

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING STATEMENT

Syrian Refugee Update

Seven years after the civil war began in Syria, there is still no outward sign of an end to the conflict. Recent events have shown that the political and security situation in the country remains extremely volatile and, despite the efforts of the international community, the suffering of its citizens continues unabated. The Council continues to play its part in responding to the crisis by working in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. During the past two years, we've been privileged to provide a home, and a chance for a new beginning, to a number of refugee families who were forced to flee the conflict. I'm pleased to report that, despite the appalling conditions that many suffered while living in temporary shelters and camps, most have successfully begun to re-build their lives and now look forward to a brighter future. However, as might be expected, there remain significant challenges in responding to the long term needs of this vulnerable group, not least their desire to become self-sufficient and to integrate fully into their new communities.

The Council continues to work in partnership with of a number of statutory, third sector and community-based organisations to deliver support across the region and a number of initiatives have been successfully launched to overcome specific barriers, including bespoke language and employment support programmes. We continue to learn from this programme and endeavour to make resettlement to this city a truly positive experience.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence

In line with the requirements set out in the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015, Cardiff Council and key partners, including Health, Police, Vale of Glamorgan Council and survivors have developed a regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023, entitled 'It's in Our Hands'. This inaugural strategy sets out a shared vision that "people who live, work and visit Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan have the opportunity to live positive, independent lives without being affected by violence and abuse". It also sets out a regional approach to dealing with these issues in a collaborative and innovative way, and identifies where services need to work better to pursue perpetrators, prevent abuse from happening, protect and support victims. In addition to input from partners, the strategy has also been informed by survivors of abuse and I would like to thank them for their contribution which has been most valuable. The strategy is currently subject to consultation for an 8-week period and I would encourage Members to take a look at the document and provide any comments.

Inclusive Cities Project

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation has funded the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford to work with five UK cities (Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool and Peterborough) on a new area of work called the 'Inclusive Cities Project'. The cities and their local partners will be supported to achieve a step-change in their approach towards the integration of newcomers. It will also draw on ideas and experience from within Europe and innovative approaches from cities in the USA. Each city participating in the project will establish a local cross-sector taskforce to create a new narrative around migration and develop its own action plan outlining tangible changes. In Cardiff, we have chosen to focus on:

- Employability – the use of a co-ordinated single gateway approach to securing employment and ensuring that new arrivals are included in measures to prepare residents for a changing labour market.
- A co-ordinated gateway approach to the provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) that ensures an effective assessment of need and allocation of appropriate and timely provision of services.
- Use of the Volunteering Portal to signpost and promote volunteering and involvement in local communities.
- Developing a narrative about the inclusivity and diversity of the city that everyone can identify with.

The first meeting of the Cardiff 'taskforce' is due to take place on Monday 9th April 2018.

Canton Dementia Café

Dementia cafés were created in Cardiff following close liaison with the Alzheimer's Society and their Service User Review Panel, based at Oldwell Court Day Centre. It was this user led direct feedback that has helped to create these new safe spaces for those living with dementia, as well as their friends, family, carers and health professionals within the city. Following the success of the Dementia Café at Cardiff Central Library Hub, Canton Library launched its own Dementia Café on 28th February 2018.

At the launch event, the new Canton Dementia Café welcomed Mind on Music, which is a small charity that raises awareness of the benefits of music and sound for well-being. Founder, Bexi Owen, is on a year-long tour of the UK during which she has been visiting care homes, hospitals and other venues as part of the project. Visitors to the café really enjoyed singing along to her music, which has the power to soothe, stimulate and bring to mind long forgotten memories. In addition to this, visitors enjoyed refreshments, crossword puzzles, local history picture books, dementia book stock, professional information signposting, a good chat and even an impromptu arts session as one of the visitors brought along his water colours!

The Canton Dementia Café will take place on the last Wednesday of every month between 2.30pm and 3.30pm and the Central Library Hub Dementia Café is on the first and third Thursday of every month between 11.00am–1.00pm.

Councillor Susan Elsmore
Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health & Well-being
21 March 2018