

VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2013

- PRESENT:** Mr Islwyn Humphreys (Voluntary Sector) (Chair)
- Local Authority**
- Councillors Jim Evans, Alun W Mummery and K P Hughes
- Voluntary Sector**
- Eleri Lloyd Jones
Aled Roberts
Mrs Dilys Shaw
- Health Sector**
- Wyn Thomas, BCUHB Assistant Director of Community Development
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr John R.Jones (Chief Officer Medrwn Môn)
Mrs Gwen Carrington (Director of Community – IOACC)
Mr J.Huw Jones (Head of Service, Policy – IOACC)
Mr Mark Gahan (Making the Connections Officer –Medrwn Môn)
Ann Holmes (Committee Officer)
- APOLOGIES:** Cadi Roberts (Voluntary Sector)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Ms Lyndsey Williams (Project Manager – Medrwn Môn), Miss Emily K.Jones (Observer)
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1 CHAIRPERSON

Mr Islwyn Humphreys representing the Voluntary Sector was elected Chair of the Liaison Committee.

Mr Islwyn Humphreys thanked his fellow Committee Members for this mark of trust in him and he also thanked his predecessor as Chair, Councillor Kenneth Hughes for his contribution and leadership during his time in office.

The Chair then welcomed all those members who were new to the Liaison Committee to their first meeting and he extended a welcome also to Miss Emily K. Jones who was present as an observer as part of her work experience.

2 VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Councillor Alun Mummery representing the Local Authority was elected Vice-Chair of the Liaison Committee.

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

4 MINUTES 15TH APRIL MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Liaison Committee held on 15th April, 2013 were submitted and confirmed as correct.

Arising thereon –

- The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn referred to the matter of the voluntary sector's participation in the Authority's scrutiny process and specifically to the issue of training which he understood was on-going for the Council's Elected Members. He said that at the Committee's previous meeting it was mentioned that training opportunities afforded to Elected Members with regard to effective scrutiny might be extended to relevant representatives of the voluntary sector. The Officer went on to say that he felt that there had been undue delay in engaging the voluntary sector in order to ensure that the sector is adequately and appropriately prepared for undertaking a contributory role in scrutiny.

The Head of Service (Policy) informed the Committee that the Scrutiny Manager is intending to report back to this Committee at its next meeting. Elected Members have been provided with training in a range of areas as part of their induction process into the office. He confirmed that it is recognised that the voluntary sector has a key role to play in scrutiny and he said that he would inquire as to the position with regard to scrutiny training.

Action Arising: Head of Service (Policy) to follow-up with the Scrutiny Manager the possibility of including voluntary sector representatives within any further planned scrutiny training arrangements and to report back to the Committee.

- A representative of the Voluntary Sector inquired as to the status of the review of Social Services Contracts and the formulation of a framework within which contracts can be agreed.

The Director of Community confirmed that a template has been agreed and notwithstanding some issues with capacity the objective remains to complete the work according to the arrangements reported at the previous meeting. The review and its completion have taken on greater significance as the local government funding position faces continuing pressure. However, the review has to be conducted service by service and although other matters requiring attention have intervened in the period since the Committee's previous meeting, the aim is still to establish a methodology and framework for funding contracts with the voluntary sector during the time from now until the autumn.

- The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn stated that he had been in discussions with the Head of Service (Policy) with regard to the Funding Code which it was agreed requires detailed consideration with input from Finance Officers and the Director of Community. The intention is to convene a meeting at the earliest opportunity and to bring a report back to the Liaison Committee.

Action Arising: Head of Service (Policy) and Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn to liaise to arrange a meeting of relevant officers to discuss the Funding Code and to report back to this Committee.

- The Head of Service (Policy) confirmed the County Council's new elected member representation on the Liaison Committee and inquired whether BCUHB had given the matter consideration from the perspective of its own representation. Mr Wyn Thomas, BCUHB informed the Committee that either himself or Eleri Lloyd as local managers would in all likelihood remain the contact points between the Committee and the Health Board and that he did not foresee any change in that situation in the short term.

The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn said that the voluntary sector's membership of the Liaison had also undergone change following an election. He informed the Committee that over 80 individuals had participated in the election and that over 20 of those who had been successful had put their names forward for consideration as the sector's representatives on

the Liaison Committee which he believed was testament to the extent of the interest in the Committee and its activities. The Officer said that those individuals who had indicated their interest in becoming members of the Liaison Committee potentially formed a pool of members from which could be drawn contributors to the Authority's scrutiny process.

- The Chair inquired as to the position in relation to the Compact Agreement. The Head of Service (Policy) confirmed that the Compact was ready to be formally signed by the interested parties and in response to a suggestion by the Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn that the event should be marked appropriately, the Head of Service (Policy) agreed and said that the matter would be given consideration.

Action Arising: Head of Service (Policy) and Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn to liaise to arrange appropriate means of recognition for the occasion of the signing of the Local Compact Agreement, 2013.

5 VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE REMIT

Consideration was given to proposed revised terms of reference for the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee as presented to the 15th April, 2013 meeting.

The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn explained that the revised remit was re-presented for the consideration of the Liaison Committee under its new membership in order for Members to be clear regarding the forum's role and purpose. The Officer said that the remit document now needed to be updated to reflect the Liaison Committee's new membership.

Mr Wyn Thomas, BCUHB suggested that as the BCUHB has only one serving representative on the Committee, the proposed quorum of two people from each of the three constituent groups on the Committee might be revised to read two people from each of the Local Authority and Voluntary Sector groups so that the absence of a health sector representative from a meeting might not prevent the Committee from proceeding with its business.

It was agreed to accept the terms of reference for the Liaison Committee subject to amendment to reflect the Committee's new membership and the proposal with regard to the Committee's quorum.

Action arising: Head of Service (Policy) in consultation with the Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn to amend the terms of reference as outlined.

6 THE COMPACT AND VOLUNTEERING POLICY

A copy of the Compact and Volunteering Policy as presented to and endorsed by the Executive at its meeting held on 18th March, 2013 was presented for the Committee's information.

The Head of Service (Policy) reminded the Members that the principles of the Compact Agreement have been formalised by approval by the Executive and that they constitute the core function of the Liaison Committee. He said that it was now timely also to review the Funding Code to reflect new changes and requirements. The intention is to develop a work programme based on the Compact's principles and to promote a meaningful and constructive dialogue between the three parties who have subscribed to it. Further work needs to be undertaken with regard to the Volunteering Policy in preparation for its implementation.

The Director of Community confirmed that the discussion around the Volunteering Policy has commenced and that the first step involves identifying those volunteers within the system at present and to clarify DBS requirements and to consolidate the current arrangements. The second tranche would then involve identifying other opportunities for volunteering in areas where a volunteering input is required in line with Service priorities. That dialogue needs to take place with the voluntary sector and information shared with the Committee as the situation evolves.

The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn said that he was of the view that an opportunity exists to arrive at a better mutual understanding and co-operation as regards openings for volunteering and that the voluntary sector would be happy to contribute towards maximising those openings.

It was agreed to note the position.

Action Arising: Director of Community and Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn to liaise with a view to progressing volunteering issues as outlined and to update the Committee at the next meeting.

7 WELSH GOVERNMENT MATTERS - COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND DELIVERY IN WALES

- The published remit of the Welsh Government's Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery in Wales was presented for the Committee's information.

The Head of Service (Policy) stated that the Welsh Government has commissioned a broad review of the way public services are governed and delivered in Wales via a Commission under the chairmanship of Sir Paul Williams which will report back to the Welsh Government by the end of 2013. The Officer said that consideration needs to be given to the outcome of the Commission and its recommendations as regards models for service delivery when those are published. A consultation process is currently in progress and there will be an opportunity to respond to the Commission through the WLGA and other means. The voluntary sector will be informed of the Council's input to the Commission. There is a general view that the present structure of public service delivery in Wales is unsustainable in the long term.

The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn said that it is important for the sector also to respond to the Commission especially given the perception that being able to take action at a local level is increasingly being superseded by regional arrangements.

The Director of Community informed Members that the Social Services' experience of working does indicate that the thinking at national level is firmly in the direction of broader based working arrangements either on a regional or national basis and the challenge lies in reconciling this approach with evaluating outcomes in local terms and ensuring equal opportunity within the resources whilst at the same time responding to local needs.

It was agreed to note the position.

No further action arising.

- The Welsh Government's Consultation Document – Continuity and Change: refreshing the relationship between the Welsh Government and the Third Sector in Wales was presented for the Committee's information.

The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn said that the document above forms the basis of a consultation on the relationship between the Welsh Government and the Voluntary Sector. The Management Board of Medrwn Môn has already met to formulate a response to the consultation which has been instigated in part because of the pressure on public funding and because of the movement towards a regional approach towards service delivery. The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn emphasised that the local dimension lies at the heart of the voluntary sector's activities and the promotion of such local activities constitutes the strength of Medrwn Môn. However if the financial situation continues to deteriorate other arrangements might have to be considered e.g. working on a more regional basis. There is also a potential loss of funding to the sector in the establishment of alternative forms of support e.g. a bidding process to an Innovative Fund. The Officer said that it would be helpful if the County Council was to provide a response to the consultation document as well. He explained that the concerns generated by the document are around the loosening of local connections and the risk that with the advancement of regional arrangements and a regional approach, the focus on local activities and local needs will be lost.

It was pointed out that with a closing timescale of 8th August for the receipt of observations there will be limited opportunity therefore for the Liaison Committee to gather its views and present them formally to the Welsh Government.

The Director of Community informed Members that she was the designated Lead Officer on this matter within the Council and would be co-ordinating the response to it.

There was agreement that should it be necessary a small representative group of the Committee be convened at short notice to allow the viewpoint of this forum/ third sector to be reflected within the Local Authority response to the Consultation document.

It was agreed to note the Consultation document.

Action Arising: Head of Service (Policy) to liaise with the Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn as necessary to make appropriate arrangements for the committee's views with regard to the Continuity and Change Consultation document to be incorporated within the County Council's response.

8 COMMUNITY VOICE

Ms Lyndsey Williams, Medrwn Môn Project Manager gave a presentation and outline of the Listen Community Voice Project in which she referred to the following aspects of the project –

- £1 million Lottery funded project running until 2017
- One of only 2 successful projects in North Wales
- Managed and administered by Medrwn Môn
- 9 portfolio projects working across Anglesey
- Working within the hardest to reach communities

The Project Manager proceeded to explain the planned portfolio outcomes and delivery and the project's strategic fit with Council plans and strategies as well as how it might benefit the Liaison Committee through common identified themes. The Officer said that the project is in its early stages with the initial work involving the creation of baseline information gathered from the 9 portfolio projects with a view to establishing the current position with regard to community engagement with public services.

The Making the Connections Officer added that the Community Voice Project provides an excellent opportunity to work within communities in tandem with service providers and to build a picture of who the service users are and to bring them closer together with those who make the provision.

In the ensuing discussion, consideration was given to how the project and the information about service users and their profile it generates might dovetail with the work of the Council's project boards to the mutual benefit of both work streams. It was agreed that the Committee should receive regular feedback on the Community Voices project and it was suggested also that a presentation might be made on the project to the Council's Heads of Service in the autumn.

It was agreed to note the information and to thank Ms Lindsay Williams for the presentation.

Actions Arising:

- **Update on the Listen Community Voice Project to feature as a regular item on the Liaison Committee's agenda**
- **Head of Service (Policy) and Director of Community to liaise regarding the feasibility of arranging a presentation for the Council's Heads of Service on the Listen Community Voice project.**

9 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Arrangements for a workshop in the autumn to formulate a work programme for the Liaison Committee were considered

The Head of Service (Policy) said that the objective is to develop a work programme around the Committee's aspirations and what it seeks to achieve at each meeting and that he would liaise with the Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn and the Director of Community with regard to arranging a workshop.

With reference to the Committee's next meeting scheduled for 3rd October, 2013, the advantages and disadvantages of taking meetings of the Liaison Committee out into the community were considered and following discussion, it was agreed that the practice should continue.

It was agreed –

- **That a workshop be held in the Autumn on the lines suggested**
- **That the Liaison Committee should continue to meet at venues within different communities across Anglesey.**
- **That the next meeting scheduled for 3rd October, 2013 be convened in Talwrn.**

Action Arising: Head of Service (Policy) to liaise with the Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn and the Director of Community to make arrangements for a workshop in the Autumn.

The Director of Community informed the Liaison Committee's Members that Anglesey's project to develop Age well Community Centres for older people had won a Social Care Accolade for 2013.

**Mr Islwyn Humphreys
Chair**