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THURSDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2023

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND THE **MULTI LOCATION MEETING OF CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL** WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE **CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN. SA31 1JP AND REMOTELY AT 10.00 AM, ON WEDNESDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2023** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Democratic Officer:	Emma Bryer
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THE MEETING CAN BE VIEWED ON THE AUTHORITY'S WEBSITE VIA THE FOLLOWING LINK:-

<https://carmarthenshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.
3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)
4. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER, CABINET MEMBERS AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (IF ANY)
5. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 8TH NOVEMBER, 2023 5 - 18
6. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM:-
 - 6.1 STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23 19 - 58
7. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE:-
 - 7.1 30TH OCTOBER, 2023 59 - 68
 - 7.2 13TH NOVEMBER, 2023 69 - 72
8. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICE OF MOTION:-
 - 8.1 NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLORS JOHN JAMES AND ANN DAVIES

“This Council condemns the heinous mass slaughter of innocent people in Israel on October 7th. Council is also horrified by the scale and consequences of the ongoing military retaliation in Gaza. We therefore call on the international community to:

 - i. Unite to deliver the humanitarian response needed to safeguard innocent lives devastated by this conflict, and ensure that access is given to food, water, medicines, and the power source which are all urgently needed.
 - ii. Seek an immediate ceasefire to end the current human suffering.
 - iii. Support the call from communities throughout the world for **ALL** hostages to be released and returned home to their families.
 - iv. Work with Israeli and Palestinian representatives to bring an end to this current conflict and negotiate a permanent peace settlement which delivers security

and a peaceful long term future to this area based on the principle of a two-state solution.”

9. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED).

10. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS:-

10.1 QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR HEFIN JONES TO COUNCILLOR ALUN LENNY, CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

“In setting out the likely entry criteria for the future Sustainable Farming Scheme, Welsh Government ministers, and the First Minister himself, recently reaffirmed the likely requirement for farming enterprises to have 10% of their farmed land under tree cover, and a further 10% as habitat land. In addition, there is a strong possibility that farming businesses will need to implement a range of carbon sequestration methods on land they manage to mitigate their own emissions, and /or will look to undertake habitat management work in line with support schemes to ensure sustainability.

Local authorities also have ambitions in relation to afforestation, along with aspirations and targets for emissions reduction and mitigation.

Will the cabinet member for resources provide reassurance that Carmarthenshire County Council will NOT seek to use land that forms part of farmed council holdings for afforestation projects to achieve its own ambitions or meet its own targets, and ensure that farming and primary production enterprises run by tenants on the council’s rural estate have the best possible chance to be sustainable and continue to make a valuable contribution to our rural communities in this county?”

11. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES:-

11.1 THE UNAFFILIATED MEMBERS HAVE NOMINATED COUNCILLOR JOHN JAMES TO TAKE THEIR VACANT SEAT ON THE PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12. MINUTES FOR INFORMATION (AVAILABLE TO VIEW ON THE WEBSITE)

12.1 PLANNING COMMITTEE - 24TH OCTOBER, 2023

12.2 GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE - 27TH OCTOBER, 2023

12.3 PARTNERIAETH JOINT COMMITTEE - 6TH OCTOBER, 2023

12.4 LICENSING COMMITTEE - 31ST OCTOBER, 2023

12.5 PLANNING COMMITTEE - 9TH NOVEMBER, 2023

12.6 COMMUNITIES, HOMES & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 15TH NOVEMBER, 2023

12.7 DYFED PENSION FUND COMMITTEE - 15TH NOVEMBER, 2023

12.8 PLANNING COMMITTEE - 21ST NOVEMBER, 2023

13. THE REPORT RELATING TO THE FOLLOWING ITEM IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION AS IT CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPHS 14 OF PART 4 OF SCHEDULE 12A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) (WALES) ORDER 2007. IF, FOLLOWING THE APPLICATION OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST, THE COUNCIL RESOLVES PURSUANT TO THE ACT TO CONSIDER THIS ITEM IN PRIVATE, THE PUBLIC WILL BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING SUCH CONSIDERATION.

14. CWM ENVIRONMENTAL LTD - RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY (RRF) REBUILD COSTS AND LOAN REQUEST

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COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillor B.A.L. Roberts (Chair)

Councillors (In Person):

S.M. Allen	K.V. Broom	J.M. Charles	P. Cooper
M.D. Cranham	C.A. Davies	G. Davies	H.L. Davies
K. Davies	L. Davies	S.L. Davies	T. Davies
L.D. Evans	W.T. Evans	J.P. Hart	T.M. Higgins
J.K. Howell	P. Hughes-Griffiths	J.D. James	M. James
J.P. Jenkins	H. Jones	A. Lenny	M.J.A. Lewis
N. Lewis	A. Leyshon	K. Madge	D. Nicholas
M. Palfreman	D. Price	B.A.L. Roberts	H.B. Shepardson
E. Skinner	D. Thomas	E.G. Thomas	G.B. Thomas
M. Thomas	J. Tremlett	A. Vaughan Owen	

Councillors (Virtually):

D.M. Cundy	S.A. Curry	A. Davies	T.A.J. Davies
C. Davies	LI.M. Davies	M. Donoghue	A. Evans
D.C. Evans	H.A.L. Evans	N. Evans	R.E. Evans
S. Godfrey-Coles	A.D. Harries	R. James	G.H. John
B.W. Jones	A.C. Jones	D. Jones	G.R. Jones
A.G. Morgan	D. Owen	B.D.J. Phillips	E. Rees
S.L. Rees	E.M.J.G. Schiavone	R. Sparks	F. Walters
P.T. Warlow	D.E. Williams	J. Williams	

Also Present (In Person):

W. Walters, Chief Executive
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services
G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services
A. Williams, Director of Place and Infrastructure
P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services
L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer
S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator
R. Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability
K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Also Present (Virtually):

R. Morris, Members Support Officer

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 am - 1.20 pm

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

(Note:

- At 12:54pm the Council's attention was drawn to Council Procedure Rule (CPR) 9 – Duration of Meeting and, as the meeting would have been underway for three hours at 1:00pm, and it was resolved to suspend standing orders, in accordance with CPR 23.1, to enable the remaining business on the agenda to be considered.]

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L. Bowen, A. Davies, B. Davies and P. Hughes.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
H. Shepardson	6 – Presentation by Chief Fire Officer Roger Thomas, Mid and West Wales Fire Authority	Member of the Fire Authority
K. Broom	6 – Presentation by Chief Fire Officer Roger Thomas, Mid and West Wales Fire Authority	Member of the Fire Authority
E. Williams	6 – Presentation by Chief Fire Officer Roger Thomas, Mid and West Wales Fire Authority	Member of the Fire Authority
G. Thomas	6 – Presentation by Chief Fire Officer Roger Thomas, Mid and West Wales Fire Authority	Member of the Fire Authority
E. Thomas	9.3 – Conservation Area Appraisals	Lives within the Llandeilo Conservation Area
J. Tremlett	9.3 – Conservation Area Appraisals	Lives within the Laugharne Conservation Area
A Lenny	9.3 – Conservation Area Appraisals	Lives within the Carmarthen Conservation Area
H.A.L. Evans	9.3 – Conservation Area Appraisals	Lives within the Newcastle Emlyn Conservation Area
C.A. Jones	9.3 – Conservation Area Appraisals	Lives within the Llanstephan Conservation Area
Andrew Davies	9.3 – Conservation Area Appraisals	Lives within the Brecon Beacons Conservation Area
D. Phillips	9.3 – Conservation Area	Lives within the

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

	Appraisals	Llanboidy Conservation Area
D. Jones	9.3 – Conservation Area Appraisals	Has the Caeau Mynydd Mawr Marsh Fritillary Butterfly Project in the area

3. CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

- The Chair advised that she had attended the Launch of the Poppy Day Appeal in the Council Offices at Carmarthen.
- The Chair outlined the Council’s support for the White Ribbon Day to be held on the 25th November 2023 raising awareness of domestic abuse and local services available to help victims and survivors.
- At the Chair’s invite, the following Councillors addressed the Council:-
 - Councillor Linda Evans raised awareness to this year’s Christmas Toy Box Appeal and highlighted that this year many children and families would be impacted upon by the rising costs of living and therefore, encouraged Members to contribute to the Appeal and raise its awareness within their wards.
 - Councillor John Jenkins advised that the meeting of the Council that day would be his last meeting having made the decision to stand down as a Councillor with Carmarthenshire County Council due to family and work commitments. He reflected on his time as a county councillor since being elected to the Elli Ward in Llanelli in 2004. He expressed his appreciation to elected members and officers of the Council for their guidance and assistance over that time and also extended his best wishes for the future. He also commented on the honour of being elected by the people of the Elli Ward to represent them on the Council.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER, CABINET MEMBERS AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (IF ANY)

The Council received the following two Cabinet Member announcements:

- Councillor Alun Lenny, Cabinet Member for Resources, referred to the forthcoming Autumn Statement announcement by the UK Chancellor, which would be followed in December 2023 by the Welsh Government’s announcement on the level of Revenue Support Grant for Welsh Local Authorities for 2024/25. He commented on the severe financial pressures being faced by local authorities both in England and Wales and that he had written to the Chancellor in that regard urging him to provide sufficient funding to the Welsh Government, through the Barnett formula, to enable it, in turn, to provide additional funding for Local Government in Wales to continue to maintain essential services.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

- Councillor Glynog Davies, Cabinet Member for Education and the Welsh Language, echoed the sentiments raised by Councillor Lenny and specifically referred to the impact financial constraints were having on the provision of education services. Specifically, the impact of the £40m reduction of funding to the Council's Modernising Education Provision programme which was also facing rising construction and maintenance costs. As a result of those pressures, he advised the current programme was unsustainable and was being re-examined and would be submitted to Council for its consideration in due course.

5. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 11TH OCTOBER 2023

It was noted that Councillor K. Davies should have been included within the list of members attending the meeting the Council meeting virtually on the 11th October 2023.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 11th October 2023 be signed as a correct record.

6. PRESENTATION BY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER ROGER THOMAS, MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE.

[Note: Councillors K. Broom, H. Shepherdson, G.B. Thomas and E. Williams having earlier declared an interest, re-iterated their declaration on this item and remained in the meeting for its consideration.]

The Chair welcomed to the meeting the Chief Fire Officer, Mr Roger Thomas, Mrs Sarah Mansbridge, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service's Section 151 Officer together with Councillor Gwynfor Thomas, Chair of the Fire Authority.

The Chief Fire Officer and the Section 151 Officer gave an overview of the work of the Fire and Rescue Service detailing the work of the Fire Service and including the current operational and financial challenges.

The presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chair thanked the Chief Fire Officer, Section 151 Officer and the Chair of the Fire Authority for their attendance at the meeting and for the presentation.

7. RE-APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE TO A FURTHER TERM OF OFFICE

The Council considered a report on re-appointing Mrs Daphne Evans and Mrs Julie James onto the Standards Committee for a further term of office. It noted that whilst both the members had been appointed by Council in 2017 for a 6year term, expiring on the 12th December, 2023, Regulation 21 of the Standards Committee (Wales) Regulation 2001 provided for the re-appointment of members for a further term of office of no more than 4 years without the need for the post to be re-advertised.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Mrs Daphne Evans and Mrs Julie James be appointed to a further 4 year term of office on the Council's Standards Committee for the period 12th December 2023 – 12th December 2027.

8. COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY, REGULATORY AND OTHER COMMITTEES AND THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SERVE UPON THEM

In line with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, as amended, the Council considered a report detailing the outcome of a review of the composition of the Council's Scrutiny, Regulatory and other Committees following notification received that:-

- Councillor John James was no longer to be treated as a member of the Labour Group,
- Councillor Emyr Rees had left the Labour Group and,
- The Disbandment of the Housing Review Panel.

As a result of the above review, it was noted that the disbandment of the Housing Review Panel would result in a reduction in the number of Committee seats on the Council from 168 to 160

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, as a result of the changes to the overall political composition of the Council and the disbandment of the Housing Review Panel, that:

8.1 The number of Committee Seats on the Council be reduced to 160, split as follows:

- Scrutiny – 67
- Regulatory and Other - 93

8.2 The Changes to the number of seats held by the Labour Group, Plaid Cymru Group and Unaffiliated Members, as detailed within Tables 2 and 3 of the report be adopted.

8.3 In accordance with Corporate Procedure Rule CPR 2(2) the changes in Committee Members as a result of resolution 8.2 above (as detailed within the report) be approved.

8.4 In accordance with Part 6 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 to note that the existing arrangements for the allocation of the 5 Scrutiny Chairs remains unchanged.

9. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:-

**9.1. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 - ADOPTED
CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2006 -2021)**

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

The Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on the 16th October 2023 (minute 10) had considered the Annual Monitoring Report 2022/23 relating to the Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (2006-2021) prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Local Development Plan (LDP) Regulations 2005. It was noted that in accordance with the Council's Statutory Duty, the Annual Monitoring Report would be submitted to the Welsh Government and published on the Council's website by the 31st October 2023.

RESOLVED that the following recommendation of the Cabinet be adopted:

“that the Annual Monitoring Report for the Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) be endorsed and officers be authorised to make typographical or factual amendments as necessary to improve its clarity and accuracy”

9.2. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022-23

The Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on the 30th October 2023 (minute 6) had considered the Draft Annual Report 2022/23 on the Council's Corporate Strategy 2022-27, published in accordance with the requirements of both the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to publish an Annual Report on its Well-being objectives and under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 to report on its performance on a self-assessment approach. It was noted the report aimed to meet both the above requirements in the one document and included information relating to the four Well-being Objectives and Core Business Enablers and assessed progress made during the year.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendation of the Cabinet be adopted:

“that the Carmarthenshire County Council's Draft Annual Report for 2022-23 be approved”.

9.3. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

[Councillors Andrew Davies, H.A.L. Evans, C.A. Jones, D. Jones, A. Lenny, D. Phillips, J. Tremlett and E. Thomas having earlier declared a personal interest in this item, remained in the meeting and voted.]

The Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on the 30th October 2023 (minute 8) had considered a report regarding Conservation Area Appraisals that built on work undertaken to review ten of the designated Conservation Areas across the County and the subsequent preparation and consultation of the appraisals for each of the identified Conservation Areas. It was noted the report outlined the process and feedback received as part of the associated formal public consultation, setting out the final draft conservation area

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

appraisals and any recommended amendments to the Conservation Areas themselves together with detailing the next steps in relation to the regulatory process required to formally amend the Conservation Areas.

In response to a request received for parts of the Furnace area in Llanelli, associated with Alexander Raby an eighteenth century ironmaster, to be declared a conservation area, it was noted officers would liaise with the member who raised the issue.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendation of the Cabinet be adopted:

“8. 1- that the outcome of the Conservation Area Appraisals and the recommended amendments to Conservation Area Boundaries be approved,

8.2 – to authorise officers to undertake regulatory processes necessary to formally amend the Conservation Area boundaries as recommended”.

10. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE 16TH OCTOBER 2023

RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of Cabinet held on the 16th October, 2023 be received.

DURATION OF MEETING

At 12:54 pm the Council’s attention was drawn to Council Procedure Rule (CPR) 9 – Duration of Meeting and, as the meeting would have been underway for three hours at 1:00pm, it was therefore

RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to allow the remaining items on the agenda to be considered.

11. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES:-

11.1. THE LABOUR GROUP HAS NOMINATED COUNCILLOR DERYK CUNDY TO REPLACE COUNCILLOR KEVIN MADGE ON THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Labour Group’s nomination for Councillor D. Cundy to replace Councillor K. Madge on the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be approved.

11.2. THE LABOUR GROUP HAS NOMINATED COUNCILLOR LEWIS DAVIES TO TAKE ITS VACANT SEAT ON THE EDUCATION, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Labour Group's nomination for Councillor L. Davies to take its vacant seat on the Education, Young People, and the Welsh Language Scrutiny Committee be approved.

11.3. THE LABOUR GROUP HAS NOMINATED COUNCILLOR CRISH DAVIES TO REPLACE COUNCILLOR ROB EVANS ON THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Labour Group's nomination for Councillor Crish Davies to replace Councillor R. Evans on the Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee be approved.

12. TO ELECT THE CHAIR OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE FOLLOWING A VACANCY MID TERM

The Council, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4 (2) the Council considered two nominations received for the election of Chair of the Democratic Services Committee following a mid-term vacancy.

Following a vote, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor M. Cranham be appointed Chair of the Democratic Services Committee.

13. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED).

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

14. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS:-

14.1. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR JOHN JAMES TO COUNCILLOR ANN DAVIES, CABINET MEMBER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS, COMMUNITY COHESION & PLANNING POLICY

Question by Councillor James:

"The recent announcement by Dwr Cymru that many of its wastewater treatment plants are currently illegally spilling untreated sewage into rivers and the sea by not adhering to their permits has greatly alarmed the residents of Carmarthenshire.

Taking into account the proactive steps already taken by this Council regarding the concentration of phosphorus in our waters here in Carmarthenshire; What is Carmarthenshire County Council doing to Challenge Dwr Cymru on this illegal practice, and will you, Cllr. Davies, contact Dwr Cymru to discuss what measures they intend introducing to ensure that such neglect of our environment and to the health and well-being of our residents does not happen again".

Response by Councillor Davies:

Thank you John for the question.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

I can assure you and all the Councillors that I am very disappointed to see that over 223 breach discharge contents have happened in Wales since 2018 and these have a detrimental impact on the biodiversity of rivers and shouldn't happen in the 21st century. I note that NRW have given a warning to Dwr Cymru and enforcement notices and I have written to the Chair of Dwr Cymru to ask for a formal response and on the report to ask why so many breaches happened in Garnswllt and Llannon and the impact on this estuary in Carmarthen and this is not good enough. The answer, as I'm sure that you will all realise, is investment.

As Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Community Cohesion and Planning Policy and Chair of the Tywi Nutrient Management Board I have met with Dwr Cymru / Welsh Water to press for urgent need for long-term investment. I welcome therefore the submission of Dwr Cymru's business Plan to OFWAT for the period 2025-2033 earlier this month. And, if this is approved, it will result in a £3.5bn investment programme reducing the company's impact on the environment and in particular helping to improve river water quality. It's imperative that this work gets started and includes measures to substantially reduce nutrient discharges from waste water treatment to rivers of special areas of conservation and the commencement of a multi AMP programme to stop its network of 2,300 storm overflows causing ecological harm to our rivers. This work will, in itself, help save our rivers from further pollution and ensuring its enjoyment for all our residents here in Carmarthenshire. Thankyou

Supplementary Question by Councillor James: there was no supplementary question.

14.2. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR TERRY DAVIES TO COUNCILLOR DARREN PRICE, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Question by Councillor Davies:

"Will the Leader provide an update in terms of the Stradey Park hotel in the Ffwrnes Llanelli and outline any discussions that he has had with both the UK Government and Welsh Government on the matter"?

Response by Councillor Price:

Thank you Terry for the question

Since the announcement at the beginning of October that the UK Conservative Government had withdrawn their intention to utilise the Stradey Park hotel, the owners of course have stated that they want to reopen the hotel.

Now, I am sure that all members would want to see the site being brought back to use, and I am certainly of the view that this needs to happen sooner, rather than later.

Now, whether the site will be operated by the current owner, or another is not something for us as a council to determine – it is after all a private enterprise, but

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

clearly the longer that the site is left empty, the more the fabric of the buildings will deteriorate, and the greater will be the cost to bring it back up to standard.

Having spoken to a number of people in Llanelli and members over the last few weeks it is clear that local people want to see the site either revert to its former use as a hotel, or developed into another asset which can bring benefit to the town, and for that to happen as quickly as possible. What nobody wants is to see the site remaining derelict for a prolonged period.

Now, with the threat of Home Office use now firmly off the table, we now need clarity from the owners in terms of how they intend to bring the site back to use, and a detailed timetable for any works. It is important for the local community to fully understand the scope of works needed in order to bring the site back to use.

Members will remember that I had written to the Conservative Government urging them to withdraw from the site, and as a result of that letter, I received a further communication from the UK Government only last week. Within that letter, dated on November 1st, the UK Government state that they are now “committed to work with partners on a lessons learned exercise facilitated by the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership.” Now, clearly, this is important, as they had failed in my view to learn the lessons from the Penally camp experience.

Within this council of course, we have started to think quite some time ago about the way in which improvements can be made and, indeed, ever since the Stradey Park story broke back in May, I have been making the argument that there is an alternative way of managing the asylum process here in Wales.

As members are aware, I have consistently stated that local government and the Welsh Government should have a central role in developing an All-Wales approach to emergency asylum accommodation, as opposed to leaving it to a UK Government which very often has no idea of the local context – as we have seen in the case of the Stradey Park hotel.

I raised this over the Summer with both the Minister for Social Justice, Jane Hutt and at WLGA meetings with other Leaders, and it was therefore pleasing that on September 15th, at a WLGA Executive Board meeting, it was agreed by all leaders of local authorities in Wales to formally accept a proposal to develop a new, collaborative, way forward for planning asylum accommodation in Wales. It was pleasing that many of the concerns that we had raised, and the experiences that we had shared, were reflected and addressed in that proposal, which sought to develop a new relationship between the UK Government, Welsh Government and Welsh local government – where there is parity of esteem, as opposed to the UK Government simply telling us locally what is going to happen, with little or no opportunity for local input.

I understand that the Welsh Government has now made that offer to the Conservative Government in London, and I would hope that the Conservative Government would look and take up that offer.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

From our perspective, here in Carmarthenshire of course, what is frustrating for us, as members, is that these discussions between WG and UK Government hadn't taken place at an earlier stage, because had this more co-operative model been proposed, and was in place, prior to this May, then I am absolutely convinced that we would not have had to endure what we've had to endure in Llanelli.

Members will be aware that the Police and Crime Commissioner, Dafydd Llewelyn, has estimated that the cost to the police force of the Stradey Park fiasco has been in excess of £300k for Dyfed Powys Police. He is seeking reimbursement, and has written to the Home Secretary, Suella Braverman to make that point.

I can confirm this morning Chair, that I too will be making a claim for reimbursement from the Conservative Government for costs incurred by this authority due to the fiasco over the past six months.

Officers of this authority have spent over 2,700 hours, yes 2,700 hours, dealing with this issue. In addition, we have also lost income due to the cancelled marriage ceremonies and resulting loss of income of course to registrars, for example. This comes at a time of significant budget strain, as we have heard earlier this morning, and officers have been pulled away from their primary duties in order to deal with this mess.

In total, nearly £230k of costs have been incurred as a direct result of the Conservative Government's flawed proposal, and I believe that there is a duty on the Conservative Government to reimburse this authority for those costs.

Chair, the grit and determination shown by so many over recent months is to be commended, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank members, officers, partners and local residents for their co-operation and efforts over recent months. What is clear is that we need to harness that energy, to turn that frustration into positive action, and ensure that everyone is on the same page, as we all take steps to make Llanelli the prosperous, sustainable, welcoming and successful town that we know it can be.

As always Chair, I will endeavour to keep members updated on developments at the Stradey Park, and with regards to further discussions with both the UK and Welsh Governments on this agenda.

Thank you

Supplementary question by Councillor Davies: There was no supplementary question.

14.3. QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR MEINIR JAMES TO COUNCILLOR ALED VAUGHAN OWEN, CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, DECARBONISATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Question by Councillor James:

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

“In response to the Declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, does the Council intend to decarbonise our light vehicle fleet?”

Wouldn't setting a meaningful timetable and targets send a clear message to the residents of Carmarthenshire that we take our responsibilities seriously, and give us an opportunity to showcase the cost savings and benefits of an electric fleet to businesses and organisations within our County?”

Response by Councillor Vaughan Owen:

Thankyou very much Councillor James and your question does raise a vital issue that affects not only the environment but also our health and well-being. It's about the urgent need to decarbonise our public fleet of vehicles. This is not just an issue of environmental concern. It's essential for our future.

Scientists and organisations around the world have been sounding the alarm, including the fire service today in his presentation, and the message is clear the lifetime of oil is no longer sustainable for the sake of our climate and public health. Organisations such as the Inter-Government Panel on Climate change, the IPCC, and the World Health Organisation have provided irrefutable evidence that our continued dependence on fossil fuels is causing serious damage to our planet and our own health. We can't deny our dependency on oil.

For us, as an authority, we have fully committed to playing our part and have set an ambition to be net zero by the end of the decade. The largest carbon footprint comes from our non-domestic buildings and some really innovative steps are being taken to reduce energy demand in the form of electricity and heat. as has been noted in the Annual Report and 20% of the emissions come from our fleet and we have to do things differently in this area quickly.

So, I can announce that by working together Cllr Edward Thomas we have mandated that, from this week forward, all new fleet across the authority must have the presumption in favour of Electric Vehicles. Clearly, an assessment will support every decision based on the technical requirements, the economic costs and savings, the environment and health benefits and the practicality of deployment.

This decision now shapes the way forward for a new fleet strategy that is fit for purpose and addresses the challenges and opportunities ahead.

In the last meeting of the Climate and Nature Emergency Advisory Panel, members agreed to undertake a deep dive into fleet and transport across the authority. We are lucky to have knowledgeable and passionate members from across the chamber who will be able to gather evidence from experts and others that have started the journey and together we will shape an exciting bold new fleet strategy that will be scrutinised and hopefully enhanced by the Place and Sustainability Scrutiny committee. The insight of both the panel and scrutiny will provide recommendations to the Cabinet on practical measures to accelerate the transition, setting ambitious targets and driving us closer to the net zero goal.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

We need to step away from doing less bad in better ways.

We need to step away from incremental changes in the wrong places and find out the boundaries of what is possible.

But it is not like we are starting from a standing start, currently about 17% of our cars are Ultra Low Emission Vehicles but, regionally, we have been on the front foot when it comes to the larger fleet, including three refuse lorries and the 8 EV Traws Cymru buses that run from Carmarthen to Aberystwyth.

These have given us such an insight and learning around Electric Vehicle technology and capability - imagine a bus that can do 230miles on a single charge and then recharge in 90 mins

We have also built design and construction skills within the county while developing the charging station at Nant y Ci.

For every local authority is presented with unique geographical challenges, each with its own set of obstacles and opportunities, but working collaboratively we can deploy the right vehicle to the right place and learn, fail and share so that this country can significantly decarbonise the public fleet. We are already part of an all Wales purchasing agreement that can look at funding options, the economies of scale means significantly reducing costs and also reducing the lead in time for vehicles. We are in the process of ordering 20 electric light commercial vehicles.

Our action plan with the Public Service Board Partners will see us working more collaboratively across the county when it comes to the charging infrastructure. Each organisation is on its own decarbonising journey but enabling each partner to access one another's charging network will accelerate the business case for fleet de-carbonisation.

But also, this is about how we enable society to decarbonise the way it travels. Having a fleet of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles should be something we would want to share with others. We have already invested heavily in a charging network across the county, and we are looking at innovative ways to develop on-street charging. The transition to low carbon transport must be fair and equitable and who knows, we might start thinking even further outside the box and commit to some of our pool cars to be available for as community car club vehicles and make greater use of night-time charging tariffs. Promoting the positive aspects of a decarbonisation in the fleet, reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality, debunking some mis-information being promoted by those still heavily invested in oil and gas, are all things we must do in parallel with switching our fleet.

Now is the moment to embrace the green revolution, we accelerate along this journey, we mustn't look in the rear view mirror and say, this is how we have always done it, in fact we should be looking back and say, can you believe how we used to do things?

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

The road before us is uneven and uncertain but decarbonising the fleet is like paving the way to a sustainable future where every vehicle represents a step towards a cleaner and greener path.

Supplementary question by Councillor James: There was no supplementary question.

15. MINUTES FOR INFORMATION (AVAILABLE TO VIEW ON THE WEBSITE)

The Chair stated that the minutes outlined on the agenda under 15.1 – 15.10 were available for information on the Council website.

CHAIR

DATE

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

COUNTY COUNCIL 6TH DECEMBER, 2023

SUBJECT: STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES' ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Purpose:

There is a statutory requirement for the Director of Social Services to report annually to their Council on the delivery and performance as well as plans for the improvement of the whole range of Social Services.

This is the annual report by the Director of Social Services on the performance of our Social Care Services in the county.

This report provides Members with the opportunity to question the content and gives an opportunity for the Statutory Director to consider any comments elected Members may have for the future.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

That the Annual report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2022/23 be approved.

Reasons:

Political scrutiny of this report is considered by the Director to be an important element in the development process and will be amended throughout the various stages to the final publication of this report in the summer of 2023.

Cabinet Decision Required:	YES – 30 th October 2023
Council Decision Required	YES – 6 th December 2023

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. J. Tremlett (Health & Social Services Portfolio Holder)

<p>Directorate: Communities</p> <p>Name of Head of Service: Jake Morgan</p>	<p>Designation: Director of Community Services (Statutory Director of Social Services)</p>	<p>Tel: 01267 224698</p> <p>Email addresses: JakeMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES' ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Annual Report examines each Service area within Social Care and shows how service strategies, actions, targets and service risks will be addressed and delivered operationally by the service this year based on the approved budget.

The Annual Report (attached) comprises an overview provided by the Director of Social Services, which provides information on how we have performed in 2022/23 and an assessment on the future, together with our strategic priorities for 2023/24.

The Report links closely with the Directorate Business Plans for Community Services and Education & Children's Services departments.

Following publication of the report to the public (after it has been presented to full Council), Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Welsh Government will complete their analysis and review of the report. There will be a formal meeting with CIW in December to discuss their analysis and proposed plan. This will be followed by an Annual Letter to Council confirming their analysis and inspection plan.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: **Jake Morgan** **Director of Social Services**

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The Annual Report will be an important contribution to the Council's Improvement Plan.

2. Legal

The Annual Report forms an important part of the statutory duties of the Director of Social Services:

"The Director will present to Council, publish and report on an annual statement of plans for performance and improvement"

3. Finance

There are no financial implications in the report. However, the report highlights some budget pressures which will need to be considered in the budget setting process for 2024/2025.

4. ICT

The PIMS system will be used to provide updated commentary of the action plan for 2023/24.

5. Risk Management Issues

Key risks have been addressed in this report with a link to the departmental and corporate risk register.

6. Physical Assets

Physical assets are included in this report in relation to service delivery.

7. Staffing Implications

Staffing implications are included in this report.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jake Morgan

Director of Social Services

1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination

YES

Scrutiny Committee

Health & Social Services

Date the report was considered:-

4th October, 2023

Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CABINET that the report be received.

2. Local Member(s) - Not applicable.

3. Community / Town Council - Not applicable.

4. Relevant Partners - Not applicable.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - Not applicable.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED

YES

Include any observations here

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE.

Title of Document

File Ref No.

Locations that the papers are available for public inspection

Statutory Director of Social Services Annual Report

Final 2022/23



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Dates of Officers and Political meetings

05/09/2023	DMT
07/09/2023	CMT
04/10/2023	Scrutiny
16/10/2023	Pre Cabinet
30/10/2023	Cabinet
06/12/2023	Council

Introduction



This is my **tenth** annual report as Statutory Director of Social Services. Social Services is only a part of my corporate role. There is a statutory requirement for me to report on the performance annually to demonstrate the improvements and the significant challenges we faced during 2022/23. I also set our priorities for the current year 2023/24.

I am grateful for the council's support and commitment to Social Services as we face unprecedented workforce and demand pressures.

The inability to recruit sufficient Homecare, Residential Care and Social Work Staff reached a critical point in late 2022. In common with almost all authorities this led to long waiting lists for assessment and care. Since then, workforce initiatives including a care Academi, increased degree sponsorship and improving some terms and conditions have improved and stabilised the position in all areas. However, at the time of writing, we still face significant gaps in Homecare and Social Work.

The council faced significant financial pressures in 2022/23, we needed to deliver against a robust efficiency programme in Adult Services. Children & Family Services were well protected corporately albeit increased demand and costs create a significant challenge for the council this year as the number of looked after children continue to rise. Our prevention and demand management work along with many other initiatives in supporting us to work as efficiently as possible whilst we continue to strive to improve service user outcomes. The position for 2024/25 looks more challenging and key decisions may need to be made by the council to meet need in different ways.

Despite this, performance remains good in most areas despite unprecedented levels of demand. In particular: We still have the lowest number of looked after children for our population in Wales; Our development of Supportive Living resources for adults with Mental Health and a learning disability is really transforming lives as this programme gathers pace; our Home-first service is reducing those needing long term care at pace and our development of in house resources to rebalance the market is on the cusp of delivering a range of new and innovative resources.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all Council staff who have worked incredibly hard throughout the year to deliver the services highlighted in this report. I have been so impressed by their dedication, patience and professionalism in the way they have risen to the huge challenges. I also want to express our sincere thanks to all our statutory partners, third sector and volunteers who have contributed so much to ensuring better outcomes for those who need our help most.

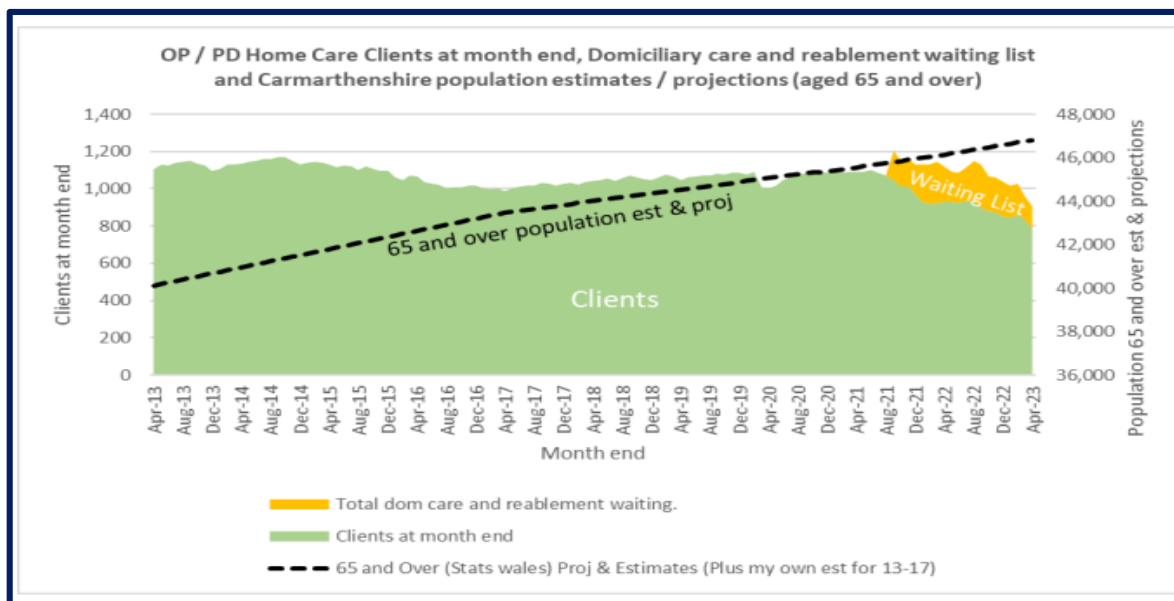
Jake Morgan, Statutory Director of Social Services

Overview

Adult Services

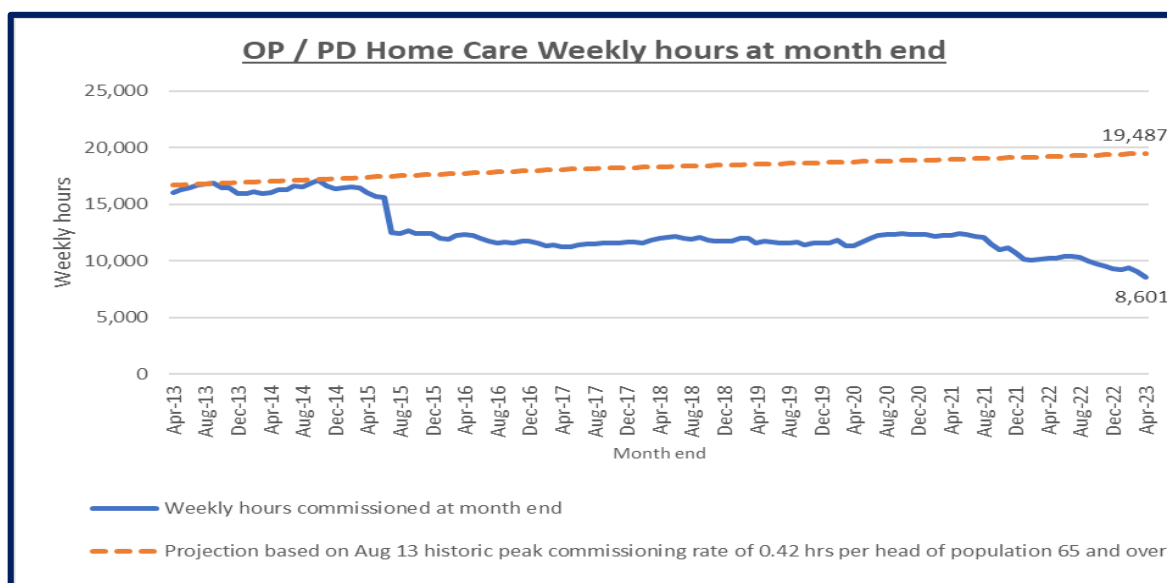
The last year has continued to present ongoing challenges for Adult Services. Similarly, to all Councils across the UK we have been grappling with the dual challenge of increased demand and complexity of those people who need our support as well as decreasing capacity to support them linked to the ongoing social care workforce crisis. In simple terms, we do not have enough social workers or Homecare staff to firstly assess all of those that require assessment and secondly support them once they have been assessed.

Homecare delivery has reduced to just over 9,000 hours a week due to the ongoing difficulties in recruiting and retaining sufficient numbers of care workers across sectors. This has inevitably led to minimum waits for care with the risk managed through careful triage and monitoring of people's needs. Greater emphasis on reablement, therapy led step down provision and supporting people in different ways such as Direct payments has led to a significant reduction in demand when considered against the growth in the number of older people in the county. The graph below illustrates the likely demand for homecare if we had continued with the same model of care:



Innovation had made a difference in particular our efforts at smarter commissioning and contracting, a greater emphasis on early intervention, utilising technology, and workforce better, more effective reablement and the introduction of direct payments has led to a striking long-term trend of halving the number of hours of homecare. This has enabled us to manage provision whilst maintaining a stable number of residential placements and delivering a sustainable budget. From being amongst the highest providers in Wales for Homecare we are now average when considered against our population.

The graph below illustrates the 10-year trend of provision.

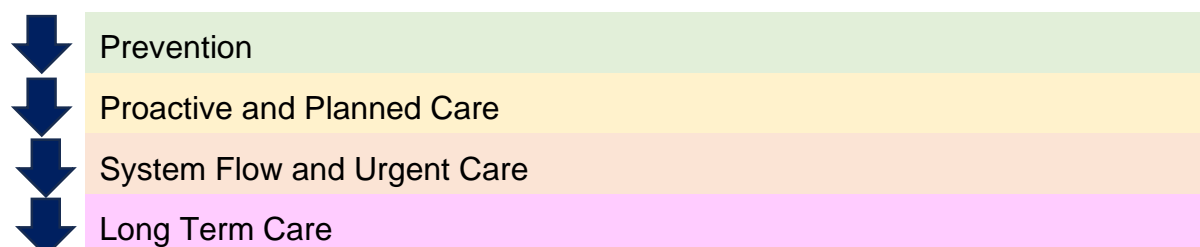


Note -The drop in 2015 reflected a more effective new contracting model and a drop in the number of paid for hours not a drop in the number of care hours delivered to service users.

A range of activities have had an impact in managing demand and demographic growth despite these efforts there is still a considerable waiting list of more than 100 people. However, had we not made these radical reforms over the last 10 years then we would have a waiting list of 500 people and spend of an additional £20,000,000 annually. This clearly illustrates how managing demand in this area is central to the overall financial health of the authority.

In **Older People and Physical Disability services** it has been demonstrated that working in partnership within our integrated management structure between Carmarthenshire County Council and the Local Health Board has been key. This partnership extends to Delta Wellbeing and our third sector partners who are critical to developing and delivering community preventative services as well as long-term care services.

Our strategic plan to manage demand is aligned to the development of pathways as follows:



Our priority has been to redesign these pathways of care to allow us to ensure our services are aligned to best support the population of Carmarthenshire as the population changes and the needs grow by at least 3% a year.

Our key priority has been on keeping safe those waiting for care. This has been a strength of the service over the last year. We have maintained our robust approach to triaging all referrals for social work assessments and prioritising those in greatest need. We continue to review those waiting for care, to ensure that needs have not changed and people remain safe through regular keeping in touch calls by dedicated Care and Support Coordinators in the teams. We also work with families to consider all options and are creative around how to meet support needs at home through a combination of informal and formal support.

We continue to make best use of the care capacity we have by using the releasing time to care methodology to actively reduce care packages where appropriate and release hours to support others. The support of our Occupational Therapists is critical in using their expert knowledge to reduce the number of carers needed from 2 to 1. As part of the annual budget efficiencies, it was agreed that we would look to increase the capacity within the review team on an invest to save basis. This is allowing us to increase the pace at which we can do reviews, and consequently release more care hours to support others.

A dedicated meeting now takes place fortnightly to review all long hospital waits. This allows us to challenge and review and ensure that all options have been considered. This has had a considerable impact on reducing those with a long wait in hospital. In addition, there are twice weekly hospital escalation panels where all difficult cases are escalated and discussed. Waits for care in hospital remain in line with the long-term average with less than 10% of hospital capacity used for people waiting for care despite well over 70% of the capacity of hospitals used for frail and elderly people.

Preventing admissions and reducing the length of stay will be key if we are to create more bed capacity for planned hospital care. With record deficits in Health Board budgets across Wales there is a very real risk that this could destabilise the implementation of initiatives that deliver medium- and long-term benefits in favour of short-term cost cutting.

To improve flow and reduce demand we have also recently changed our approach to how we deal with referrals when they come through Delta Wellbeing, our single point of access to community health and social care. All referrals are now being centrally triaged by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, rather than being triaged in the 3 separate localities by individual professional teams. Whilst it is early days, this approach is starting to reduce the number of those waiting for social work assessment both by ensuring that referrals are directed to the correct place first and through identification of preventative/early intervention services which allow us to close down the referral at information and advice. At the time of writing the report the overall number of people waiting for assessment had reduced from a post pandemic peak of 450 to 200 and we were cautiously optimistic that this change in approach would effectively help us to manage demand. The numbers of people waiting for domiciliary care had also significantly decreased from just over 250 at its peak to just over 100, most of who are in the community.

Despite the challenges, there are a number of key achievements. The Integrated Services Restructure is now complete, all Senior Managers are in post with only the

Senior Delivery Manager for Prevention in the process of being recruited. This restructure, the first for 9 years provides the platform to deal with the continued challenges. This prevention post will support the Carmarthenshire Prevention Board in clarifying its strategic intent in relation to prevention and help us to develop an action plan to address key gaps and ensure we retain a focus on long term goals as we navigate budget pressures in Health and the County Council.

Our award-winning Home First pilot whereby we triage all new referrals is helping to inform Phase 2 of the restructure. As a result, we are re-aligning our teams under the Senior Manager posts. We anticipate that Phase 2 will be complete by mid-Autumn. The Intermediate Care element of the Home First team is now fully embedded and is supporting people to leave hospital more quickly and starting to support people in crisis in the community to help keep them at home rather than admitted to hospital. This element of our changes is receiving national recognition.

Aligned to this service is Ty Pili Pala, our 14 bedded reablement unit within Llys Y Bryn Care Home which is providing excellent outcomes with 70% of those that use the service returning home with no formal ongoing care. We have also launched our integrated reablement service in partnership with Hywel Dda University Health Board. Whilst recruitment has been a challenge, 90% of those supported are now leaving the service with no long-term care arrangements needed. This is an outstanding example of a service improvement that improves outcomes and reduces costs that could not be delivered without such a strong integrated approach across health and social care.

Our day services for older people are now back up and running, following the enforced closure during the pandemic, and we are slowly growing the service to ensure that we can keep pace with demand. As people chose different models of care and support, we will reshape these services to reflect need.

This model of continuous improvement leaves me cautiously optimistic that the latest set of data continues to demonstrate that our innovative approaches are having the impact that we need to ensure that residents in Carmarthenshire who need it are supported at home in as timely a way as possible within a budget that is manageable in the short term. However, as the population grows it will be impossible to both continue to absorb inflation in the sector above 10% and the frail population growing annually by nearly 3% without substantial and sustained national investment in the care of older people.

Mental Health and Learning Disability services have continued their drive to develop a range of supported accommodation to reduce their reliance on residential care. This improves outcomes and enables choice for individuals and promote their independence as more vulnerable people are able to live in our communities. This programme of work also impacts positively on the budget, by reducing over provision and cost in some cases. This ambitious programme of change slowed during the pandemic but is now progressing at pace. Several housing schemes have been opened with more to follow this year and approximately 20 individuals have stepped down from residential care.

Whilst the last year has been challenging, it has also brought opportunities, such as in day opportunities where we have had to adapt and provide less building-based services and provide activities and support people in different ways, with resources reshaped and remodelled to deliver care in the communities that people live. This was always our intention. We have also been successful in increasing the use of technology to stay connected with people and this has proved very successful. We have developed several innovative projects to provide day opportunities for people with a Learning Disability including activities in collaboration with leisure. Moving forward we are also establishing a skills hub in Crosshands which will offer skill development and accredited training.

Last year the Council provided a significant additional investment in Mental Health Services, to enable us to develop and deliver improved services. Unfortunately, despite the investment, we have been unable to recruit all the social worker posts, as a result we are embarking on an ambitious programme to “grow our own”, linked with development pathways for social care staff. More information is provided in the Workforce section of this report. We have however established a wellbeing pathway in the mental health teams with a dedicated resource focussing on early intervention and prevention. Whilst this is in its infancy it is already producing positive outcomes for individuals.

Demand for substance misuse services has increased since the pandemic. We have seen an increase in those presenting with Alcohol Related Brain Damage, so we are collaborating with colleagues in the Health Board and third sector to develop support pathways for individuals with this profile. This is also the case for individuals who have mental health and substance misuse issues.

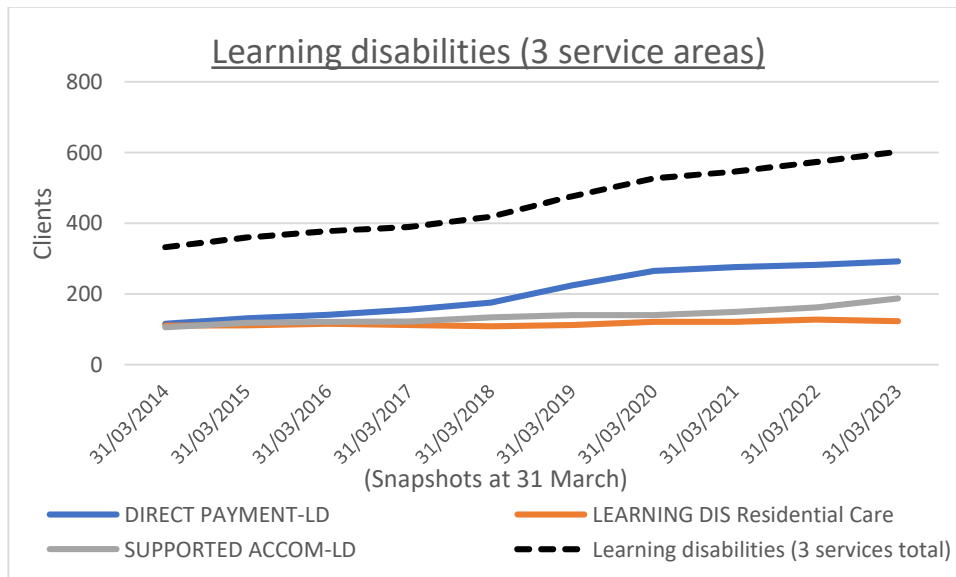
Over the last year, similarly to older adults and physical disabilities, increased demand and complexity has been a consistent feature in all the Social Work teams. This includes our Learning Disability Teams who are responding to the impact of the pandemic on individuals and their families and our Substance Misuse Team who have seen increased complexities related to increased substance misuse.

In order to manage demand going forward it will be essential to ensure that we have a robust prevention strategy to provide advice, information, assistance, early intervention and rapid response to those in crisis. This will allow us to, wherever possible, help people to maintain their independence for as long as possible, and prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital and residential care. Person centred practice will be at the heart of everything we do, as well as supporting carers to continue in their caring role. We have carers champions in all teams within Adult Social Care, and all teams have either achieved or working towards their Investors in carers awards. This collaborative approach is key in delivering our service objectives. Getting this right must be the service’s key focus in 2023/24.

These services are facing increasing demand that can result in delays to providing the care people need when they need it. However, strong professional leadership in the service leaves me confident that the service is managing the risk and developing the pathways of care to keep people safe and future proofing our services in times of increasing demand. However, the pace of delivery will need to increase if we are to

keep pace with rising demand and deliver a net decrease in the number of people with mental health and learning disabilities in residential care.

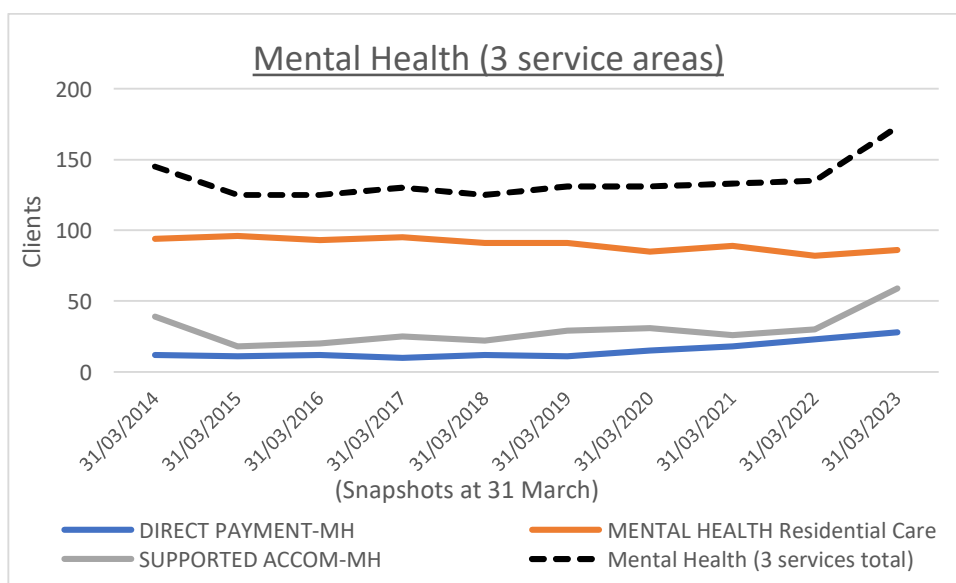
The graph below illustrates people with learning disabilities that receive a range of services since 2014.



The number of people receiving a service has doubled since 2014 with demand growing this has now demonstrated a steady growth in people receiving supported living and direct payments.

The challenge for the next few years is to build on the progress made in developing accommodation in the last few years, further reduce the number of people in residential care and support adults with disabilities in the community.

The below graph illustrates patterns and demand since 2014 for people with Mental Health



In the past few years, we have been successful in slowly reducing numbers of people in residential care. Since the pandemic the demand for mental health services has grown, and we have seen a growth in people requiring supported accommodation in the community. Extending the range of accommodation options as we have done in Learning Disability is a priority this year.

Safeguarding

In relation to **Safeguarding of Adults**, we have seen an increase in safeguarding activity and an increase in the complexity of referrals, but performance is consistent, and we continue to deliver and continue to be held in high regard in relation to safeguarding and lead on many of the regional projects.

Carmarthenshire continues to lead regionally on strategic developments in relation to Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

Suicide and Self harm prevention is now a priority for the Safeguarding Board and Carmarthenshire Safeguarding Operational Group as we have seen incidents of suicide rise across the region. A regional group chaired by the Head of Adult Social Care continues to pilot an immediate multi agency response to suicide, this is being progressed on a local authority footprint to ensure we do all we can to respond to those in crisis.

I can confirm there is a robust process in place for responding to and managing professional concerns.

Corporate Safeguarding remains a priority. Corporate safeguarding are the areas outside of the core safeguarding work with vulnerable children and adults. In this area where work slowed during the pandemic, key work has been developed by human resources to improve recruitment arrangements ensuring full compliance with our policy. Schools have been a priority area with new guidance and direction issued by the Director for Education and Children.

A new policy will be launched in 2023 to ensure that corporate governance and reporting arrangements are strengthened.

Moving forward Corporate Safeguarding will be contained in a dedicated annual report published in parallel with this annual report. Improvement in reporting arrangements and making the political governance arrangements clear will be the key action in 2023/24.

Technology Enabled Care

The County Council's award-winning arm's length company Llesiant Delta Wellbeing is central in our approach to maximise the benefits and respond to fast developing approaches in health and social care monitoring and technology.

Whilst the service delivers out of hours switchboard services for the council this is a tiny part of a service that has expanded from 45 members of staff to more than 170. Whilst it supplies a range of services to most counties in Wales its primary growth area in recent years has been to the people of Carmarthenshire and West Wales.

Delta provides our Information, Advice and Assistance service for adult social care providing a single point of contact for all enquiries. This year it is projected to handle more than 20,000 calls through qualified call handlers. Performance has improved at effective preventative advice with more than 40% of calls now diverted.

In addition, DELTA makes more than 40,000 proactive monitoring calls to isolated and vulnerable people across West Wales. This is an increase of more than 25% on last year as more vulnerable people are found to benefit from the CONNECT programme of support. The CONNECT programme is also able to offer a responder service preventing ambulance calls and unnecessary admissions to hospital. The service is expected to deliver 5000 emergency calls in the next year with less than 8% of calls needing emergency service intervention. This service has further supported hospital discharge pathways by offering a bridging and monitoring service for up to 7 days following discharge. Over the next year we anticipate more than 600 discharges will be supported in this way.

All these functions are underpinned by monitoring technology that is fitted in people's homes. Carmarthenshire has been recognised as a UK leader in delivering technology enabled proactive care. Whilst we already support the monitoring of a range of health needs in the community, I am of the view that this area will expand, and we are seeing growing interest and investment from the health sector. Through a partnership with the private sector, I believe Delta will be amongst the first in Wales to digitise the technology in people's homes and will be well placed to support the health sector in the application of artificial intelligence in the delivery of diagnostics and treatment.

Case Study 1

Intermediate Care Multi-Disciplinary Team (Home First Team and Delta):

Mrs N is a 99 year old lady who lives alone, she is very independent albeit a little shaky on her feet when mobilising, otherwise does very well at home. During the early hours of a Wednesday morning her bed sensor was activated after 30 minutes of absence. The Community Response team were alerted and dispatched within 7 minutes of the activation coming through. The Response team arrived at the property 15 minutes later to find Mrs N on the floor in her bedroom.

After completing the ISTUMBLE assessment and taking the clinical observations, Mrs N was lifted from the floor. Mrs N experienced a bump to her head, but she refused for an ambulance to be called. Responders ensured she had her lifeline to hand, should she need assistance or if anything was to change and assisted Mrs N back to bed. The following morning the GP was notified of the fall and a home visit was arranged. The GP visited Mrs N and suggested she goes into hospital for a CT Scan to check her head injury, so contacted the Welsh Ambulance Service to arrange an ambulance. This was then picked up by the Community Response Manager at Delta Wellbeing and the Paramedic via the ICMDT (Home first team) and transport was arranged with Delta Wellbeing to take Mrs N into A&E. When Mrs N was ready to go home, A&E Discharge Teams contacted Delta Wellbeing to collect Mrs N and take her home. Community Responders then settled Mrs N in, made her comfortable and ensured she had her lifeline to hand, should she need any assistance. Over the following 7 days, a welfare visit was arranged with Mrs N to ensure that she was coping well following her fall. Any concerns are then reported to the 'Home First' team for further triaging.

Children & Family Services

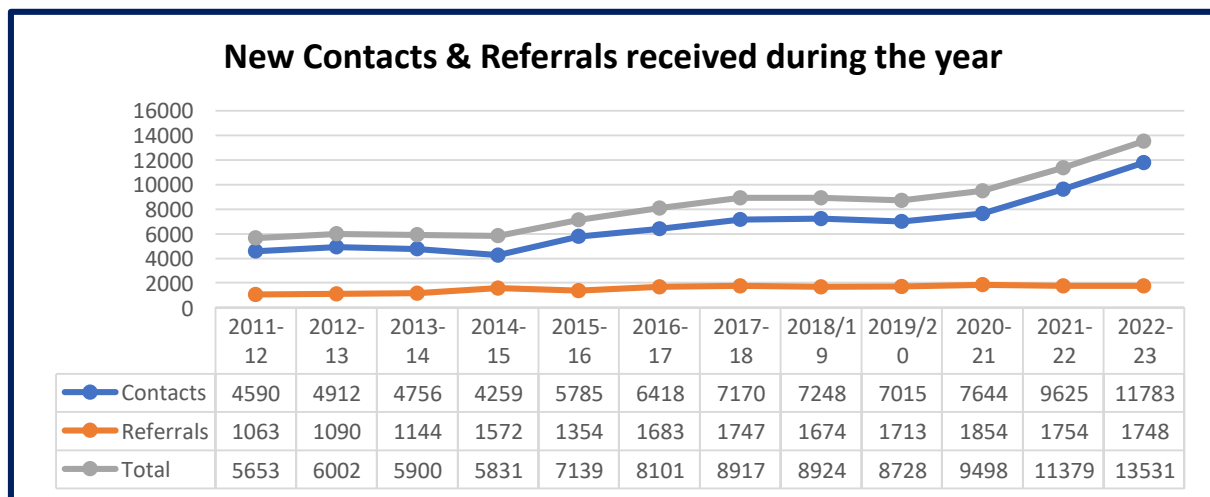
During 2022/23 Children & Family Services has seen a number of changes including a new Head of Children & Family Services, Jan Coles who started in September 2022. This is only our fourth Head of Children’s services in the last 28 years! 2023 will also see most of the 3rd tier in the service retiring. This is something we have prepared for, and we anticipate a new structure will be implemented in the Autumn of 2023 with new senior managers in place across much of the service.

We are rightly proud of our children and family services and the new team will retain our focus on ensuring our children are safe, keeping our looked after children numbers low and cared for locally whilst providing comprehensive family support and early intervention services.

As the service moves on from the COVID dominated years there are significant pressures on the service. Our teams are increasingly seeing families who struggled during COVID and are now facing hardship as the cost-of-living crisis hits the poorest families the hardest. As a result, we have seen an increasing demand for our services and support and the number of contacts to the department continuing to rise. We are dealing with more than 70% more referrals than we were 10 years ago and since the pandemic we have seen a huge rise in activity reported to the initial assessment teams and recorded as contacts in the graph below.

This increase coupled with on-going challenges in recruiting social workers all added to the challenges faced by Children & Family services teams. Managing the increase in demand and the ongoing challenges in recruitment of Social Workers will be our priority for 2023/24.

The graph below illustrates the level of contact and referrals during the year.



There has been a significant rise in the number of contacts, but the referrals are stable. We believe this reflects the inter-agency activity across the Local Authority

Children & Family Services continue to embed a **relationship based systemic approach to delivering social work** in order to improve partnership working with families and increased engagement through assessment and in the provision of support, which in turn improves the well-being of children. The approach is also underpinned by Signs of Safety which allows the department to set goals in partnership with families which are achievable by them. The systemic approach is being introduced to more Teams across Children & Family services including the Child Assessment Teams. Feedback from families highlight these approaches help them feel valued and listened to. Training has been provided to newly recruited social workers along with refresher training for more experienced staff to ensure we continue to strengthen our relationship-based approach.

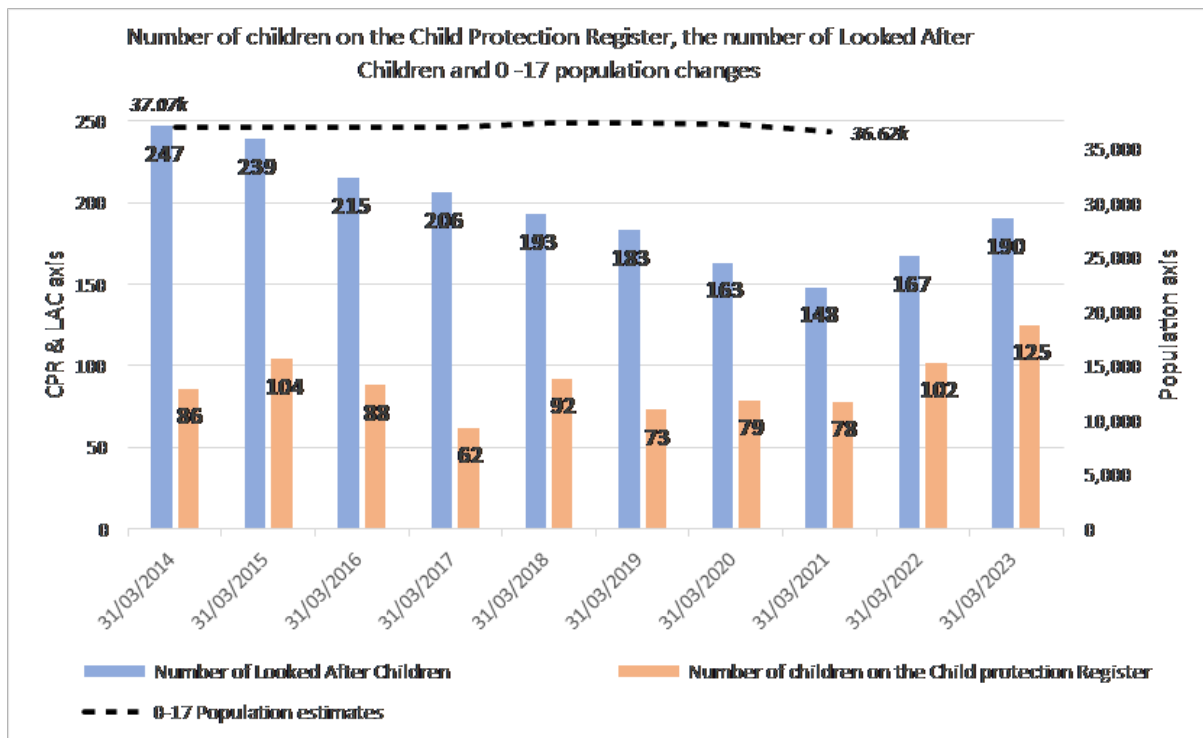
The Senior team report that the **Auditing of assessments and plans of care and support** has continued throughout the year to ensure they are developed in partnership with children and families. There is good evidence of direct work with children and the child's wishes and feelings regards their lived experiences and the support they are receiving. The assessments are also audited to ensure they reflect the five principles of the SSWBA, that families have a voice and control over intervention, focus on wellbeing, assessments and plans are co-produced with families and has a multi-agency approach. In addition, that families are provided with early intervention and preventative support to ensure they are supported earlier.

83% of new assessments completed during the year were completed within statutory timescales (within 42 working days). Although we have not met our internal target of 91% it is an acceptable result based on an approximate 'all Wales average figure' of 79% during 2021/22. Assessments are also dependent on the availability of relevant multi-agency professionals and family members which can result in some being completed outside of timescales. Assessments may require a longer period of time ensuring quality and meaningfulness to achieve better outcomes for the child. The continuous monitoring and auditing of Assessments allows feedback to teams on what improvements can be made and highlight any training needs for the service. The inability to fill social worker posts have also inevitably had an impact on our overall capacity. However, despite these added pressures we have continued to perform well.

The **regional threshold and multi-agency child protection arrangements** are continuing to work effectively ensuring early intervention and utilisation of preventative services to reduce the need for statutory involvement wherever possible. A regional Development Day was held in May last year facilitated by Gladys White OBE which was an opportunity for staff to consider legislation, guidance, and child protection practice across the region to ensure risks are understood and consistently applied. The day was well received as it enabled an opportunity for participants to consider best practice, understand the importance of effective risk assessments and a rich debate on how thresholds and risks are understood and applied and the roles of different agencies in contributing to assessing risks. Feedback highlighted the benefit of having time to reflect on the procedures and best practice examples, work alongside colleagues from different agencies, and provided assurance that arrangements are working effectively across the region. Threshold meetings continue to be held quarterly. The '**Right Help at the Right Time**' framework launched in December. It includes a directory containing up

to date, accessible information on the range of services available at various levels of need to assist professionals when deciding whether to refer to preventative or statutory services. It is available on the [FIS website](#)

The graph below illustrates the key area on service provision and demand over the past 10 years despite the small fall in the number of children in the county.



The number of children on the Child Protection Register has seen a significant rise this year (an increase of 22.5% since last year) and have continued to rise in 2023. Recent times have been particularly challenging for families whilst every effort has been made to maintain children at home for as long as possible where risks remain a concern through a robust child protection plan. Of those children placed on the Child Protection Register during the year, the number of children that were previously on the register in the last 12 months was low at 5.9% (9/153) and we are pleased to have performed better than our target of 7.8%. De-registrations and registrations are subject to multi-disciplinary case conferences. Children are subject to child protection planning and cases are closely monitored particularly where child protection concerns remain high. Early intervention is key to practice and the involvement of preventative services to reduce the need for children being subject to child protection plans. Childcare teams are supported by the Integrated Family Support Team (IFST), Edge of Care Team (EOC), and Family Intervention Team (FIT) who provide additional intensive support. Figures are scrutinised at the Audit and Evaluation Group. Further work will be completed this year to ensure we are operating with the optimum levels on the CP register. If these numbers are sustained, then more capacity in Social Work teams will need to be considered.

We have done all we can during the year to try and reduce the number of children becoming looked after, but despite this we have seen a sharp increase in the number of **looked after children**. Families have struggled in the aftermath of the pandemic compounded by the cost-of-living crisis which has added stress on families, issues arising increasing risks in relation to abuse and neglect, and mental health.

We continue to monitor and review all children where requests are made for accommodation through our accommodation panel and try to ensure alternative support options to care are considered through Edge of Care, IFST and Family Intervention Service and other preventative services. We are developing our parenting programmes to assist families and maintain children at home or rehabilitate them home following a period of foster care.

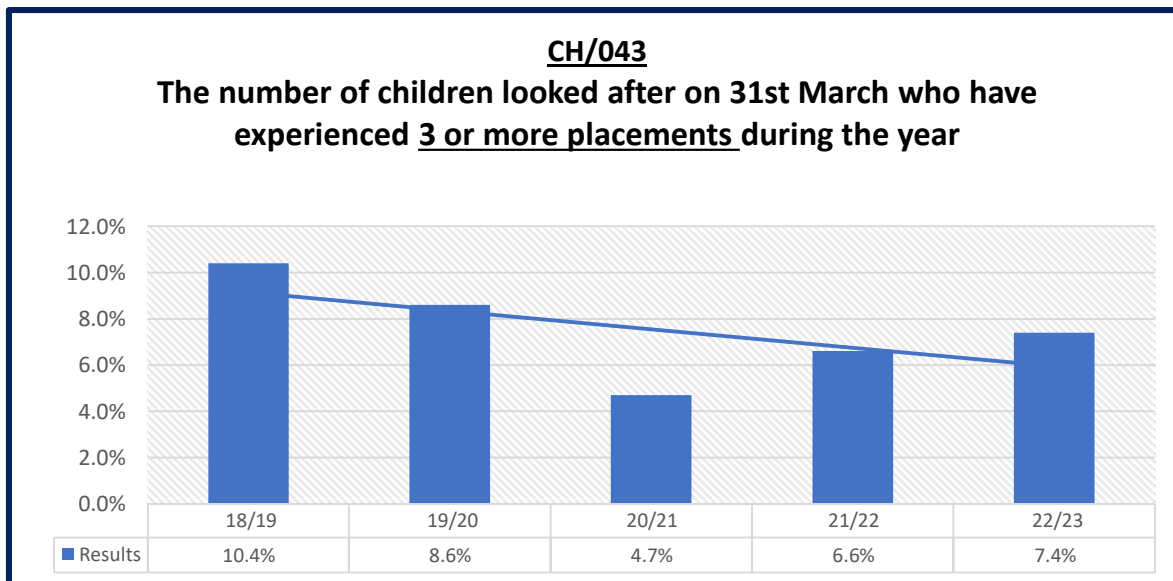
We are in the process of reviewing our service in Edge of Care and IFST to develop further support to front line teams to ensure the right help at the right time is received to support families within the local community. The significant number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers has contributed to this rise.

However, despite this work numbers have continued to rise above 200 and whilst this is still the lowest rate in Wales this is creating pressure on the budget and staffing resources which is a significant concern. Further work will be undertaken to consider what the detailed reasons are for this to ensure they can be addressed.

The education stability of children looked after remains excellent with only 3 children needing to move which has been down to the hard work of social workers, schools, foster carers and other professionals (one move was the young person's choice, one due to a change in circumstances of the young person and the other due to the distance involved). However, maintaining children in the same school has placed additional pressure on our transport service where costs have risen due to taxi services needing to be used in our rural communities.

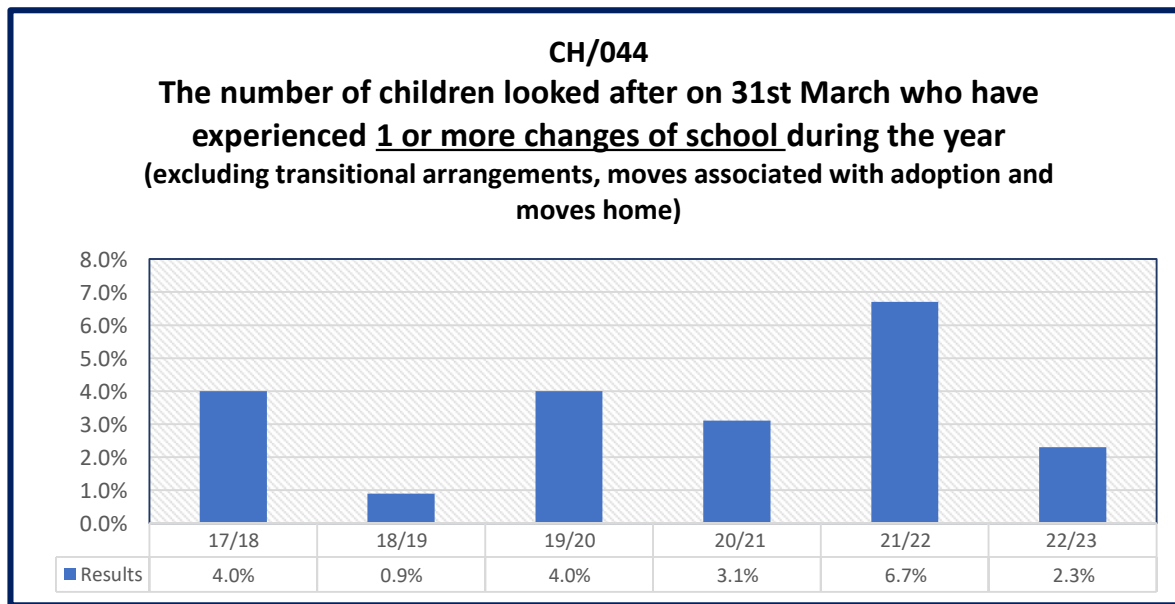
A review on how this is commissioned is underway as the individual cost of some trips seem disproportionate.

The graph below illustrates the number of children looked after who have experienced 3 or more placements.



The number of children experiencing 3 or more placement moves during the year has seen an increase, however we have only just missed our target and there have been many successful outcomes for those children and young people despite the number of moves.

This reflects the hard work the schools and other professionals have done.



The focus remains on increasing foster placement choice by recruiting more foster carers with the skills and experience to manage children who have more complex needs. If we are to manage the budget effectively the recruitment of more foster carers will be essential.

The **Fostering service** continue to drive our recruitment campaign and have close links with Foster Wales and our regional marketing officer to enable us to focus priority on recruiting more foster carers. During the year Carmarthenshire has approved and recruited 14 new foster carer households and it has been important to offer intensive support to these new carers to manage the children under a care and support plan. We have continued to provide a range of support to foster carers including 24 hrs out of hours support from the fostering service. We have a peer mentoring service of experienced foster carers also supporting all our foster carers. The uplift in fostering allowances has taken place and is a more generous offer to retain and recruit more foster carers and assists towards the cost-of-living crisis that many carers themselves have experienced. However, recruitment has only just kept up with the numbers leaving. Recruitment within this area will need substantial investment to continue to cope with the demand.

The fostering service continue to have responsibility for around 100 **special guardianship carers** who require to be reviewed for support both practically and financially on an annual basis subject to good practice guidance from Welsh Government. This work is progressing but staffing to cover this role has been difficult during the year and access to funding a fostering support worker on a permanent basis to work alongside a social worker from the fostering team has now been achieved through Welsh Government funding. This is an area of growth which will require careful monitoring in the future as many special guardianship families have experienced more hardship due to cost-of-living difficulties which is impacting on their family circumstances, and we need to support such children living in these permanent places with their extended family to avoid placement breakdown.

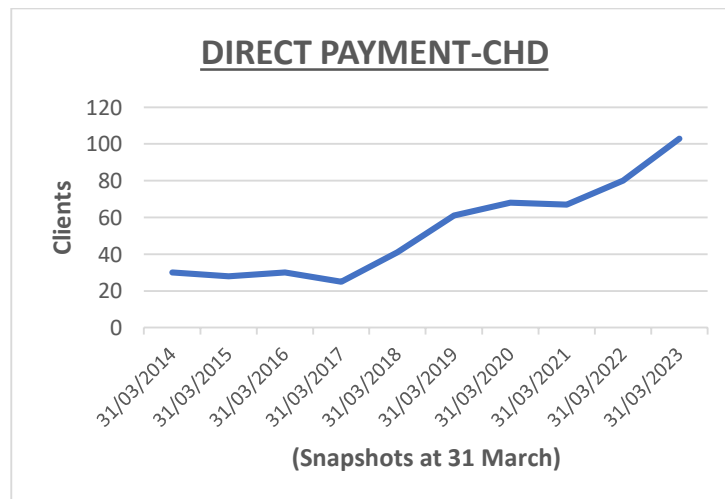
Children & Family Services has worked in partnership with the Housing Department, Youth Service and Commissioning to devise, develop and commission new **supported accommodation for young people aged 16-25** including children with disabilities. The new service is already providing improved accommodation and increasing support to young people in supported housing. One aim of the service was to move away from grouping large numbers of young people together in accommodation settings who had similar needs and experienced similar challenges. The new service comprises of smaller supported houses staffed with support workers and based around the three main towns of Ammanford, Llanelli and Carmarthen. This will allow more young people in need of accommodation to be supported in the areas they have lived through their childhoods which has the advantage of allowing them to live near extended family who are often the young people's support network.

Children & Family Services continue to collaborate with our colleagues in the Housing Department and in Youth Support Services to ensure the developments in respect of accommodation are underpinned by the Care Leavers Accommodation Framework. The new **In-House Supported Lodgings** Service has already approved eight supported lodgings providers who are providing supportive placements to 10 young people aged 16-18 years. The Service works in partnership with Fostering and the Housing Department to enable more choice and increased capacity of placements for our young people aged 16-21 years, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, or others who wish to move onto more independence. The service provides high quality placements which support young people to meet their needs

and promotes their pathways into further education, training, and work. It has increased capacity for young people who need accommodation to ensure they receive the best care and support to help give every young person the best start in life and improve their early life experiences. In addition, high quality carers are providing significant levels of support to young people who experience complex needs who have experienced homelessness.

Direct Payments

The below graph illustrates the growth in the number of children in receipt of a direct payment.



We have seen a significant increase in Direct Payments as the department has found it challenging to meet the needs of families post pandemic.

A significant piece of work is underway to look at models of care in meeting the demand in the future for children with disabilities.

Mid and West Wales Regional Adoption Service (MWAS) is an integral part of the National Adoption Service (NAS) and the Voluntary Adoption Agencies in Wales to continually develop by embedding the four NAS Good Practice Guides into practice. In accordance with the guides, MWAS has already improved transitional work when children are moving to adoptive placements to ensure children and adopters are more effectively supported through the process. In addition, MWAS is also taking steps to improve support to birth parents by working with our partner Reflect to support birth parents at earlier stages in the Adoption Process. MWAS is providing a significant level of support to children and adopters to ensure the right support is provided at the right time.

The service has experienced Adoption Social Workers, Support Workers and an Adoption Psychologist who work with children and families to ensure the appropriate therapy/direct work can be provided to adoptive families to create stability for adopted children and prevent disruptions. The region is working in partnership with NAS to embed Welsh Early Permanence into its service. This will ensure children experience less loss and separation if there is a need for them to be placed with adopters which will improve their emotional well-being and outcomes as they develop through their childhood. Carmarthenshire continues to have very few

children waiting for an adoption placement and has an abundance of adopters waiting for a child therefore is in a strong position to enable choice of adopters for children to ensure the match is right for the child. Through effective marketing the service continues to attract enquiries from the public who are interested in adoption.

There are currently 4.26% of **Electively Home Educated** children who have not had a visit in the last 12 months. Last year this figure was 11.13%, reflecting a significant increase in number of visits completed. Many visits were cancelled due to illness in families (including Strep A and Scarlet fever during the last few months). Out of all visits completed, the child was spoken to in 64.97% of visits. Group work has continued to be funded by the EHE grant with workshops in Welsh, English, science, maths, outdoor learning, horticulture, art, mindfulness, and drama. Currently 14 EHE learners are being supported to complete their Art GCSEs this year. The team held a community-based wellbeing event for home educated learners which was attended by approximately 50 children. The local authority continues to work towards the Welsh Government's core offer for all EHE learners. This is being discussed at the strategic focus group for inclusion and engagement.

Team Around the Family (TAF) is fully staffed with an increased budget for 2023/25 to expand the direct work and prevent family breakdown. The annual parenting programme is being delivered providing support in terms of nurture based parenting and specific parenting for children with neurodiversity. There are no waiting lists. Where parents are unable to attend group work, the team continue to provide one-one support. The Team continues to link in with schools, health colleagues and community resources within the 3rd sector and their input is well received. The Co-ordinators ensure that there is extensive local community knowledge and engagement and the team continue to focus on early intervention and support for families in their local communities.

The new membership has been established for the **Corporate Parenting Panel**. The new guidance has been provided by WG and there is a workshop planned to develop a new corporate parenting strategy to be compliant with the expectations of this. New targets for 2023/24 will be set and there will be an increased focus on accountability from all departments across the council and councillor leads for key areas to ensure that the excellent outcomes previously attained for children looked after and care leavers in Carmarthenshire is maintained. There is increased demand across the services with some children looked after not always receiving all that they are entitled to and this will be addressed as a priority.

There is a strategic development plan in place to recruit and retain more foster carers ensuring our children's care needs can be met locally, develop residential care options in line with eliminate (removing profit from care) and extend the level of well-being and community support available to our looked after children and care leavers.

There is now a small team of 3 staff within the Corporate Parenting Team who are supporting **Trauma Informed Practice and Attachment Awareness** training and professional practice in terms of children looked after by Carmarthenshire. Trauma informed practice and restorative models is now embedded in the 4 phase inclusive behavioural model. A senior Educational Psychologist leads on training and support

for schools. There are staff trained in trauma informed practice in every school in Carmarthenshire and in every department across Education and Children's Services.

Awareness raising about the implementation of the **Code of Practice for Autism** has been a key priority this year. Ensuring that managers, commissioners and Learning and Development are aware of their responsibilities under the Code has been a crucial step to ensure individual duties are being met. This has been achieved through training and information sessions, and publicised on staff bulletins, websites and via social media. Our recent Autism Support Services Event was attended by over 300 people and contributed to ensuring that we are compliant with many of the duties within the Code. Specifically, relating to awareness raising of the diagnostic, support services and carers services available to autistic people and their families. We are part of the Regional Strategic and Task and Finish Groups collaborating with the Local Authorities and Health Board to ensure a consistent approach and best practice sharing as well as with Welsh Government commissioned 'People at Work' to ensure a shared understanding of the duty's requirements.

The Family Information Service Childcare Offer parent applications continue to be processed, and the following paid to local childcare providers delivering the offer during April-July 2023: £99,226.97* (£81,997.50 General childcare and £17,229.47 SEN). August and September figures will be included in the next quarter report as these are not currently available from Ceredigion CO delivery authority and will be reported in Qtr3 the above figure is for the legacy system and it is important to note that July's payment may also include some August payments. Ceredigion CO delivery authority allowed providers to claim early for August as it was expected that September would be busy as the funding claimed through the legacy system ended 31/08/2023. National Digital Service £542,050 the new Digital system.
Total Spend May – Jul 2023 £641,276.97

Childcare Offer Additional Support Grant

7 children received support through the CO Additional Support Grant.
5 additional children received CO ASG for CO approved holiday entitlement until Sept 2023. No further updates from Welsh Government to commence the system build to incorporate the Additional Support Grant process for providers and parents within the New Digital system. (FIS) have ensured families and professionals have received updated information on services, resources, and developments.

During July – September the FIS website had 9,744 users, 15,731 sessions, and 34k pageviews. There was a 12% increase in users in this period. Carmarthenshire Flying Start was the most viewed page due to the expansion of the service, which has created much interest with parents checking their eligibility for the service. The FIS have received 436 enquiries in this quarter.

Summer of Fun / Winter of Well-being a Welsh Government funding enabled a significant package of support to be provided designed to help children, young people and their families recover from the pandemic to ensure no child was left behind. Several organisations received funding including family and children's

centres, youth service, Actif, Menter, Pembrey Country Park and theatres where children and young people were able to access free activities and workshops.

15, 000 children and young people across the county from 0-25 years benefitted from these activities.

Carmarthenshire's **local offer** is an electronic information hub to provide disabled children and their families an easily accessible platform to source information and support within their area. Consultation with Parents and carers has taken place to ensure it is accessible for all. The web page is set up for different age groups (0-5 years, 5-11 years, 11-16 years and 16 -25 years) with sub sections that can be accessed by 'One Click' to support such as - *Health and Wellbeing, Social Care, Education, Financial Support and Housing*. On-going training is being provided to the core staff who will manage the updates of the website to ensure it remains current. The webpage was finalised and went live on 25th November 2022.

Flying Start case management discussion meetings are now aligned to the statutory services' Pods and systemic practice are working well in identifying support to meet the needs of the families. Delivery has been impacted by the lack of childcare staff. The **Flying Start App** is integral in reaching families, especially during the Flying Start expansion, providing key messages, such as health, language and play, safety messages, information, and links to the support services. The App has developed to reach families so that they can now book onto a course and have updates on their child when in childcare.

The FS team has needed to expand to meet the additional demands of the FS phase 1 expansion and prepare for phase 2 childcare expansion. The parenting team are developing services to meet the changing needs of families within the community. Staff training has taken place, especially around trauma based and systemic practice which has enabled upskilling and has built their confidence in delivering services and supporting families. Families are re-engaging with face-to-face services, with our language and play groups being oversubscribed, resulting in additional groups being run. The health visitors have continued to run clinics from the Integrated Children's Centres and the Early Years Centre in Trimsaran.

Families First have continued to develop early intervention support services (0-25) for disadvantaged children, young people, and families across the county in line with the **Family Support Strategy**, utilising opportunities for integrated services across the children and Communities Grant and Housing Support Grants, and all programmes have been successfully delivered. Action for Children were successful in their bid for delivering the Families First (FF) parenting project for the next four years. Challenges including staff vacancies, sickness, and rising demand of services have led to small waiting lists for support in some projects.

During 2022-23 outcomes and outputs for families have been positive in this family support programme:

- ✓ **9230** individuals have been supported from the Families First (FF) programme, of which 6011 (65%) were new individuals.

- ✓ **4621** families have been supported from the FF programme, of which 2881 (62%) were new families.
- ✓ **798** single agency JAFFs were closed with a positive forward movement of 749 (94%) on the distance travelled tool.
- ✓ **145** cases were stepped down from statutory social services to FF programme, and **25** cases were stepped up to Social Services.

Direct Care Provision/Commissioned Care

External Commissioning and Support

Carmarthenshire purchases most of its residential care for children and adults from the private sector. Approximately 36% of homecare is provided in house with the remainder purchased from the private sector through a specialist framework. During the pandemic we saw market failures across the private sector with the in-house provision increasingly seen as a provider of last resort to vulnerable people. Thus, it is crucial that we maintain an appropriate balance of in-house and externally purchased care and that no single provider monopolizes provision and prices in the county. As the market for care consolidates, this is becoming increasingly challenging to manage and, in some areas, we are seeing significant profits generated as the sector is under supplied to meet growing demand.

The last year has continued to be a challenging one, with ongoing covid related issues and market stability concerns. We continue to support the sector through the coordination and distribution of PPE, additional payments to the sector, and supporting Covid outbreaks. Market pressures continue in relation to workforce recruitment and retention of care staff both in-house and externally and this remains a key area of concern. This was especially evidenced in the domiciliary care sector where during 2022 we experienced our highest waiting lists for care and support at home. We are, however, cautiously optimistic that we are now seeing a downward trend and the sector appears to be more stable. We have also experienced two care home closures which were particularly complex from a legal and financial perspective which have led to contract terminations and the difficult transition of residents to alternative care homes.

Provision of residential care for children is problematic across Wales with huge costs for a very few children. There is some evidence the Welsh Government's strategy to take the profit out of the care market has reduced new investment in the sector as providers see little opportunity to make profit or expand further. Whilst I am wholly supportive of the approach, we are in a difficult transition period with a severe under supply in the market for children.

There are some notable areas of progress during 2022/23. This includes the publication of the Market Stability Report which has identified a number of key recommendations to ensure market stability and sufficiency of supply. We have also developed the West Wales Adult Advocacy Strategy and regional commissioning arrangements linked to this. We have recommissioned the third sector spend and developed five community/preventative hubs across the county as part of our

strategic preventative approach to reducing demand on statutory services and supporting people to live well in their local communities. This has strengthened our strategic approach to prevention.

We have developed and published the Housing Support Programme Strategy and continue to strengthen links with housing and accommodation, but still recognise there is much to do in this area. Following bringing our direct payment support service in-house, we have developed a much-improved approach to the management of direct payments which provides greater assurance both for those that use them and the Council.

In-house Residential Care

We continue to maintain our in-house residential care provision to support residents in Carmarthenshire. We have started to remodel this provision to help meet some of the market gaps identified in the Market Stability Report and this will be an ongoing journey over the forthcoming years. As explained above, the investment in Ty Pili-Pala, a wing of Llys Y Bryn Care Home, as a 14-bedded step-down unit is proving hugely beneficial to those leaving hospital in reducing their long-term care needs. Recruitment remains a challenge in our in-house homes, but we continue to proactively market our vacancies to fill gaps as and when they emerge. We have advanced plans to expand an existing home or purchase a suitable site to further rebalance the market in the county.

In Children's Residential care we are maintaining our provision on 3 sites for children with disabilities whilst considering a new build to replace some respite provision linked to the Heol Goffa school development in Llanelli. We have developed a specialist Childrens home in Carmarthen and anticipate this will be completed by late Autumn 2024. Further developments of smaller longer term homes are under consideration to ensure we can meet need locally and in a way that is cost effective and keeps children local.

In-house Home Care

The impact of the pandemic has taken its toll on our social care workforce, and this undoubtedly has been our greatest challenge over the last year. We have continued to have trouble recruiting Homecare staff. Within this context, our Homecare Team have shown great resilience in continuing to provide care in people's homes demonstrated through a very positive inspection from the CIW.

It's the department's priority to build an efficient, strong and sustainable in-house service. This will include enhancing the in-house provision and redeveloping the reablement services. We have successfully established a triage arrangement for intermediate care with health colleagues and this is already having an impact on hospital flow and reducing waiting lists. We have also progressed an aggressive recruitment campaign, streamlined our recruitment processes, introduced additional capacity to support recruitment and improved the grading structure for home care staff, which now means that our rate of pay is amongst the best in Wales.

Currently the in-house home care service provides approximately 37% of the overall domiciliary care market in Carmarthenshire. The service is focussing on strategies that promote expansion, but recruitment and retention challenges in the care sector has impacted on this objective. Our aspiration going forward, is to grow the in-house service to provide 50% of the market over the next year which will include supporting those with more complex needs. This strategy will ensure that we are able to have greater resilience within the domiciliary care market.

Key to developing our in house service is to increase its productivity so that it is more cost effective. Work is underway to address this and close the cost gap with the private sector. Hourly pay rates and travel reimbursement are not now dissimilar between the public and private sector in Carmarthenshire. The biggest differential that impacts on cost is now sick pay and pension both of which are significantly better in the County Council.

What Others Say

A Care and Support survey was undertaken in March 2023 with users of the services with a 15% response rate, this is lower than previous years.

82% of respondents felt that their views were listened to by Social Care.

86% of respondents felt they/the person they care for were given the right information and advice when they had needed it.

80% of respondents felt that they/the person they care for was treated with dignity and respect.

84% of respondents stated that they/the person they care for has been happy with the care and support they have had.

As we have recovered from the pandemic inspections of services have resumed, comments lifted from the reports are illustrated below.

“People and their relatives speak highly about the care and support they receive. Care records are person centred and reflect people’s individual needs. Care staff are well trained, have a good knowledge of the people they care for and are enthusiastic about working in the service. Dedicated and knowledgeable managers who are well supported by the Responsible Individual (RI) lead the service. The managers are accessible and well respected by all involved. The RI has good oversight of the service and there are robust systems in place to support this. The leadership team have good working relationships and a clear vision about the service.”

**CIW Inspection report 2023 on the In house Domiciliary care service.*

“Overall conclusion following the inspection is that West Wales Shared Lives endeavours to support people to maintain their independence. The staff team are enthusiastic and want to make a positive difference to people’s lives. Carers are focused on the person’s needs, to positively impact on their well-being. People say their placements and carers support them well. Many carers feel well supported by the Responsible Individual (RI) and the management team overall, although some feel there is little or no support. Good communication channels are evident throughout the service; however, some people feel the communication is poor. There are robust systems in place to monitor the quality of care provided. It was noted that some elements of communication could be improved as well as ensuring all carers are supported and these are key priorities going forward.”

**CIW Inspection report 2023 on Shared Lives – inspection April 22*

“ People staying in Tir Eion respite service benefit from the care and support they receive through the knowledgeable and caring staff team. Promotion of people’s individual health and wellbeing underpins the aim of the service. Care and support plans are detailed and provide a good sense of the individual, their complex needs and how best to support them. External professionals are actively involved in the support people receive. A dedicated and enthusiastic manager leads the ethos of the service. Staff respect and value the manager who is well supported by the Responsible Individual (RI). There are a range of monitoring and audit processes in place, and the RI has good oversight of the service”.

**CIW Inspection report 2023 on Tir Eion Respite Centre – Inspection August 22*

**“
Children are treated with dignity and respect and care staff take time to communicate with them and provide choices. Children can choose the activities they want to do and the food they want to eat. Children are encouraged to make positive choices and reminded of the benefits of this”.**

CIW Inspection Report on Llys Caradog Childrens Centre - March 2023

Complaints and Compliments

Adults & Children

We have continued to learn lessons from complaints and ensure that any learning points that emerge are addressed and embedded across the service.

A Resolution and Complaints Manager commenced in post in October 2022 with the responsibility of coordinating processes relating to complaints and undertaking preventative work. The purpose of this is to increase learning within teams to improve the quality of the service provided and to reduce the volume of complaints received.

In March 2023, the team underwent an internal audit and some initial recommendations have been made including the production of a procedural document which will be a priority going forward.

Further to this, a complaints training programme has been developed, which will be rolled out in the coming months to include:

- Complaints awareness training for all staff
- Training for staff undertaking Stage 1 complaints resolutions.
- Complaints training for providers

There will also be a focus on preventative work to increase learning from complaints within the teams.

A total of 73 complaints were recorded at either Stage 1 or 2 in relation to Adult Services in 2022/23 of which 56 were investigated at the Local Resolution Stage 1 and 17 under the Formal Investigation of Stage 2. A further 41 complaints were dealt with by the department and recorded either as redirects, no further action, on hold pending safeguarding/ legal proceedings or other.

Within Children services 10 were recorded at Stage 1 and a further 3 were recorded at Stage 2.

In the same period three complaints have been escalated to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales following completion of a Stage 2 investigation. The Ombudsman has not accepted any of these complaints and no further investigation has taken place.

If there are any recommendations made following the completion of the Stage 1 or Stage 2 process, the team log these on an action plan which is sent out to relevant managers to follow up. Trends and learning opportunities will be identified from these recommendations and are brought to Process and Practice Board and subsequently disseminated in team meetings on a quarterly basis by the Resolution and Complaints Manager. In terms of governance, the Complaints Audit Group continues to meet on a quarterly basis.

The team have also been working on increasing the pool of Independent Investigating Officers and over the last year, 3 new investigators have been commissioned. Going forward more work will be done to ensure a robust selection process whilst ensuring impartiality.

The Resolution and Complaints Manager links in regularly with her counterparts both regionally and nationally to share ideas and ensure a consistent approach across Wales.

*2023/24 Social Care complaints report is available on request. *

Compliments

A total of 153 compliments were received and recorded in 2022/23.

Gair byr i ddweud bod Mam wedi trosglwyddo o Ysbyty [l'r gartref]. Mae hi'n hapus yno ar hyn o bryd a byddwn yn parhau i'w chefnogi i setlo. Diolch i ti am dy gyngor a help dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf. Mae'r gwasanaeth gofal o dan bwysau aruthrol ond mae yna bobl dda iawn yn cynnal y gwasanaeth a gallwn ddweud heb amheuaeth dy fod yn un o'r rheiny. Diolch."

I would like to say thank you to all the girls who have looked after me the last few months. My family and I are really grateful for the wonderful nursing that I have had. They have been caring encouraging and very professional. Please pass on my grateful thanks. I shall miss their visits and little chats".

As a family we wanted to express our thanks for the support offered at what has been a difficult transition for Mum. As Mum stated herself today, she wants to remain at home if possible, and it is good to know we are all working towards supporting her wishes.

"Newydd gorffen y supporting statement, ond I guess bo dim ishe fe nawr. Diolch i ti am y cymorth a'r cefnogaeth, mae'n teimlo fel bo pwys trwm wedi codi, allwn byth diolch digon i ti. Fe wnaï cysylltu a [the care home]

Workforce

Workforce

Our staff are without doubt our most valued asset – they are the front face of the Council and represent and uphold our key values as public servants. We recognise the challenges faced by staff and have ensured that we continue to support their welfare and wellbeing. Their resilience and dedication have been incredible. We continue to need an adequate workforce of well-trained, experienced staff with the right skills and approach needed to work with citizens and effectively in partnership with other organisations. This challenge will remain with us for some time and especially in the context of how we continue to respond post pandemic.

Our priority is to ensure that the social care workforce has the knowledge and skills to meet our business objectives and that service users in Carmarthenshire are supported by skilled and competent staff.

Our workforce strategies continue to evolve, and we must continue to work collaboratively with our partners in the region including Health, to minimise training duplication, maximise training attendance and share information regularly in order to meet the shared training needs of the sector and achieve our goals.

Being able to recruit social workers, carers, foster carers and personal assistants still remains a top priority for us in order to fill vacant posts across the sector.

We aim to attract more young people into the care profession by collaborating with schools and key stakeholders to deliver social care.

The Care Academi, which is the first of its kind in Wales is established and we currently have twelve individuals on this programme. The individuals are on placement in care settings, thus gaining experience whilst undertaking their care qualifications. They will go on to be supported to follow a career in management or social work.

'Growing our own' social workers is a priority. We are currently supporting individuals to undertake the part time Open University Social Work Degree and the full-time master's programme at Swansea University with 26 completing within the next three years. There is growing evidence that this number will need to be further expanded in the coming year.

Rate your Division.

We asked all staff in the Department if they would “[Rate Their Division as an Employer.](#)” Using this national methodology it helps us to understand their experience working in the department and each division. Instead of asking hundreds of survey questions, we ask one key question:

“ *How likely would you be to recommend your division as an employer to someone you know?*

1 = Not at all likely and 10 = Extremely likely. ”

Our overall score for the Department result is: **Good**

Workforce remains our biggest challenge in terms of recruiting and retaining sufficient numbers of social workers as well as Homecare workers. This issue is not in any way unique to Carmarthenshire. Locally we have made good progress in residential care recruitment but continue to have gaps in Social Work and Homecare.

In order to address the challenge, we established a Social Care Recruitment and Retention Group which I chair, to ensure that we have the focus that we need on the workforce challenges.

From a social work perspective, we have created 10 new social work trainee posts across both Adult and Children & Family Services to allow us to grow our own social workers. We have also recruited 2 overseas social workers who have now started in post and are working to recruit more. This strategy overall is allowing us to fill our vacancies and provides us with a long-term solution to social work capacity. We are also supporting 2 of our Occupational Therapy Assistants to do their degree with a view to becoming qualified Occupational Therapists following the launch of the new degree programme at Swansea University.

We held a joint Social Work Professional Development event back in March 2023 across Children and Adult services, 350 Social workers were invited to the event. Total of 191 Social Workers attended and was well received.



Using a NPS scoring, the event NPS Score came out as 'Great'. A further social work development session is now planned for October 2023.

During the event we celebrated the fantastic job many of our social workers do and asked them to reflect on examples that were magic for them. Examples of magic moments captured included:

- Doing last care and support visit with long term service user and seeing her do well with new-born baby having formed positive relationships with everyone.
- Upholding rights and promoting choices to stay in own home with his dog, despite visit from Fire Brigade.

- Working hard to get the right package of care for adult to stay at home, which was what they wanted and deserved.
- It is a privilege to sit in people's homes and be able to speak to both adults and children at the most difficult times in their lives, about the difficulties, strengths and to build relationships with them.
- Working with families in a way that restores their faith in SW. Empowers them to make positive changes, helping them to change their mindset on how to raise their children and manage challenges. Being told that she will tell others about her support from Social Services and how it has changed her family situation, when she had previously been worried about having Social Services involved.

From a care worker perspective, we have established a Care Academi which provides individuals with the opportunity to work in care settings and gain qualifications as part of a pathway to Social Work or management. Currently we have 10 people on this programme, and we are about to embark on a third stage of recruitment. We have had active recruitment campaigns to attract care workers to come to work in Carmarthenshire.

We have also supported the sector in recruitment and retention initiatives. Additional funding was allocated to local domiciliary care providers to lead on a recruitment and retention plan. The intentions being for local providers to work together to agree targeted initiatives that will raise the profile of care and to also develop/stimulate the market.

A project board was set up by providers to manage the allocation of monies and to agree priority areas. The project focused on the following areas:

- Social Care Champions: Each provider nominated a staff member to represent the role of a carer, visiting schools, colleges and attending events.
- Marketing: The group set up a web-based platform to post encouraging information to raise the profile of a career in care. This was not used to advertise jobs for care providers but had links to We Care Wales.
- Carmarthenshire Carers Awards: The group arranged a Carers Awards evening in the Stradey Park Hotel to recognise and promote the excellent work of care staff. Providers worked together to plan the event, which was a great success and which had a positive impact on staff morale.

The group continue to work on the project and are currently developing a care apprenticeship pathway for 16 to 18 year olds.

We are also building on the developments in Pembrokeshire and now extending the development of micro enterprises into Carmarthenshire. We have recruited a local Catalyst which is hosted by PLANED and will work closely with CAVS and other partners.

- Mark Evans, Senior Manager for Mental Health and Substance Misuse, achieved the Outstanding Contribution to Practice award for his 34-years of service.

- ✪ The Long-Term Domiciliary Care Team won the team award at the Welsh element of the British Care awards.
- ✪ Gill Grennan Jenkins, Team Manager 0-25 Service (which is across adults and children) was also highly commended for the Front-line Leadership award at this event.



In addition to the above, our Cabinet Member, Cllr Tremlett, has introduced a Team Achievement of the Month Award through which good practice is recognised internally.



Welsh Language

Within the Communities Department, we have ensured 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language remains a priority. We are confident that an active offer is provided in almost all circumstances. The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.

The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. Many of the staff are Welsh speakers, which means people are able to communicate in Welsh or English as they choose.

People are able to have their care provided in Welsh, as a good percentage of the staff are able to speak Welsh.

**CIW Inspection report on the In house Domiciliary care service.*

Whilst the Welsh Language Board has not met as frequently during the year, access to training has continued and a total 22 staff have completed training.

Work is underway to ensure all staff have Welsh language attainments recorded on their training profile. Of those who have a speaking language level recorded, we know that:

- 63% are level 0-2
- 35% are level 3-5

The sustainability of the Welsh language depends on providing enough educational, cultural and social opportunities to use the language daily and this is an essential part of our workforce strategy.

A revision of our strategy will provide the opportunity for us to build on the work that has already been done in Carmarthenshire, and create the conditions that will enable the Welsh Language to thrive, to ensure it can be seen and heard in our communities and amongst our workforce. The strategy will support and contribute to the Welsh Government's vision to create a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.

Next Steps

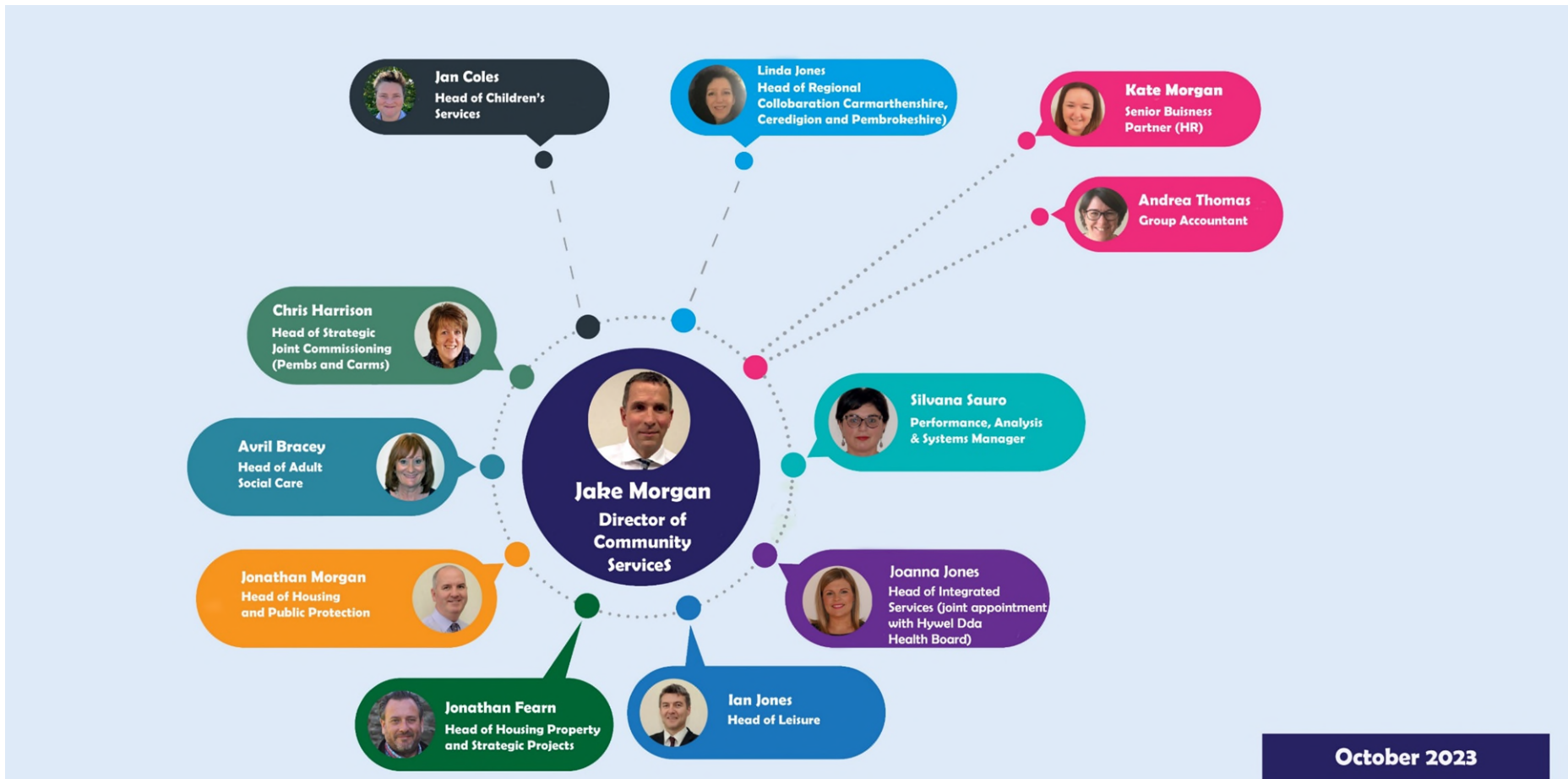
Children & Family Services

No	Action	By Who
1	Continue to provide support to keep children at home with their families and out of the care system wherever possible and better manage budget pressures in the service	
2	Invest in local efficient council run services to rebalance the market across all elements of adult and children social care enabling the service better manage budget pressures in the service.	
3	Work with the Health Board to provide readily accessible and appropriate levels of support to all with Mental Health issues with an expansion of access and support to Children and Vulnerable Adults.	
4	Support the ambition to rebalance the market and take profit out of children's care by opening a Children's Home for children with complex needs in Carmarthenshire.	
5	Further support a Care Academi giving a career pathway for care work, including professional development and training for young people leaving school. Work to double the number of staff supported to gain a Social Work degree. Continue with the recruitment campaign of Social Workers.	

Adult Social Care and Integrated Services

No	Action	By Who
1	Continue to better integrate health and care and work towards parity of recognition and reward for health and care workers.	
2	Continue to improve the support available to carers across the county.	
3	Develop preventative services to meet the demands of an ageing population and those with complex needs.	
4	To work with Hywel Dda University Health Board to deliver seamless integrated Health and Social Care wherever possible.	
5	Increase the range of supported accommodation for those with complex needs, reduce the reliance on residential care and facilitate safe discharge from hospital and/or the need for residential care for vulnerable adults.	
6	Further expand the Delta Connect service to provide proactive technology enabled care to vulnerable people within their own homes together with a package of emergency support, monitoring, and wellbeing calls	
7	Work with Welsh Government to create and define a National Care Service that delivers national standards of care with local delivery of services to meet our community's needs	
8	Continue to develop a 10 Year Social Services Vision with a short-term implementation plan that is consistently appraised.	

Department's Management Structure



CABINET 30 OCTOBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillor D. Price (Chair) (In Person)

Councillors (In Person):

C.A. Davies	H.A.L. Evans	L.D. Evans	
A. Lenny	E.G. Thomas	J. Tremlett	A. Vaughan Owen

Councillors (Remotely):

G. Davies.

Also in attendance as an observer (Remotely):

Councillor D.M. Cundy.

Also Present (In Person):

W. Walters, Chief Executive;
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services;
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services;
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law;
G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services;
L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer;
A. Williams, Director of Place and Infrastructure;
C. Higginson, Media Manager;
G. Ayers, Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager;
E. Evans, Principal Democratic Services Officer;
S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator;
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present (Remotely):

J. Coles, Head of Children and Families;
R. Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability.
M. Runeckles, Member Support Officer;

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely: 10:00am - 11:07am

[Note: A change to the order of business, at the Chairs request, Agenda item 16 – Oriel Myrddin was moved to the last item of business]

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P.M. Hughes.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor / Officer	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
Councillor A. Lenny Councillor H.A.L. Evans Councillor E. Thomas Councillor J. Tremlett	8 – Conservation Area Appeals	A personal interest in that the Councillor lives within a conservation area. The Councillor remained in the meeting, took part in the consideration and voted.
Wendy Walters, Chief Executive	16 – Oriel Myrddin	Mrs Walters withdrew from the meeting prior to the consideration of the item.

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE 16TH OCTOBER 2023

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 16th October 2023 be signed as a correct record.

4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS

The Chair advised that no questions on notice had been submitted by members.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

6. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022-23

Cabinet Members considered the Draft Annual Report for 2022-23 on the Council's Corporate Strategy 2022-2027.

The report included information in regard to the four Well-being Objectives and Core Business Enablers and assessed the progress that had been made during the year.

Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the Council was required to publish an Annual Report on its Well-being Objectives. In addition, under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021, the Council had a duty to report on its performance on a self-assessment approach. The report aimed to meet both the requirements in one document.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the Carmarthenshire County Council's Draft Annual Report for 2022-2023 be approved.

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT 1ST APRIL 2023 TO 30TH JUNE 2023

The Cabinet considered an update report on the treasury management activities and the prudential indicators for the period 1st April 2023 to June 2023.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the update Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator Report for 1st April 2023 to 30th June 2023 be approved.

8. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

[Councillors A. Davies, H.A.L. Evans, A. Lenny and J. Tremlett having earlier declared a personal interest in this item, remained in the meeting and voted.]

Cabinet Members considered a report regarding the Conservation Area Appraisals which built on the work undertaken to review ten of the designated Conservation Areas across the County and the subsequent preparation and consultation of the appraisals for each of the identified Conservation Areas.

The report outlined the process and feedback received as part of the associated formal public consultation, setting out the final draft conservation area appraisals and any recommended amendments to the Conservation Areas themselves. The report also included the next steps in relation to the regulatory process required to formally amend the Conservation Areas.

It was noted that the consultation on the content of the draft Conservation Area Appraisals was undertaken between the 24th June 2022 and 26th August 2022. As part of the online questionnaire 16 responses were received. A further 93 comments were submitted as part of the face to face and webinar sessions. All comments received had been duly considered and have informed the content of the draft assessments forming part of the report.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

- 8.1 that the outcome of the Conservation Area Appraisals and the recommended amendments to Conservation Area Boundaries be approved;**
- 8.2 to authorise officers to undertake necessary regulatory processes necessary to formally amend the Conservation Area boundaries as recommended.**

9. STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES' ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Cabinet Members considered the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services on the performance of social care services in the county for the year 2022/23. The report comprised an overview of performance in 2022/23 as well as an assessment on future provision, together with strategic priorities for 2024/25.

There was a statutory requirement for the Director of Social Services to report annually to Council on the delivery of services and performance as well as plans for the improvement of the whole range of social services. It was noted that the Health & Social Services Scrutiny Committee had endorsed the report at its meeting on the 4th October 2023.

Expressions of thanks were conveyed to the staff working across the health and social services.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the Performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2022/23 be approved.

10. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON THE CARMARTHEN AND LLANELLI BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) BOARDS

Cabinet Members considered a report on the representation on the Carmarthen and Llanelli Business Improvement District (BID) Board.

The report sought approval from Cabinet for Carmarthenshire County Council representation as an observer on the Carmarthen and Llanelli BID boards to enable the Council to report on the BID levy hereditaments in line with the Operational Agreements.

Cabinet noted that Carmarthen and Llanelli BID's were formed in 2020 and 2016 respectively, the Carmarthen BID was still within its first five-year term, whilst the Llanelli BID started its second term in March 2021.

The report outlined that both BID's were governed by Operational Agreements between Carmarthenshire County Council and Carmarthen BID CIC Limited (Carmarthen BID) and Ymlaen Llanelli (Llanelli BID). Within the terms of both agreements, Carmarthenshire County Council were responsible for the collection of the bid levy from liable businesses and administering the BID Revenue Account.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that a nominated representation from Carmarthenshire County Council as an observer on the Carmarthen and Llanelli BID boards be approved.

**11. NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL (13TH SEPTEMBER 2023)
LLANDEILO BYPASS**

Cabinet Members received a report which contained information in response of a notice of motion referred by County Council at its meeting held on 13th September 2023 to Cabinet in respect of Llandeilo Bypass for consideration.

The report recommended that Carmarthenshire County Council write a further letter to Welsh Government's Deputy Minister for Climate Change, setting out the Council's position and to formally request the information set out in the Notice of Motion. Cabinet Members were in support of the recommendation.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that a letter be sent to the Welsh Government's Deputy Minister for Climate Change, setting out the Council's position and to formally request the information set out in the Notice of Motion.

**12. NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL (13th September 2023)
SHADOWS DEPRESSION SUPPORT GROUP**

Cabinet Members received a report which contained information in response of a notice of motion referred by County Council at its meeting held on 13th September 2023 to Cabinet in respect of the Shadows Depression Support Group for consideration.

Cabinet Members noted that the Council had a responsibility to provide statutory mental health services under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act, the Mental Health Act and Mental health Measure and Together for Mental Health Strategy. In addition, through a multi-disciplinary approach, collaboration with the Health Board to develop mental health services took place and that the Council's Social Work teams were co-located with the Health Board Mental Health teams.

It was understood that Shadows Depression Support Group had been awarded a grant by the Health Board through Primary Care Cluster funding for a 3-year period. However, this grant had until very recently come to an end. The report gave recognition to the support that the Group had provided over the duration of the grant, and the positive feedback which had been received from all involved.

The Council's Commissioning Team have had early-stage discussions with the Shadows Depression Support Group on the prospect of working together to meet local need, the report detailed 2 services that had been confirmed for Shadows Depression Support Group to deliver in the Amman and Gwendraeth areas, namely, VAWDASV AND Generic Mental Health.

Furthermore, it was highlighted that the Commissioning Team had been supporting discussions between the Shadows Depression Support Group and both Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services and CWMPAS. This would enable access to specialist information and advice which would support Shadows Depression Support Group to maximise available opportunities to improve the sustainability of the service going forward and to inform planning for the new financial year.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

12.1 to make further calls on Hywel Dda University Health Board to ensure that there are sufficient mental health services available to residents across all of Carmarthenshire, in both the short and long-term;

12.2 to call on the Welsh Government, Hywel Dda University Health Board, the GP cluster and Carmarthenshire County Council to work with the Shadows Depression Support Group to find a sustainable funding solution in order to protect services in the Amman and Gwendraeth Valleys.

13. 10 TOWNS PROGRAMME CAPITAL FUND - KIDWELLY TOWN

Cabinet received a report which contained an application submitted by Kidwelly Town Council as part of the 10 Towns programme.

The aim of the 10 towns programme is to provide designated rural market towns across the County the opportunity of economic growth and sustainability. Kidwelly Town Council had agreed to act as the lead body on behalf of the economic growth plan team which had been established within the town and included representatives from private, public and third sector organisations.

It was noted that there were no alternative funding sources available for this project and therefore without Shared Prosperity Fund investment and Core funding, this project would not proceed.

Cabinet Members considered the detailed application within the report which included the project summary and associated costs.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the grant request of £100,000 from the Authority's 10 Towns Capital Fund and £75,000 from the Shared Prosperity Fund as part of the Rural Anchor programme be approved.

14. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent business.

15. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as the reports contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

16. ORIEL MYRDDIN CAPITAL PROJECT

[Note:

- This item was moved to the end of the agenda;
- Wendy Walters, Chief Executive declared an interest and left the meeting prior to the consideration thereof.]

Following the application of the public interest test it was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, pursuant to the Act referred to in Minute Item 15 above, to consider this matter in private, with the public excluded from the meeting as disclosure would be likely to cause financial harm to the Council by undermining its position in negotiations regarding the project.

The Cabinet considered a detailed report in relation to the development of the Oriel Myrddin Capital Project.

RESOLVED that:

16.1 an updated capital funding package and program be agreed;

16.2 the Head of Terms (HoT) and a roadmap of legal arrangements relating to property and governance which adopt a risk-based approach to issuing a letter of intent for the appointed main contractor to start on site be agreed.

17. SHARED PROSPERITY FUND- PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

Following the application of the public interest test it was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, pursuant to the Act referred to in Minute Item 15 above, to consider this matter in private, with the public excluded from the meeting as disclosure would be likely to cause financial harm to the Council by undermining its position in negotiations regarding the project.

The Cabinet received a report for consideration which provided information on proposed projects for grant funding which would enable the proposed schemes to be developed.

The Shared Prosperity Fund - Property Development aimed to provide financial assistance for developers towards the construction of industrial and commercial buildings with the primary aim of creating capacity for employment in Carmarthenshire.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the proposed projects for the Shared Prosperity Fund – Property Development Fund as detailed in the report be approved.

18. PLOT 3, TROSTRE RETAIL PARK

Following the application of the public interest test it was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED**, pursuant to the Act referred to in Minute Item 15 above, to consider this matter in private, with the public excluded from the meeting as disclosure would put the authority at a material disadvantage in any subsequent negotiations with third parties and potentially harm the public purse.

The Cabinet considered a report which provided detailed information on the revised development scheme for Plot 3 Trostre Retail Park. The report sought that Cabinet decision on whether the Authority proceeds with the sale for the alternative scheme on Council owned land at Trostre.

After taking into consideration the potential negative impact that the development could have on Llanelli Town Centre, it was proposed that the sale does not proceed at this time. This was duly seconded.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Authority does not proceed with the sale for the alternative scheme on Council owned land at Trostre.

19. THE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTIES FOR USE AS REGISTERED CHILDREN'S HOMES

Following the application of the public interest test it was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED**, pursuant to the Act referred to in Minute Item 15 above, to consider this matter in private, with the public excluded from the meeting because the purchase is outstanding and so as not to prejudice continuing negotiations.

The Cabinet considered a report which sought approval on the acquisition of properties for use as registered children's homes.

It was reported that as part of the Co-operation Agreement between the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru, there was a clear commitment to eliminate private profit from the care of children looked after. By 2026 it will be unlawful for Local Authorities to place children in private 'for profit' residential care homes.

Cabinet noted that currently, the Council does not have sufficient capacity within its residential services for children to meet the current and projected demand. There was also insufficient supply within the 'not for profit' sector in residential services in Wales.

In considering the proposed acquisition, Cabinet noted that it would be funded through Welsh Government to re-balance the market and prepare Authorities for 2026.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the acquisition of a 5-bedroom property as detailed within the report for use as a Registered Children's Home be approved.

CHAIR

DATE

[PLEASE NOTE: These minutes reflect the order of business itemised on the agenda for the meeting which will differ from that on the webcast recording due to the change in the order of business.]

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CABINET

MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillor D. Price (Chair) (In Person)

Councillors (In Person):

C.A. Davies

L.D. Evans

G. Davies

H.A.L. Evans

A. Lenny

E.G. Thomas

J. Tremlett

A. Vaughan-Owen

Also in attendance as an observer (Remotely):

Councillor D.M. Cundy

Also Present (In Person):

W. Walters, Chief Executive

C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services

J. Morgan, Director of Community Services

G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services

A. Williams, Director of Place & Infrastructure

I. Jones, Head of Leisure

J. Jones, Head of Regeneration, Policy & Digital

L. Rees-Jones, Head of Administration and Law

C. Higginson, Media Manager

M. Roberts, Asset Management Surveyor

K.J. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

R. Morris, Member Support Officer

D. Hall-Jones, Member Support Officer

S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator

Also Present (Remotely):

M. Evans Thomas, Principal Democratic Services Officer (Note Taker)

M. Runeckles, Member Support Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen and remotely : 10.00 am - 10.30 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P.M. Hughes.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interests.

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE 30TH OCTOBER 2023

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 30th October, 2023 be signed as a correct record.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS

The Chair advised that no questions on notice had been submitted by members.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

6. LEISURE, CULTURE AND OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGY

The Cabinet considered a report detailing a new 10-year Leisure, Culture and Outdoor Recreation Strategy for Carmarthenshire which was developed to provide strategic direction for the service moving forward.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the 10 Year Leisure, Culture and Outdoor Recreation Strategy for Carmarthenshire be endorsed.

7. COUNCIL'S REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Cabinet considered the revenue budget monitoring report which provided the latest budgetary position as at 31st August 2023 in respect of 2023/24.

Overall, the monitoring report forecast an overspend for the year at departmental level of £8,730k, with a forecast overspend on the Authority's net revenue budget of £6,098k.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

7.1 that the Budget Monitoring report be received and the budgetary position and appropriate corrective action taken be noted;

7.2 that, in respect of significant overspends on specific budget areas, Chief Officers and Heads of Service critically review options available to them to address the ongoing impact.

8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023-2024 UPDATE

The Cabinet received a report which provided an update on the latest budgetary position for the 2023/24 capital programme, as at the 31st August 2023 and detailed new projects and virements for noting and Cabinet approval. Appendix A to the report indicated a forecasted net spend of £91,370k compared with a working net budget of £142,842k, giving a -£51,472k variance.

The net budget included the original H.R.A. and General Fund capital programmes approved by Council on 1st March, 2023 and slippage from 2022/23. Some of the budgets have also been amended to account for

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

differences in actual grant allocations compared with the anticipated allocations at the time the programme was approved and new grant awards received during the year to date. The main variances within each department were detailed in Appendix B to the report.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

- 8.1 that the capital programme update report 2023/24 be received;**
- 8.2 that the new projects as detailed within the report be noted and agreed, to be funded from current year capital charges underspends.**

9. NATIONAL COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR WELSH (LOCAL AUTHORITY) ADOPTION AND FOSTERING SERVICES

The Cabinet considered a report providing an update on the proposals for developing the governance and enabling for the National Adoption Service for Wales as it assumes responsibility for Foster Wales 2. The report also sought to achieve agreement to signing the Joint Committee Agreement for the proposed Joint Committee.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

- 9.1 that the update report be noted;**
- 9.2 to agree that the Authority signs the Joint Committee Agreement for the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales.**

10. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100B(4)(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent business.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as the reports contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

12. DISPOSAL OF PARC DEWI SANT, JOBSWELL ROAD, CARMARTHEN

Following the application of the public interest test it was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED**, pursuant to the Act referred to in Minute Item 11 above, to consider this matter in private, with the public excluded from the meeting as disclosure would put the Authority at a material disadvantage in any subsequent negotiations with third parties and potentially harm the public purse.

The Cabinet considered a report detailing proposals for the disposal of Parc Dewi Sant, Jobswell Road, Carmarthen.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to proceed with the recommendation as detailed in the report.

CHAIR

DATE

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 14

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

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