

## **Summary of Welsh Government comments on list of RWC potential locations**

### **General**

- One important consideration, is how accessible the sites are and whether they are well served by public transport links eg not sure how accessible some sites in Merthyr (Cefn Coed) and Porthcawl are?

### **Mental Health and Substance Misuse**

- Locations like Newport and Cardiff would be the ones most likely to be best served in terms of surrounding mental health and substance misuse services – however, we have to emphasise that these are already at full capacity.
- In addition, places like Newport and Cardiff have good transport links (for visiting relatives, children etc).
- The key point to make, however, is that Local Authorities and Health Boards will be better placed to offer a view on this, and their early engagement is critical.

### **Housing dependent children at the centre with mothers**

- Children's and Families division have reviewed the list of potential sites and felt they were not in a position to comment on suitability but thought it useful to have a look at which, if any, of the sites sat within a Flying Start area as they might provide access to enhanced services.
- Those living in Flying Start areas have access to enhanced health visiting services, support for speech, language and communication and parenting support. They would also have access to childcare for any children in the two to three years of age, age range.
- This is with the caveat that this would need to be confirmed with the relevant local authority, the Waterloo Hotel, Newport – NP20 2JG and Hirwaun Police station site – CF44 9SL are probably within Flying Start areas and they are surrounded by

postcode which are. However, this is based on the last data we have on LSOAs from 2016 and so while Flying Start coverage is unlikely to have changed a great deal since then it is possible that other codes have been brought in instead.

- The remainder of the sites do not appear to be within Flying Start areas. There is a slim possibility that Sunnyside House, Bridgend – CF31 4AF might be, but this cannot be ascertained without contacting the local authority which we are unable to do at this time.

### **Psychology- Led Model**

Not specific comments on the specific sites, but some thought on the kind of building/setting that would be consistent (or at least have the potential to be consistent) with the psychology-led model of the female offending blueprint, encouraging the selection of a building that is likely to enable the development of an enabling environment (acknowledging that this needs to be balanced with a range of other considerations of course).

The immediate setting and outlook of a building should lend themselves to a rehabilitative environment – so its own grounds, garden (allowing for the possibility of gardening and other outdoor-based activities), greenery, sense of spaciousness, not being overlooked, etc, would be positive.

- The building should be in relatively peaceful surroundings and at the very least not somewhere ‘noisy’ (so not right next to a motorway or train line, or in a city centre, for example).
- The building should not have the ‘look’ of an institution from the outside or inside and as far as possible (given its likely size) should have the look and feel of a home. The approach should be welcoming and not add to any sense of stigma that service users may already be experiencing.
- This needs to be balanced with the setting needing to have the potential to be made suitably secure for staff and women to feel safe at all times so that risk of re-traumatization is minimised.
- There should be a space that could be a light, airy and welcoming reception area for visitors and users of the RWC.
- There should be plenty of room for both active and passive private individual and group therapy/interview/activities, including a space large enough to accommodate ALL staff and residents at once for full community meetings. This space may also be used for staff training and supervision, multi-agency meetings, case conferences, etc. Ideally there should be room enough for group-based physical activities, such as yoga classes for BOTH staff and residents. The number and size of rooms needs to reflect the multiple services that women will be expected to engage with – historically a lack of rooms in similar centres has created problems.

- Women's residential areas should provide private bedroom and bathroom facilities and ideally a separate living room where resident women can spend evenings. Consideration needs to be given to space for the accommodation of wakeful and 'sleeping in' staff.
- Consideration should be given to a space where women can access IT, books, and other resources to support their development and engagement with services.
- Kitchen areas should be large enough to accommodate individual and group cooking activities (and possibly completion of related qualifications) by residents and staff.
- All rooms should have windows that allow for plenty of natural light, and ideally providing natural views.

Of course, what makes the environment enabling and rehabilitative will also be very much driven by the decoration, signage, furniture, relationships, the way staff interact with residents, etc, but the building itself provides the skeleton to allow this to happen in practice.

Women with lived experience should be involved in the selection of the setting for the RWC if we are truly going to put our involvement model into action.