

Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Alun Mummery (IOACC) (Chair)
Mr Islwyn Humphreys (Samaritans) (Vice-Chair)

Local Authority

Councillors Jim Evans, Kenneth Hughes, Alwyn Rowlands

Voluntary Sector

Mrs Dilys Shaw (Medrwn Môn)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr John R. Jones (Chief Officer Medrwn Môn)
Mrs Gwen Carrington (Director of Community – IOACC)
Mr J. Huw Jones (Interim Head of Democratic Services)
Lyndsey Campbell-Williams (Project Officer, Medrwn Môn)
Ann Holmes (Committee Officer)

APOLOGIES: Mr Wyn Thomas (BCUHB), Eleri Lloyd Jones (Age Cymru), Ann Jones (Merched y Wawr)

ALSO PRESENT: Anwen Davies (Senior Partnerships Manager Gwynedd & Ynys Môn) (for item 8)

1 CHAIRPERSON

Councillor Alun Mummery was elected Chairperson of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee for the forthcoming year.

Councillor Mummery thanked his predecessor in the Chair, Mr Islwyn Humphreys for his wisdom and guidance during the preceding year.

2 VICE-CHAIRMANSHIP

Mr Islwyn Humphreys, Samaritans was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee for the forthcoming year.

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

4 MINUTES 19TH MARCH, 2014 MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee were presented and confirmed as correct.

Arising thereon –

- The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn confirmed that he and the Interim Head of Democratic Services were now conducting monthly meetings to discuss the Council's priorities and to establish where best to utilise the voluntary sector's expertise and input. The Interim Head of Democratic Services said that a meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs held earlier that week to consider ways of strengthening the scrutiny process had given consideration to ways of working more closely with the voluntary sector and other stakeholders to ascertain what is important to them. Further engagement with stakeholders is planned to obtain an understanding of their concerns thereby

enriching the scrutiny process. The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn referred to the concept of a Citizen Panel.

- The Director of Community confirmed that the Intermediate Care Programme is progressing and that in this context Members and Officers are lobbying for the continuation of the opportunities that emanate from this type of scheme – the voluntary sector is asked to lend its voice to those efforts. An improved financial settlement for the Health Service in Wales is likely for next year providing an opportunity to promote care within the community. The view is that this initiative has been successful and that the funding which supports it belongs to all the partners involved and has brought with it shared benefits.
- The Director of Community confirmed that the Integrated Board has been established, and is operational; three development sessions have been held and a fourth is being planned. There is to be focus on co-location with a view to rolling out a co-location programme based on the principle of who should go where. Elements of co-location are already in place e.g. community nurses in Llangefni.

5 LOCAL COMPACT - FUNDING CODE

The Director of Community reported that efforts had been made to facilitate the Local Compact's pathway through the County Council. A briefing paper was presented to the Senior Leadership Team with the outcome that a working group is to be established to examine financial arrangements with a view to putting in place corporate arrangements to identify partnerships, agreements and financial contributions to encompass the whole range of grants to third parties. There are questions to be asked regarding the nature of the services which the Authority wishes the sector to provide; where in the community does the infrastructure and support need to be reinforced and the commissioning and provision of services in terms of who is the best provider. Whilst efforts have also been made to identify opportunities for volunteering, it is suggested that the former should be the priority work stream at this time. It needs to be emphasised that there are no issues in relation to accepting the principles of the compact and that the discussion is about governance arrangements as those relate to the Council's partnerships.

Points raised in discussion –

- The need to finalise arrangements around the Compact and Funding Code so that they become established
- That it would be an act of goodwill for the Funding Code to be accepted as it is a corporate code which formalises the Authority's funding arrangements with the voluntary sector through the Community Directorate.
- That the work in relation to refining needs in terms of commissioning and providing, and in evaluating investments in the voluntary sector provides an opportunity for highlighting what the sector has to offer.
- Given the sector's need for assurance and stability in terms of future planning, the work around clarifying the requirements as regards the sector's input and formulating a strategy jointly with the sector is important.

ACTION ARISING: Director of Community to make a statement regarding the position to the next meeting.

6 THE CORPORATE PLAN 2013-17

It was agreed to consider item 9 on the agenda – The Corporate Plan and Community Engagement/Consultation in this context.

Lyndsey Campbell-Williams, Project Officer reported on a proposal to formalise the Authority's engagement and consultation practices across the work-streams associated with the Corporate Plan by working in formal partnership with Community Voices which is a voluntary sector project dealing with nine of the hardest to engage communities on Anglesey and what that would entail in practice in terms of guiding principles, governance arrangements and target outputs. A copy of the Building Communities Seiriol Asset Mapping plan was circulated.

Points raised in discussion –

- Confirmation of how productive the model has been in practice in local settings hitherto.

- That it could serve as a corporate template for consultation/engagement involving the Council meaning that all Council services and not only those within the Community Directorate could adopt the proposed model for consultation and engagement purposes.
- That if it can be demonstrated that it works effectively within the Council then it can be adapted for and extended to Health and other services.
- That it can be developed to form a network thus enabling consultation on a number of issues simultaneously.

It was agreed to note and support the proposal.

7 THE BUDGET 2015/16 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The report of the Interim Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Office as presented to the Executive meeting held on 14th July, 2014 was presented for information. The report provided background and contextual information to the delivery of the Council's budget for 2015/16 and set out the key features for the delivery process.

The main point raised in the ensuing discussion was the need for Medrwn Môn as the umbrella agency for local voluntary bodies some of which are reliant on local authority grant funding to be informed at the earliest opportunity of the Authority's funding proposals for 2015/16 to enable them to plan accordingly, and to seek to bridge any gaps that may emerge as a result of a funding shortfall.

It was noted that a budget workshop for Elected Members to be held on 3rd October would provide an appropriate opportunity to highlight the issue given the increasing expectations on the voluntary sector in terms of its input and involvement in service provision as the Council endeavours to manage a decreasing budget.

ACTION ARISING: Portfolio Members for Housing and Social Services and for Corporate Performance to highlight at the Budget Workshop to be held on 3rd October, the importance of providing Medrwn Môn as the supporting body for local voluntary organisations with timely budget information as an integral part of the budget planning process.

8 GWYNEDD AND MÔN LOCAL SERVICES BOARD

A report by the Senior Partnerships Manager, Gwynedd and Ynys Môn setting out the initial steps in the Local Services Board's transformation journey was presented for information.

The Senior Partnerships Manager reported on the three step initial transformation journey and the formulation of priorities.

The main point raised in the ensuing discussion was the formation of robust and effective scrutiny arrangements for the LSB and the means by which the voluntary sector can have an input into the process. It was emphasised that whilst the LSB can be regarded as a force for good as a forum that seeks to co-ordinate and deliver better outcomes jointly, it needs to be able to demonstrate that it provides added value and is not an additional seam of bureaucracy.

It was agreed to note the progress to date and specifically in relation to the transformation of the joint Gwynedd and Ynys Môn Local Services Board.

9 SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING ACT

The Director of Community reported on the position with regard to the expectations arising from the legislation above and the issues involved in delivering the work programme nationally, regionally and for the Isle of Anglesey.

The Committee noted the immense body of work which implementing the work programme entails and its far reaching implications as regards how the Council fulfils its business and the ripple effects of that on its partners. The Director of Community said that she would appreciate if the voluntary sector could provide her with information on where it perceives its strengths and weaknesses lie in this context. It was suggested that given its impact on how the Council approaches the delivery of social care services, a presentation should be made to raise awareness generally within the Council about the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and what it means in

practice with information about the details around implementation to be shared in subsequent meetings.

10 VOLUNTEERING POLICY

The Director of Community reported that the Volunteering Policy has been adopted by the Council and that training for managers had taken place during the summer months to be followed by an audit of arrangements work on which needs to be resumed. The view has been taken that a review of the financial arrangements should have precedence and that aspects of volunteering can be looked at where it has been identified there is a real need to do so. This approach was supported by the Committee.

11 WHITE PAPER ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

The Interim Head of Democratic Services reported that the County Council considered its options with regard to the White Paper at a meeting held on 30th September and formally reaffirmed its stance not to enter into a voluntary merger with Gwynedd Council. The Council had also resolved to seek further discussions with the WLGA. The Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn confirmed that as an organisation it would be considering the White Paper but that it was important for it to support the Council's position at this point in time.

12 THE EXECUTIVE'S WORK PROGRAMME

The Executive's Forward Work Programme for the period from October, 2014 to May, 2015 was presented for information. The Interim Head of Democratic Services confirmed a regular dialogue with the Chief Officer of Medrwn Môn on the contents of the Work Programme so as to keep the voluntary sector updated.

13 NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting be held at 2:00 p.m. on 16 January, 2015 in Canolfan Beaumaris.

Councillor Alun Mummery
Chair