

**COUNCIL: 18 MARCH 2021**

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## **HOUSING & COMMUNITIES STATEMENT**

### **AGENDA ITEM:**

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#### **Hubs & Libraries Update**

Work has started on the new Health and Wellbeing Hub at the Maelfa site in Llanedeyrn. This long-awaited project is a partnership between Cardiff Council and Cardiff & Vale University Health Board to expand and connect with the existing Powerhouse Hub. The first phase of the project, which will deliver a brand new replacement Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) for local young people, will be completed in summer 2021, with work on the main building expected to last until mid-2022.

Community engagement on proposals to transform Rhiwbina Library took place using digital methods. There has been a wide range of community interest in the scheme and findings from the engagement will feed into the next design stage.

#### **Hub Events Website**

The new Hub Events website [www.cardiffhubs.co.uk](http://www.cardiffhubs.co.uk) is going from strength to strength. In February 2021, the site had over 3,600 views (an increase of 33% on the previous month). Hub teams delivered 159 online events attracting over 1,300 attendees, including some from as far away as Brazil.

The Hub teams focus on a range of universal offers, including Health & Wellbeing, Culture and Learning. There is a new Wake Up & Stretch session every weekday morning at 9.30am and the Low Impact Fitness Training & Move Freely sessions continue to be very popular, along with Mindfulness Mondays. Quizzes also remain popular, as well as the new gardening tips and advice sessions, online drawing and sporting memories. In addition, more events for young people are starting, including Yoga for Teenagers and Mini Mindfulness, as well as Chess and Code Clubs.

Feedback received to date has highlighted how much people value these digital events and has demonstrated the greater reach that such events can have.

#### **Together for Cardiff – Discretionary Emergency Fund**

The Together for Cardiff Discretionary Emergency Fund has been launched to support those most in need. The emergency fund is available to individuals over the age of 16 and families living in Cardiff who are experiencing severe hardship. Other eligibility criteria will apply. The fund can help with expenses such as paying for essentials like gas and electric, for essential repairs to a cooker or washing machine and for essential furniture or equipment to address digital deprivation.

Applicants to the emergency fund will be supported by the Council's Money Advice Team, who will discuss the household's circumstances, explore ways to maximise their income by accessing grants, discounts and benefits and provide help to manage any debts they may have. If all other options have been exhausted, advisors will provide guidance to make an application to the emergency fund.

Applications will be assessed by an independent panel of council officers meeting twice a week and, if successful, any necessary purchases or payments will be made on the applicant's behalf within three days of the initial application.

The money for the Together for Cardiff Discretionary Emergency Fund has been kindly donated by businesses and individuals.

### **Windrush Compensation Scheme**

The Windrush Compensation Scheme was launched by the UK Government in April 2019 to compensate members of the Windrush generation and their families for the losses and impacts they suffered as a result of not being able to demonstrate their lawful immigration status. Working in conjunction with We Are Digital, the Council's Money Advice Team will now be able to assist those affected in making a claim. We Are Digital were appointed by the Home Office as the official support provider for the scheme in December 2020 and have provided in-depth training to staff on this application process. The Money Advice Team will also offer customers help with income maximisation, grants, discounts and other areas of financial support, which may improve their current circumstances.

**Councillor Lynda Thorne**  
**Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities**  
**11 March 2021**