



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

SCRUTINY : SOCIAL SERVICES MEETING

TUESDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, 2020

PRESENT: Councillors: W R Smith (Chair)
S Jago (Vice-Chair)

Councillors G Richards, T Rogers, D Sammon and I Thomas

Cooptees:

I Cathrew (Social Services Scrutiny Committee)

Other Councillors in Attendance:

Councillor Chris Davies (Cabinet Member)

Officers:

L Curtis Jones (Chief Officer (Social Services)), A Edevane (Head of Adult Services), T Hudd (Family Support), S Lyons (Performance and Scrutiny Officer) and M Phillips (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
159	Apologies for absence	No apologies for absence were received as all members of the committee were in attendance.
160	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	No Declarations of Interest were received.

161	Budget Update for Scrutiny Committee	<p>Lisa Curtis-Jones provided the committee with an overview of the Budget Update and highlighted that it has been a very difficult process due to Covid-19.</p> <p>The following questions were raised and answered in detail by the officers in attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is currently an underspend in Integrated Community Equipment Store (ICES) is this in anyway causing delays in discharges from hospital and therefore blocking beds. What is the reason for the underspend • If there is an underspend at the end of the year in relation to ICES does the money stay with the local authority • There is currently a very large overspend in Children's Residential Placements, wouldn't it be better to put more funds into the budget at the start to reduce the chance of further large overspends in the future • Can the budget tables include the figure that the budget was set to at the start of the year so that the committee can better understand the figures • In relation to 7.3 of the report it mentions additional services through the integrated care fund and the transformation fund to allow innovation to continue across the region which includes developing phase two stay well at home programme. Can you provide more information about this and the impact it will have this winter <p>The Chair thank Lisa Curtis-Jones for the excellent report in light of the current and ongoing situation with Covid-19. The Chair also commented on the excellent work that is being carried out by Social Services Staff on a daily basis under very difficult circumstances.</p>
162	Transition of Young People Leaving Care	<p>Taryn Hudd provided the committee with the salient points within the report and an insight into the transition of young people leaving care.</p> <p>The following questions were raised by the committee and responded to in detail by the officers in attendance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In an average year how many Care Leavers come out of the system in Merthyr Tydfil

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In relation to Children Looked After and positive results from GCSE etc there is a lack of figures. This would be useful to see how many sat exams and what the results were as this would allow us the celebrate the achievements and also see where the gaps are if exams were not sat or if the results were very low.• Item 5.7 of the report states that in 2021 you aim to place 4 care experienced young people in Council settings to undertake work experience. Has this happened and can you provide details of where this work experience is taking place in the Council• A requested was made that future reports include a more detailed breakdown to show what settings the work experience is taking place in• In relation to the Pathway to Work Scheme, can you confirm if Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council have signed up to the Governments Kick Start Scheme for young people. The scheme provides 100% of funding for a six-month placement for 25hrs per week which would be ideal for our Care Leavers.• In relation to The Pathway to Work Project is it a rolling programme as it isn't clear. It shows in year one there are four work experience placements, so are there four new placements in year two or only the traineeship available• The report states that there has been a decline in face-to-face contacts in line with the Welsh Government restrictions, is this have a detrimental effect on the scenario of transition planning for our young people• Can Social Services push to receive the support of the Local Authority as a whole to be able to provide job opportunities for the young people of Merthyr Tydfil• How strong are the links with Council Departments in relations to creating job opportunities and is there something that can be done to make them even stronger moving forward <p>The Cabinet member for Social Services addressed the committee and highlighted the good work that is being carried out in relation to The Pathway to Work and the excellent challenges put forward by the committee members in their questioning of the report. It was also suggested that the Pathway to Work Programme be shared with the committee to provide a better understanding of the plans going forward.</p>
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		<p>The Cabinet Member also assured the Committee that he would follow up on the Councils plans in relation to the Government's Kick Start Scheme for young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a young person begins to live independently what issues do you face from negative peer pressure and how do you deal with the issues <p>The Chair thanked Taryn for the excellent report.</p>
163	Forward Work Programme 2020/21	The Scrutiny Officer provided an updated to the committee in relation to the Forward Work Programme and what items will be coming to the next meeting in January 2021.
164	Scrutiny Referrals, Feedback and Follow up Actions	The Chair advised that there were no referrals, feedback or follow up actions.
165	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	The Chair and the Committee reflected on the issues that had been considered.
166	Any other business deemed urgent by the Chair	<p>The Chair requested a verbal update from Lisa Curtis-Jones in relation to the current Covid-19 situation in Merthyr Tydfil Care Homes.</p> <p>Lisa Curtis-Jones provided a short concise update in relation to how Care Homes are currently coping with the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The Chair requested that a verbal update be provided at every meeting of the committee going forward.</p>