



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee

Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

Wednesday, 19 December 2018 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor A Pugh (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P Downing
L R Jones

Councillor(s)

C R Doyle
L V Walton

Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell

Officer(s)

Paul Evans
Allison Lowe
Rachel Moxey
Joanne Portwood
Lyndsay Thomas
Paul Thomas
Jane Whitmore

Community Safety Co-Ordinator
Democratic Services Officer
Head of Poverty & Prevention
Strategy and Policy Officer
Principal Lawyer
Community Integration Partnership Manager
Partnership & Commissioning Manager

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): B Hopkins and Y V Jardine

38 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea the following interests were declared:

Councillors D W Helliwell & L R Jones declared a personal interest in minute 42 "High Interest Lending Action Plan".

39 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee held on 28 November 2018 be approved and signed as a correct record.

40 Presentation - Positive Responses to Welfare Reform Principles.

The Head of Poverty & Prevention provided a presentation on the positive responses to the Welfare Reform Principles.

She outlined the key data findings from the Single Household Benefit Extract (SHBE) in relation to the following:

- March 2017 – 17,500 households;
- March 2018 – 25,000 households;
- September 2018 – 24,500 households.

She then outlined a prediction of the position in 2020, based on the trajectory of data from both March and September 2018, the results of which were quite alarming.

Work undertaken to date included:

- A “Team Swansea” based approach;
- Working with various departments such as Poverty & Prevention, Housing and Revenue & Benefits to expand the approach;
- Offering budgeting support and digital support to assist people with their claims (budgeting support moving to Swansea Citizens Advise Bureau from April 2019);
- Working with partners to provide additional support;
- An easy guide leaflet had been produced;
- Skills development and employability support being offered;
- Positive partnerships with DWP and Job Centre;
- Working closely with Coastal Housing to offer social housing support;
- Reviewing the support that the Welfare Rights Team provided and how training can be enhanced such as via webinars etc in order to reach a wider range of people.

Next steps included:

- Finalising the data use policy;
- Offering financial support to those in need such as reducing rent debt therefore reducing potential eviction;
- Take up of extra childcare hours for 157 households;
- Targeting households re 3rd / subsequent child who would not receive Child Tax Credits;
- Targeting families at risk.

Councillors could help by signposting their constituents to the relevant information. They also discussed the possibility of a credit card sized information document containing useful telephone numbers.

The Head of Poverty & Prevention mentioned some positive news from Julie Mallinson, Celtic Credit Union who had attended the September meeting. As a result of the work in both Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, there had been an additional £2.5m in the local economy through loans and savings.

The Chair thanked the Head of Poverty & Prevention for the presentation. The Cabinet Member for Better Communities – People would provide a more detailed version to Council on 20 December 2018.

Resolved that:

1. The presentation be noted;
2. A credit card sized information notice be produced containing relevant contact numbers.

41 Presentation - Diverted Giving.

The Partnership & Commissioning Manager introduced the concept on Diverted Giving – “Have a Heart – Give Smart”.

Paul Evans, Community Safety Project Officer provided a presentation which outlined:

- Concept developed in Canada in 2005;
- Many other Diverted Giving schemes throughout the UK;
- Swansea model based on the model from the Guildford BID initiative;
- Presented to Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership for sign off in October 17;
- Launched in January 2018 as a pilot;
- Joint funded by the Safer Swansea Partnership through Police and Crime Commissioners Funds and Swansea BID;
- No Council Core Funds have been used;
- Trial period throughout Swansea’s City Centre.

He explained the current situation:

- September 2018 – Expanded to cover whole of Swansea;
- Neath & Port Talbot have joined the scheme through their Community Safety Partnership;
- To date £700 has been raised;
- One application from The Wallich to fund breakfast runs;
- The next funding round now open;
- Ospreys match day collection in December;
- Scheme promoted by South Wales Police and other Safer Swansea Partner agencies.

He stated that the following were participating in the scheme:

- 21 outlets in Swansea City Centre;
- 20 night time city centre outlets;
- 6 outlets in Uplands;

In conclusion, he asked the Committee to consider whether they wanted to change the message on the branding. If so, to suggest alternative wording.

There would be a cost implication if the branding was amended. However, any decision would need to be considered by BID, ATCM, Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership and Neath Port Talbot Community Safety Partnership.

The Committee expressed concern at the overall concept in general, in particular the wording on the branding (the word "problem"), the fact that only £700 had been raised in a year and that only one organisation had applied for funding. Concern was also expressed that the Health Board were not represented on the MAREC (Multi Agency Referral Risk Assessment Conference).

The Chair thanked the Officers for the presentation.

Resolved that:

1. The presentation be noted:
2. A letter be drafted to the Safer Swansea Partnership outlining the concerns of the Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee and suggesting some possible improvements that could be made to the scheme.

42 High Interest Lending Action Plan.

The Policy & Strategy Officer provided actions and progress on High Interest Lending.

The Committee suggested that information regarding Swansea Bay Credit Union, affordable credit, grants and managing debit be published on the website and facebook pages and in Council Tax bills (if possible);

The Credit Union would also be available prior to the Council meeting on 20 December 2018 to hand out membership forms in order for Councillors to disseminate to their constituents.

The Chair clarified that the letter to the Cabinet had been drafted. However, the action plan to accompany the letter was still awaited.

The Chair thanked the Policy & Strategy Officer for the update.

Resolved that the update be noted.

43 Work Plan 2018-2019.

The Chair presented an updated Work Plan 2018-2019.

Resolved that the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 5.35 pm

Chair