

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (with Members of the Learning Communities invited to attend), held remotely via video-conferencing on Friday, 17th September 2021

Present: Councillors Bryan Davies, Gethin Davies, Marc Davies, Elaine Evans, Hag Harris, Alun Lloyd-Jones, Lyndon Lloyd MBE, Dan Potter, John Roberts, Lynford Thomas and Ivor Williams.

Present from the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
Wyn Thomas, Endaf Edwards, Gwyn James

Cabinet Members Present: Councillors Rhodri Evans, Catherine Hughes, Gareth Lloyd, Catrin Miles, Ray Quant, and Alun Williams

2.00pm – 3.35pm

1 Apologies

Councillor Paul Hinge apologised for his inability to attend the meeting due to being on other Council business. Councillor Odwyn Davies, Keith Evans and Mark Strong apologised for his inability to attend the meeting.

2 Disclosure of Personal / Prejudicial Interests (including Whipping declarations)

None

3 Through Age & Wellbeing Strategy 2021 – 2027 and Action Plan

The Corporate Director delivered a presentation and video on the Through Age & Wellbeing Strategy 2021 – 2027 and Action Plan.

It was explained that this strategy is a key part of the Ceredigion County Council Corporate Strategy that illustrates the main priorities for the Council. The priorities aim to enable the delivery of services that will enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being for the people of Ceredigion. Providing support for all ages and needs is a significant challenge for the Council with limited resources. The profile of society and demographics have changed considerably over the last decade with a significant increase in the prevalence and impact of substance misuse, poor mental health and domestic abuse and older age groups living in Ceredigion. As a consequence, demand for certain services has increased placing a greater financial pressure on those service areas. In addition, the unemployment levels coupled with the low income levels has placed increased difficulties on the ability of people to access safe, affordable housing.

The Committee noted that it was agreed in 2017 that a systematic review of all structures and service areas should be undertaken to ensure that services across the Council have the capacity and capability to meet the priorities of the Corporate Plans and Objectives.

The transformation of services has progressed well with the final major change being the integration of social care and lifelong learning into the three services Porth Cymorth Cynnar, Porth Gofal and Porth Cynnal who along with Customer Contact make up the 4 main areas that fall within the Through Age & Wellbeing Programme of change.

Formal restructuring of these services started in late 2019 with the implementation of the Corporate Manager structure across the services. The pandemic then delayed progress during 2020 but this was then further progressed from September 2020 onwards. It was recognised that a clear strategy was required to drive and communicate the need for change and how this would be achieved. Updates and workshops with members have taken place throughout the period of change. Staff and Trade Unions have been engaged and consulted during each part of the process.

At the outset of the programme a vision was created that reflected the ambitious programme of change:

‘To ensure every child, young person and adult in Ceredigion will be able to reach their full potential. To ensure fair access for all to excellent universal and targeted services that supports the health and wellbeing of all citizens. To develop skills and resilience that will last a lifetime and enable individuals to cope well with the challenges and pressures that they may face.’

The Through-age & Wellbeing Strategy clarifies the vision and plans for the implementation. The Through Age and Wellbeing strategy sets out the vision and associated approaches that will be taken to transform how the wellbeing and safety of the people of Ceredigion is supported. Giving a timeline of 2021-2027 to achieve the changes.

The strategy describes the journey the Council will take, alongside its partners, to transform its way of working. It provides the strategic context to drive future commissioning, operational service delivery, care management and the Councils role in the integration of services. The strategy sets out how we will:

- Put in place a new Through Age and Wellbeing Model of delivery
- Reduce demand on managed care and support and focus resources on those who most need them
- Support our workforce to develop a new approach to supporting individuals within Ceredigion
- Focus on preventative services which help people to remain independent or regain the independence they want and value
- Provide services within budget
- Work with partners to provide a more joined up health, wellbeing and social care system

The Strategy highlights 5 key objectives, these are underpinned by 12 focused areas of need that look at the root causes of why families and individuals may need information, advice, support and/or care.

The purpose of the Action Plan is to clearly outline what is required over the next three years (and to signal what is likely in the years beyond that) to address the root causes in order to meet the 5 key objectives of the Strategy and, alongside our partners, rebalance the care and support to provide sustainable services within Ceredigion.

A member highlighted the importance of ensuring that dementia care remains a priority and that the local authority work closely with health to ensure care remains within County.

Concerns were raised that improved communication is needed between the services and CLIC to ensure that Councillors and residents receive feedback as to when matters raised with CLIC are resolved. It was noted that 'an update on CLIC Customer Services' is an agenda item scheduled to be presented to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 14th October 2021. Members agreed that all CLIC staff should be praised for their commitment and hard work.

Investment in early intervention and prevention was highlighted as a key element as there is likely to be an increased demand on young peoples' mental health services following the disruptions caused by covid-19.

Following questions by the Members of the Committee it was agreed to recommend the Through Age and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2027 and Action Plan for Cabinet approval, subject to consideration of the following recommendation:

- That there is improved communication between Local Authority Services and the CLIC service in future.

The Chairman thanked the Officer for attending and presenting in a clear, concise manner.

4 Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021

The Corporate Lead Officer – Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services informed the Committee that a letter had been received from Care Inspectorate Wales ('CIW') on 2nd July 2021 following the Health Assurance Check carried out during May 2021. The letter summarises the findings of the assurance check on 10 May to 14 May 2021. They focused their key lines of enquiry within the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and have recorded their judgements and findings aligned to these: People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Partnerships and Integration, Well-being. The summary of findings and priorities for improvement were outlined to the Committee.

Following discussion, Members agreed to note the contents of the letter and praised all Social Services staff for their hard work and commitment to their roles prior to and during the pandemic.

Members wished to note that staff and the service are under increased pressure and are doing the best they can having to work within the current service pressures .

Confirmed at the meeting of the Committee held on xxxx 2021

Chairman: