

No.

## **VOLUNTARY SECTOR JOINT LIAISON COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2019.

Present: Councillor Ms. R.M. Birch (Chairman); Councillor Mrs. J.M. Norman (Vice-Chairman); Councillors L. Burnett, Mrs. C.A. Cave, Ms. A.M. Collins, R. Crowley, K.F. McCaffer and L.O. Rowlands.

Representatives of the Voluntary Sector: Ms. H. Smith (Barnados), Ms. L. Newton (Cardiff and the Vale Action for Mental Health) and Ms. R. Connor (Glamorgan Voluntary Services).

130 MINUTES -

AGREED - T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

131 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -

No declarations were received.

132 FUNDING OF THIRD SECTOR SERVICES - WALES AUDIT OFFICE REPORT (MD) -

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation presented the report to provide the Committee with a further opportunity to consider the Wales Audit Office (WAO) report relating to Local Authority funding of Third Sector services and the proposed approach for progressing the national recommendations.

In January 2017, the WAO published a national report on the funding of Third Sector services and the Officer advised that the Council reviewed all national reports published by the WAO and, where applicable, progressed the recommendations contained within the reports.

The Officer highlighted that the WAO report could be found at Appendix A to the report which concluded that, nationally, Welsh Local Authorities were “not always making the best use of the Third Sector nor doing enough to ensure they are securing value for money.” A checklist to assist in identifying areas of development had also been provided by the WAO within their report to Local Authorities.

In January 2019, the Committee considered the strategic and financial elements of the checklist and the report now put before Committee provided Members with an opportunity to review the third element relating to performance management arrangements (Appendix C) and were asked to consider whether there were any activities required to be progressed as a result of the performance management arrangements element of the checklist which could be incorporated into the work

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plan associated with the Compact between the Third Sector and the Council to enable monitoring of progress.

Taking into account the Chairman's point that many of the Members were new to the Committee, the Officer also took the opportunity to advise that the work undertaken by the WAO was done so in all 22 Welsh Local Authorities and therefore the report should be considered as a national study. It was also important to note that the Vale of Glamorgan Council was already in a positive position with regards to its working relationships with the Third Sector and welcomed the opportunity to utilise the WAO checklist as a self-assessment tool.

The Officer then drew the Committee's attention to the checklist (Appendix B, Page 1) and in particular to the 'Corporate Approach' item which stated "The Local Authority has designated a corporate lead for the Third Sector who is responsible for overseeing and co-ordinating the totality of the Local Authority's Third Sector funding" and advised that although the Council did not adopt an approach whereby one officer was responsible for overseeing and coordinating the totality of Third Sector funding, the Head of Performance and Development was the designated corporate lead for Third Sector funding and the work of Reshaping Services coordinated the overall funding agenda. It was also recognised that the Council needed to increase focus within individual Council departments to enhance working relationships with Third Sector organisations and that a significant amount of work was already underway with the Strong Communities Grant fund.

In referring to Appendix C, the Officer highlighted three points under the headings Information Collection, Performance Review and Risk Management & Internal Audit which were all labelled as 'under development' and advised that the Council was in a strong position with regards to the points however, there was room for improvement with regards to staff training and record keeping.

In conclusion, the Officer kindly asked that if any Members of the Committee had suggestions on collaborative working going forward that the request be passed on to himself as the Head of Policy and Business Transformation so that relevant tasks may be added into the Compact Work Plan.

A Member then wished to clarify if the Officer's request regarding points of collaborative working and partnership working generally with the Third Sector also referred to possible overlaps in service. In response, the Officer advised that as part of the Council's consideration towards finances then any overlap of services would be easily highlighted and actioned upon in order to maintain efficiency.

An historical Member of the Committee then referred to a previously raised recommendation of the Committee that 'the Voluntary Sector consider any follow up actions associated with the working areas of the checklist, in particular the section relating to partnership arrangements, and that the Voluntary Sector input be included in the Work Plan associated with the Compact between the Voluntary Sector and Council' and queried whether the recommendation had been actioned upon to date. In response, both the Representative for Glamorgan Voluntary Services and the Head of Policy and Business Transformation advised that there had been no progress made on the particular recommendation to date and apologised for the fact.

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However, the Officer reassured Members that a meeting would be arranged in the future.

At this point in proceedings, the Representative from Glamorgan Voluntary Services wished to add that the report from the WAO had been a useful tool for the Third Sector to scrutinise mechanisms in place within the Vale of Glamorgan Council and therefore identify areas for improvement. However, there could be a misconception over the the overlap of services available in the Third Sector and therefore there was a significant amount of work for both the Council and Third Sector organisations to complete, but it was important that there was a joint vision to move things forward. On a final point, the Representative wished to congratulate the Council for progress made with the Third Sector in comparison to other Local Authorities.

The Vice-Chairman then wished to enquire whether other Local Authorities and Third Sector organisations share points of good practice, to which, the Representative for Glamorgan Voluntary Services advised that that was the case and that it would be useful for Representatives from the Voluntary Sector to share points of good practice with the Head of Policy and Business Transformation so that the points be adopted within the Vale of Glamorgan if not already in place.

AGREED -

- (1) T H A T the content of the report and relevant appendices be noted.
- (2) T H A T the initial draft of the final element of the checklist relating to the performance management arrangements of Third Sector funding provided by the Council be endorsed.
- (3) T H A T follow up actions associated with the performance management arrangements of the checklist be included in the Voluntary Services and Vale of Glamorgan Council Compact Work Plan.

#### Reasons for decisions

- (1) To provide the Committee with an opportunity to consider the WAO report on the funding of Third Sector services.
- (2) To ensure Committee have been afforded the opportunity to consider the draft checklist response for the final element of the checklist.
- (3) To enable any appropriate activity to be progressed and monitored.

#### 133 COMPACT ANNUAL WORK PLAN UPDATE (MD) -

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation presented the report to provide the Committee with an update on the Work Plan accompanying the Voluntary Sector Compact and to seek the views of the Committee on the content for the 2019/20 Work Plan.

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In February 2017, the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee considered and endorsed a revised Compact between the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Voluntary Sector. The Officer advised that the aim of the Compact was to provide a local framework within which the Voluntary Sector and the Council could work together in ways which were mutually beneficial; enabling each to contribute fully and effectively to delivering wellbeing for communities within the Vale of Glamorgan.

A copy of the Compact could be found at Appendix A to the report and was accompanied by an Annual Work Plan which contained a series of actions that, when progressed, would enable the objectives of the Compact to be delivered and would drive the Committee's future agendas. The progress being made against the actions contained in the Annual Work Plan could be found in Appendix B to the report.

To support new members of the Committee, the Officer advised that the Compact was structured around four themes which were:

- Communication, Consultation and Participation;
- Partnership Working;
- Funding and Resources; and
- Volunteering.

He then went on to highlight the close correlation between the earlier report on the agenda, regarding the Wales Audit Office Report Checklist, and confirmed that action points identified within the Checklist would subsequently be added to the Compact Annual Work Plan going forward. However, there were several items within the current version of the Compact Work Plan which were now considered as business as usual and therefore it was timely to assess its content.

The Officer added that the fourth theme of the document (Volunteering) gave the impression that less progress had been made due to its content size however, this was not necessarily the case. Therefore it was suggested that focus be directed towards theme four going forward.

In light of the WAO Checklist Report and the section regarding Partnership Working, a Member enquired whether a Third Sector Champion role could be established and extended to all Elected Members of the Council which would in turn continue to support the delivery of the Compact Work Plan.

A Member then wished to raise the following points:

- With regards to enabling the Third Sector to engage in tendering processes, were the pieces of work of a suitable scale for Third Sector organisations to bid for; and
- With regards to the Strong Communities Grant Fund, funding aggregated was not an equal proportion of funds across the Vale and therefore if future funding events were taking place would the Glamorgan Voluntary Services offer support to hold events within the more rural areas of the Vale.

No.

In response to the Member's first point, the Representative for Glamorgan Voluntary Services advised that there were some large contracts available for bidding within the Vale of Glamorgan, however, there were also smaller bids available that were more appropriate for smaller organisations and bids were being made on a regular basis. The Third Sector was not always engaged with the Sell2Wales process, however, engagement levels were generally better within the Local Authority setting than the health sector. There was still a lot to learn regarding the tendering process and it was important that the way in which tenders were scored was assessed to make them more accessible.

Picking up on the Member's secondary point, the same Representative advised that the smaller organisations were less likely to apply for funding. However, Glamorgan Voluntary Services did offer one to one support and facilitated funding surgeries for organisations who had an idea and needed to work out if the idea was feasible and would qualify for funding.

In response, the Member stated that it would be good to build in an appraisal process for the dispersal of Strong Community Grant Funds.

In conclusion, the Representative for Glamorgan Voluntary Services added that the Strong Community Grant Fund consisted of Section 106 monies and therefore funds were ringfenced which was a consideration the Strong Communities Grant Fund Panel had to keep in mind when considering applications.

AGREED -

- (1) T H A T the content of the report and the updates to the Annual Compact Work Plan be endorsed.
- (2) T H A T the Committee continues to monitor progress against the actions contained in the Compact Work Plan, with particular focus given to theme four of the Compact, and advise the Head of Policy and Business Transformation of any additional actions required to progress the objectives of the Compact.

#### Reasons for decisions

- (1) To provide the Committee with an update on the work underway in relation to the Voluntary Sector Compact.
- (2) To ensure the appropriate activity is undertaken to progress the themes contained in the Compact.

#### 134 DEVELOPMENT OF THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2020 - 25 (MD) -

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation presented the report to advise the Committee of the timetable and approach being taken to develop a new Corporate Plan for the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

No.

The Officer began by advising that the Council would be developing its new Corporate Plan for publication in April 2020 and the report before Members set out the engagement undertaken to date, the timetable for developing and publishing the plan and the approach being taken.

The Plan would set out the Council's new Wellbeing Objectives which were a requirement under the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act that would frame how the Council would contribute to the national Wellbeing Goals and deliver its vision for Strong Communities with a Bright Future and build on the work undertaken in the Corporate Plan 2016-20 to deliver the same vision.

The Council had already undertaken a range of engagement activities, discussions with senior managers and Cabinet Members and it had been agreed that the Council should develop a new set of Wellbeing Objectives. It was also proposed that a more streamlined, strategic five-year Plan should be produced which would be supported in-year by an Annual Delivery Plan. The Officer added that the approach to the new Corporate Plan would need to take account of the diverse needs of the population including people of different ages, rural and urban communities, business and the work of key partners such as Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board, the police, the Third Sector and Town and Community Councils.

Utilising all the different evidence gathered from data, discussions and surveys, work had been undertaken to map out potential content of the new Plan. The work recognised that the new Plan could be framed around the set of new Objectives with a more integrated approach taken to how each objective contributed to the achievement of the four Wellbeing Outcomes. The Officer advised that a set of seven draft Objectives had been developed and were provided to Committee as below (along with indicative descriptions of potential emphasis of activity within each) with the aim that the seven themes would align to new Outcomes that would make the Council's Corporate Plan more flexible and intertwined to better reflect the needs and understandings of the general public.

<b>Draft Objectives</b>	<b>Descriptions of Potential Emphasis</b>
Shaping a Council fit for the future.	Transformation, OD, communications, equalities, sustainability.
Being part of a proud community.	Community leadership, engagement, volunteering, diversity.
Supporting and caring for those in need.	Adult and children's social care, deprivation.
Encouraging good health and well-being.	Being active, obesity, parks, events, loneliness, active travel.
Respecting and valuing our environment.	Climate change, waste management.
Looking/Planning for the future.	Planning, housing and transport infrastructure, economic development.
Providing opportunities for all.	Education and employment.

No.

It was intended that consultation on the draft Plan would be undertaken in October and November 2019 allowing for changes to be made and the revised Plan to be considered by the Council's Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee prior to the Plan being approved by Council in February 2020.

The consultation for the autumn was currently being planned and would include a range of methods for example, stakeholder meetings, online surveys and attendance at meetings at various groups and forums to engage on the Council's priorities for the coming years.

In conclusion, the Officer advised that it was recommended that the Committee considered how the Council could approach consultation with the Third Sector on the draft Plan in the autumn of 2019 and how the organisations may be able to assist in wider consultation activities with the public and other interested parties in order to inform the developments of the Council consultation plan to ensure that the Third Sector and other stakeholders were actively involved in the development of the new Corporate Plan.

A Member thanked the Officer for his presentation of the report and enquired after the public's opinion of the revision of the Council's Corporate Plan. In response, the Officer advised that by assessing the results of a survey undertaken with the general public then the majority response was that the Corporate Plan should remain central to the work of the Council. However, Officers were mindful of the fact that the results were directly tailored to the form of question asked. However, amongst smaller conversations with the general public the general opinion seemed to suggest that the general public wished to have more practical targets set for the Local Authority, in advance, so that the general public were able to hold the Local Authority to account if objectives had slipped.

At this point in the meeting, the Representative for Glamorgan Voluntary Services advised that a Corporate Plan such as the Vale of Glamorgan's was a very difficult task to deliver by just Council officers and therefore it was imperative that partners were also engaged and in particular that discussions were had with Third Sector parties to talk through the aims and objectives of the Plan and this would be an extremely useful exercise. The Representative also wished to highlight that despite volunteering being labelled under the theme of 'being part of a proud community' volunteering ran through all of the seven objectives and therefore should be a key theme throughout the whole of the new Corporate Plan.

In response, the Head of Policy and Business Transformation highlighted that the Representative for Glamorgan Voluntary Services point was a perfect example of the seven objectives crossing over in delivering the Council's work. As well as recognising the importance and flexibility of the objectives, the Council also needed to ascertain how it practically achieved its goals and delivered outcomes.

The Chairman thanked all parties for their contribution and requested that all Members of the Committee please pass on any ideas or suggestions to the Head of Policy and Business Transformation going forward.

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AGREED -

(1) T H A T the content of the report and the timetable for the development of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's new Corporate Plan be noted.

(2) T H A T consultation take place between the Third Sector and the Council to support the Council's approach of the draft Plan, in autumn 2019, to establish how the Third Sector may be able to assist in wider consultation activities with the public and other interested parties.

Reasons for decisions

(1) To inform the Committee of the work being undertaken by the Council to develop a new Corporate Plan and of the timetable for consultation and publication.

(2) To inform the development of the Council's consultation plan to ensure the Third Sector and other stakeholders are actively involved in the development of the new Corporate Plan.