

Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of People Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA with remote attendance on Tuesday, 18th July, 2023 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor John Crook, (Chairman)
County Councillor Jackie Strong, (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: Fay Bromfield, John Crook, Simon Howarth, Penny Jones, Maureen Powell, Maria Stevens, Jackie Strong, Rachel Buckler, Ian Chandler and Frances Taylor (substituting for Christopher Edwards)

Also in attendance County Councillors: Ian Chandler, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services and Frances Taylor

Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Matthew Gatehouse, Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships.
Clare Morgan, Service Manager, All Age Disability and Mental Health
Jane Rodgers, Chief Officer for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health
Hannah Carpanini, Team Manager Cldt, Adult Services
Nicholas Keyse, Estates Development Manager

APOLOGIES: County Councillor Christopher Edwards

Note: the following minutes focus on the challenge from members – for the full discussion, the recording of the meeting is at

www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKI8ldhDmSI&list=PLlmqn4nAaFJCbj_Cu0DbhGQkCrLYK7xM&index=3

and

www.youtube.com/watch?v=y61tuNNNOBE&list=PLlmqn4nAaFJCbj_Cu0DbhGQkCrLYK7xM&index=4

1. Election of Chair.

Councillor Crook was nominated as the Chair by Councillor Powell, seconded by Councillor Strong. Councillor Crook was elected.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair.

Councillor Strong was nominated as the Vice Chair by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Riley. Councillor Strong was appointed.

3. Declarations of Interest.

None.

4. Public Open Forum.

The Chair welcomed the public to the People Scrutiny Committee meeting, which would consider the Outcome of the Review into My Day My Life and the feedback from the consultation process. He explained that the scrutiny committee's role was to offer views to the cabinet and make any recommendations, which the Cabinet can accept or reject as part of their future decision-making, but that Members were keen to hear from the public and particularly service users of My Day My Life.

The Chair confirmed that a written contribution had been received in advance of the meeting from Mr David Abbott, which Members had seen. He also highlighted that a petition with many signatures had been submitted to the Committee and that Members noted the strength of public feeling on the matter before them.

There was a large public presence at the scrutiny meeting and thirteen members of the public spoke for approximately three minutes each, highlighting the need for services for people with learning disabilities (aside from those who access My Day My Life, in particular, the need for:

- A base where people feel safe, feel like they belong, without feeling different, helping them to gain confidence and offering them a sense of purpose and a quality of life.
- A base that is centrally located in the community, not on the periphery.
- Accessible toilets and changing facilities, including changing beds.
- A place in which they can undertake in-house well-being activities.
- A kitchen and a garden.
- A sensory room.
- Balanced communal areas and quiet spaces.

There was a strong feeling amongst members of the public that Tudor Street Day Centre was the only building that could provide the right facilities, and many spoke of it being their preference. One member of the public stated that this was "not just a local issue, but a matter of public interest" and called for the council to act with "compassion and foresight" and "consider the true cost of the decision, not just in monetary terms, but in terms of the well-being of citizens and community cohesion".

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and speaking under the Public Open Forum to assist the Committee with their deliberations.

5. Outcome of the Review into My Day My Life. To scrutinise the findings of the review, the feedback from the consultation process, making recommendations to Cabinet.

Cabinet Member Ian Chandler and Jane Rodgers introduced the report and answered the Members' questions with Nicholas Keyse and Clare Morgan.

Key points raised by the Committee Members

- Numerous Members were dissatisfied with the scoring process, and the individual scores allocated to the buildings and gave examples of what they felt was a lack of consistency in the application of scores. The Cabinet Member asked whether the right buildings had been shortlisted. Members didn't disagree and there were no views put forward that any other buildings should feature on the shortlist. The Cabinet Member offered to hold a session with members to explain the criteria, which can be arranged at the committee's discretion. He also stressed that following this initial sift each building would be looked at again with the involvement of current and potential service users.
- Members consider the Integrated Impact Assessment could have been stronger in terms of the age category, but also in respect of sex (not gender), in recognition that many carers will be female and therefore, there would be consequential impacts on their ability to work and their well-being. Members highlighted that people with learning disabilities may also have other co-morbid health issues, which should be recognised. Members felt the assessment needed to accurately reflect the need of carers, in addition to service users.
- The Committee noted that the eligibility criteria for the service had changed, which suggests a lower numbers of service users than the Committee expected. This raised a concern as to whether people are being adequately supported.
- Several Members suggested Tudor Street Day Centre was their preferred choice of location for a base in Abergavenny. Members advocated the need for a kitchen and a garden to enable people to continue those activities they really enjoy in any future buildings.
- Members heard that unpaid carers also used the Tudor Street Day Centre as a place to have some respite. Transport to services was also highlighted, members reflecting that some carers had found that the time taken to transport those cared for to services, meant that there was only a short period of respite for them, before needing to collect them.
- Members felt strongly that people with learning disabilities are vulnerable members of the public who should be supported and should not have to fight for services.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked everyone for their patience throughout the process and the public for their attendance and valuable contribution. He also thanked Cabinet Members and Officers for their input and concluded:

- There was broad support from the committee for the recommendations of the review and a strong desire to see the work progress at a pace.
- The Cabinet Member had stated that he would hold workshops service users over the summer to seek their preferences and gather further information on the three shortlisted buildings, which the Committee supported. Members were able to identify any other suitable buildings they felt were suitable for consideration and inform the Cabinet Member.
- The Committee requests that the Cabinet Member takes into account the points provided in this summary when making further decisions on the My Day My Life Service.
- A formal summary would be presented by the Chair to the Cabinet to reflect the views of the Committee, together with some additional comments for the Executive to consider in their future decision-making.

6. People Scrutiny Forward Work Programme.

The forward work programme was noted.

7. Council and Cabinet Work Programme.

The forward work programme was noted.

8. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th April 2023.

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

9. Next Meeting: Wednesday 19th July 2023 at 10.00am.

The Chair confirmed that the Committee would be meeting the following day, 19th July 2023.

The meeting ended at **1.09 pm**