
SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & WELL-BEING STATEMENT

Refugee Resettlement

We continue to play a significant role in providing support to those welcomed through the Afghan Resettlement Schemes, ensuring access to education, health and mental health services, language learning and, most important, transition into long-term homes across Wales and the wider UK. Cardiff has played a hugely significant role in providing a new, safe and optimistic start for those who risked their own lives in the struggle for democracy, freedom of speech and civil rights, and our accomplishments to date should be a real source of pride for our city.

A delegation from our French twin city of Nantes visited Cardiff on 11th March, led by the Deputy Mayor of Nantes Metropole who has a particular interest in migration policy and responsibility for European, migrant and traveller issues. The visiting delegation will be shown the good practice arrangements implemented in Cardiff for welcoming Afghan refugees over recent months, including meeting with staff and Afghan families.

Veterans Support

This week, the Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities and I visited Leckwith Drovers allotments site where the Council is working in partnership with the Welsh Veterans Partnership on its 'Green Headspace' project. This is all about bringing uncultivated allotment land back into use and, at the same time, playing an important part in helping to support the mental health and well-being of veterans. In addition, the project enables veterans and their families to integrate with the local allotment community through the growing of fruit and vegetables.

We also spoke to veterans and their families about the sustainable and affordable new-build homes that are being delivered for Armed Forces leavers, veterans and their families in Cardiff through successful partnership working between the Council, Welsh Veterans Partnership and Housing Associations. One such example is The Mill housing development in Canton where some of those we met had recently moved into. They were incredibly complimentary about the difference their new homes had made to their lives, as well as the support received from the Council, especially the Veterans Team. The Welsh Veterans Partnership believes that Cardiff is leading from the front in Wales through its support for veterans' transition and resettlement within communities in line with the commitments made in the Armed Forces Covenant.

WHO Age-Friendly Cities Network

In a first for Wales, Cardiff's application to join the World Health Organisation (WHO) global network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities has been successful. Established in 2010, the network aims to connect cities, communities, and organisations worldwide, with a common vision of making communities a great place to grow older. Working collaboratively with key partners including Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, South Wales Police, educational institutions, and the third sector, an Age-Friendly action plan was compiled which includes 'We Will...' ambitions. Ultimately, our aim is to deliver an age friendly vision of Cardiff as a great place to grow older and a place where older people are more empowered, healthy, and happy.

The process of collating Age-Friendly initiatives and services for the submission has flagged up the array of age friendly programmes, targeted activities and health initiatives that aim to make a positive difference to the lives of older people living in Cardiff. I look forward to the opportunities that the membership of the WHO global network present to increase awareness of these programmes, as well as learning from countries and communities across the world as we continue working to create a city where older people live and age well.

Toilet Strategy

An update statement on the Council's Toilet Strategy was submitted recently to Welsh Government and I'm pleased to report the significant progress made. The update details actions taken since the publication of the strategy in December 2019. Although the pandemic has, of course, affected progress in some areas, there are positive key developments. These include the rollout in all Hubs of new accessible signage to tackle discrimination and support those whose illnesses are not visible. Improved and new toilet provision has also been made available, including Changing Places which provide facilities to meet those with more complex needs.

Work has commenced to widen community toilet provision across the city, including the creation of new toilet signposting stickers that include dementia friendly design elements. These are in the process of being rolled out to participating community businesses and organisations within Cardiff. Communications have been circulated within business networks to broaden participation in the community toilet scheme. Officers have also reached out to Interfaith partners to explore the potential of meeting diverse toileting needs, as well as expanding the network of locations where people can access toilet facilities. This will help to ensure that people feel confident to fully enjoy the city.

Cardiff North Dementia Service

By invitation I recently visited the Cardiff North Dementia Service at St Thomas Church Hall on Pantbach Road, Heath. The service provides respite sessions for people and their families, and is not only for those living with Dementia, but also for issues such as social isolation. The service is provided by dedicated, expert staff who take great pride in the care and activities provided.

I am pleased to say that discussions are underway for this service to move to Llandaff North & Gabalfa Hub from next month. The move is intended not only to enhance the service already provided but also will allow integration with Hub services and activities, and access to other facilities, including the Changing Places facility, and the soon to be re-opened on-site café. This will pave the way for partnership working in the provision of hot and nutritious food for Cardiff North Dementia Service clients. Cardiff North Dementia Service will operate from the Hub twice a week, with the opportunity to expand to three days per week if there is sufficient demand.

Meals on Wheels and Telecare

Cardiff Council's Meals on Wheels and Telecare services are working in partnership to help our citizens stay independent in their own home.

The Meals on Wheels service delivers meals 365 days-a-year to vulnerable and older citizens across the city. The drivers deliver a hot nutritious meal and a caring welfare check to over 250 people every day. These checks can include ensuring individuals are wearing their Telecare pendant alarm or calling their friends or family if they don't seem their usual selves.

This extra reassurance for family, loved ones, neighbours and clients is reflected in the responses received to our 2021/22 customer survey, which found that:

- 92% of customers said they feel happier
- 94% of customers agree that they feel more secure knowing someone will check they are okay
- 96% of our customers agreed the service has helped them remain independent in their own home
- 80% of our customers agree they feel less lonely because of seeing our friendly drivers
- 86% of our customers agree they feel healthier
- 66% felt they visited their GP less

The Meals on Wheels service works in partnership with the Telecare Team to provide a combined approach to keeping citizens independent in their own home. Each month the Telecare Team receives more than 20,000 calls to our control centre and our mobile wardens attend to approximately 600 people needing assistance in their homes. Our wardens are highly trained and fully equipped to assist, whether it is getting someone back on their feet after a fall, administering first aid, or waiting for emergency services to arrive.

The Telecare Team is working collaboratively with Vale of Glamorgan Council and is extending its falls response service to the east of the Vale of Glamorgan. The aim is to assist residents to remain independent in their own home, reduce calls to the Welsh Ambulance Service and help to avoid hospital admissions. This is being piloted initially from March to October 2022.

Pen Pal Scheme

Undoubtedly, some of the hardest hit during the pandemic were care home residents, many of whom were unable to see loved ones and family members for extended periods of time due to public health restrictions. In May 2021, a new inter-generational Pen Pal Scheme was launched bringing together residents of three care homes with two schools. Pupils from St Joseph's RC Primary School and Millbank Primary School put pen to paper to write letters to residents at The Forge Care Centre, Heol Don and Ely Court care homes to share experiences, and find out more about their new pen pals. It has been heart-warming to receive extremely positive feedback about the scheme and to learn about the developing relationships between the older and younger individuals.

Capel I Bawb

The former chapel at Cardiff Royal Infirmary (CRI), a Grade II listed building, has been transformed into a vibrant health and well-being facility for residents. With a new name, Capel I Bawb chosen for the facility through a public engagement process, it provides a valuable resource where patients, service users, carers and the local community can be signposted to accessible information and advice, social learning, and recreational activities. It will have a key role in the Health and Well-being Centre @CRI, providing a focus for information, advice and signposting with the aim of empowering people to manage their own health and well-being.

A partnership project sponsored by the Regional Partnership Board with funding from the Integrated Care Fund, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and Cardiff Council, the chapel is now home to a health and well-being library, council services including self-service book loans, open access PCs, facilitated activities hosted by a Community Liaison Officer, meeting spaces and an Aroma Café. Public access toilets are available within community spaces, including a fully accessible toilet and baby changing facilities.

It houses a comprehensive collection of books, including children's resources and the complete Reading Well (Mental Health, Dementia, and Children's) collections which are clinically selected and designed to deliver positive health outcomes. Visitors can take advantage of the Hubs & Library Service reservation system and access the thousands of library books available across the city on request. Work is also underway to deliver a community events programme at the new facility.

The Welsh Government Minister for Health and Social Services, Eluned Morgan MS, is due to officially open Capel I Bawb on 17th March.

Domestic Violence One Stop Shop

The Domestic Violence One-Stop-Shop is complete, following an internal refurbishment of the second and third floors of Block 14 at Cardiff Royal Infirmary (CRI). The setting provides a safe and welcoming space for women who have experienced domestic violence. The 'one stop shop' approach enables the provision of a service which caters for a wider remit of violence against women services and expands on the domestic abuse and sexual violence service already available. Its location within CRI enhances the holistic experience, with the Sexual Assault Referral Centre and other health provisions on site.

The lower floor has a welcoming reception area and a range of interview rooms designed to put service users at ease. Toilets and shower facilities are provided, as well as a playroom for children visiting the building with parents. A meeting room provides a flexible space for group work and training. The upper floor houses a staff space, with a range of offices, a call handler room, toilets, and kitchen. The scheme was completed in partnership with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, and with RISE, who deliver the service.

Test, Trace, Protect (TTP) Transition

Members will be aware of the forthcoming removal of Covid-19 restrictions in Wales. The legal duties to self-isolate will be removed at the end of March. However, during the transition period (31 March to 30 June 2022) contact tracing of positive cases will continue, and individuals will be advised too to self-isolate. At the end of June, routine contact tracing will end, and the advice to self-isolate will move to advising individuals to take additional precautions when ill. I would ask all members to assist in the dissemination of this advice, and to encourage everyone into the longer term to take sensible precautions to protect themselves and others. PCR testing will remain (in addition to Lateral Flow Tests) for especially vulnerable people; those with symptoms working in health & social care; care home residents; prisoners; and when managing outbreaks.

PPE Provision

The Council's PPE and Covid-19 supplies have continued to help keep Cardiff citizens safe throughout 2021/22. Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the team at Dominions Way has distributed over 70 million pieces of PPE, including masks, visors, gloves, aprons, sanitisers, and anti-bacterial wipes. It is awe inspiring to learn that the team has successfully packed and distributed 71.5 million items of PPE to care homes, domiciliary care providers, schools, council teams, hostels, third sector organisations, and unpaid carers across the city. This includes the provision of 729,000 Lateral Flow Tests to carers, council teams, care homes, domiciliary care providers, and education teams.

I welcome the statement made on 11th February by Welsh Government Minister for Health & Social Services, Eluned Morgan MS, regarding the Welsh Government's PPE strategy for 2022-23, which confirmed the extension of free PPE provision to health and social care organisations until the end of March 2023. It is reassuring to note that the Welsh Government's Programme for Government includes the commitment to provide free PPE for health and social care for as long as is needed to deal with the pandemic. The Council will continue to work collaboratively with the Welsh Government to ensure that carers have the PPE they need to keep themselves and the people they care for safe.

Real Living Wage in Social Care

Cardiff Council is pleased that the real Living Wage is being rolled out within the social care sector in Wales, and the Welsh Government wrote recently to local authority Chief Executives and Directors of Social Services to provide further details. The Welsh Government has provided £43.2m to fund this expansion across Wales, of which £36.5m will be allocated to local authorities, with 2022 being a transitional year. Welsh Government confirmed that detailed implementation guidance will be published shortly.

Joint Equipment Service

The Joint Equipment Service (JES) was able to support an individual at the end-of-life return home recently at very short notice. On a Friday at midday, hospital staff informed JES that an individual could be discharged home if a specialist profiling bed was made available to support palliative care. The JES Team sprang into action, recalling two operatives from current deliveries, without detriment to other service users. By 2.30pm the bed was installed, and the individual was home surrounded by family. Sadly, the individual passed away within days, but the dedication of the JES Team allowed them to spend their final days surrounded by family in the comfort of home.

Councillor Susan Elsmore
Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health & Well-being
11 March 2022