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## GOHEBIAETH YN DILYN CYFARFOD Y PWYLLGOR

**Pwyllgor** PWYLLGOR CRAFFU GWASANAETHAU OEDOLION A CHYMUNEDOL

**Dyddiad ac amser y cyfarfod** DYDD MERCHER, 7 MEDI 2016, 5.00 PM

Gweler isod gohebiaeth anfon gan Gadeirydd y Pwyllgor ar ôl y cyfarfod , ynghyd ag unrhyw ymatebion a gafwyd

Am unrhyw fanylion pellach, cysylltwch â [scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)

9 **Gohebiaeth yn dilyn Cyfarfod y Pwyllgor** (*Tudalennau 1 - 14*)

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr McGarry

27 October 2016



Councillor Daniel De'Ath and Councillor Susan Elsmore  
Cabinet Members  
c/o Room 520  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear Councillors De'Ath and Elsmore

**COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 SEPTEMBER  
2016: SUPPORT AND ADVICE SERVICES RECOMMISSIONING -  
POLICY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT LETTER**

When I wrote to Councillor De'Ath on 8 September I said that I would write a follow up letter, containing supplementary observations that Members wanted to provide on the recommissioning of Advice and Support Services.

Members were aware of the pressing deadline for publication of Cabinet papers soon after their meeting, so my first letter was limited to the recommendations that Members wished to make to help shape the final Cabinet report. I thank you sincerely for your consideration and diligence in taking the Committee's views on board in that final report.

We welcomed the offer in Councillor De'Ath's response to my letter that officers will be pleased to return to Committee at an appropriate point to provide feedback on progress with the recommissioning processes (especially the draft contract specifications). **I will be grateful if Jane Thomas can liaise with Angela Holt to arrange this.**

As the evidence we received from officers and external witnesses at the meeting was so informative, we felt that it could be useful to share this evidence with you in writing, rather than for the insight to be lost. I will not repeat the issues contained in my previous letter, and hope the following points will be of interest.

**OBSERVATIONS ON GENDER-SPECIFIC SUPPORT**

While recognising limits to officer capacity (and in particular the already heavy workloads of Independent Domestic Violence Advocates), Members **recommend** that the new specification contains provision for close working and alignment between generic and specialist support services to enable target hardening in cases

of domestic violence. They were pleased that Jane Thomas had already been considering how the CPS and NODS could be engaged in this.

Members **recommend** that the specification allows for people who experience domestic violence to maintain optimal contact with their children and pets. Members were aware that The Dogs Trust and RSPCA would both be useful to engage to see how pets could be incorporated within refuge arrangements. We were reassured to hear Jane support this view, and also her view that arrangements would as often as possible allow the victim to stay in the family home, with the perpetrator being evicted. Members considered that the Deprivation of Liberty Standards were a useful potential read across, and encouraged Jane to liaise with Adult Services colleagues on this issue to ensure that enough expert capacity could be built into future arrangements.

Members sought reassurance that the additional vulnerability of “hard to reach groups” highlighted in the Safe Lives Report was being actively considered. Jane confirmed that capacity to manage these issues could be potentially included as part of the specification, and that some future provision could be delivered by outreach. In any case, the Act required all staff to be trained to “ask and act” to spot potential abuse.

Members also **recommend** that the specification provides opportunities for people to self-refer and access support in ways that they can easily incorporate into their existing daily routines, without creating suspicion in their partner’s mind. Clearly shops, doctor’s surgeries and schools all offer environments for confidentially reporting abuse, and we hope these opportunities will be built into future commissioning arrangements.

Members were concerned to identify how, given ongoing pressure on resources, the Council would be able to avoid the “race to the bottom”. They noted the officers’ position that: the baseline would be the minimum number of units that need to be provided; clearly, the provider might be able to exceed this number; and there was an appetite within the Council for further thinking to go in to see how capacity could be maximised, with Children’s Services and other partners wanting to shape arrangements creatively.

I said I would not repeat issues from my previous letter, but a recurring theme in all the discussions held on the night was in trying to ensure that as diverse a range of expert inputs could be secured through commissioning arrangements, and we urge you to consider how to take advantage of the wide range of expert services provided by small providers.

Finally, Members received very helpful evidence from Gwendolyn Sterk of Welsh Women’s Aid (WWA). To summarise, these were the main points contained within her evidence:

- Welsh Women’s Aid have as their mission the development of “strength-based, needs-led services with results that last”.
- Cardiff was in a unique position in this area, with some excellent domestic, violence, sex work, black and minority ethnic and male focussed services.

- There are some gaps in local domestic violence service provision.
- WWA would encourage a “consortium” to be developed and a co-production approach.
- WWA would expect “quality” to feature more highly than “cost” in the commissioning criteria.
- Commissioned services must secure a sufficiency of refuge places, which have been under great pressure across Wales. Similarly, there should be a sufficiency of gender responsive services, for both male and female victims.
- Refuge is not just crisis support, but a holistic, needs-led provision that lasts as long as the victim needs support.
- IDVA workloads are very high. Authorities need to work with agencies such as the CPS on target hardening.
- Management costs for domestic violence services are already generally exceptionally low, as they have been cut back to focus on the front line.

## **OBSERVATIONS ON GENERIC AND OLDER PEOPLE’S SUPPORT**

A Member expressed concern that future arrangements might see a reduction in provision of wardens, which could lead to a reduction in good order, and timeliness of response, while potentially reducing control of bullying. Members recognise that new Welsh Government guidance prevents the Council from funding wardens through the Supporting People grant, but were pleased to hear Sarah and Jane affirming the need for wardens, and their commitment to seeking alternative funding mechanisms, for instance from rents.

Another Member asked for details of the number of staff in place at Nelson House, and Jane kindly offered to provide this information. **Please could she send this to Angela Holt for distribution to the Member?**

A Member asked how the wide range of needs identified in the equality impact assessment would be met. She was reassured by Jane’s response that the specification would be very inclusive, and that despite the phasing of generic and specialist support, specialist providers would be in place throughout the process.

Members were grateful that Ceri Meloy, Frances Beecher, Phillip Richardson and Mark Sheridan were able to attend Committee to give evidence on behalf of providers and Registered Social Landlords. The central points they made were incorporated into my previous letter, but I thought it might be helpful to detail some of the other key points they made:

- The representatives were grateful that the Council had responded positively to their suggestion that after some “ad hoc” cuts made previously, a more strategic review of provision could be undertaken.
- They also expressed their genuine appreciation of the transparency of the consultation process, and the opportunity they had been afforded to raise their concerns openly.

They were concerned at:

- The proposed size of the financial reduction of £900,000, equating to 30%, which they felt would lead to staffing cuts, which they did not feel were always factored into specifications.
- The proposal to reduce the number of providers from 14 to two. Their concern was centred on what would happen if one of the two went into administration, or special measures, and they questioned how easy it would be for the Council to manage underperformance of such a small number of providers.
- They supported the idea of a consortium, which they felt would support delivery of flexible, adaptable services, but which they did not feel would necessarily deliver efficiencies in its own right.
- The proposed timescale, which they felt to be too short to allow for developing a consortium.

Members were pleased that officers provided responses to the concerns, and are sure that they have thought long and hard to develop optimal arrangements. As I mentioned in my previous letter, we look forward to continuing to work with you towards the best possible commissioning arrangements under the circumstances.

## **OBSERVATIONS ON ADVICE SERVICES**

Members were pleased to hear that the Council has undertaken an exercise to see if the Council could deliver advice services in-house, in case a provider did not come forward. We note the officers' view that quality outcomes from in-house provision are very high, and that overheads are not significantly above those of external providers.

Members noted that there had been a recent review of existing Advice Services and would be interested to have sight of this. **Please can you arrange for a copy to be sent to Angela Holt, for distribution to the Committee?**

Officers recognised that some service users might prefer to seek advice from an independent source and that there were other projects to which service users can be referred. However, Members were concerned that given funding pressures it might be difficult to rely upon some of these independent providers.

The Committee valued the evidence provided by Sheila Hendrickson Brown of Cardiff Third Sector Council. Sheila acknowledged the great strides taken by the Council on this issue, and also that there had been gaps in the provision previously delivered. She also understood that with funding reducing, it was in some ways inevitable that services would be delivered increasingly in-house.

There were, however, some risks to manage to avoid unintentionally losing the additional benefits provided through co-production with the third sector. In particular:

- The benefit of the specialist skills that smaller and larger voluntary groups had built up with service users, and the ease of access that they provided.

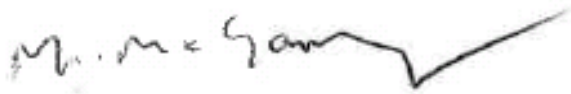
- The added value of social interaction and volunteering delivered through the voluntary sector.
- The impact on the capacity and funding of third sector organisations.

Sheila hoped that the resultant services would listen to the voices of marginalised service users and support their needs, and that lessons could continue to be learnt to develop a truly inclusive service.

I hope that the three above recommendations will be of benefit to you in refining the commissioning framework, and will provide a useful point of reference when officers bring the item back to scrutiny.

I will also be grateful if Jane would provide the two pieces of information requested, regarding staffing arrangements at Nelson House, and the review of Advice Services, to Angela Holt.

Yours sincerely



**COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARY M<sup>C</sup>GARRY**  
**Chairperson - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

Cc: Sarah McGill  
Jane Thomas  
Liz Patterson  
Chantel Abel  
Matt Swindell  
Gwendolyn Sterk, Welsh Women's Aid  
Ceri Meloy, Dimensions  
Frances Beecher, Llamau  
Phillip Richardson, Cadwyn  
Mark Sheridan, Taff Housing  
Sheila Hendrickson-Brown, C3SC

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol





Fy Nghyf / My Ref : **CM 35661**

Eich Cyf / Your Ref : **Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr McGarry**

Dyddiad / Date: **9th September 2016**

Cllr Mary McGarry  
Cardiff County Council  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
Butetown  
Cardiff  
**CF10 4UW**

Annwyl / Dear Councillor McGarry

**COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 SEPTEMBER  
2016: SUPPORT AND ADVICE SERVICES RECOMMISSIONING**

Thank you for your letter setting out your recommendations relating to the Advice and Support Recommissioning Process. I very much welcome the constructive and helpful comments set out in the letter.

I look forward to receiving your more detailed letter in due course and both Councillor Elsmore and I will make a fuller response at that time, however, I wanted to respond immediately to your recommendations to make changes to the report. All your recommendations have been accepted and changes have been made to the report to reflect this:-

- **The packaging proposals for procurement**

Each section of the report has been amended to include a statement that confirms that bids will be welcome from single providers, consortia or a lead provider with sub-contractors will be accepted. The possibility of the more informal approach of a lead provider in partnership with other organisations was made clear during the provider workshops, and C3SC had organised a networking event on the Councils behalf to encourage providers to work

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*Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg a byddwn yn sicrhau ein bod yn cyfathrebu â chi yn eich dewis iaith boed yn Gymraeg, yn Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn creu unrhyw oedi.*

*The Council welcomes correspondence in English and Welsh and we will ensure that we communicate with you in the language of your choice, whether that's English, Welsh or bilingual as long as you let us know which you prefer.*



together. This is a very helpful addition to the report and clarifies the intention of the Council to encourage joint working between providers.

- **The Balance of Quality and Cost**

I note your comment on the cost/quality ratio and also the comments of Welsh Women's Aid on this issue. There are no firm proposals as yet for the cost / quality ratio for the Gender Specific tender, it is recognised that more time is needed for the complex commissioning exercise. The report has been amended to confirm that further research will be undertaken on this matter before proceeding with the recommissioning.

- **The Delegation of Arrangements for Procuring Gender Specific Services**

I would be very happy for the Committee to have further involvement in the Gender Specific proposals as the further detail is developed. The report has been amended to include this. Officers will also be happy to feed back to committee on progress with the other recommissioning processes; your oversight of these issues will be very welcome.

- **Maintaining Flexibility, and a "Learning Culture" Approach**

I also note your comment about a learning culture and the need to learn from providers and sector organisations regarding the lessons from other commissioning arrangements. The consultation section of the report has been amended to reflect this commitment.

May I commend the Committee for the very thorough scrutiny of this issue and the constructive comments. I would also like to thank you as Chair on behalf of myself and the officers who attended for the very professional manner in which the meeting was conducted.

I look forward to your further comments on this matter.

Yn gwyir  
Yours sincerely



**Y Cyngorydd / Councillor Councillor Daniel De'Ath**  
**Aelod Cabinet Dros Cabinet Member for Safety, Engagement & Democracy**

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr McGarry

08 September 2016

Councillor Daniel De'Ath  
Cabinet Member for Safety, Skills, Engagement and Democracy  
c/o Room 520  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW



Dear Councillor De'Ath

**COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 SEPTEMBER 2016: SUPPORT AND ADVICE SERVICES RECOMMISSIONING**

Thank you for attending Committee last night with Sarah McGill, Jane Thomas and Sam Harry to present your draft proposals for recommissioning of Advice and Support Proposals. Please pass on our sincere thanks to officers for their diligence and patience in participating in what was a long and interesting meeting. Members found their evidence to be very helpful.

I recognise that Councillor Elsmore was unable to attend the meeting, and that you attended specifically in relation to the recommissioning of Gender Specific Services. I am writing this letter to you on the understanding that Cabinet has sought Members' feedback on the proposals in advance of your meeting on Thursday 15 September. Given the complexity and range of your proposals, I will be writing again to you and to Councillor Elsmore with more general comments and feedback.

This letter contains views which Members felt were most urgent to be communicated to Cabinet given the imminent publication of your papers for the 15 September meeting, and we hope that these views may help inform any decisions you make then.

The points in this letter cover the following four elements of the draft Cabinet report:

- The way that the commissioning packages might be offered to prospective bidders;
- The balance between quality and cost in the evaluation of tenders;
- The level of delegation suggested for commissioning Gender Specific Support, given the current lack of detail available for this proposal; and
- The need to retain flexibility, and to maintain a firm "learning culture" approach as recommissioning arrangements move forward.

## THE PACKAGING OF PROPOSALS THROUGH PROCUREMENT

Your proposals offer a radical realignment of the way services are currently provided, which is designed to generate efficiencies and resilience. You will be aware that there will be risks inherent in this approach, but while we have natural concerns at the significant reduction in proposed providers (wondering if the number of Floating Support providers could for instance be less significantly reduced), we heard the officers express confidence that the proposed solution was robust and resilient, and respect this judgement.

We do, however, have a suggestion about how these packages can be offered through procurement. Members heard useful evidence from four members of the Provider Forum, who had consulted Forum members in advance of the meeting to secure a representative view on the Generic and Older People Floating Support proposals. Their clear message was that, while the Consortium approach (commended as a possibility in your draft proposals) was an appropriate way to possibly maximise the package's inclusivity, creativity, flexibility, expertise and resilience, it carried two key risks:

- The first of these was that the timescale for the recommissioning of these services was not long enough to robustly prepare for the creation of a Consortium, which they suggested should take up to two years, given the complexities involved in creating this legal entity. It was for this reason that they requested a delay in your agreeing these proposals to July 2017.
- The second was that a Consortium would not effectively reduce management overheads and increase efficiency. Indeed, there was a possibility that overheads could increase, given the administrative role that the lead provider might need to fulfil in managing the Consortium.

Consequently, there was a view expressed by various witnesses throughout the meeting that Cabinet might wish to consider as an alternative the simpler approach of a 'lead and supportive bidders' model, as currently in place, for instance, in the current advice contract with 'Cardiff Advice Services', which sees Citizen's Advice working in partnership with The Speakeasy Advice Centre.

While we can see that – given enough time – a Consortium would be a desirable way of ensuring wide input into a resilient overall service – we are concerned about the timescale issues, and would **recommend** that your draft report makes reference to the possibility of commissioning a lead organisation with potentially several sub-contractors, before the concept of a Consortium becomes framed as the only possible partnership model for you to take forward for these proposals.

## THE BALANCE OF QUALITY AND COST

This Committee has in the past commented on the prevalence of using the 50/50 quality and cost split in tender specification and evaluation. This may work well in many circumstances, but when procuring complex services for highly vulnerable service users we have a natural tendency to consider that quality should occupy a

more significant focus. Committee heard evidence from Gwendolyn Sterk of Welsh Women's Aid, who referred to interesting developments in thinking at a Welsh Government level on this matter, and **recommend** that your draft report retains flexibility to allow officers to undertake further research with Welsh Government and other local authorities to see if there are other approaches to the percentage split that would be more appropriate to meet the needs of people requiring these services.

## **THE DELEGATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROCURING GENDER SPECIFIC SERVICES**

Your draft Cabinet report makes clear that further thinking needed to be invested in considering the size, nature and cost of the commissioning package for Gender Specific Services before a specification could be developed, and that the commissioning specification and evaluation proposals were still developing. Sarah McGill made clear at the meeting that she would be content to return to the Committee with draft proposals in the above areas, so that Committee could provide further advice before they are determined. We therefore **recommend** that part 4i of the recommendations in the draft Cabinet report be amended to include reference to the future role of scrutiny in shaping the emerging recommissioning proposals (specifically for 'gender specific services' but potentially for all aspects of the proposals).

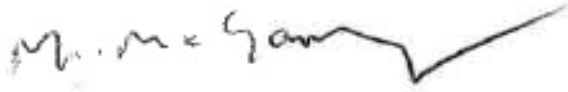
## **MAINTAINING FLEXIBILITY, AND A "LEARNING CULTURE" APPROACH**

Committee benefited from evidence from Sheila Hendrickson-Brown of C3SC. Her evidence related specifically to Advice Services, but Members felt it was equally applicable to all aspects of the recommissioning proposals. Sheila recognised that the Council was taking bold and difficult decisions in seeking to optimise a very unsatisfactory funding environment, and paid tribute to many aspects of the excellent work being delivered through Hubs and other Council services. However, the driving need for efficiencies was forcing the Council to amalgamate support arrangements into larger and larger units, and (as in the case of Advice Services) deliver more services in-house that had traditionally been delivered through grant-funded third sector organisations.

This could naturally pose a specific threat to the sustainability of local third sector organisations, and a more general dilution of third sector and social enterprise culture in the city. We would like to stress our appreciation of the good work developing in Hubs – for instance the development of volunteering and links with local communities – but **recommend** that, as there are so many uncertainties and concerns associated with charting a way forward with no clear blueprint of success to measure against, it would be helpful if your draft report could acknowledge the need to keep working closely with providers and third sector partners, to manage any unintended consequences and ensure that any lessons from recent and current commissioning arrangements could closely inform future proposals.

Members made many other relevant observations at the meeting which I am sure will be of benefit to Councillor Elsmore and to you, but which are probably more suited to a future policy development discussion than an urgent piece of pre-decision scrutiny. I hope the above comments help you and Cabinet colleagues in your consideration of these proposals, and look forward to receiving your feedback on the four above recommendations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary McGarry', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARY M<sup>C</sup>GARRY**  
**Chairperson - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

Cc: Cllr Susan Elsmore  
Sarah McGill  
Jane Thomas  
Chantel Abel  
Matt Swindell

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr McGarry

12 September 2016

Councillor Daniel De'Ath  
Cabinet Member for Safety, Skills, Engagement and Democracy  
c/o Room 520  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW



Dear Councillor De'Ath

**COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 7 SEPTEMBER 2016: CABINET RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

Thank you for attending Committee last Wednesday. Members were pleased to receive your positive response to the Committee's report, and your appreciative comments of the work undertaken by the Inquiry team. They were also grateful for the frank and detailed answers you provided to Members' questions.

The Committee was disappointed that Neil Hanratty was not able to attend the meeting, especially given his co-ordinating Director role for implementing the report's recommendations. We will be grateful if in future Neil could let the scrutiny officer know if he is unable to attend a meeting, so that I can communicate this to Members and any other witnesses attending the meeting. Members were, however, grateful to Jonathan Day for attending at very short notice – his evidence was relevant, confidently presented, informative and helpful.

At the end of the meeting, Members asked me to write to you with the following observations which we hope will be of benefit to you, Neil and other officers and partners in taking the Night Time Economy Strategy and associated work forward. The key themes of our feedback are:

- Co-ordination and management
- Timescales
- Funding, and
- The relationship between the BID and a potential Night Time Levy.

Members were pleased to hear that you will be championing the Night Time Economy, with the Director of Economic Development taking the co-ordinating Director role. You will remember that during our Inquiry Members noted the importance of having clear management arrangements and effective co-ordination in place, as this work spans the responsibilities of several Directorates and partner organisations.

Building upon this, Members were also pleased to hear of your plans to ask officers to develop packages of work within the Cardiff Public Services Board's Safer and Cohesive Communities Programme to govern the implementation of this work.

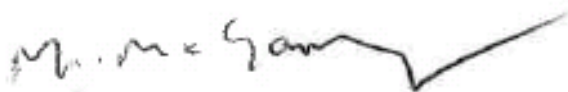
Thank you for agreeing our recommendation to develop a partnership-based Night Time Economy Strategy with a clear action plan. Committee will be very interested to hear at a future meeting how the Strategy will identify future priorities and principles of service delivery. We note that you consider that it is essential to agree these overall principles first, before exploring more operational funding issues and timescales. But we are naturally keen to see these arrangements set out in writing, and were reassured to hear that although this was not a firm commitment, you hoped the Strategy could come forward towards the end of this calendar year. We also understand that efforts are being made to separately ensure availability of resources for the busy Christmas period.

We were pleased for your confirmation that a pledge for resources of £250k per annum for managing Night Time Economy initiatives had been recommended for agreement by the Business Improvement District (BID) Board. Also, that the BID Board was representative of businesses committed to both the Day Time and Night Time Economies.

Members noted your and Jonathan's reservations at the potential for a Late Night Levy to raise the sums discussed during the Inquiry, and recent mixed experiences in Liverpool and elsewhere. You wish the BID Board to bed in successfully and reach its potential before considering a Late Night Levy. We will not therefore be expecting to see any proposals for a Levy to be coming forward soon. However, please keep your mind open to the potential for a Levy to add further value to the BID, and we would consider it beneficial to review these matters in perhaps two years.

In conclusion, thank you again for your clear appreciation of the Committee's Inquiry report, and we in turn appreciate your own commitment to this important topic. There are no specific recommendations in this letter requiring a formal response, but we may schedule in further scrutiny of the Night Time Economy as and when the Strategy comes up for agreement by Cabinet.

Yours sincerely



**COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARY M<sup>C</sup>GARRY**  
**Chairperson - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

Cc: Neil Hanratty  
Jonathan Day  
Joseph Reay

Paul Orders  
Chantel Abel  
Katie Prichard