



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Poverty Reduction Policy Development and Delivery Committee

At: Committee Room 3A, Guildhall, Swansea

On: Wednesday, 27 September 2017

Time: 3.00 pm

Chair: Councillor Paulette Smith

Membership:

Councillors: P Downing, D W Helliwell, T J Hennegan, P Jones, R D Lewis, D Phillips, A Pugh, C Richards, G J Tanner, L G Thomas, L V Walton and T M White

AGENDA

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|----------|---|----------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence. | |
| 2 | Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.
www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests | |
| 3 | Minutes.
To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record. | 1 - 3 |
| 4 | Feedback / Presentations from Members on their Research - Communities First Transition | |
| 5 | Communities First Transition. | 4 - 7 |
| 6 | Swansea Council and the wider Swansea Partnership response to the implementation of Universal Credit Full Service. | 8 - 14 |
| 7 | Work Plan 2017-2018. | 15 - 16 |
| 8 | Timing of Future Meetings for the Remainder of the 2017/2018 Municipal Year. | |

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 25 October 2017 at 4.00 pm

Huw Evans

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Thursday, 21 September 2017

Contact: Democratic Services - (01792) 636923

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE POVERTY REDUCTION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 5, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON
WEDNESDAY, 23 AUGUST 2017 AT 4.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor P B Smith (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P Downing
R D Lewis
T M White

Councillor(s)

D W Helliwell
C Richards

Councillor(s)

P Jones
L V Walton

Officer(s)

Allison Lowe
Chris Sivers

Democratic Services Officer
Director of People

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): G J Tanner and L G Thomas

10 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea no interests were declared.

11 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Poverty Reduction Poverty Development and Delivery Committee held on 26 July be signed and approved as a correct record.

12 **DRAFT TACKLING POVERTY STRATEGY. (PRESENTATION)**

The revised tackling poverty strategy for Swansea Consultation Draft 2017-2020 had been circulated by email and Chris Sivers, Director of People supplemented the report with a presentation on the Poverty Strategy and action plan.

She outlined Swansea's definition of poverty:

Income poverty - not a barrier to school achievement, healthy /vibrant life, skills/qualifications, fulfilling occupation.

Service poverty - targeting resources where they have greatest impacts, and decisions made with service users.

Participation enjoyed by all residents, who access a wide variety of cultural, social and leisure experiences. Residents involved in decisions.

The Tackling Poverty Scrutiny Inquiry Panel had made a number of recommendations, which had nearly all been incorporated into the draft strategy.

- Make a new commitment to tackling poverty;
- Focus on 'what works';
- People experiencing poverty centre to the strategy;
- Collaborate through Swansea Public Services Board;
- Strengthen the links to economic policy;
- Rethink the target area approach;
- Tackling poverty is everyone's business;
- Keep the strategy current.

She emphasised that Poverty is everyone's business and that all Departments had a responsibility not just the Poverty & Prevention Department. There were now closer links with our Economic Development Policy and 'every contact counts' and work with partners is progressing to expand our approach.

As a result the outcomes had been aligned with the One Swansea Plan's, as follows:

- Children have a good start in life;
- People learn successfully;
- Young people and adults have good jobs;
- People have a decent standard of living;
- People are healthy, safe and independent;
- People have good places to live and work.

The consultation process had been extended to 6 October 2017 with full and easy read bilingual versions available.

She then suggested that 3 items from the Tackling Poverty Strategy Delivery Plan Performance Framework 2017-2020 be discussed:

1. Increasing digital literacy, increasing access to a wide range of Council Services including financial inclusion
 - Access in rural areas
 - Training the IT shy
 - Reducing Isolation
2. Consider the Commissioning of an involvement and participation study for Swansea;
 - Leeds truth commission
 - Similar with Swansea flavour
 - Take into the account the things we do (co-commissioning, etc)
3. Commission Policy in Practice to work alongside the Council's Revenue and Benefits Team to identify the cumulative effect of benefit reforms households in Swansea:
 - Impact of welfare reforms at household level
 - Majority of households will be worse off

- Targeting service at those at risk
 - Employability to increase income
 - Housing to protect tenancies

The Committee discussed the above 3 items and suggested that in relation to Item 1 that we investigate the expertise developed within Schools and other community involvement.

In relation to Item 3, holding a “roadshow” type event in communities that were likely to be effected was suggested. Councillors also stated it would be beneficial to receive further information on the plans for the introduction of Universal Credit at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the Committee receive further information on the plans for the introduction of Universal Credit at the meeting scheduled for 27 September 2017.

13 **WORK PLAN 2017-2018.**

The Director of People presented the Work Plan for 2017-2018.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Work Plan be noted;
- 2) The plans for the introduction of Universal Credit be added to the agenda for the meeting scheduled for 27 September 2017;
- 3) The meeting scheduled for 27 September 2017 commence at 3 pm and be scheduled for 2 hours.

The meeting ended at 5.12 pm

CHAIR

Agenda Item 5



Report of the Head of Poverty and Prevention

Poverty Policy Development and Delivery Committee – 27 September 2017

Communities First Transition

Background

In his statement on the 14th February 2017, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children announced that *'Communities First should be phased out'*.

The Cabinet Secretary also announced –

- Establishment of a £6m Legacy Fund Grant, distributed across current Communities First local authorities from April 2018.
- An additional £4m of capital funding made available this year and in future years via the Community Facilities Programme for Local Authorities and the third sector to apply. Taking resources available to £6m in 2017/18 and 2018/19, £4.5m in 2019/20 and £4.4m in 2020/21.
- Funding of nearly £12m across Wales from April 2018 for employability support, supporting the Communities for Work programme. Local Authorities will have the opportunity to introduce this new infrastructure before April 2018. This funding will ensure infrastructure for the ongoing delivery of Communities for Work as well as continued support for management, premises costs and additional mentoring and engagement posts. This is currently known as the Employability Grant.

Note: At the time of writing, the allocation of Employability Grant funding for Swansea is anticipated to be £1,008,460 for the financial year 2018/19 subject to final approval from Welsh Government.

Communities First Funding 2017/18

It has been confirmed that *'Communities First funding will continue at 70% of 2016/17 levels until March 2018.'*

The total Communities First Funding for Swansea in 2016/17 was £2,844,812.00. (Reduced to £2,702,812 following £142k being vired to Supporting People.) £1,991,368.40 has been awarded and profiled for this new financial year. (A reduction of £853,443.60.)

Early Adoption of Employability Grant

Swansea has been confirmed as one of four local authorities across Wales to become an 'early adopter' of the Employability Grant.

As an Early Adopter, we are working with Welsh Government to phase-out the Communities First Programme by December 31st 2017 and implement a structure for the delivery of the Employability Grant from January 1st 2018. Early adoption during 2017/18 will be funded within the Communities First allocation for 107/18 and is not early access to this new funding stream prior to April 2018. The Employability Grant will initially be available until 2020 to support employability alongside the Communities for Work Programme.

Swansea Communities Transition Plan

Welsh Government approved the Swansea Communities Transition Plan 2017/18 on June 21st 2017. The plan submitted sought to meet the requirements set out by Welsh Government, as well as setting out the key local principles for the Transition Year based on the information that was available at the time. It is recognised that the Transition Year is a period of ongoing change and development, and we are continuing to working closely with Welsh Government throughout this process.

In summary, the key principles and considerations of the plan are as follows –

Timescales

- The Communities First Programme will be phased out in Swansea in-line with 'Early Adoption'.
- Early adoption of the Employability Grant structure and ways of working will be implemented by 1st January 2018. (within allocated Communities First funding 2017/18)

Staffing

- Ensuring that the right people with the right skills are in the right jobs.
- Recognising that there will be significantly less posts available through the Employability Grant than the Communities First Programme has provided.
- Minimising as far as possible, the risk of redundancy to existing Communities First staff by holding vacant posts and supporting eligible staff to access redeployment opportunities.
- To secure key posts identified as essential for managing and implementing the transition process. (Project delivery staff – contracts extended to December 31st 2017, Management, Support and Finance staff – contracts extended to March 31st 2018.)
- Provide remaining staff fair opportunity to access available posts in the Employability Grant delivery model.

Third Party Organisations (Faith in Families and Bonymaen Kids Play Initiative)

- Support Third Party Organisations by committing 100% of non-reduced funding for the full financial year 2017/18.
- Provide an explicit contract for the Transition Year which specifies the condition that Third Parties develop and implement an exit strategy for their Communities First funded activity.

Premises

- To continue to occupy office space in public access community buildings in the existing 'Delivery Areas' (The Phoenix Centre Townhill, The Action Resource Centre Blaenymaes and Caernarvon Way, Bonymaen)
- To continue to co-ordinate hub delivery at Dyfatty Community Centre and Seion Newydd Morriston.
- To withdraw from the former Daniel James site office space (No public access)

Lift Programme

The Lift Programme reflects the commitment in the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty Action Plan to provide 5,000 training and employment opportunities across Wales to people from workless households by the end of 2017.

In Swansea, the Lift pilot has been running in the North West Cluster (Penderry) and to date has supported 110 people into employment (16hrs or more pw).

The LIFT Programme is due to complete and close from December 2017 to March 2018.

Welsh Government have confirmed that as an Early Adopter, the LIFT Programme in Swansea should be part of the wider transition process so that staff have fair and equal opportunity to potentially access available roles made available through the Employability Grant.

Current Situation

As Lead Delivery Body for the Communities First Programme in Swansea, we will receive the allocated funding via an application process that is due to commence over the coming months. This grant will fund agreed community based posts, management structure and appropriate budget lines for the delivery of the Employability Grant. Discussions with Welsh Government are ongoing in support of both the early adoption process and application and approval process for the forthcoming funding.

Employability Grant

Welsh Government are in the early process of developing guidance and performance monitoring for the delivery of the Employability Grant, therefore many of the details are unknown at this point.

We do know that the grant will allow us to:-

- Support individuals that are not eligible for Communities for Work. This means that we can support people who have been unemployed or economically inactive for a year or less through the Employability Grant.
- Support individuals that are poor employed.
- Continue to focus in geographic areas of deprivation whilst having a flexible approach to boundaries. (The terminology of Communities First Clusters will be phased out across Wales, these areas will be known as Delivery Areas)

The Communities First programme had been designed to deliver agreed 'projects' at a local level, the forthcoming Employability Grant will not deliver such projects. The Employability Grant will provide intensive one-to-one mentoring for participants.

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Head of Poverty and Prevention

Poverty Policy Development and Delivery Committee - 27 September 2017

Briefing Note: Swansea Council and the wider Swansea Partnership response to the implementation of Universal Credit Full Service.

1. Introduction

This briefing note provides information about the transition to Universal Credit in Swansea and includes:

- Background about the transition, key dates and exceptions;
- Our service response from the Housing Benefit Section and Welfare Rights Team;
- The way we are working with internal and external partners to provide further support;
- Briefing information (as Appendix 1) from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), which describes their local response.

2. Background, key dates and exceptions

- 2.1 Swansea is currently a Universal Credit (UC) 'Live Service' area, with gateway criteria in place. If a claimant falls into any of the groups defined by gateway criteria, they will not be entitled to UC and will remain on 'the legacy benefits' (for example Housing Benefit). Local authorities, on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), under their rules, administer Housing Benefit.
- 2.2 Swansea becomes a UC 'Full Service' area from 13 December 2017, at which point, DWP remove the gateway criteria and the majority of new claimants, and those who experience certain specific changes in their circumstances, will have to claim Universal Credit instead of Housing Benefit if they need financial assistance with paying their rent. DWP administer UC.

- 2.3 We have been advised that there are 95 properties within our boundary which fall into DWP's Neath area, which goes into Full Service on 4th October 2017. These properties lie in the SA8 4 postcode.
- 2.4 Some individuals can continue to claim Housing Benefit in a UC full service area, including:
- People of state Pension Credit age.
- Working age people in a UC Full Service area who are:
- Living in Specified Accommodation¹
 - Their resident partner is of state Pension Credit Age
 - There are 3 or more children in the household (new claims only)
- 2.5 If someone over state Pension Credit Age forms a partnership with someone on UC, the UC claimant can chose either, to remain on UC or claim State Pension Credit & Housing Benefit.
- 2.6 We have provided DWP with an anonymised list of properties, which usually fall into the definition of Specified Accommodation, to avoid confusion on behalf of DWP or delay with our citizens being advised they should claim Housing Benefit instead of UC, and potential rent arrears that could arise from such a delay.
- 2.7 Information will be exchanged between the authority and the DWP in cases where they cannot easily determine if a property is Specified Accommodation as has happened in pilot areas.
- 2.8 Some changes in personal circumstances will cause people to transfer from HB to UC including 'Natural Migration' which includes, but is not limited to:

¹ Specified accommodation is accommodation in which the tenant is provided with care, support or supervision. This could include accommodation provided by a charity, voluntary organisation or a Housing Association and includes domestic violence refuges. Local Authority refuges and hostels (where the accommodation is not self-contained) could also fall into this definition. As far as we are aware, this Authority does not have any accommodation of this type. DWP determine whether accommodation falls under the definition of Specified Accommodation based on the information provided by the UC claimant in their on-line claim and information obtained from landlords. There is also an opportunity in the handover process for the local authority to advise the DWP that the UC claimant is living in Specified Accommodation.

- A move from out of work to in work.
- A move from in work to out of work
- An increase in working hours to the point where Jobseekers Allowance ceases.
- A household becomes responsible for a child for the 1st time
- Partners separate.
- Once UC is established in every area. DWP will move anyone remaining on legacy benefits over to UC systematically. This is called manager migration.

3. The Housing Benefit (HBS) Section's role in the UC claim process?

3.1 HBS role is to:

- Ensure we do not pay Housing Benefit to people who are required to claim UC.
- To close down Housing Benefit claims for anyone moving to UC from Housing Benefit when instructed by DWP. There is no discretion in this.

3.2 If we pay Housing Benefit in error, there will be financial implications for the authority. We would not be recompensed by DWP for the amount paid as we are currently.

3.3 DWP will send us a 'HB Stop notice and Universal Credit Migration Gather proforma' (UC MGP1 LA) which is the instruction that any existing Housing Benefit claim must be closed and from what date. Once the Housing Benefit claim is closed, the authority will advise DWP about the amount of any Housing Benefit already paid for any period after the closure date. This amount will be deducted from the first payment of UC.

3.4 We will work with DWP where possible to avoid issues that have arisen in pilot areas during the handover process.

4. Council Tax Reduction

4.1 When making an online claim for UC, customers are asked if they need to claim Council Tax reduction to help with any Council Tax they have to pay. If they do, they are advised to approach their local authority to make a separate claim for the reduction.

4.2 Answering yes will trigger an indicator to be set within DWP software systems to ensure that the authority is provided with details of the income received from UC. This does not remove the person's requirement to make a claim for Council Tax Reduction with us.

4.3 We will work with DWP colleagues to raise their awareness of the need to ensure our citizens claim any Council Tax Reduction, to which they are entitled.

5. Poverty and Prevention - Welfare Rights Support

5.1 Training:

Welfare Rights Team are holding four seminars, providing an overview of UC:

- 17th October 2017 10.00am to 12.00pm
2.00pm to 4.00pm
- 31st October 2017 10.00am to 12.00pm
2.00pm to 4.00pm

They are also providing two training courses on Universal Credit, specifically aimed at support workers / social workers working with claimants:

- 28th November 2017
- 16th January 2018
- Further courses will be available from April 2018

In addition, they are incorporating aspects of Universal Credit in to their other courses, in particular within:

- EEA Nationals
- ESA
- Introduction to Benefits

5.2 Advice Line:

The team are raising awareness of UC to support social workers and other advocates when they call the advice line regarding their clients benefit entitlement.

5.3 Policy:

The team are working with WRAC (Welfare Rights Advisers Cymru) and NAWRA (National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers) and contributing to a report to the Works and Pensions Committee, Universal Credit enquiry to raise awareness of Universal Credit roll out and plan for our response based on the advice available from DWP and the experience of pilot areas.

5.4 Welfare Reform Leads Meeting:

Attending and contributing to these meetings.

5.5 Benefit Take Up

The team are using HB records to identify underpayment of benefit to the most vulnerable claimants, in order that claimants receive the correct level of transitional protection when they are manually migrated to UC. To date, they have identified 17 claimants who were underpaid on average £62.53 per week and who consequently received (on average) lump sum backdated payments of £6,089.29 per person.

6. Internal and External Partnership Working

6.1 The Adult Prosperity and Well-Being Service, Housing Benefits Team, Welfare Rights Team, and Adult Community Learning will explore the opportunities to provide two levels of Digital support from the Contact Centre, building on the existing support that is available. Digital support will broadly comprise of –

- Immediate help with UC Claims and commitments;
- Further training and support including referral to other partner services to build individuals capacity.

Housing Benefits staff training will take place in mid-November prior to December roll out.

6.2 Following the recent Financial Inclusion Steering Group meeting a Task and Finish Group is being established to identify the current work by the wider partnership to support this issue. This task and finish group will be required to produce an action plan before the next meeting of the FISG in October. This will include areas such as:

- Mapping provision across the partnership
- Understanding duplication and working jointly to maximise the use of resources, save cost and redirect to fill gaps in services.
- Taking a wider partnership approach to delivering Personal Budgeting Support
- Providing joint advice and looking at joint promotional materials to ensure consistent messages.
- Working proactively with local DWP management and personnel to help them to provide advice and work on joint solutions to alleviate the issues faced by claimants.

Appendix 1

DWP Local Approach

The following briefing has been provided by Mark Hurry, DWP Employer and Partnership Manager for Gorseinon, Morriston and Swansea

This what is happening throughout Swansea regarding Universal Credit:

- On 30th June the Local Authority had the handover pack regarding Universal credit Full service. Universal Credit is an agile system and updated every two weeks and The LA were happy for the pack just to be delivered to them. As and when it is updated this is sent to the LA. The Support pack is used by the LA to up-skill their staff.
- Customer Representative Group (made up of various organisation throughout Swansea) – LA, CAB, Welfare Rights, Tenancy support and third party organisations was held on 2nd August at Swansea Jobcentre. Next one planned for 18th October.
- Self-Employment organisations attended an event run by Neath Jobcentre on 24th August (This covered Swansea also).
- Meeting with Welsh Housing in Caerphilly 14th September
- Managers for Registered Social Landlords and LA are having an overview and IPAD presentation on 20th September.
- Citizens Advice Bureau overview and IPAD presentations 25th and 27th September.
- Coastal Housing presentation and IPAD session 28th September
- Welfare Rights presentation and IPAD sessions 3rd October
- Caerlas Housing meeting presentation 11th October
- Third sector presentations and IPAD sessions – 7th, 8th and 9th November (6 sessions run over 3 days various organisations attending).
- Gwalia presentation and IPAD sessions 14th November
- Tenancy Support presentation and IPAD session 15th November
- Childcare Partnerships – presentation and IPAD session 23.11.17
- Swansea Young Families – presentation and IPAD session 29.11.17

IPAD sessions are where we are showing organisations how a customer makes a claim, uses their on-line journal to liaise with their work-coach and the contact centre – this is helping organisations understand what a customer see's and support can be given with this.

Mark Hurry is meeting numerous organisations and happy to take information from organisations as to who he should make contact with.

He is also attending various meetings where Universal Credit Full Service is high on the agenda and encouraging conversations about UC.

All staff in the Jobcentre are being trained for 3 weeks and 1 weeks consolidation.

They are also looking at lessons learned from other (pilot) sites to ensure organisations are aware of Universal Credit, to make sure that all organisations are working together and discussions take place.

They are also working to ensure that vulnerable customers who need help with using on-line services know where to get help i.e. Jobcentre, LA, housing organisations etc.

Personal budgeting support and digital support is offered to all customers.

In the Jobcentre they have created a Complex Hub where customers can come to and they have various organisations attending daily.

Mark is currently organising drop in sessions for private landlords at various venues – dates to be decided.



Poverty Policy Development & Delivery Committee 2017/18

Workplan

Date of meeting	Agenda items and Format
23 August	<p>Draft Tackling Poverty Strategy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation on what it is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members provide feedback on the strategy itself • Small Group work to consider the Performance Framework in more detail • Formal feedback from the Committee to the consultation process 2. Members tasked to undertake research on ‘what works’ in tackling poverty
27 September	<p>Communities First Transition and Universal Credit Implementation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback/presentations from Members on their research 2. Paper Circulated on Communities First Transition Plan for information 3. Presentation and Discussion on plans for introduction of Universal Credit
25 October	<p>Employability</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outline of the Swansea Works programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop session on options for future development 2. Holiday Hunger – review of summer programme and plan for future school holidays
22 November	<p>Employability</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members feed back on their research 2. Workshop session to explore ‘fit’ between Swansea Works and the Tackling Poverty Strategy and to draft the letter to Cabinet Member
20 December	<p>Childcare</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Childcare Sufficiency Audit Presentation 2. Members tasked with research on ‘what works’

<p>24 January 2018</p>	<p>Childcare</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback from Members on research undertaken 2. Government Funded Pilot scheme for 3-4 year olds presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop session to identify potential options to include in report to Cabinet <p>Homelessness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation and feedback on the draft Homelessness Strategy
<p>28 February</p>	<p>Food waste</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outline of current activity to minimise food waste 2. Invite businesses to outline their activity on this
<p>28 March</p>	<p>Food waste</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation to explore the potential for tax relief for food banks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of other options to support food banks 2. Workshop session to identify items to put into report to Cabinet 3. Members tasked with research on cold calling zones
<p>25 April</p>	<p>No Cold Calling Zones</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members feedback on the research they've conducted 2. Presentation on what the Council currently does to support No Cold Calling Zones and doorstep money lenders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion about improving the Council's work in this area • Members determine three key points to pass on in a letter to the Cabinet Member