

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 14 JANUARY 2016 AT 10.00 AM

Present

Councillor HJ Townsend – Chairperson

M Gregory

MEJ Nott OBE

PJ White

HM Williams

Invitees:

Councillor M W Butcher

Councillor N Farr

Councillor C A Green

Councillor R C Jones

Councillor A D Owen

Councillor C Reeves

Councillor M Reeves

Councillor D Sage

Councillor M Thomas

Officers:

Avril Bracey

Group Manager - Mental Health

Sarah Daniel

Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Paul Williams

Equality and Engagement Officer

112. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Officers/ Members for the reasons so stated

Councillor H David – Other Council Business

Councillor C E Smith – Other Council Business

113. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

114. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet Committee Equalities held on 17 September 2015 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

115. WALES EXTREMISM AND COUNTER TERRORISM UNIT

The Equality and Engagement Officer welcomed Simon Thomas and Jane Morris from the Wales Extremism and Counter Terrorism Unit at South Wales Police to the meeting. He introduced the report which detailed the current threat of extremism and terrorism across the UK and provided a local context for Members.

The Officers from the Wales Extremism and Counter Terrorism Unit gave an insightful presentation to the Cabinet Committee that covered the current threat and risk picture

across the UK, and provided a local context for Bridgend. The presentation also covered the New Prevent Duty under the Counter Terrorism Security Act 2015, and the Channel Programme, which was designed to manage and support people vulnerable to violent extremism. The Officers also provided an overview of the new statutory authority duties in relation to the above.

A Member asked if awareness training was available for street-refuse collectors given that bombs were being made out of easily available household items. The Prevent Case Management Coordinator stated that South Wales Police had made an application to the Home Office for a grant of £10k for the delivery of "prevent awareness" training. If successful the training would focus on schools, but there would also be a series of E-Learning training packages made available to raise awareness for frontline staff.

The Cabinet Member Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing thanked the Officers for the report and presentation and stated that awareness of radicalised extremism was essential to ensure that everyone stayed safe.

A Member thanked the officers for the presentation and asked if the protection strategy included a possible cyber-attack. The Prevent Case Manager stated that there was a cyber unit based in London that researched and removed extreme and radical views from the internet. She added that the unit also looked at the content of what the public were researching online so they could reduce possibilities of an attack.

A Member stated that a law should be passed to not allow people back into the UK if they have been to Syria to train with ISIS. The Prevent Case Manager stated that this law is in fact already in place but the difficulty was proving that this is what they had in fact been to Syria for. Many people are able to easily claim they have been to visit family, providing aid or receiving healthcare and it was very difficult to prove otherwise if they had strong links to the Country.

A Member suggested that in order to raise awareness further, it would be useful to arrange for the presentation to be presented to full Council; members could then share their awareness with their constituents.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Equalities Committee received and considered the report.

116. SUPPORT IN BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE ISSUES

The Group Manager Mental Health submitted a report to the Cabinet Committee with an update regarding the provision of mental health services to adults in the borough, the Mental Health Commissioning Plan and progress concerning the Dementia Strategy Plan. She reported on progress in the following areas:

- The Local Primary Mental Health Service continued to go from strength to strength with customer service questionnaires indicated that 90% of those in receipt of the service indicating they would recommend it to others.
- A single point of access (SPA) for GP referrals into secondary mental health services had successfully been piloted in Bridgend. This was being evaluated with a view to rolling out the scheme in Neath, Port Talbot and Swansea.
- An accommodation work stream had been put in place for a single procurement and brokerage process for high cost specialist mental health placements. This was enabling the Authority to collaborate with colleagues in communities to develop specific mental health housing projects such as increased provision of

floating support and a specialist housing project for those with complex mental health issues.

- An initiative was being developed to raise awareness of mental health issues in schools. The initiative also aimed to help early identification of mental health concerns regarding young people and facilitate early intervention.
- The development of an electronic library of online self-help guides to offer information and advice on a wide range of subjects that included anxiety, dealing with bereavement and alcohol dependency. By the 5 November 2015 there had been 1624 visits to the electronic library across the region.
- There had been a comprehensive consultation and engagement exercise on the delivery of the dementia strategy. This had taken the form of focus groups throughout the borough and individuals had also been able to respond via the BCBC website. Early indications showed that the priorities identified improvements in service provision, diagnosis and timely intervention, access to information and training were correct although concern had been raised regarding the ability to deliver in a challenging financial context.
- A system for monitoring individual movement (Just Checking) to confirm levels of support required was currently being piloted.

The Group Manager added that whilst much had been achieved over the last year a lot remained to be achieved and there were significant challenges ahead.

The Cabinet Member Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing congratulated the Group Manager on her new post and thanked her for her immense work and efforts on considerably improving the Mental Health Service within the Borough.

A Member stated that providing drop-ins was an excellent way for the public to receive support as it removed a lot of the stigma attached to Mental Health issues and was easy for people to access which made it more likely that they would seek help.

The Equality and Engagement Officer informed Members that the Authority had recently provided training to staff on mental health issues to remove the stigma. He stated that over 200 people had attended the courses and many were able to discuss their own experiences of mental health. He added that there was also an E-Learning training module available for staff to complete.

A Member asked if there was a possibility of providing a crisis centre in the Borough. The Group Manager Mental Health stated that discussions were taking place to explore if this was a possibility as this had been a success in Leeds

The Chairperson asked if the police were trained and knew how to manage a situation if they took someone into custody with a mental health issue. The Group Manager Mental Health stated there was a multi-agency risk forum that included the police, the probation service, housing agencies and mental health team that had agreed a collaborative plan on how to work with individuals with mental health issues, she added that for example under the Mental Health Act people with Mental Health issues should not be detained in a cell.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Equalities Committee received the report and noted the developments in mental health services, the mental health commissioning and delivery plan and progress concerning the dementia strategy and delivery plan.

117. 6 MONTHLY UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2012 - 2016

The Equality and Engagement Officer provided a report to members with an update on the implementation of the current Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives. He informed Committee that many actions had been concluded which supported the development of new/improved service provision and the remaining actions were on track for completion during the remainder of the current Strategic Equality Plan.

The Chairperson thanked the Equality and Engagement Officer for his work in implementing the plan and stated it was pleasing to see so many of the objectives had been marked as green.

A Member stated that there were only three taxis in the whole Borough that that were able to carry a disabled passenger making it extremely difficult to be able to get a taxi for the time needed, especially at short notice. He stated that the Licensing department could look at increasing this when issuing licenses for new drivers. The Chairperson added that it would be useful for Councillors to work with the disabled community and spend the day shadowing them to see the challenges that they are faced with on a daily basis. The Equalities and Engagement Officer stated that transportation was a major issue and one that the Authority was continually trying to improve and continued to be an objective.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet Equalities Committee considered the report and the progress being made.

118. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015 ON THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

The Equalities and Engagement Officer provided a report to Committee with an update on the work being done to develop the Council's fourth Annual report 2014-2015 on the strategic equality plan. He added that the Council had published annual reports on its Strategic Equality Plan since 2011/12. The SEP annual report specifically set out:

- The steps taken to identify and collect relevant information
- Any reasons for not collecting relevant information
- Progress towards fulfilling each of the equality objectives
- Specific employment information, including information on training and pay

The Cabinet Member Communities asked if there were subsidies in place for people with disabilities that need to use taxis as Welsh Government offered a subsidy for bus use. The Equality and Engagement officer stated that this was currently not an option as the taxi firms were private firms, although this could be something that the Authority could explore.

A Member stated that the Authority should speak to the local AM to lobby to put a quota on licensing taxis that are suitable to carry disabled passengers, he added that it would be in their interest to provide this service as they would in turn get more business.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Equalities Committee noted the progress being made and approved the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2014/15.

119. URGENT ITEMS

None

CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - THURSDAY, 14 JANUARY 2016

The meeting closed at 12.08 pm