

No.

VOLUNTARY SECTOR JOINT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 29th April, 2021.

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

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

Also present: Councillor E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Legal, Regulatory and Planning Services).

Representatives of the Voluntary Sector: Ms. L. Newton (Cardiff and the Vale Action for Mental Health) and Ms. R. Connor (Glamorgan Voluntary Services – Strong Communities Grant Fund Evaluation Panel Representative).

605 APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY VICE-CHAIRMAN FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR –

Committee were advised that due to current circumstances relating to the COVID19 pandemic there were no nominations for the role at this time, and it was therefore

AGREED – T H A T that the item be deferred until the next Committee meeting.

606 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors Mrs. C.A. Cave and L.O. Rowlands, Ms. H. Smith (Barnardos) and Mrs. A. Barnaby (Town and Community Council Representative).

607 MINUTES –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 19th October, 2020 be approved as a correct record.

608 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

No.

609 PROJECT ZERO – DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE PLAN (REF) –

Cabinet, on 22nd March, 2021, had referred the report to the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee in order to obtain its views on the draft Plan as part of the consultation process.

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation advised that the draft Climate Change Challenge Plan set out the Council's response to the climate emergency and the work that would be undertaken as part of Project Zero, and detailed 18 challenges and the steps the Council proposed to take to meet those challenges as part of Project Zero. These challenges were framed around the need to demonstrate strong leadership, fulfil the Council's responsibility to current and future generations and to make a difference now.

The draft Plan also detailed some of the work already underway across the Council as part of work to adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change. This work also formed part of Project Zero.

The report set out the details for the consultation on the draft Plan which would take place from 23rd March to 11th May, 2021. The report also set out the timetable for the Plan being approved post consultation and the proposed governance arrangements for Project Zero including scrutiny.

Committee Members thanked the Officer for the comprehensive report, and noted the importance of ensuring that third sector groups and assets were linked in with the draft Plan as much as possible.

In response to queries and comments from Members, the Officer advised that the Plan had an integrated agenda covering a wide-ranging topic which needed to balance a number of factors, including Planning matters, green infrastructure, flood management and housing demands, and as such one Council-wide strategy was required rather than numerous disparate projects. There was no easy answer in terms of mitigating the impact of climate change and a holistic approach was needed.

Committee, having considered the report

AGREED – T H A T the Cabinet Reference, Report and appended Draft Climate Challenge Plan be noted.

Reasons for decisions

The views of the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee are taken into account as part of the Project Zero consultation process.

No.

610 CORONAVIRUS RECOVERY GRANT FOR VOLUNTEERING – 2020/21 (GVS) –

The representative for Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS) presented the report, the purpose of which was to update Committee regarding the research undertaken by GVS to learn from the experiences of those who volunteered during the pandemic.

GVS had received £30,000 from the total allocation of £180,000 (Coronavirus Recovery Grant for Volunteering) awarded across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

As part of the regional project, in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC) and Cardiff City Council, GVS undertook a short, but comprehensive research exercise in the Vale of Glamorgan that aimed to scope and review existing volunteering provision, learn from the experiences of those who volunteered during the pandemic and work with the informal community-based groups that emerged as the pandemic unfolded to explore their future direction.

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation wished to formally thank the Representative for having linked in with relevant colleagues in the Council so quickly and effectively in order to capitalize on the opportunity to obtain and use the grant for such meaningful work.

In response to queries from Members the Representative advised of the following:

- There were individuals who had begun volunteering informally who were unwilling to undertake the bureaucracy that came with some formal volunteering opportunities.
- At the beginning of the pandemic there had been a need for as many people as possible to help, and the guidance from the Charities Commission and relevant service areas in the Local Authority had therefore been to side-step bureaucracy where needed, however as informal groups became formally established they inevitably had to adhere to more bureaucratic structures.
- The Vale Heroes website had facilitated anyone over the age of 65 receiving assistance either directly or indirectly from Age Connects.
- GVS had been making referrals to relevant agencies for those aged under 65.
- GVS had been following up with individuals to ensure they had received the services they had requested, and where appropriate they had been referred to relevant service areas within the Local Authority.
- A lack of available online shopping timeslots had initially been a predominant problem, however throughout the year the severity of this had decreased, with it mainly being the elderly who continued to require this service.
- There had been astonishing responses from organisations across the Vale of Glamorgan to the difficulties being faced.
- It appeared many of the difficulties which had required support had been short-term issues, but organisations had excellent mechanisms for identifying where individuals may require further input or referral to an appropriate service.

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- With regard to an update on the long-term effect on the Voluntary Sector and whether organisations would be able to maintain their momentum, this would be dependent on resources. GVS were pursuing this and efforts included securing additional funding from Welsh Government to run another small grant scheme specifically to focus on informal, non-constituted support groups.
- GVS intended to continue to work with non-constituted groups as they acknowledged the importance of access to grass-roots communities in order to deliver services.

Committee, having considered the report

AGREED – T H A T the contents of the report be noted.

Reason for decision

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

611 GVS INVOLVEMENT IN COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME (GVS) –

The report advised that in August 2020, GVS was invited to a Pandemic Immunisation Stakeholder Event and was subsequently, along with Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC), invited to join a UHB facilitated Vaccine Planning Group in September. This involved attendance at weekly and then fortnightly meetings so far and was continuing.

The report outlined the ways in which GVS had contributed to the vaccination programme, the largest piece of work having been the scoping of third sector organisations in order to identify their essential front line staff. Given that there were approximately 3,000 third sector organisations in Cardiff and Vale, this was an ongoing task and had to be done in a sensitive way to ensure that all appropriate organisations had an opportunity to identify their frontline staff.

Committee, having considered the report

AGREED – T H A T the contents of the report be noted.

Reason for decision

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

612 GVS EVALUATION OF FEEDBACK FROM THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS ABOUT ACCESS TO THE COVID-19 VACCINATION AS PRIORITY FRONTLINE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE STAFF (GVS) –

GVS had contacted Third Sector organisations which had been included in a scoping exercise for the Covid-19 vaccination to get feedback on the experience, asking the following questions:

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- The general view amongst staff and volunteers about having the vaccine (including those listed as priority and other staff/volunteers not yet invited to book).
- Any concerns heard from staff and volunteers which might make them reluctant to have the vaccine.
- An understanding of the rate of uptake amongst staff and volunteers who were identified as a priority for the vaccine, e.g. the percentage of those priority staff who have had the vaccine.

There had been 24 organisations who had responded to the exercise and the report gave a brief summary of their feedback.

In response to queries from Members, the Representative from GVS advised of the following:

- In respect of concerns regarding uptake of the vaccine amongst Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff and volunteers, GVS had assisted across Cardiff and the Vale, and vaccine delivery was being made available in Mosques and other community centres in order to provide familiarity, security and comfort for those who were concerned. Where appropriate, separation of men and women had been respected to ensure attendees at these premises were comfortable.
- GVS had ensured that its premises in Llantwit Major was Covid secure in order that it could be used to deliver vaccinations, and surgeries in Llantwit and Cowbridge were utilising this to make vaccinations available closer to home for many Vale residents, and removing barriers for those who could travel to centres in Barry or Cardiff.
- There weren't any figures at present to suggest there was more reluctance to have the vaccine in women or in men in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- The predominant issue was reluctance or barriers to travelling from the Western Vale, although Community Transport and local taxi companies had provided excellent help in this regard.

Councillor Burnett, as the Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration, wished to assure Committee that Cabinet were in regular receipt of updates regarding uptake of the vaccine, and while there was concern regarding some not turning up to their appointments the figures for the Vale were looking very good overall, and where there was concern regarding uptake in specific groups steps were being taken to reassure and encourage these communities.

Members agreed that the roll-out of the vaccine was impressive and to be applauded, and could not have been achieved without the work of those in the Voluntary Sector.

Committee, having considered the report

AGREED – T H A T the contents of the report be noted.

No.

Reason for decision

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