

No.

HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 6th July 2021.

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

The Meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor S.J. Griffiths (Chairman); Councillor N. Thomas (Vice-Chairman); Councillors Ms. J. Aviet, Mrs. J.E. Charles, O. Griffiths, Mrs. N. Nugent-Finn, and J.W. Thomas.

Also present: Councillors N. Moore (Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources), L. Burnett (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration); B.T. Gray (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health) and K.F. McCaffer (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Arts and Culture).

172 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 live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.”

173 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor T.H. Jarvie.

174 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 8th June, 2021 be approved as a correct record.

175 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations of interest were received.

176 ANNUAL CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING REPORT: 2020/21 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 7th June, 2021 was presented by the Head of Resource Management and Safeguarding which set out the Council’s corporate responsibility to ensure that there were effective arrangements in place for safeguarding children and adults who required specific Council services. The

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Annual Report 2020/21 provided an overview of the Corporate Safeguarding activities taking place across the Local Authority.

Following the Officer's presentation and subsequent questions from the Committee, Social Services Officers advised that:

- The level of technical support provided to families to take part in virtual Child Protection Conferences was assessed on a case-by-case basis and provided when required. The process of moving from face-to-face to virtual conferences due to social restrictions put in place as a result of the national pandemic had been a very different engagement process but one that had continued to improve the experience for families, before, during and following a conference. Social Workers continued to manage the expectations of the family prior to a conference taking place.
- The Chairperson role during a Child Protection Conference continued to be independent to ensure that the voice of the relevant child(ren) was heard, the language used was appropriate to all attendees and all parties understood the importance of the process.
- The levels of engagement for Child Protection Conferences had improved since the move to virtual platforms as feedback suggested that parents found the conferences more convenient, easier to attend, and comfortable due to them be able to join from their own homes. The Council would continue to assess the success of virtual Child Protection Conferences going forward.
- With regards to the increasing number of children being recorded as at risk of abuse, neglect, or harm under one, or more of the five risk categories, instances of emotional abuse and neglect were becoming more apparent however it was difficult to identify any particular patterns due to figures fluctuating in line with the overall number of Looked After Children. A lot of cross-service working was taking place to support children and their families.
- The figures set out in the Annual Corporate Safeguarding report in relation to the number of referrals made to the Disclosure & Barring Service for concerns/allegations under the safeguarding against practitioners procedure related to any persons undertaking a role in a position of trust and not just social workers. The thorough investigation process was confidential and managed by a small team of individuals and third-party agencies who ensured that the concerns of the vulnerable individual were listened to.
- It was acknowledged that the investigative process was a stressful time for accused individuals and unfortunately, due to a lack of evidence to reach either a substantiated or unfounded conclusion, 51 cases remained unsubstantiated.

The Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report, the resolutions of Cabinet and having regard to the discussions at the meeting, subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the work that has been undertaken to improve corporate

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arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children and adults, as set out in the report, be noted.

(2) T H A T Committee continues to receive a six-monthly reference from Cabinet on work being carried out to improve Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and the effectiveness of relevant policies.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) To ensure that Committee is aware of recent developments in corporate arrangements for safeguarding and has oversight of the key areas of corporate working.

177 LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT EXTENSION (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet of 21st June, 2021 was presented.

The Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report, the resolutions of Cabinet and having regard to the discussions at the meeting, subsequently

RECOMMENDED – T H A T both the Cabinet reference and report be noted with it being accepted that the matter be considered further, alongside the linked Part II report, later on the Agenda.

Reason for recommendation

To apprise Committee on the background to the proposals, as considered by Cabinet to extend the Leisure Management Contract and having regard to the confidential nature of the matter.

178 FAMILIES FIRST REPORT 2020-21 (DSS) –

The purpose of the report was to appraise Members of progress and activity within the Welsh Government grant allocated to support the delivery of the Families First Plan 2020/21 in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Prevention and Partnerships Manager apprised Members on seven distinct projects under the Families First Plan during 2020-21:

1. FACT – delivered by Social Services.
2. Families First Advice Line (FFAL) delivered by Social Services.
3. Disability Focus – internally delivered and externally commissioned.
4. Parenting – internally delivered Social Services.
5. Youth Wellbeing – internally delivered by Education.
6. Young Carers – externally commissioned; and
7. Central co-ordination – internally delivered by Education.

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Following the Officer's presentation and subsequent questions from the Committee, Social Services Officers advised that:

- 78 families completed a Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) with support from the Families Achieving Change Together (FACT) support workers however, the numbers of referrals aimed towards the service was much higher.
- Referrals from Children's Services (where these had not met the threshold for statutory intervention or require a 'step down' service), had remained high, with many cases remaining open between 8-12 months due to the complex needs of the family.
- Referrals could only be made to the FACT service via the Families First Advice Line (FFAL) this could be done by a professional or direct from the family. This ensured that the service was able to offer adequate advice, assistance and information to support the family as quickly and accurately as possible. This could include signposting to more appropriate services.
- The Families First Management Board continued to explore ways to increase capacity in all Families First Services.
- The Families First Advice Line was highlighted as being a distinct service and outside the Council's Contact 1 Vale (C1V) Call Centre.

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the content of the 2020/21 Families First Report and examples of positive work undertaken to support children, young people and families in the Vale of Glamorgan be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting relating to the positive progress made on the development of the Families First Service.

179 THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN AND CARDIFF INTEGRATED FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21 (DSS) –

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an opportunity to consider and scrutinise the 2020-21 Annual Report for the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) before it was submitted to the Welsh Government as required. Attached at Appendix 1, the report provided information on the effectiveness of the service provision and highlighted any challenges which impacted upon the successful delivery of the service including the significant effect as a result of the national pandemic.

The Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) was a partnership between the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Cardiff Council and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board who had a joint statutory responsibility for ensuring the delivery of an (IFSS) in their region. It was noted throughout the report the term IFST referred specifically to the work of the Team of practitioners, rather than the wider Service, referred to as IFSS, which included other elements funded through the Substance Misuse Area Planning Board.

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Following the Officer's presentation and subsequent questions from the Committee, Social Services Officers advised that:

- For families requiring support around instances of substance misuse, the referral pathway was via the Community Addiction Unit (CAU) operated by the University of Wales Health Board.
- Referrals to the IFSS was a fluid process and the number was largely impacted by the resources available to the team. An increase in the number of 'no space' referrals for the Vale of Glamorgan was in part related to the national pandemic. A 'No space' referral was a referral that had been received and was deemed to be appropriate but, because all staff were already working with families, it had to be closed. Information was collated on these families for IFST to inform development, identify gaps in capacity and advise of referral spaces becoming available.
- Adequate funds would need to be found to increase capacity within the IFSS which was very difficult in the current financial climate.
- From the point of view of the IFSS report, the Vale of Glamorgan had 23 'no space' referrals however, the report did not provide information on the support that the 23 families were also receiving from other Council services.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the 2020-21 Integrated Family Support Team Annual Report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Committee continues to receive annual reports, each July, on the work of the Integrated Family Support Team.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) To allow Members to scrutinise the work of the Integrated Family Support Service in relation to Welsh Government guidance.

180 CLOSURE OF ACCOUNTS 2020/21 (DSS) –

The purpose of the report was to inform Committee that the accounts were complete and also of the provisional financial position for the Committee for the 2020/21 financial year.

The Operational Manager for Accountancy advised that:

- The year-end revenue position was an adverse variance of £113k after a net transfer to reserves of £530k.
- A revenue savings target of £100k was set for 2020/21 which was achieved.
- There was capital expenditure during the year of £2.595m.

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RECOMMENDED – T H A T the financial measures taken and proposed for the 2020/21 financial year, as set out in the report, be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

181 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL TO 31ST MAY 2021 (DSS) –

The Operational Manager for Accountancy presented the report, the purpose of which was to advise Committee of the progress relating to revenue and capital expenditure for the period 1st April to 31st May, 2021.

The revenue position for 2021/22 would be challenging with the continuing pressure for the service both operationally and financially as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. This would impact 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.

A savings target for the year had been set at £79k.

The currently approved capital budget had been set at £4.235m.

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the position with regard to the 2021/22 revenue and capital budgets for the period 1st April to 31st May 2021 be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting regarding the projected outturn for 2021/22.

182 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES 2020-2021 – CHALLENGE VERSION (DSS) –

The Director of Social Services presented his report, the purpose of which was to ensure Elected Members contributed to the challenge process and agreed the future priorities for the service.

The challenge version of the Director's report allowed members and stakeholders an opportunity to comment and inform a future final draft which would be considered by Cabinet.

The Committee welcomed the use of SWAY to present a more reader friendly report and passed their sincere thanks and admiration to all Social Services Staff for their continued hard work in what was and will continue to be a difficult time.

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RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the content of the 2020-21 Director's Annual – Challenge Version (SWAY) report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the 2021/22 improvement priorities for the Social Services Directorate, as set out in the Challenge Version Report, be endorsed.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) To provide Elected Members with an opportunity to contribute to the challenge process for the Director's Annual Report 2020-2021.

183 ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN MONITORING REPORT: QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE 2020/21 (DSS) –

The purpose of the report was to present quarter 4 performance results for the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 in delivering the Annual Delivery Plan commitments as aligned to the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.

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 Wellbeing 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.
- (3) T H A T the progress being made through the Council's recovery strategy in response to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic 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 wellbeing goals for Wales.
- (3) To ensure Members maintain an oversight of the recovery issues impacting on the work of the Council and their respective Scrutiny Committees.

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184 1ST QUARTER SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION TRACKING 2021/22
AND UPDATED COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME SCHEDULE
2021/22 (MD) –

The purpose of the report was to report progress on Scrutiny recommendations and to consider the updated Forward Work Programme together with any slippage for 2021/22.

The Chairman advised that the Committee's recommendation tracking was up to date with all points labelled as completed and that all reports expected during Quarter 1 had been received and therefore no slippage to report.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the status of the actions listed in Appendix A to the report be agreed.
- (2) T H A T the updated Committee Forward Work Programme Schedule attached at Appendix B to the report be approved and uploaded to the Council's website.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To maintain effective tracking of the Committee's recommendations.
- (2) For consideration and information.

185 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC –

RESOLVED – T H A T under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 4 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act, the relevant paragraphs of the Schedule being referred to in brackets after the minute heading.

186 LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT EXTENSION (REF) (EXEMPT
INFORMATION – PARAGRAPHS 12 AND 14) –

The reference from Cabinet of 21st June, 2021 was presented by the Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance.

The Cabinet report and subsequent reference advised that the current Leisure Management Contract had commenced on 1st August, 2012 for an initial period of 10 years but with the ability to extend by a further 5 years if both parties were agreeable.

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The 5-year extension had been agreed in principle when the Covid-19 pandemic struck, causing considerable disruption to the Leisure Centres, and changing both the delivery methodology and the financial circumstances of the original contract. Further discussions had since taken place as the time remaining on the original contract was now limited and arrangements needed to be put in place to protect the future of the service. Financial modelling of different options available to the Council had been undertaken and advice had been sought from the consultants who originally advised the Council on the contract in 2012. This advice had demonstrated that even with the changes in financial circumstances, the option of extending the contract was by far the best option for the Council and that a longer extension than 5 years was the optimum commercial approach.

It was proposed to extend the contract by a period of 7 years and 5 months that allowed both the Council and the Contractor to compensate for the time lost due to the pandemic. Leases of the Leisure Centre facilities were granted to the Contractor for a period of 15 years from 1st August, 2012. It would be necessary to enter into reversionary leases of the Leisure Centre facilities to cover the additional 2 years 5 months of the contract. Due to the commercial sensitivity of the financial information involved, this matter was considered confidentially under Part II.

The Scrutiny Committee, having considered the report, the resolutions of Cabinet and having regard to the discussions at the meeting, subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the current position with regard to the negotiations of the Leisure Centre contract extension, as referred by Cabinet on 21st June 2021, be noted.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet Resolutions (2), (3), (4) and (6), of the 21st June meeting as referred, be endorsed.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To provide Committee with the background information for the proposals.
- (2) For Committee to consider the proposed contract extension prior to a final Cabinet decision.