



# **Cwm Taf Regional Collaborative Committee (RCC) Annual Review 1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017**

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## 1. Executive Summary

During the 2016-17 reporting year, the Cwm Taf Regional Collaborative Committee has made great progress in respect of the delivery of the Supporting People programme within the region. The RCC continues to be focussed and efficient in its guidance and the two Authority areas continue to work in co-operation and collaboration for the benefit of Cwm Taf service users. It is clear that the committee benefits from a very driven, resourceful and experienced membership who are committed to collaborative working within Cwm Taf and the delivery of regional SP programme.

### Operations

Value for money and effective service provision continue to be a high priority for the RCC. Our work towards increased joint regional commissioning continues with the aim of offering our service users high quality housing related support at the best possible unit cost. We believe this will be best achieved through joint commissioning services where this is a viable option.

We strongly believe that our service users are the most appropriate people to assist us in ensuring that SP services in Cwm Taf are delivering the best possible outcomes for them. We aim to ensure that service users are at the heart of the decisions we make and will continue to liaise with them on a regular basis to ensure that their suggestions, feelings and needs are carefully considered while we shape the future of the SP programme in Cwm Taf.

### Future Strategic Aims

The RCC will ensure that the programme is strongly aligned to the Social Service and Wellbeing Act, Future Generations Act, Tackling Poverty programmes, Domestic Abuse legislation, Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Homelessness Prevention strategy. We realise the importance of good linkage with other Wales-wide initiatives and will work to strengthen those links with these programmes operating in Cwm Taf over the coming year. The RCC are aware of the financial challenges faced nationally and locally and are committed to finding innovative solutions to ensure positive outcomes for those who use Supporting People services.

Barry Gallagher

## 2. Introduction

The Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG) - Guidance (June 2013) states that Regional Collaborative Committees (RCCs) across Wales are required to submit annual / regular reports to the Supporting People National Advisory Board (SPNAB), to advise the Minister on progress of each RCC. The RCC forms part of the overall governance structure for the SPPG, the current structure is available on the Welsh Government website: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housing-and-regeneration/services-and-support/supporting-people/programme-structure/?lang=en>

This Annual Review will cover the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 and will provide the SPNAB with an update on developments and an honest assessment of what's worked well and areas that still need to be progressed in the Cwm Taf RCC. This report is a reflection of all Cwm Taf RCC attendees; each member, deputy member, co-opted member and advisor has been given the opportunity to input their views and recommendations.

The SPPG – Guidance (June 2013) identifies a number of areas of responsibility for the RCCs across Wales and the High level principles. These are listed below.

The areas of responsibility where the RCC is expected to report to SPNAB:

1. Advise
2. Recommend
3. Planning
4. Priority Setting
5. Membership and Attendance.

The high level principles for the RCC:

1. Improving services and outcomes for the end user
2. Ensuring probity, accountability, transparency and scrutiny
3. Operating on the basis of equality, collaboration and co-production
4. Providing strategic oversight and direction in line with national, regional and local strategy and SP commissioning plans.
5. Being underpinned by and comply with robust and enforceable grant conditions.

Cwm Taf comprises of two local authority areas: Merthyr Tydfil (Lead authority) and Rhondda Cynon Taf. It is covered by the Cwm Taf University Health Board and the South Wales Police.

## 3. Case studies

### Example 1: Cwm Taf Allowable Activities, Pricing Policy and Cost Calculator

Both locally and regionally we have explored ways in which to commission and monitor services in a more transparent way. This began by exploring examples of good practice from other areas.

Across Cwm Taf we have adopted the Gwent Allowable Activities document which has helped identify Supporting People activities at an operational level. Gwent's Pricing Policy and Cost Calculator are models of good practice which we aim to emulate in our region. This has been given initial approval by the Supporting People Planning Groups.

The Gwent Allowable Activities document has been discussed with support providers and amended to reflect regional variances. The document was agreed and signed off by the RCC and is being piloted across Cwm

Taf with particular emphasis on the contract & monitoring, evaluation and review process to ensure that activity funded by Supporting People qualifies as housing related support.

In tandem with the development of the Cwm Taf Allowable Activities document, the Pricing Policy and Cost Calculator are being considered by both authorities. RCT have made some local variances around National Insurance and pensions as part of their pilot arrangements.

Both authorities are in the process of using pricing guidance to better understand the cost of floating support services in respect of providing best value services and to better understand regional opportunities where appropriate. Both Supporting People teams will share their findings of the first phase of the exercise and will update their local planning groups and the RCC .If successful the same exercise will be rolled out to Supported Accommodation services across Cwm Taf.

### What worked well?

The Cwm Taf Allowable activities document has provided a framework for providers to assist them in identifying eligible activities. This document is used unilaterally across Cwm Taf as part of the identification of hours during verification and is regularly audited during monitoring, evaluation and review. This has assisted in identifying clearly non-eligible activities which providers can no longer claim for.

Work is ongoing in relation to the regional implementation of the Pricing Policy and Cost Calculator. In particular implementation across floating support services has been prioritised for 2017/18.

### Lessons learnt

The cost calculator work has highlighted discrepancies across providers in the cost of service delivery and for some provider's high management costs. We will prioritise as an RCC developing a process to minimise these discrepancies and ensure where they continue to exist there is clear auditable explanations recorded.

### Example 2: Compliance with the Aylward Review

The review recommended that the eligibility criteria for older people receiving Supporting People funds in Sheltered Housing should be based on need rather than age or tenure. The RCC has worked hard in order to comply with the Aylward recommendations. This was achieved in full by April 2017.

### Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT)

To ensure services commissioned through the Supporting People Programme remain compliant with the terms and conditions of the grant, the Supporting People Planning Group tasked the Supporting People Team with undertaking a strategic review of the housing related support services being provided for older people, with a particular emphasis on sheltered housing across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Following the outcome of the review a new tenure neutral floating support service was presented to the RCT Supporting People Planning Group. The new service works in partnership with Health and Adult Social Care services and as a low-level prevention and early intervention service it focuses on helping older people to increase their independence, improve their health and reduce their isolation.

Following the implementation of a project plan which included consultation with providers, stakeholders and service users, along with transition plans for staff and service users, the older persons Floating Support

service was re-tendered from services that were provided through nine existing providers and merged into a single service with a new contract issued in August 2015.

In 2016 / 17 the project supported 814 service users in their own homes including owner occupiers and those living in the private rented and social housing sectors.

#### Merthyr Tydfil

Across Merthyr Tydfil there was a delay in implementation in comparison to RCT (which has been noted in other annual reports). Two services were already providing floating support with three services providing traditional sheltered accommodation. These services were approached and asked how they would meet Aylward recommendations. This included two service providers reconfiguring their service into generic floating support whilst still providing support to residents of sheltered housing when it was required and one provider being decommissioned.

Ongoing evaluation and review will identify areas for improvements across the range of Older People's floating support now available within Merthyr Tydfil in order to ensure that these services are fully tenure neutral and are providing housing related support in line with the Cwm Taf Allowable activities.

#### What worked well?

Across the Cwm Taf RCC area all older people services are now tenure neutral and in compliance with Aylward recommendations. The current services are offering a generic level of support and will ensure the appropriate housing related support services are targeted at those who are assessed as needing the service.

We strongly believe that our service users are the most appropriate people to assist us in ensuring that SP services in Cwm Taf are delivering the best possible outcomes for them. We aim to ensure that service users are at the heart of the decisions we make and will continue to liaise with them on a regular basis to ensure that their suggestions, feelings and needs are carefully considered while we shape the future of the SP programme in Cwm Taf.

#### Lessons learnt

##### Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT)

The service has highlighted the need for more generic services which can work with range of people irrespective of need and tenure.

##### Merthyr Tydfil

Working collaboratively with providers ensured that transition and reconfiguration could be achieved. Where providers were struggling to identify ways forward they were offered opportunities to re-submit proposals and receive support from the SP team if required.

## 4. How people who access services are involved

The RCC feel strongly that service user engagement is essential and want to ensure that service users are involved in planning and making decisions regarding services that they access. This is reinforced in the development of the RCC Service User Engagement Framework.

The RCC has continued to explore opportunities to enhance this following the commissioned work with 'House mark' across the region in 2016 with the recommendation in the report being fully endorsed.

We have requested case studies from all providers which have given us valuable insight into the positive impact SP services have on service users and the stress they alleviate from other front line services. Through the case studies work we have been made aware of extra income providers have secured for service users which has informed our commissioning decisions.

### What worked well?

The research provided an opportunity to engage with a wide range of stakeholders with a number of recommendations agreed and discussed' with a particular focus for commissioners and providers as below:

Commissioners should:

- Fund and encourage mental health and emotional support across all services.
- Encourage social activities, giving users more opportunities to come together and help each other.
- Consider how support services can offer some longer-term support, including checking up on people a number of months after moving on or allowing them to re-refer if they are struggling.
- Encourage a focus on literacy, as this is clearly lacking among lots of people supported.
- Promote an even more person-centred approach to support, including reduced "paperwork" where possible (e.g. a lighter touch for long-term older people services) and more control in people's own lives.
- Engage on a more regular basis with people being supported, including by communicating changes and future plans.

Providers should:

- Maintain the key worker approach as far as possible, to build trust and rapport with users.
- Continue to provide a holistic service, including around emotional and psychological needs.
- Keep running social activities, giving users more opportunities to come together and help each other and divert them from negative aspects of their lives.
- Provide support on literacy and on attending appointments. This could include mock appointments, help in listening, asking questions and overcoming perceived power inequalities with authority figures or professionals.
- Manage expectations better, especially around the amount of support on offer and around external services like re-housing.
- Give users opportunities to be involved in their support and the wider service if wanted.
- Encourage and support users to give something back if wanted, such as volunteering at your service or

in the wider community.

### What was achieved?

The report was approved by the RCC to include that the recommendations be incorporated into the service specifications for each provider which has been in place from 2016-17.

The Cwm Taf RCC has also agreed to establish an outcomes subgroup to explore the opportunities around developing a set of regional outcomes based on the priorities established through the service user consultation process.

### Lessons learnt

We continue to recognise the importance of appropriate engagement at all levels. We have utilised planning mechanisms to engage with providers in the creation of the Local Commissioning Plans and the Regional Strategic Plan. In particular concerns arise around the potential impact that future funding cuts to the Supporting People programme could have on the delivery of services provided through this funding stream. We will repeat the case studies exercise on a 6 monthly basis to ensure we capture added value of SP services and document progress made (or independence sustained) by Service Users.



## 5. Service Development

As part of the Annual Review, and to meet the reporting requirements of Welsh Government we are required to provide additional detail about the following:

### 1. How have decisions been shaped by spend plan, needs analysis, outcomes and other sources of data? What changes have resulted?

Across Cwm Taf we continue to implement central referral systems for access to Supporting People funded services. The systems collect information on referrals, presenting needs, supply mapping, and project turnover. Voids management is also closely monitored across the region with claw back being instigated where required.

The RDC and the Supporting People Leads regularly present spend plan information, relevant data, outcome analysis and summarised provider review information and recommendations to the RCC that will inform and assist with any decision making for future service provision for the Supporting People programme. During 2015/16 the Supporting People teams received 1767 referrals, 914 for women and 871 for men through the central referral system.

- This data suggests that there continues to be demand for services for all client groups currently supported by the Supporting People Grant Programme.
- Regionally there are some differences in service demand with some client groups showing a decrease in the numbers presenting and some client groups are showing an increase in the numbers presenting.
- There is a significant decrease in 2 client groups across the region this includes ex-offenders and substance misuse (alcohol). However there significant increase in referrals for Mental Health in both RCT and Merthyr.

Where there are increases in single people with support needs this is attributed to the previous category of homelessness being subsumed into this group. Where there are increases in older people this is as a result of the reconfiguration of the sheltered provision into a tenure neutral floating support service.

The Cwm Taf RCC priorities for 2017/18 were identified in the RCC planning session held in October 2016 and are outlined below:

- To Identify where services can be commissioned regionally across Cwm Taf
- To review current floating support provision to identify;
  - A) Where providers can be regionally commissioned
  - B) Where services can be re tendered/commissioned
- To explore the implementation of the Cost Calculator in Merthyr Tydfil and in RCT to rationalise the spend
- Improve outcome monitoring across Cwm Taf to ensure SP services are able to effectively evidence quality services
- Form closer links to the tackling poverty and early intervention and preventative agenda, in particular by exploring joint commissioning opportunities and reducing duplication by streamlining services where possible

- To monitor the implications of welfare reform, including changes to housing benefit on the Supporting People programme
- To progress the action plan for the RCC with key milestones to focus work streams.

The data collated suggests that numbers are increasing and in particular high numbers are presenting across the region which highlights the continuing demand for the following client groups:

- Mental Health
- Homelessness / single people with support needs.
- Domestic Abuse
- Young People (Supported Accommodation)

The RCC have agreed that these will be the priority areas that the RCC will focus on for 2017/18.

Consultation was undertaken with regional providers through the regional provider's forum in November 2016. Overall participants felt there were no objections to either the general direction, content or the proposed regional priorities.

Some comments were passed about the needs data not being an accurate reflection (underestimating) of the range and complexity of needs presented but it was accepted that this followed from how the forms are completed rather than a collation error.

Overall there was agreement that data collection was reasonably competent in justifying existing service provision, but concerns were expressed that it is not geared up to collect data on new and emerging needs for which services do not yet exist.

The following 2 new regional priorities were agreed:

- Prioritise service user participation and co-production across the Region.
- Verify the validity and integrity of the needs data by comparing with the data collated for the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and tackling poverty agenda, particularly on new and emerging needs.

## 2 . What Regional and Sub regional (for RCCs with more than 2 local authorities) work is commissioned and how have services improved since the last Annual Report?

### Regional Projects

#### Floating Support (Substance Misuse)

The first Cwm Taf Regional project was agreed and commissioned in 2014. This project was introduced as a pilot for 6 months and due to the success and ongoing need was commissioned as a regional project in 2015. The project was commissioned for 2016 however, due to the strategic relevance review the funding was reduced (For MT) with no impact to support delivery and service.

## Hostel Accommodation

Work is ongoing to explore regionally commissioning the hostel provision across Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf. At present there are different access routes to the hostels across the region which is being explored in Merthyr Tydfil with the view to aligning the process with Rhondda Cynon Taf to enable a smoother transition to help with joint commissioning arrangements.

## Off the Shelf Register

As part of the ongoing work to develop projects across the region, the RCC Commissioning Planning Group has welcomed project proposals to be considered for the Cwm Taf 'Off the shelf register. This will prove beneficial for local projects if slippage arises throughout the year.

## Cost Calculator / Pricing Policy

Work is ongoing to implement the cost calculator approach to floating support across the region. This was approved in 2016 and will be further implemented across 2017-18. This work will lead to greater transparency and equity across services and will allow a more robust means to commission services moving forward allowing for a more cohesive approach to potential regional commissioning.

## Cwm Taf Allowable Activities

A Cwm Taf Allowable Activities document has been developed and is being used across the region identifying housing related support activity. This has improved clarity for providers and again, greater transparency in relation to the activity that is being funded across the region.

## Barriers/challenges

### Floating Support (Substance Misuse)

The project was commissioned for 2016 however, due to the strategic relevance review and the findings a recommendation was made to reduce the funding for this project as it was not proving to be a value for money service. This was agreed by MTSPPG and the RCC and the funding was reduced (For MT) with no impact to support delivery and service. The funding was not recommended for increase in 2017-18 however this will continue to be reviewed.

#### Hostel Accommodation

The RCC have approved a regional approach to commissioning the hostels. The main barrier to this exercise has been the difference in operational arrangements across the region which would make regional commissioning difficult at this time. Across Merthyr Tydfil work is ongoing in to streamline the process and will continue to be developed over 2017-18 with a view to explore regional commissioning of the provision from 2018 onwards.

## Cost Calculator / Pricing Policy

There have been some delays in regional implementation due to slight variances being agreed in each local authority area.

How did we overcome these?

### Hostel Accommodation

We continue to work on streamlining processes with the view to having a more consistent regional access arrangement by the end of 2017-18. This could also lead to opportunities to share provision across the region based on similar unit numbers in each area and commissioning the same service provider  
Cost Calculator / Pricing Policy

We continue to work on further developing this process and have agreed to focus on floating support provision over 2017-18 in each individual local authority with regional oversight and joint working.

### 3. How can you demonstrate a more early intervention and preventative approach to homelessness is being delivered, how is this being addressed on a regional basis?

A number of changes have been made across the provision regionally in support of the preventative approach. The following table illustrates the increase in floating support provision commissioned during 2016-17:

Project	Provider	Model	Client Group	Capacity
Recovery Links (MT)	Gofal	FS	Mental Health	29.5 hours
Safe (RCT)	RCT Homes	FS	Older People	Up to 500 Units
Oasis	TBC	FS	Men Women Domestic Abuse	10 units

The following table illustrates the projects that were decommissioned for 2016-17:

Project	Provider	Model	Client Group	Capacity	Revenue Released
Lifeline (MT)	MTCBC	Alarm	Older Person	390	£57,215.33
Lifeline Piper Haven (MT)	MTCBC	Alarm	Older Person	25	£7,335.30
Older Person service (RCT)	RCT Homes	Sheltered	Older Person	712	£203,085.38
Older Person service (RCT)	Age Connect	Sheltered	Older Person	125	£131,187
Older Person service (RCT)	Hafod Housing Association	Sheltered	Older Person	24	£1,604.19
Older Person service (RCT)	Newydd Housing Association	Sheltered	Older Person	33	£1,659.16

Older Person service (RCT)	TBC	Sheltered	Older Person	140	£9,088.48
Older Person service (RCT)	TBC	Sheltered	Older Person	235	£23,959.37
Older Person service (RCT)	TBC	Sheltered	Older Person	187	£14,592.00
Older Person service (RCT)	TBC	Sheltered	Older Person	48	£16,948.46
Staffing costs (Cwm Taf)	MTCBC	N/A	N/A	N/A	£20.282

This clearly illustrates that across Cwm Taf there has been a shift from the provision of accommodation based services to more floating support provision.

## Rhondda Cynon Taf

An early intervention and prevention pilot project was commissioned through RCT Supporting People Grant in August 2016 to help people who had been identified at an early stage to sustain their accommodation. This is delivered through an early key working support programme which looks at a number of areas to provide a package of support that prevents escalation of damaging behaviours. This innovative delivery of housing related support is a holistic early intervention service which looks at the wider picture of individual's situation and family needs. This includes not only ensuring that tenancies are sustained but improving the overall long term resilience of the family

The SAFE project was commissioned by the RCT SPPG and aims to bridge the gap between the existing domestic abuse provision and the need for more emotional support services. The project will provide new and exciting ways to work with individuals who are, or have experienced domestic abuse in the form of group work and therapeutic services. The new service offers a combination of one-to-one support to find and implement solutions to the barriers that could prevent them from accessing the project, group activities, peer support session, and community activities to achieve outcomes for service users.

Women's Aid RCT have created a new role for a specialist mental health worker who works with vulnerable women with complex needs in refuge in RCT to offer support and help to sustain their placements and secure move-on accommodation.

GRAMO (Get Ready and Move On) is another new service concept and is available to service users placed in hostel and supported accommodation provisions in RCT. The funding made available by Supporting People Grant provides a co-ordinator role to offer additional pre – tenancy information advice and assistance in a work shop environment. The aim of the service is to ensure service users are provided with enhanced information on managing a home and help prevent homelessness due to lack of skills or the right information on tenancy rights or financial management. The project is also working with the Youth Offending Service and the Aftercare teams to offer more tailored and individual sessions for young people who will not have held a tenancy previously.

We will continue to work collaboratively with colleagues in Housing / Homelessness departments and across Social Services to ensure we are prioritising prevention in line with the new duties from both Acts.

#### 4. What links does the RCC have with Social Services and Health Services in the region? Have there been any joint service commissioning or pooled resources? If so, can you give details of the projects?

The Cwm Taf RCC has strategic representatives from Health & Social services as members of the RCC and the Supporting People local planning groups. The members for all boards are the same representatives which is complimentary for consistency and the planning processes.

There is currently no pooled budget across the three areas however Supporting People funding continues to work with Adult Social Care on a number of projects.

Within Merthyr Tydfil a new project is being commissioned for 2017-18 which will take a collaborative approach with Social Services Community Mental Health team and the CPN health and crisis management team to assist clients in secondary mental health support services to move on into independent living. This dispersed project will work in collaboration with a local RSL to provide intense support and accommodation to aid step-down, providing enhanced opportunities for people with mental health issues to actively live in the community.

Within RCT a re-configured project will be opening its doors in October 2017. This project will be a supported accommodation service for vulnerable young people including care leavers offering 5 units of self-contained accommodation and will take a collaborative approach working in partnership with Children's Services.

The RCT Supporting People Team are also working closely with Adult Social Care Teams to assist clients with Mental Health needs establish links with Supporting People Services. The Supporting People Manager is also a member of the Specialist Accommodation Panel.

Although we are in the early stages, links have also been established with Health, including exploring service links with the GP clusters and Community Hubs and joint training opportunities.

#### 5. What links have been made with other regional strategic / planning groups, and what preparations have been made for joint working with the Regional Partnership Board and Public Service Board for the Social Services and Well being Act?

The Cwm Taf RCC has made significant links with Cwm Taf SS&WB Partnership Board that was established and is responsible for the implementation of the SS&WB Act. The Chair of the Cwm Taf RCC is a member of this board, along with both Directors for Social Services for Merthyr Tydfil & RCT. Therefore we have regular updates at our RCC meeting of the implementation plan and the progress being with an update summary pro-forma suggested as a means to feed information into the group.

The RCC Health representative is currently leading on the population needs assessment element of the Act. Regular updates are brought to the RCC and providers across the region have been involved in the consultation at various stages.

The RCT SP Lead represents Supporting People on the development of the Information Advice & Assistance for the SS&WB Act and the RDC represents Supporting people on Priority 2 of the SS&WB Act to increase our local community capacity and resilience and help people meet their wellbeing needs through less formal service arrangements.

Both Supporting People leads in each authority are members of the Cwm Taf Sexual Violence & Domestic Abuse Executive Board with requirements from the Act being shared widely across the regional providers.

The RCC will be proactive in ensuring links are made with the Cwm Taf Public Services Board and Strategic Partnership Board and the Public Engagement Group. The Cwm Taf RCC Chair will sit on the Cwm Taf Public Services board in her capacity as chair of the SS&WB Partnership board which will allow effective feedback mechanisms for the RCC.

6. Following the Aylward recommendations what proportion of spend on services for older people tenure is neutral i.e. equally available to home owners, PRS and social landlord tenants? If not, what plans do the RCC have in place to deliver tenure neutral services and within what timescales?

As of 2017 -18 all services to older people across the Cwm Taf Region will be tenure neutral.

### Barriers/challenges

The only barrier being one provider failing to meet the deadline regarding their plans to meet Aylward, which resulted in their service being decommissioned.

7. In the RCC region what joint commissioning is undertaken between Supporting People and other key programmes e.g. Communities First, Families First, Flying Start, Community Safety/domestic violence? Please list the project, local authority and which funding streams are involved?

The RCC have been proactive in ensuring that key links are made with these programmes and are committed to closer alignment to avoid duplication with a more streamlined approach with better results for our service users.

There is regular representation on the RCC from the tackling poverty leads across the region and locally information is fed through to the planning mechanisms in each authority.

Within Merthyr Tydfil work has been ongoing to support the Families First agenda as we have recognised that changes to their funding regime and the removal of Communities First may lead to an increase demand on Supporting People funded services. To this end we have commissioned a service with CAB around welfare benefits and appeals to support individuals with their financial capability for 2017-18.

Within RCT the Supporting People Manager and Officer have regular meetings with the Head of Prosperity and Communities who oversee the Tackling Poverty Programmes. This helps identify where opportunities can be made for stronger links, joint working and possible future commissioning avoiding duplication of services. The joint working opportunities to date include

Communities for Work mentors visiting Supporting People supported accommodation projects to offer assistance and guidance to service users and support staff in seeking volunteering and job opportunities.

Communities First RCT are offering support and assistance through their Digital Friday schemes across RCT to support our clients to make application and bid for suitable properties when they are ready to move on into their own tenancies through the RCT website. This had previously been highlighted as a barrier to those service users with no access to WIFI or the use of mobile devices.

RCT are also working in partnership with the Tackling Poverty Teams to develop information sharing protocol which will ensure referrals in and out of provision are streamlined, as well as allowing improved sharing of information regarding support needs and client outcomes.

## 8. Have all local authorities in your area adopted the RCC's Regional Strategic plan? .

Both Local Authorities have adopted the Regional Spend Plan. The RDC attends both local planning groups to give updates on RCC decision making and planning.

## 9. How do local planning groups feed into RCC decision making?

Some members of the SP planning groups are also members of the RCC. This includes provider representation. Local authority updates are a standard agenda item to ensure planning groups are able to inform the RCC of relevant progress and local developments.



## 6. RCC Appraisal

All Members, Deputies, Co-opted Members and Advisors were asked to give their opinions on the Cwm Taf RCC. From the 22 individuals asked to respond, 9 responses were received. A workshop was held on 16th May for members to contribute to the report.

The following is a summary of the responses received.

### What's worked well during this reporting period?

Cwm Taf RCC has fully met the requirements of the Aylward review.

There has been a high level of engagement from RCC members, with strong political involvement from both local authorities. Despite recent changes in Chairperson and RDC, work is still progressing confirming the resilience of group and processes.

We have ensured that money is being invested wisely. There are low levels of under-spend across the region and the budget is being well managed. We have invested in new and innovative schemes outside of traditional supporting people funded services linked to the homelessness prevention agenda. These include domestic abuse services; mental health and the GRAMO (Get Ready and Move On) scheme, aimed at ensuring participants have the skills and knowledge to sustain their tenancies in the long-term.

The RCC has continued to work collaboratively on embracing regionalisation. To date we have agreed a number of consistencies including a Cwm Taf Allowable Activities document and a joint approach to monitoring finances through a pricing policy and cost calculator exercise. Regular operational meetings also take place between the Supporting People Teams to explore joint working opportunities and ensure effective communication.

In order to further progress regional commissioning we have agreed to review the floating support provided across the region in collaboration utilising the cost calculator to identify a consistent approach to costs and fundable activities. We will continue to develop this process through 2017-18 with the view to explore the potential to jointly commission provision where appropriately moving forward.

We have also agreed as a region to explore jointly commissioning the hostel provision managed by the same support provider. This has includes reviewing access and move on arrangement across the two authorities. As such we are working to streamline the approach to enable consistent commissioning moving forward through 2017-8. This will provide opportunities to further explore the maximisation of resources and the reduction of waste.

The RCC has established strong links with the tackling poverty agenda and the agenda set by the Housing Wales Act, Social Services and Wellbeing Act and the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act. This has been supported through high level membership on the board and representation at various levels including through our Chair (Councillor Linda Matthews) who chairs the SSWB Board and our Health representative Nicola Davies who sits on the group and led the work on the Population Needs Assessment across Cwm Taf.

The RCC has worked in partnership with providers to agree the strategic priorities moving forward and will continue to focus on improving the programme across the region.

The RCC continues to take a strategic approach to its work, recognising the need to align with and support the work of other key groups in Cwm Taf. In particular the Social Services and Well-being Partnership Board and the Public Services Board.

An update on the development of the Population Assessment (SSWB Act) and Well-being Assessment (WBFG Act) was a standing item at every meeting. Members were involved in the various engagement activities and shared opportunities to get involved with their organisations and networks.

### What needs to be progressed over the coming year?

Our focus over the upcoming year will be to meet the strategic priorities outlined within the Regional Strategic Plan.

These include:

- To Identify where services can be commissioned regionally across Cwm Taf in the context of expected reduction in national, (and therefore local funding).
- To Review current Floating Support provision to identify;
  1. Where providers can be regionally commissioned
  2. Where services can be re-tendered/commissioned
  3. To better understand and identify client priorities and needs
  4. How we can prioritise client need for service planning.
- To continue to implement and evaluate the cost calculator in Merthyr Tydfil and RCT to rationalise spend and further improve consistency across the region.
- Improve outcome monitoring across Cwm Taf to ensure SP services are able to effectively evidence quality services
- Form closer links to the tackling poverty and early intervention and preventative agenda. In particular by exploring joint commissioning opportunities and reducing duplication by streamlining services where possible
- To monitor the implications of Welfare Reform including changes to housing benefit. In particular the extension of the Local Housing Allowance room rate for under 35 year olds.
- To encourage participation in financial management improvement activities for service users.
- To progress the action plan for the RCC with key milestones to focus work streams.
- To ensure tenancy support services compliment local authority housing advice services and that all SSPG funded services work closely with Housing Options teams.
- In an environment where there are constant pressures for efficiencies, justify expenditure in preventative services which will reduce strain on other services.
- To build capacity and resilience in preparation for changes arising from amendments to the Social Services and well-being Act and changes to the funding of Supported accommodation.

Provider consultation has also identified the following priorities:

- Prioritise service user participation and co-production across the Region.
- Verify the validity and integrity of the needs data by comparing with the data collated for the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and tackling poverty agenda, particularly on new and emerging needs.
- In order to ensure these priorities are being met we will continue to work on proposals to regionally commission the hostel provision across Cwm Taf and focus on the potential to jointly commission floating support services.
- We will also prioritise the completion of a work plan for the RCC for clear direction and strategic intent to be understood and accessible to all members and stakeholders.
- The RCC needs to ensure ongoing involvement with the development of the responses to the Assessments i.e. the Well-being Plan for WBFG and the Area Plan for SSWB.
- The implications of the changes to the Communities First programme and the loss of funding for projects needs to be carefully monitored and mitigating action considered where appropriate.
- Opportunities for regional working and consistency of approach/ arrangements will continue.
- We will ensure a swift transition within the new political landscape resulting from recent local elections.

### Any other comments?

Within the Cwm Taf RCC we have worked cooperatively to deliver a regional approach to Supporting People. We are conscious of upcoming changes and challenges including those posed by legislative and welfare reform and potential cuts posed to the individual Local Authority Supporting People Programme Grants. We are continuing to work towards streamlining services including exploration of regional commissioning. We have met the requirements of the Aylward recommendations and are working proactively to explore opportunities to emulate good practice across the region. We are aware of the fragility of the housing sector in the environment of welfare reform and budget cuts and the need to protect SP services.

## 7. Governance – Housekeeping

- A) Does the RCC have an up to date memorandum of understanding?  
Yes (not currently signed by Public Health)
- B) Do all the RCC members have an up to date declaration of Interest form?  
These are currently out to members for renewal electronically.
- C) Has the RCC published it's regional spend plan and spend plans for each local authority within the region?  
Yes
- D) Has the RCC published it's latest Regional Strategic Plan?  
yes
- E) Has the RCC published last Year's Annual Review Report?  
Yes
- F) Has the RCC published the minutes of it's meetings?  
This was raised at the June RCC (not quorate), we are currently discussing the best way to communicate the outcome of RCC meetings. This is likely to be in the form of 'key messages' rather than full minutes of meetings.

Attendance Register for RCC Members								
*Full Members Name	Deputy	Reps	Date	Date	Date	Date		
			9th May 2016	16th Aug 2016	15th Nov 2016	28th Feb 2017	Attendance %	
Cllr Linda Matthews		LA Rep - MTCBC	1	1	1	1	100	
Cllr Joy Rosser		LA Rep - MTCBC	0	0	0	1	25	
Phillip Howells	Cheryl Emery	LA Rep - RCTCBC	1	1	1	1	100	
Mark Anderton	Lowri Morgan	LA Rep - MTCBC	0	0	0	0	0	
Nicola Davies		Health	1	1	1	1	100	
Angela Jones		Public Health	0	0	0	0	0	Angela was acting as interim director for Public Health during this period which made

Earl Smith			0	0	0	0	0	
Angela Stacey		Landlord - Trivallis	1	1	1	0	75	
Julie McCarthy		Landlord - Merthyr Valley Homes	0	0	1	0	25	New Rep
Sarah O'Keeffe		Landlord - Wales & West	1	1	0	0	50	
Dave Jones / Ben Griffiths		Short term - Adref / Gwalia	1	1	1	1	100	
Audrey Broome		Short term -	0	0	1	1	50	
Barry Gallagher		Long term - Drive	1	1	0	1	75	
Sue Preece / Hannah Mills	Lowri Morgan	RDC	1	1	0	1	75	RDC not in post for one meeting
Lowri Morgan	N/a	SP Lead - MTCBC	1	1	1	1	100	
Cheryl Emery	N/a	SP Lead - RCTCBC	1	0	1	0	50	
Steve Lynch / Donna Lemin	N/a	WG	1	0	0	0	25	
Lisa Curtis-Jones	Mark Anderton	Co-opt - LA Rep - MTCBC	0	0	0	0	0	
Giovanni Isingrini	Phillip Howells	Co-opt - LA Rep - RCTCBC	0	0	0	0	0	
Julian Pike		Co-opt - MTCBC Housing	0	1	0	1	50	
Alyn Owen		Co-opt - MTCBC Tackling Poverty	0	1	1	0	50	

Derek James		Co-opt - RCTCBC	0	1	0	0	25	
Paul Mee		Co-opt - RCTCBC Tackling Poverty	0	1	1	0	50	