

No.

VOLUNTARY SECTOR JOINT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 15th April 2024.

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

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor S. Lloyd-Selby (Vice-Chair in the Chair); Councillors A.M. Collins, J.M. Norman and N.J. Wood.

Representatives of the Voluntary Sector: L. Newton (Cardiff and Vale Action for Mental Health) and Councillor C. Hawkins (Town and Community Councillor Representative).

Also present: Councillor N.C. Thomas and E. Williams.

992 ANNOUNCEMENT –

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

993 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillor R.M. Birch (Chair), G. Bruce, I. Buckley, C. Iannucci-Williams and Ms R. Connor (GVS).

994 MINUTES –

AGREED– T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 29th January, 2024 be approved as a correct record.

995 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

996 PRESENTATION: CWMPAS: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES –

The Director of Corporate Resources commenced by advising that Dr. Sarah Evans from Cwmpas had been invited to the Committee to provide an overview of the work Cwmpas had been doing with the Council and its partners over the last few months.

No.

Dr. Evans provided a PowerPoint presentation stating that Cwmpas was an organisation which was working to build a fairer, greener economy and a more equal society where people and the planet came first.

In referencing Cwmpas' work with the Council, it was noted that internal engagement had taken place, a social enterprise workshop had been held and a review of poverty work had been undertaken. External engagement also took the form of working with the Third Sector and social enterprises, Town and Community Councils, Section 16 workshop and the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee. The main emphasis of the presentation referred to the key findings of the all Wales Audit Wales Report around social enterprises with key findings being noted as:

- The overall conclusion being that Local Authorities were not effectively working with social enterprises to maximise the impact;
- better use of resources could be made; and
- to improve services for people and communities.

Part of the report focused on that most Local Authorities were also not delivering their responsibilities under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and effectively promoting social enterprises. It had also been found that relatively few Local Authority officers were aware of their legal duties to champion the use of social enterprises with very few setting out how they were working to grow the sector and deliver their Section 16 responsibilities. Conclusions from the Third Sector report were detailed as:

- It was found that the Council's arrangements supported its current way of working with the Third Sector, but they could be strengthened to maximise opportunities to enhance the relationship to support the delivery of the Council's Strategic Recovery priorities;
- The Third Sector viewed working with the Vale of Glamorgan Council as relating to strong relationships with individual staff, staff listened, staff responded, engaged proactively about potential opportunities with the third sector viewing them as a partner but with the ability to get more involved before decisions were made;
- Reference to funding decisions, paying for funding, providing commissioned services and the opportunity to shape services.

In drawing attention to the Section 16 workshop, Dr. Evans stated that the meeting had been held in person on 9th April, there had been good attendance with examples of co-produced solutions being referred to, the Third Sector advising that they wanted to innovate and develop new services together. Other examples included the role of Section 16 forums, procurement, supported development impact measures and highlighting social value wellbeing impacts.

Having considered the report, the Vice-Chair (in the Chair) enquired as to what the next steps were to be having regard to the Section 16 workshop, being interested in Dr. Evans' and the Director of Corporate Resources' views of their perception of what may be holding the Council back. The Vice-Chair also made reference to what appetite there was for stepping into a new way of working. In response, Dr. Evans advised that the Head of Resource Management and Safeguarding and his team

No.

were keen to work with the sector through the new Section 16 Forum to explore how they worked together. The Operational Manager for Corporate Strategy and Insight commented that understanding the processes and requirements was key as well as recognising that it was about working together with all organisations and not just the Council leading on matters. In recognising that the Voluntary Sector Compact was to be reviewed / refreshed, it was suggested that further conversations in this regard take place after the meeting and prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Norman commented on the number of vacancies on the Committee from the Third Sector, with it being suggested that this also be considered going forward.

Following consideration of the presentation, it was subsequently.

AGREED – T H A T the presentation be circulated to all Members of the Council, that further updates on the work of the Section 16 workshops and the Voluntary Sector Compact review be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

997 PRESENTATION: HOUSING: WORKING WITH THE THIRD SECTOR –

The Operational Manager, Public Housing Services introduced his team advising that the presentation to the Committee would include an overview of service areas work with others to deliver services. The Supporting People Co-ordinator informed the Committee of the housing related support which provided flexible services that enabled vulnerable people to live independently. The types of support being for example:

- Support to settle and maintain homes,
- Support with budgeting / debts etc.,
- Support to develop practical living skills.
- Signposting and supported links with agencies.
- Support looking for work / training / volunteering.
- Advice on housing issues.

The officer provided Committee with a detailed overview of each type of support and the specialist services that were provided.

The total Housing Support Grant budget for 2023/24 was noted as £4.7m. The number of service users provided with support in the last 12 months had been 1,942. The number of emergency alarm users was reported as 2,187; 3,365 enquiries to the One Stop Shop had been made and the total number of service users in supported accommodation was reported as 91. The Vale of Glamorgan Council worked in partnership with a number of providers which included for example Llamau, Hafod, Pobl etc., with all support being accessed via the Supporting People Gateway.

The Senior Neighbourhood Manager for Housing Management and Community Investment in presenting her service area commenced by saying that housing management was undertaken by the Vale Homes Housing Management and Community Investment teams, with examples of roles within the team including income offices, money advice officers, community development and involvement

No.

officers, housing managers and assistants, volunteering and digital inclusion officers. It was important to note that to deliver all services a working partnership with internal and external and Third Sector organisations was required.

Housing Management services also helped tenants maintain their tenancies, receive support, seek specialised agency input and provide a joined-up service. Working in the community to improve neighbourhoods was also a key element of the work of the service area and again the presentation referenced the number of organisations that the Housing Service worked with.

In considering the presentation the Vice-Chair enquired as to the peer-to-peer monitoring that was being undertaken stating that, in her view, it was a good valuable experience that could be shared. In recognising the number of organisations, the Council was working with, she also noted that there was further scope for working with the Third Sector. The officer agreed that it was important to raise the profile and work with the Third Sector to engage on as many different projects as possible.

The Director of Corporate Resources commented that it was now a good opportunity to make the Compact feel real and to consider all the comments in order that a further piece of work could be undertaken by the Operational Manager and himself following the review of the Compact.

The representative for Town and Community Councils was also keen engage rural communities and queried whether there was any further areas in particular joint working with other providers that could be expanded upon and considered going forward for the Wick community as well as other rural communities. The Operational Manager, Public Housing Services, in recognising that there were a number of Council properties within the Wick area, provided a few examples of work that was being undertaken recognising that there could be further support and further conversations to be had and encouraged the Councillor representative to get in touch in order that further discussions could take place.

In recognising the Compact was likely to be reviewed over the next few months, having regard to the conversations at the meeting and accepting that the Compact would be County wide, the Vice-Chair asked all present to consider what opportunities could be available and requested that all suggestions be forwarded to the relevant officers for consideration.

It was subsequently.

AGREED – T H A T the presentation be forwarded to all Members of the Council and the Third Sector for their information with follow up conversations to be undertaken as reflected in the discussions at the meeting.

998 LET'S TALK ABOUT LIFE IN THE VALE: SURVEY REPORT AND FURTHER ENGAGEMENT (REF) –

Cabinet had referred the report to the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee at its

No.

meeting on 11th April, 2024. However, the minutes of that meeting were not yet available, with the Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer however verbally advising that recommendations contained within the report had been endorsed by Cabinet with the Voluntary Sector to refer any views back to Cabinet for its consideration.

The Operational Manager – Corporate Communications, Participation, Equalities and Directorate Development presented the survey and also provided a short PowerPoint presentation of the results to date, with it being noted that the Let's Talk About Life in the Vale survey had run from 22nd August to 18th December, 2023. The survey had been widely promoted to Vale of Glamorgan residents through a variety of channels and methods, including media releases and email promotions etc. The results had been sorted into a number of categories with total number of 4,009 members of the public having responded to the survey. It was noted that 60% of respondents had stated that they were either very or fairly satisfied with the Vale of Glamorgan as a place to live with 80% of the survey respondents stating that they would recommend the Vale of Glamorgan as a place to live.

In terms of service priorities respondents ranked the following as the most important to least important to them:

1. Easily access care and healthcare services when my family or I need them.
2. Live in a neighbourhood that is clean and tidy.
3. Buy or rent a good quality home.
4. Access to regular recycling and waste collections.
5. Enjoy the natural environment.
6. Travel using well maintained public highways.
7. Shop for food and everyday items within my local area.
8. Access good quality local nurseries and schools for my children or those in my community to attend.
9. Things to keep me fit and healthy for free or at a price I can afford.
10. Take part in formal learning to help gain new skills.
11. Engage with arts, cultural or heritage events for free or at a price I can afford.

In terms of the percentage of respondents who strongly or slightly agreed that the services provided by the Vale of Glamorgan were of a high quality the figure was 29.3%, with 25.5% saying the Vale of Glamorgan Council acted in the interest of local residents. More respondents stated that they strongly or slightly disagreed than agreed that the service provided by the Vale of Glamorgan Council was of a high quality with 51.8% saying that the Vale of Glamorgan acted in the interests of local residents.

In referring to the next steps, the officer stated that a high-level results report from Data Cymru was to be reported to Cabinet, Committee and strategic partners and further engagement with underrepresented groups was currently underway. Feedback to respondents and citizens was also underway with the reporting mechanism and further engagement to be considered in the development of the new Corporate Plan 2025-2030 as well as the Public Participation Strategy being reviewed, and actions reprioritised within 3 months.

No.

The Vice-Chair in recognising the results of the survey were pretty much, in her view, 'a mixed bag' with in some ways the comments not being surprising, was pleased to note that public engagement had been considered as a top priority.

The Town and Community Council representative advised that he was surprised by the amount of information in the survey together with the detail contained within the report and suggested that Members of the Committee further consider the report and make any comments back to the Operational Manager to assist further progress.

The Operational Manager also said that he was more than happy to come to a future meeting of the Committee to advise on progress as he welcomed feedback and comments on the report.

The Vice-Chair welcomed the open invitation for the Committee to receive further updates and in particular was eager to see what engagement would look like in the future and its impact on communities as well as enquiring if the survey could be repeated. The Operational Manager advised that the approach was now being developed by Data Cymru and the WLGA into a standard model for all Councils in Wales but that it could be run again in 2025.

The Vice-Chair also welcomed the steps the Council was taking to strengthen participation and the importance for Committee Members and the Third Sector to ensure that the work was publicised as widely as possible, with it being recognised that future updates would be presented to the Committee in due course.

It was subsequently.

AGREED – T H A T the report be noted.

Reason for decision

Having regard to the report, presentation and comments at the meeting.