

## COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 SEPTEMBER 2016

Present: County Councillor McGarry(Chairperson)  
County Councillors Ali Ahmed, Carter, Chris Davis, Lomax,  
Magill and Sanders

### 21 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence

### 22 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A declaration of interest was received from Councillor Lomax as he is a resident in Council Owned Sheltered Accommodation.

### 23 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

### 24 : CABINET RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE'S INQUIRY 'HOW TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER IN THE NTE IN A TIME OF AUSTERITY'

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Dan De'Ath Cabinet Member (Skills, Safety and Engagement) and Jon Day Economic Development Manager to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which he thanked the Committee for the thorough and forensic inquiry; he noted that Cardiff was considered relatively safe as issues were dealt with well when they arose; there was a long history of partnership working in Cardiff too. Most recommendations had been accepted and some partially accepted. Currently Cardiff was in the process of developing a Night Time Economy Strategy with partners that would inform the vision and show shared understanding; an action plan would then be developed to follow on from this. The Cabinet Member explained that he was now the Night Time Economy Champion, he also sits on the Safer and Cohesive Programme Board; he added that there was lots of good work being done with Bar and Door Staff.

Members were reminded that there was £250k for the Night Time Economy from the BID business plan, there was partnership working between the Council and the Police on how this money would be spent.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Member and Officer and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members were grateful for the comprehensive response to recommendations and were pleased to hear that there was now a Cabinet Member as the Night Time Economy Champion and sought clarification on where the issue would sit as it crosses both Economic Development and other Directorates. The Cabinet Member advised that it would sit with the City Centre/BID team under the Director of Economic Development, with the Leader and CEX being involved through the Public Service Board.
- Members asked for a timescale for the Strategy to be ready and were advised that there was no date as yet as it was a work in progress. Members were concerned that Cardiff had not provided input into the Welsh Government Plan.
- Members asked for views on the Late Night Levy. The Cabinet Member gave his personal view that he would want the BID to settle in first; there were questions around the practicality of the levy and other cities had not seen the money come in as expected; he felt that the BID was the most appropriate vehicle but that the levy would be looked at. With regard to timescale the Cabinet Member stated that the BID should settle first so it would not be in the next few years. Officers added that a levy would raise funds directly for the Police etc. to use whereas the BID would enable co-design of how money is used.
- Members sought clarification on what businesses are involved with the BID and were advised that the BID represents all businesses in the City Centre, including Hotels, Retail and Bars etc.
- Members asked how funding requirements would be addressed and were advised that it would be a shared vision working with partners not just about funding but also about how to police the city centre. Members were advised that the work of the inquiry would inform this work.
- Members noted that recommendation 11 was partially accepted and sought reassurance that this would be considered and were advised that it would.

AGREED – That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to relevant Cabinet Members, Directors and officers thanking them for attending the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee on 7 September 2016 and to convey the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

## 25 : PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY: ADVICE AND SUPPORT RECOMMISSIONING

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Dan De’Ath Cabinet Member (Skills, Safety and Engagement) Sarah McGill, (Director of Communities, Housing and Customer Services) Jane Thomas (Assistant Director of Communities and Housing) and Sam Harry (Category Manager Commissioning & Procurement) to the meeting.

The Chairperson advised that this item enabled Members to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the Recommissioning of Advice and Support Services, prior to

consideration at Cabinet in September. Members were advised that Councillor De'Ath was attending for the gender specific support services element of the report only; officers were dealing with the other aspects of the report in Councillor Elsmore's absence.

The Chairperson reminded Committee that they had received confidential information (Appendix G to the Cabinet Report which was at Appendix 1 in their papers) and therefore part of the meeting would be held in private, in closed session and Members were not permitted to ask questions relating to Appendix G until the closed session.

The open session would start with a presentation covering the overarching elements of the proposals. The presentation then had a section on each area of proposals, which would be taken in stages, Members could ask questions on each area before moving on.

The Chairperson invited the Director to make a statement in which she stated that this was a very substantial piece of work, with lots of detail which was why it had been broken into sections. With reducing resource, it was important that things were put in place to make the best use of resources for the best possible outcomes for clients.

The Chairperson invited overarching questions and comments from Members:

- Members sought reassurance that the phased approach would not mean an element of ambiguity for those tendering for service provision in both categories. Officers advised that each phase relates to specific contracts that exist at the moment, it hasn't been split and officers were already waiting to recommission services in the second phase.
- Members asked about the rationale for such a scale down of providers' overall and the rationale behind the timescales; as these are based on predictions on the supported people grant being reduced, but still waiting on the Welsh Government Settlement and wondered whether it would be better to wait until next year when these would be known. Officers explained that they had given considerable consideration to the numbers of providers, economies of scale were needed to protect services to clients; it would enable more expertise and the joined up nature of services would allow more flex. Cuts would be made from April 2017 and, if made, if not the flex would allow for more money to be added if available. The Director added that it was all about sustainability in a time of year on year cuts; contracts needed to be of a size that can manage the situation.
- Members discussed mental health provision in both generic and specific services and wanted to exercise caution that there may be economies of scale and better expertise by not splitting these services.
- Members asked if there was an expectation that the providers may have an umbrella arrangement to take away the risk from the Council. Officers stated that yes this was the expectation and that they have been very specific that this could be 1 provider or consortia, it was open to all.

## Gender Specific

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which he noted the work that was being done with many groups including Women's Aid and service users and noted that the service was for men too.

Members were provided with a presentation on Recommissioning of Gender Specific Services; the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members considered Generalised Workers and sought reassurances that expertise would remain in relation to IDVA's as conviction rates are increasing. Officers agreed it was important to keep the expertise and noted that the organisation should also have a legal expertise. Currently there are IDVA's and floating support workers, not all staff would be generic, some would work across but expertise would remain.
- In relation to Stakeholders, members considered that the CPS and Ministry of Justice could be included as they have key roles; Officers thought that this was a good suggestion.
- Members considered the issue of pets needing to be considered and noted that the Dogs Trust will foster dogs. Officers agreed that was an important consideration and that also it was important to move people swiftly into accommodation where they can take their pets, rather than into a refuge.
- In relation to target hardening, Members noted that it was not just the perpetrator but also the family, friends and local community that needed to be considered. Officers considered that this was a major issue; they met with the police who have domestic violence expertise and noted that each case was very different and that sometimes it was not suitable for people to stay if family were in the area.
- Members welcomed and understood the joining up of services. Members noted from the presentation that the contract would have 4 different components and asked if there would be an evidence base for the proposed service provision at set up. Officers stated that they have looked at research and work undertaken in other Councils, there would be changes based on what is happening elsewhere but it wouldn't be too prescriptive.
- With reference to the Safe Lives Report, Members had previously sought reassurance that underrepresented groups would be included so that they have an equal opportunity to the service provision. Officers advised that all staff are trained and know to ask questions if they think something is wrong, this included hard to reach groups.
- Members asked in relation to economies of scale, what mechanisms were in place to ensure these would be achieved in relation to providers' overheads such as back office/management costs etc. Officers explained it would be a competitive process and if a provider's management costs were too high then they wouldn't be very competitive. Officers added that they would expect to see how the organisation was organised especially if it was consortia, they would need to be innovative.

- With regards to consultation, members considered that at a tendering workshop then the comments would be positive as people would not want to spoil any future chances at successful tender if they made negative comments. Officers disagreed and stated that they have worked with providers for over a year on the gateway project and they have ongoing dialogue with regards to services, they didn't consider that providers would have held back if there were real issues; officers were confident it was a fair consultation and that all were consulted.
- Members discussed the One Stop Shop and considered it was important that it would be well advertised, but discreet and safe. There would also be other ways of accessing the service such as phone calls and emails.
- Members noted the importance of regular reviews going forward; officers stated that this was a real opportunity to join up services and flex them over time; it would be very difficult to flex if there were separate contracts; the reviews would take place as part of the contract management.
- Members noted there were currently 68 units and asked how this would change and also sought asked what the price/quality split would be and how officers could ensure there would be no race to the bottom. Officers explained that a unit is 1 person being supported at any one time; with regard to size, officers weren't suggesting a reduction but that economies of scale would mean more robust services; there would be a minimum number to be supported to meet statutory regulations. Officers advised that there would be a 50/50 price/quality split, with specific quality into services to avoid race to the bottom, each element would be looked at to pick up on the quality aspect.
- Members asked for the numbers of male victims and were advised that the report states that current users of the service are 2.23% male and 97.77% female; but noted that these are indicative figures.
- The Chairperson asked that Committee are afforded the opportunity to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the final Cabinet Decision and officers agreed to bring the item back to committee when the specifics are finalised.

The Chairperson invited Gwendolyn Sterk from Welsh Women's Aid to the meeting and to make her presentation, in which she stated that she welcomed being involved in the consultation and ongoing discussions; Welsh Women's Aid had produced guidance on Commissioning on these specific services; it was a needs led approach that needed to be sustainable. It was added that Cardiff was in a unique position in that there had been good specific services in place for some years however there were still some gaps in sexual violence currently. Ms Sterk stated that she would advocate consortia to build on expertise.

Members were advised that the Act would likely increase the already high demand. Male provision needed to be proportionate but not prejudice gender specific/responsive women only services. Ms Sterk added that she would be willing to work/engage with the CPS and Ministry of Justice if required.

It was noted that there needed to be a clear understanding of what a Refuge was, in that it is not just accommodation but also supports needs and is a holistic service.

With regards to providers' overheads, Ms Sterk stated that most have very low overheads as they are very small organisations.

In relation to the price/quality split, Ms Sterk expressed her concern over the 50/50 split as Welsh Government have a higher percentage based on the quality element.

The Chairperson thanked Ms Sterk for the contribution to the meeting and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members discussed Refuges and the numbers of people that are turned away from them and asked if the short term capacity was an issue for Women's Aid. Ms Sterk advised that it was a huge concern which she was raising on a National level as women often move across authorities.

### Generic & Older People Floating Support

Members were provided with a presentation on Generic and Older People Floating Support; the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members discussed Wardens in supported living accommodation and were advised that wardens were not being removed, the issue was where they were funded from i.e. via the rent; this would be up to individual landlords.
- Members wondered if there would be a disproportionate effect on small providers and whether it was conducive to social enterprise and how this would be balanced; even though Members understood it made sense from a contract point of view. Officers advised that they need to ensure that the position is sustainable with reducing budgets; it was no longer possible to carry on with lots of small arrangements in place; there needed to be a drive to deliver services in a difficult position.
- Members asked what work was doing done to ensure that the niche skills of small organisations would not be lost if provision was awarded to consortia and how would money be saved by this approach. The Director advised that in the tendering process it would be made very clear that skills would need to be available. With regard to savings, current vacancies in current service provision stand at 100+; it was expected that services would be delivered more broadly to people at home through one set of arrangements and therefore providing economies of scale.
- Members sought reassurance that Generic Floating Support workers would cover individuals with other needs as picked up in their EIA; officers explained that Generic Floating Support workers would also be able to cover low level mental health issues where no services were engaged.
- Members were concerned that there may be gaps between phase 1 and phase 2; officers explained that they were recommissioning generic services and that specialist services would remain, they would specify those who need

expertise and identify some who are hard to engage so would ask for more specialist knowledge in these areas, as well as providing for others.

- With reference to Older Peoples Gateway, Members were advised that the Independent Living Service would feed into it and also into floating support

The Chairperson welcomed the Regional Committee representatives for providers and landlords, Frances Beecher, Ceri Meloy, Mark Sheridan and Philip Richardson, to the meeting and invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members sought views on the presentations that had been given at the meeting. Mark Sheridan stated that previously they had taken cuts in an ad hoc way and the strategic approach now being taken was welcomed. He added that they had not heard enough information to determine whether there would be a race to the bottom. Finally, he stated that there were concerns over management costs, as to set up consortia would cost money.

Ceri Meloy stated that she had concerns over reduced staff, TUPE transfer, redundancies etc. She added that information at the tender stage was often not sufficient to put in a competitive tender.

Phillip Richardson stated that the numbers of providers would reduce from 14 to 2, and had concerns with what would happen if 1 went into performance measures/administration; and what the Council could do to step in/whether 1 provider could cope.

Frances Beecher stated that it had been positive that the providers' representatives were able to come to committee and be open and honest and not negatively judged by the Council. She considered that cutting from 14 to 2 was too much and that consortia seemed the way forward. However, she did not consider that it would provide economies of scale; there had been cuts over the last 5 years and no more cuts could be sustained, but providers can still provide the skills and expertise. She added that she considered the timescales too challenging and requested an extension for proper service user involvement.

- Members made reference to the consultation and asked if representatives were invited to the consultation workshops. Frances Beecher said that they were but noted that all the people in the room were in competition with each other so they could only be open to a certain extent. Mark Sheridan said that some views had not been taken on board but they did feel able to raise concerns.

In closing, Frances Beecher requested that Committee recommend that the number of providers is more than 2; that providers certainly support consortia but that it wouldn't provide economies of scale; they recognised that less money meant less units and requested that the timescales be extended until summer 2017 to allow for proper and full consultation.

The Chairperson invited officers back the table to respond to comments made:

The Director stated that with regard to numbers of providers, that it was just the generic support that was being considered and that the specialist providers would remain. If contracts were found to be not working, then the Council would be able to step in and cancel them; Consortia was an option but it couldn't be a requirement, the Council would encourage SME's to work together, however they do it, and that Consortia was a lengthy and legal process; Timescales would be discussed in closed session; there were currently 100+ unused units therefore the reduction in units of support was a way of addressing this; evidence from the Gateway had been invaluable and had told officers that in some cases support had been ongoing for too long, so monitoring was crucial to continue to provide support services in the City.

### Advice Services

Members were provided with a presentation on Advice Services and the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members were concerned that more and more support was provided in-house and in particular providing advice and wondered if there was any information available on the cost of Council provided advice versus contracted out advice. Officers stated that they had undertaken an exercise to see if they could have provided the services in-house and it could have been done, there were the added pension contributions but Council staff are paid less than providers. The Director added that there were no concerns regarding the quality of the advice but there needed to be a choice and the Council can't bid for external funding whereas providers can.
- Members were concerned over reliance on external funding this may not be sustainable/replaceable. Officers stated that this was always a risk in the current climate.
- Members asked if having to attend tribunals would be included in the contract and were advised that it was not as it was not in the current arrangements either.

The Chairperson welcomed Sheila Hendrickson-Brown from C3SC to the meeting and invited her to make her presentation, in which she thanked Committee for the opportunity to attend the meeting. She recognised that there were significant financial challenges and there was a need to respond to services going forward, and that there had been gaps in some services. She noted that lots of the responses had been supply sided rather than demand sided and there could be an analysis of who were not accessing services and whether this was contributing to social exclusion. Members were advised that volunteers had not been mentioned but should be fully considered. Feedback from third sector members in Cardiff had been positive as Cardiff has been seen to seek out and address challenges, however there needed to be an ongoing dialogue regarding innovative services in a challenging environment.

The Chairperson invited Officers back to the table to respond to comments.

- Members were advised that there are 70 volunteers who work in the Hubs.
- Officers do look to identify people who may need services and signpost them when they can.



- Service User Consultation was not specifically about the changes because the service would not be reducing but there are ongoing customer satisfaction surveys undertaken providing very positive feedback on both Council and contracted out services.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members:

- Members asked how Cardiff compares to the rest of the UK with regards to advice services and were advised that it was very difficult to compare as there were very many different approaches.
- Members asked if people who have been referred for specialist services had been consulted and officers advised that they had received high satisfaction feedback for all services.

The Chairperson informed Members and the public that the Committee would now go into closed session to consider confidential information- therefore members of the public were asked to leave the room.

The meeting reconvened in open session to discuss the way forward and it was:

AGREED – That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to relevant Cabinet Members, Directors and officers thanking them for attending the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee on 7 September 2016 and to convey the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

## 26 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Correspondence to and from the Committee was outlined and noted.

Members were advised that on 28 June 2016, the Committee met in forum mode to consider items and issues for inclusion on the potential work programme for the forthcoming municipal year. At the meeting, Members considered a wide range of possible items, including suggestions from Members and officers, performance reports, pre-decision items, policy review & development work and monitoring reports, which could be included in the Committee 2016-17 work programme. Members were asked for their views on whether to triage budget issues under the Performance Panel and then bring to Committee; after discussion on the potential workload, it was considered that this would be the best option as to add budget issues to the committee agendas would remove the welcome flex the agendas currently had.

Members views were sought on the draft work programme; Members asked when they would be able to scrutinise the Gypsy & Traveller report and were advised that it would depend on the date it goes to Cabinet but there would be pre-decision.

In general Members were happy with the work programme as it stood and were grateful for the flex it had to enable other issues to be considered if and when needed; Members wished to thank Angela Holt for her hard work in compiling the work programme.

RESOLVED: To

- i. Note the content of the correspondence schedule.
- ii. Approve the proposed work programme.

27 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on 5 October 2016 at 5.00pm in CR4, County Hall, Cardiff.