providing consistent oversight and monitoring of Social Services.

19 ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN MONITORING REPORT: QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE 2020/21 (DSS) –

The Director of Social Services presented the report, the purpose of which was to present quarter 1 performance results for the period 1st April, 2020 to 30th June, 2020 in delivering the Council's Annual Delivery Plan commitments as aligned to its Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.

Despite the significant challenges of responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic, which was at its height during the first quarter period, positive progress had been made in delivering the in-year commitments in relation to the Annual Delivery Plan. The progress had contributed to an overall AMBER status for the Plan at quarter 1 (Q1).

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the performance results and progress towards achieving the Annual Delivery Plan 2020/21 commitments as aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives within the remit of the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

(2) T H A T the remedial actions to be taken to address areas of underperformance and to tackle the key challenges identified within the remit of the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee be noted.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To ensure the Council clearly demonstrates the progress being made towards achieving its commitments in the Annual Delivery Plan 2020/21 aimed at making a positive difference to the lives of Vale of Glamorgan citizens.

(2) To ensure the Council is effectively assessing its performance in line with the requirement to secure continuous improvement outlined in the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 and reflecting the requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that it maximises its contribution to achieving the well-being goals for Wales.

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20 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL TO 31ST JULY 2020 (DSS) -

The Operational Manager for Accountancy presented the report, the purpose of which was to advise Members of the progress relating to revenue and capital expenditure for the period 1st April to 31st July, 2020.

The revenue position for 2020/21 was challenging with additional pressure for the service both operationally and financially as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. This had impacted both as a result of incurring additional expenditure but also from a loss of income. Funding had been provided by Welsh Government to cover some of the issues.

Following the Officer's presentation, the Cabinet Member for Social Care was pleased to confirm that the authority had approved a 10% pay rise to members of staff helping to deliver key services and this was separate to the taxable £500 Welsh Government scheme. Care providers who had received emergency financial support from the Council at the start of the pandemic were now refunding any funds not used. It had been a complex financial situation and he wished to pass on his sincere thanks to all members of staff involved.

In response to subsequent member questions, the Operational Manager for Accountancy advised the following:

- With regards to Section 106 funding under Capital Monitoring in relation to parks and leisure projects, which was often used alongside funds from the Strong Communities Grant Fund, the Officer would provide a further breakdown to all Committee Members via the Democratic Services Officer following the meeting;
- Reserves were available for Social Services however once spent the funds would be gone. At the end of the last financial year, the Council was able to transfer funds into a general fund that could be utilised elsewhere however, it was too early to say what the situation would be, come the end of the current financial year.

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the position with regard to the 2020/21 revenue and capital budgets be noted.

Reason for recommendation

That Members are aware of the projected revenue outturn for 2020/21.

21 4TH QUARTER SCRUTINY DECISION TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATED WORK PROGRAMME SCHEDULE 2020/21 (MD) –

The Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer presented the report, the purpose of which was to report progress on the Scrutiny recommendations for 2019/20 as would

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have been received in May 2020 and to confirm the Committee's Work Programme for 2020/21.

The report advised Members of progress in relation to the Scrutiny Committee's previous recommendations and a suggested Work Programme Schedule for 2020/21:

- 4th Quarter January to March 2020 (Appendix A);
- 2nd Quarter July to September 2019 (Appendix B);
- 1st Quarter April to June 2019 (Appendix C);
- Suggested Work Programme Schedule for 2020/21 (Appendix D); and
- Emergency Power Decisions relating to the remit of the Committee (Appendix E).

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the status of the actions listed as completed in Appendices A and B to the report be agreed.

(2) T H A T the status of the actions listed as ongoing in Appendices A, B and C be noted.

(3) T H A T the suggested Work Programme Schedule attached at Appendix D be approved and uploaded to the Council's website subject to the following amendments:

- (i) The presentation originally scheduled for April 2020 from Innovate Trust be scheduled for the January 2021 Committee meeting to coincide with the next update report presented to the Committee on Telecare Services;
- (ii) The Annual Social Services Representations and Complaints Report 2019/20 be slipped from the October 2020 meeting to the November 2020 meeting as per the Director's request.

(4) T H A T in context to the Committee's Forward Work Programme planning, the Emergency Power Decisions taken during the national lockdown as set out at Appendix E be noted.

Reasons for recommendations

(1&2) To maintain effective tracking of the Committee's recommendations.

(3&4) For information.