

No.

HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 13th October, 2020.

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

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

Also Present: Councillors B.T. Gray (Cabinet Member) and L.O. Rowlands.

114 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Democratic Services Officer 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.”

115 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor Mrs. R. Nugent-Finn.

116 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 15th September, 2020 be approved as a correct record.

117 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

118 CORONAVIRUS RECOVERY STRATEGY (REF) –

The Director of Social Services, with support from relevant Heads of Service, presented the reference from Cabinet which set out the Council’s management of the pandemic via a three phase Coronavirus Strategy: response, transition and recovery.

Since the previous meeting of the Committee, the Vale of Glamorgan had entered a local lockdown which meant that working practices established during the response phase of the pandemic would continue and/or be re-established to maintain vital services. However, recovery stage planning would continue alongside transition activity.

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The Director drew Members' attention to page 33 of the Strategy which set out the recovery threats and opportunities for the Corporate Plan Well-being Objective most aligned to the remit of the Committee: 'To support people at home and in their community'.

Officers then apprised the Committee on key points for their service, in addition to those already provided at the previous Committee meeting, as follows:

Resource Management and Safeguarding

- The development of a team plan for the Council's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Team following confirmation of continued funding for the supply of PPE from Welsh Government for the duration of the pandemic;
- The development of the publicly accessible Dewis Information System in light of Covid-19 to provide updated messages to the public; and
- Maintaining good working relationships with independent providers under the work of the Regional Training Unit in partnership with Cardiff City Council. A report on the work of the unit was due to be presented to Cabinet in the near future.

Children and Young People Services

- The overall ethos of the Division remained to 'consolidate practice in an evolving situation';
- One of the key opportunities to date had been around virtual methods of communication and these were now central to the work of the service to stay in contact with service users and partners and were recognised as contributing to a sustainable approach going forward; and
- A positive example of recovery was the approach to transition risk assessments when considering how children matched for adoption could be safely engaged in a plan for introductions that supported their movement to their adoptive placement. This had removed uncertainty for the relevant children and reduced delay.

Adult Services

- The service continued to provide care and support at home, and visits to people at home were risk assessed to balance the risks of spreading the virus but at the same time assessing the needs of service users in preparation for building resilience for the winter months ahead. The amount of time staff spent within homes was minimised and alternative remote communication methods were promoted;
- The service continued to review domiciliary care contingency plans to ensure that the plans were fit for purpose, assessing individual needs and prioritising needs accordingly, in anticipation of any workforce issues;
- Plans were already underway to re-establish the Council's Day Service provision however in smaller numbers than usual to meet Covid-19 safety restrictions and alongside the digital offering developed during the pandemic. Robust risk assessments were taking place to ensure that services could resume safely and benefit both the service user and their carer(s); and

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- The wellbeing of all staff was a primary focus for the service to ensure that support was available for individuals to manage working from home, and due to premises not currently available due to relocation of the Vale Community Resource Service, alternatives were identified to enable Adults Division staff have some access to an office base, based on individual risk assessments and/or priority tasks that could not be undertaken at home.

Leisure Services

- Leisure centres were open but operating on limited services;
- The decrease in footfall and limited services at leisure centres, as a result of the pandemic had had a financial impact on the service and a report was due for Cabinet's consideration in the near future;
- The Exercise Referral scheme remained on a virtual basis only;
- The Council was now able to repurpose Public Health Wales staff which had not been a possibility previously which opened up opportunities for the service;
- In relation to Sports Development, the service was waiting on confirmation in writing from the Sports Council that the funding previously provided to repurpose staff was going to cease and therefore the Council was required to start planning the re-establishment of sports activities which was a challenging task with Covid-19 restrictions in place;
- Play Service activities were continuing where possible.

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

- A demand review looking at key areas of activity in Children and Young People Services was undertaken in August 2020, noting a heightened number of contacts received. A further review was taking place in October 2020 and would include consideration of the impact of schools returning on contacts to Children and Young People Services. The Vulnerable Children Tactical Group had been maintained so that the Council Directorates could continue to consider children's wellbeing on their return to school and plan play provision for the October half term;
- Leisure Services understood the difficulty service users were having in booking swimming sessions due to high demand and continued to work in partnership with Legacy Leisure to increase the service whilst remaining in line with Covid-19 restrictions to avoid any enforced closures. Swimming lesson numbers had also been reduced to meet the restrictions;
- An update on the Transformation Fund General Practice Triage Pilot Project would be provided to committee in conjunction with the update report on the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board scheduled for the Committee's consideration in January 2021.

The Chairman congratulated all officers for the positive progress made by their services during a very difficult time and concluded the meeting by asking that the Committee's thanks be passed on to all staff helping to maintain much needed vulnerable services.

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RECOMMENDED – T H A T the Cabinet reference, appended report and Strategy be noted.

Reason for recommendation

To provide Committee with an overview of the work undertaken in response, transition and recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic.