

## VOLUNTARY SECTOR JOINT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2022.

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

The Meeting recording is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor R.M. Birch (Chair), Councillor J.M. Norman (Vice-Chair);  
Councillors C.A. Cave, A.M. Collins, R. Crowley and L.O. Rowlands.

Also Present: Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson.

Representatives of the Voluntary Sector: R. Connor (Glamorgan Voluntary Services),  
L. Newton (Cardiff and the Vale Action for Mental Health), H. Smith (Barnardos) and  
A. Barnaby (Town and Community Council Representative).

829 APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY VICE-CHAIR FROM THE  
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL  
YEAR –

AGREED – T H A T L. Newton be appointed Honorary Vice-Chair for the current  
municipal year.

830 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from W. Hennessy (Trustee of Vale People First).

831 MINUTES –

AGREED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 be  
approved as a correct record

832 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

833 AUDIT WALES: THIRD SECTOR PARTNERSHIP WORKING - VALE OF  
GLAMORGAN COUNCIL (CX) –

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation presented the report which advised  
Committee of the findings of the Auditor General for Wales' examination of  
partnership working between the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Third Sector.  
The review focused on examining whether the Council's arrangements with the third

sector were effectively supporting the Council to achieve its strategic recovery priorities.

Overall, the report findings concluded that the Council's arrangements supported its current way of working with the third sector, but now could be strengthened to maximise opportunities to enhance the relationship to support the delivery of the Council's strategic recovery priorities.

The report also identified four Proposals for Improvement:

- P1 - The Council should reconsider the checklist set out in Appendix 1 of the Audit Wales report, in particular the following sections:
  - Vision
  - Corporate strategy
  - Compact
  - Understanding engagement with the third sector
  - Designing services
  - Training
  - Performance review
- P2 - As part of the review of the compact, the Council should reflect how it wants to work with the third sector to help deliver its strategic recovery priorities, how it can build on the positive work during the pandemic, and consider how it can strengthen its application of the sustainable development principle.
- P3 - The Council should consider the level of resources and investment required to achieve a more collaborative way of working with the third sector and reflect this in its Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- P4 - The Council should consider what actions it can take to help the third sector adjust to a more collaborative way of working.

The Chair thanked the Officer for his presentation of the report and subsequently invited comments from Members, the responses to which could be summarised as follows:

- The representative from Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS) felt it was vitally important that the response to Audit Wales' (AW) report was collaborative and co-produced, with involvement from both the Local Authority and the Third Sector.
- GVS had been invited to present its Annual Report to the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting.
- The report from AW had highlighted several matters for GVS, particularly regarding the surge of additional volunteers between March and June 2020, and while the number of volunteers was no longer at that same level, it was higher than it had been pre-March 2020. It was therefore important to capture the enthusiasm and willingness to support that had come through and continued to come through from the Vale of Glamorgan's population.
- It was difficult to increase the number of volunteers or stakeholders who engaged with feedback surveys, as they often had other priorities and time spent on a survey was a turn-off.
- While it was acknowledged that 1100 respondents to the Wellbeing survey were not representative of the Vale's population (at less than 1%) this was actually a relatively high response rate. Moreover, the Council's Public

Participation Strategy set out an ambition to explore different ways of engaging with the population on a cyclical basis, involving them in processes much earlier on.

- Regarding the establishment and constitution of a Task and Finish Group which would explore issues raised in the report, the Officer advised that the group would notionally include Local Authority Officers and colleagues working in the Third Sector to do initial scoping work, with there being broader involvement of Elected Members and other representatives to develop the work further. The group would report updates regularly to Committee in order that it could scrutinise, influence and shape the work as it progressed, but the Officer clarified that a representative of the Committee could be involved in the group to help shape its initial phase of engagement work.
- Officers consulted and encouraged the public to participate in a range of ways, although due to COVID-19 they hadn't been able to undertake traditional face-to-face consultation but were hopeful to be back doing this shortly. In addition, there were options to complete surveys via telephone or through the Council's Contact Centre if individuals did not have access to technology or the internet. The Public Participation Strategy looked at available methods and how to best participate.
- The representative from Cardiff and the Vale Action for Mental Health (CAVAMH) indicated the organisation would be happy to help with the work under discussion, and noted that in some instances replies to surveys were being encouraged by being offered monetary payment.

In response to comments made by Councillor C.A. Cave the Chair suggested that she discuss with the Assistant Democratic Services Officer how best to circulate relevant reports and minutes to other Council Committees, and Committee agreed this was a good idea.

There being no further comments or queries at this time it was subsequently

AGREED –

(1) T H A T the key findings arising from Audit Wales' review of the Council's partnership working with the third sector, and the Council's response to the review and Audit Wales' proposals for improvement as set out in the report be noted.

(2) T H A T the comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, who considered this matter at their meeting on the 20th January 2022, be noted.

(3) T H A T the report be referred to the Governance and Audit Committee and thereon to Cabinet for endorsement of the proposed actions to address the proposals for improvement together with relevant comments from the Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee and the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

### Reasons for Decisions

(1&2) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.

(3) To ensure the Council responds appropriately and implements areas of improvement as identified by Audit Wales

#### 834 VALE OF GLAMORGAN PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD – DRAFT WELL-BEING ASSESSMENT (CX) –

The report sought Committee's views on the draft Well-being Assessment, which was a statutory duty placed on Public Services Boards (PSB) by the Well-being of Future Generations Act and had drawn on a range of national and local data, research and evidence. Analysis of this information was set out in a suite of reports which together formed the Well-being Assessment and told the story of the experiences of well-being in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Different elements included in the Well-being Assessment were:

- A View of the Vale of Glamorgan – An Assessment of Current and Future Wellbeing
- Demographic Report
- Education and Economy Report
- Health and Communities Report
- Environment and Transport Report

Each themed report reflected on the impact of COVID-19 and how it had changed lives, and demonstrated how different services and issues impacted on each other and the importance of taking an integrated approach. The assessment also looked to the future and what the Council needed to be mindful of for current and future generations, what the Vale looked like today but also what the Vale in the future may look like for example in terms of demographics, technology and the environment.

The Head of Policy and Business Transformation and the Strategy and Partnership Manager, having concluded their presentation of the report, invited any questions or comments from Members which they addressed as follows:

- The assessment contained a section regarding volunteering, and a question had been asked in relation to volunteering within the 'Let's Talk' engagement survey, with information also having been pulled in from a Welsh national survey. Officers were happy, however, to expand on the issue of volunteering as they viewed the Assessment as an ongoing piece of work under continual development.
- The PSB were mindful of avoiding duplication, bearing in mind their strong partnership work with Safer Vale and as a part of the Cardiff Capital Region, and PSB were therefore focused on identifying where they added most value.
- Officers recognized the importance of a robust communication strategy within the Council which also assisted in avoidance of duplication, and it was important for the Council to establish its connections across the Regional Partnership Board, the Capital Region and PSB, while also being clear about their specific remits and perspectives. The aim was to establish what gap these bodies would be trying to fill by collectively working together, and this work would be undertaken during coming months.

- The findings of the Assessment had been regularly fed back to the Council's Strategic Leadership Team and Insight Board. Officers were encouraging colleagues to, in developing policy and carrying out impact assessments, draw on information within the assessment rather than carrying out the work again.
- While the Assessment was required to be carried out every five years, Officers were considering which elements could be refreshed on a more regular basis so that the PSB's partners could access the information.
- Officers were trying to promote the fact that such an extensive piece of work had been undertaken and that as a resource it was available to those who needed it within the Council and its partnering organisations.
- Officers recognized that they could investigate how the Council's Greenlinks Community Transport service might be able to address issues around loneliness and alcoholism, two points picked up on within the assessment. This would be in addition to work being carried out in partnership with GVS and Age Connects to address issues around isolation and loneliness amongst communities in the Western Vale, including a planned hub in Llantwit Major and a range of funding opportunities being made available to community groups.

Members praised the comprehensive report and work carried out and, at the request of the Chair Officers agreed that the presentation slides used during the meeting would be circulated to Members in order that they could share them further in other forums, for instance Town or Community Councils.

With there being no further queries from Members it was subsequently

AGREED – T H A T the draft Well-being Assessment be noted, with Officers representing the PSB having been advised of Committee's views regarding the content, structure and conclusions detailed within the assessment during the discussion of the agenda item.

#### Reason for Decision

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