

MONDAY, 19TH JULY, 2021

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A **VIRTUAL MEETING** OF THE **EXECUTIVE BOARD** WHICH WILL BE HELD AT **10.00 A.M. ON MONDAY, 26TH JULY, 2021** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
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County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

EXECUTIVE BOARD

MEMBERSHIP - 10 MEMBERS

Councillor	Portfolio
Councillor Emlyn Dole	Leader Corporate Leadership and Strategy; Chair of Executive Board; Represents Council at WLGA; Economic Development Represents the Council on the Swansea Bay City Region; Collaboration; Marketing and Media; Appoints Executive Board Members; Determines EBM Portfolios; Liaises with Chief Executive; Public Service Board
Councillor Mair Stephens	Deputy Leader Council Business Manager; Human Resources; Performance Management; Wales Audit; Training; I.C.T.; T.I.C. (Transformation, Innovation and Change); Strategic Planning
Councillor Ann Davies	Communities and Rural Affairs Rural Affairs and Community Engagement; Community Safety; Police; Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015; Tackling Poverty; Wellbeing of Future Generations; Third Sector Liaison ;Equalities, Climate Change Strategy.
Councillor Glynog Davies	Education and Children Schools; Children's Services; Special Education Needs; Safeguarding; Respite Homes; Regional Integrated School; Improvement Service; Adult Community Learning; Youth Services; School Catering Services, Lead Member for Children and Young People; Youth Ambassador
Councillor Hazel Evans	Environment Refuse; Street Cleansing; Highways and Transport Services; Grounds Maintenance; Building Services; Caretaking; Building Cleaning; Emergency Planning; Flooding, Public Rights of Way.
Councillor Linda Evans	Housing Housing – Public; Housing – Private, Ageing Well
Councillor Peter Hughes Griffiths	Culture, Sport and Tourism Town and Community Councils Ambassador; Development of the Welsh Language; Theatres; Sports; Leisure Centres; Museums; Libraries; Country Parks; Tourism.
Councillor Philip Hughes	Public Protection Trading Standards; Environmental Health. Environmental Enforcement; Planning enforcement; Unlicensed Waste; Parking Services; Bio diversity
Councillor David Jenkins	Resources Finance & Budget; Corporate Efficiencies; Property/Asset Management; Procurement; Housing Benefits; Revenues; Statutory Services (Coroners, Registrars, Electoral, Lord Lieutenancy); Armed Forces Champion Contact Centres and Customer Service Centres
Councillor Jane Tremlett	Social Care & Health Adult Social Services; Residential Care; Home Care; Learning Disabilities; Mental Health; NHS Liaison/Collaboration/ Integration; Care Home Catering Services, Carers' Champion; Dementia Care Champion; Disability Ambassador

A G E N D A

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST**
3. **TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON THE 5TH JULY, 2021** 5 - 8
4. **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS**
 - 4.1 **QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR ROB JAMES TO COUNCILLOR EMLYN DOLE, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

“Two reports have been conducted into the Authority’s Planning Department - one by Wales Audit and the second by external consultants. It is believed that the reports are highly critical of the performance of the Department. Can the Leader of Council outline when the findings of these reports will be published?”
5. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**
6. **REVENUE BUDGET OUTLOOK 2022/23 TO 2024/25** 9 - 26
7. **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES** 27 - 88
8. **POLICY FOR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND BREACHES OF TENANCY 2021** 89 - 106
9. **BURRY PORT - DEVELOPMENT OF SITE 4** 107 - 116
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.**
11. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

THE REPORT RELATING TO THE FOLLOWING ITEM IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION AS IT CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPH 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 BOARD RESOLVES PURSUANT TO THE ACT TO CONSIDER THIS ITEM IN PRIVATE, THE PUBLIC WILL BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING SUCH CONSIDERATION.
12. **SALE OF LAND AT PENCRUG, LLANDEILO** 117 - 124

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Monday, 5 July 2021

PRESENT: Councillor E. Dole (Chair)

Councillors:

C.A. Davies, G. Davies, H.A.L. Evans, L.D. Evans, P.M. Hughes, P. Hughes-Griffiths, D.M. Jenkins, L.M. Stephens and J. Tremlett

Also in attendance:

Councillors D.M. Cundy and J.D. James

The following Officers were in attendance:

W. Walters, Chief Executive

C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services

J. Morgan, Director of Community Services

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

J. Jones, Head of Regeneration

L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law

P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)

A. Williams, Head of Waste and Environmental Services

I.R. Llewelyn, Forward Planning Manager

D. Hockenhull, Marketing and Media Manager

L. Jenkins, Executive Board Support Officer

S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator

R. Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer

Virtual Meeting: 10.00 am - 11.00 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interests.

3. MINUTES - 21ST JUNE 2021

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on the 21st June 2021 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. ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TASK AND FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT TRADING STANDARDS SERVICES - FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION SAFEGUARDING SCHEME (FESS).

With reference to minute 5 of the meeting of the Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee held on 10th June 2019 the Executive Board considered the final report from the Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group, presented by its Chair Cllr. John James, which had been established to review the Trading Standards Services – Financial Exploitation Safeguarding Scheme (FESS).

The Group's main aims for the review had been to explore whether the portfolio of crime prevention, victim support and education activities consolidated within the FESS initiative provided an effective strategy to help combat fraud victimisation and promoted corporate health and wellbeing objectives in the wake of the Social Services and Wellbeing Wales Act 2014 and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015.

The Executive Board thanked the Committee, Officers and the Chair for their work on the report and the Executive Board Member - Social Care and Health added that she would ensure that its findings were shared with the Safeguarding team particularly as many scams targeted the elderly.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to endorse the final report and recommendations of the Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group's review of the Trading Standards Services – Financial Exploitation Safeguarding Scheme (FESS).

7. SIGNATORY TO THE PLACEMAKING CHARTER

The Executive Board considered a report which sought endorsement for the Council to become a signatory of the Placemaking Charter Wales. The report outlined the context and purpose of Placemaking, its role and status in national and local planning policy as well as the content of the Charter. The Charter had been developed by the Design Commission for Wales and the Welsh Government in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership, which was made up of stakeholders representing a wide range of interests and organisations working within the built and natural environment. It reflected the collective and individual commitment of these organisations to support the development of high-quality places across Wales for the benefit of its communities.

The Council's Planning Committee had recommended endorsement of the report at its meeting on the 24th June 2021.

In response to a concern that the reference to 'Language' under the heading 'Identity' could be more robust it was commented that the Council's own policies would ensure that this was the case.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the Placemaking Charter Wales be endorsed with Carmarthenshire County Council becoming a signatory.

8. SKILLS AND TALENT PROGRAMME, SWANSEA BAY CITY DEAL

The Executive Board considered a report detailing a proposed Business Case for the Skills and Talent programme, within the suite of 9 Swansea Bay City Deal projects, that would deliver a skills training solution offering the best value sustainable skills infrastructure to develop the future workforce for the region. It

was considered that the development of a comprehensive and forward-thinking skills programme was vital to the overall success of the City Deal Portfolio. The programme would align the available skills provision and identified skills gaps with the needs of Industry across the region as well as the 8 innovative projects that made up the City Deal supporting the growth of GVA, productivity and business investment in the region.

The Leader highlighted the fact that this was the first project under the Swansea Bay City Deal Gateway review process which had received the 'green light'.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- 8.1 to approve the proposed Business Case for the Skills and Talent programme and its formal submission to the Portfolio Management Office in accordance with the City Deal Implementation Plan to secure City Deal funding approval;**
- 8.2 that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Regeneration, in conjunction with the Executive Board Member – Leader, to make any minor amendments to the business case as necessary to obtain approval at local, regional and national governance.**

9. 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.

CHAIR

DATE

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Executive Board 26th July 2021

REVENUE BUDGET OUTLOOK 2022/23 to 2024/25

Recommendations / key decisions required:

1. The Executive Board receives the initial budget outlook and considers the level of Council Tax rises and the level of school efficiencies that it considers appropriate for developing the Medium Term Financial Plan;
2. Executive Board endorse the proposed approach to identifying the required savings
3. Executive Board note the proposed approach to the budget consultation

Reasons:

To provide the Executive Board with an overview of the budget issues and outlook for the forthcoming years.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee to be consulted NA

Exec Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. David Jenkins

Corporate Services Directorate

Designations:

Tel No. 01267 224121

Name of Director:
Mr C Moore

Director of Corporate
Services

E Mail Addresses:

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Report Author:
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Services

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Board

26th July 2021

REVENUE BUDGET OUTLOOK

2022/23 to 2024/25

The report appraises members of the current financial outlook and updates our current financial model covering the next three financial years.

The report outlines the proposals for taking forward the budget preparation for the three year period.

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: **C Moore**

Director of Corporate Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The budget is being prepared having regard for the Council's Corporate Strategy.

Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken on budget proposals in order to consider and assess the potential impact with respect to protected characteristic groups and the Welsh language. All budget proposals considered to have an impact on front line services will undergo a period of public consultation. The Equalities Impact Assessments will be further developed following consideration of possible mitigation measures to reduce the impact once the responses and findings of the budget consultation have been received.

2. Finance

Council Fund

The report provides an updated view of the Budget outlook for 2022/23, together with indicative figures for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years.

The financial model tabled above will be updated as and when more information becomes available, including the provisional and final settlement from Welsh Government.

Provisional settlement is expected October 2021.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: **C Moore** **Director of Corporate Services**

1. Scrutiny Committee

Consultation with Scrutiny Committees will be undertaken during the budget process.

2. Local Member(s)

N/A

3. Community / Town Council

All budget proposals considered to have an impact on front line services will undergo a period of public consultation before the final budget is set.

4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Consultation with Staff Side Representatives and other organisations will be undertaken and results will be reported during the budget process.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
2021/22 3 Year Revenue Budget		County Hall, Carmarthen

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

EXECUTIVE BOARD

26th July 2021

REVENUE BUDGET OUTLOOK 2022/23 to 2024/25

HEAD OF SERVICE & DESIGNATION.	DIRECTORATE	TELEPHONE NO.
R Hemingway, Head of Financial Services	Corporate Services	01267 224886
AUTHOR & DESIGNATION	DIRECTORATE	TELEPHONE NO
R Hemingway, Head of Financial Services	Corporate Services	01267 224886

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to:

- 1.1. Appraise members on the current financial outlook
- 1.2. Update our current financial model covering the next three years;
- 1.3. Outline proposals for taking forward the budget preparation for the three year period.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The current three year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was agreed by Council on 3rd March 2021 and was based on estimates of known commitments at that time, and formulated in the context of the Welsh Government (WG) financial settlement for 2021/22, with estimates used for years 2 and 3 of the plan.
- 2.2. The 2021/22 budget was set in context of an easing - but highly uncertain – public health situation. Whilst it attempted to address the immediate unavoidable effects of the pandemic on the Authority’s finances over the coming year, it was to some extent mitigated by the assurance of continued financial support via Hardship funding in the short term. Nevertheless the MTFP required a combination of budget savings and council tax increases to bridge the financial gap over the planning period.

- 2.3.** The overall financial standing of the Authority has been maintained at a prudent level. This approach enabled us to act swiftly in the early phases of the pandemic, responding to the needs of residents and businesses and making critical decisions in advance of Welsh Government financial support, which was extremely important to the residents of the county at that time.

In addition to existing reserve balances earmarked for specific purposes such as insurance or committed capital schemes, the authority recognised specific risks and costs associated with the COVID19 recovery and has set aside one-off funding for resetting services and to fund support measures for the local economy. It was also possible to add to our Council Fund, which currently stands at 3.1% of our net budget. In recent years we have made limited use of such reserves to support ongoing expenditure.

3. CURRENT POSITION

COVID-19

- 3.1.** Nearly 18 months into the global pandemic, COVID19 continues to dominate public sector finances over the near term. The combination of additional health spending, reduced tax revenues and the unprecedented financial scale and duration of the furlough scheme have driven up public sector borrowing to £303bn (14.5% of GDP) in 2020/21– its highest in peacetime Britain and more than five times higher than 2019/20.
- 3.2.** Whilst the pace of both Welsh and UK vaccine rollout has exceeded all expectations, a full return to “normal” life remains some way off, with the risk of new variants of concern ever present and media reports of Welsh social distancing regulations remaining for the remainder of 2021. The economy and consequent tax revenues will be at a much lower base, with NHS waiting lists for routine operations at an all time high and several multiples of pre-pandemic levels. At a UK level, HM Treasury will need to put in place measures to address borrowing to bring public sector finances more into balance. This will inevitably impact upon available WG budgets through the Barnett consequential. This has already begun to be seen in the approach taken by Westminster towards NHS England pay awards as well as English schools recovery funding.
- 3.3.** The timeline to achieve this is however far from clear. Whilst the outlook for public finances is undeniably worse as a result of COVID19, there may be a gradual transition towards addressing public sector borrowing, driven by the need for public sector investment to boost economic recovery.

- 3.4.** During 2020/21, the Authority incurred £24m of additional costs and £10m of lost income which was met by the WG hardship scheme, whilst this mechanism is operating until at least September 2021, any permanent changes will need to be built into recurrent budgets. It is likely that we will need to build some additional costs into recurrent budgets as well as consider longer term impact on commercial income streams, which could be significant. One service area of note is homelessness, where there the cost of provision during the last year increased significantly, but was funded by WG.

BREXIT

- 3.5.** The first six months of 2021 have seen a number of frictions arising from the new trading arrangements with the European Union. These have ranged from food export restrictions and fishing rights, staffing impacts on farming and hospitality and an acute shortage of HGV drivers according to recent media reports. What is clear is that the effects were not immediately felt and are taking some time to manifest, partially due to the combined effect of COVID19 restrictions. Carmarthenshire has already experienced some difficulties with recruitment in some areas, believed to be the combined effects of Brexit and COVID19.
- 3.6.** The initial stages of project development and evaluation are underway for the Community Renewal Fund and Levelling Up Fund respectively, the precursors to the long awaited Shared Prosperity Fund. There is much greater decision making vested in Westminster rather than Welsh Government, and funding is allocated across the UK on a competitive basis. It remains to be seen whether the level of grant award in both Carmarthenshire and Wales reduces versus historic levels.

COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW

- 3.7.** The last two years have seen single year Westminster Comprehensive Spending Reviews (CSR). A multi year CSR is planned over Autumn 2021, which has the potential to shift key dates in the latter half of our budget planning process. Early indications are this could lead to a provisional settlement date in December, in line with last year's late timetable.

Given, however, the significant disruption to last year's MTFP development, it is critical that budget development work is started early to ensure a thorough and robust process.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

- 3.8.** In April 2021, County Council approved the updated “Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire” This document sets strategic priorities and aspirations and will underpin the key policy decisions to be taken in the development of the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 3.9.** Due to public restrictions, last year’s public consultation activities were curtailed to online only budget questionnaires and virtual member meetings. It is planned that wider public engagement will take place for this budget cycle, depending upon the prevailing public health restrictions in place. It is proposed that member seminars remain as virtual meetings as this format allowed more members to participate to get the widest range of views.

4. CURRENT FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Budget development always involves assumptions which are refined as the situation evolves and information becomes clearer. COVID19 impacts both in terms of uncertainty over the possibility of future “variants of concern” until such time as worldwide vaccination/herd immunity is realised and the path to more balanced public finances. As these uncertainties are unlikely to be resolved over the summer, it is recommended that budget development work is begun based on the current MTFP parameters as set out in the budget papers agreed by Council Council in March 2021. Further details are provided in the subsequent paragraphs.

5. FINANCIAL MODEL

The financial model has been extended by one year and so covers the three year period up to 2024/25. The most important part for any financial plan or model is the underlying assumptions, the current key assumptions being:

- 5.1.** For the purposes of our financial outlook, the base model reflects the Aggregate External Finance (AEF) increasing by 2.0% each year. Service specific grants currently account for around £100 million and it is assumed that EITHER any further reductions are contained within the AEF reduction above OR that activity/expenditure is reduced in line with grant funding.

There are no significant planned reductions that officers are aware of, however members should note that we are now in a transition phase towards the proposed “Shared Prosperity Fund” which will replace existing EU funding streams. The bid processes are currently in

progress for the Community Renewal Scheme (revenue schemes) and Levelling Up Fund (capital schemes).

- 5.2.** As for all Local Authorities, the treatment of delegated school budgets has a significant impact on the scale of savings proposals across every other service area. Our planning assumption is currently that schools' delegated budgets do not have a specific savings target applied – this is the budget approach we have taken over the last three years, which has protected schools from more than £5m of savings that have inevitably fallen across other council services. Whilst school balances are now showing a substantial surplus position, members should be aware that this is largely due to one off recovery funding received very late in the financial year. Whilst working to mitigate the impacts of lockdowns on learners, many of our schools still have a pressing need to return their budgets to a sustainable footing.

As a consequence of validation for pay and price inflation, it is recognised this budget will grow, and that proportionally larger savings will need to be found elsewhere. Should there be new or additional pressure put on the budget, for example from a worse than planned WG settlement, schools funding would need to be reassessed.

- 5.3.** The MTFP approved by County Council in March 2021 included substantial savings in the Education department linked to the rationalisation of primary school provision – these savings are planned for 2023/24. This would not see an adverse funding outcome for delegated budgets, but is instead about capturing the financial benefit of an overall more efficient schools system and the support services behind it. If this is to be delivered, it is imperative that positive progress is made over the coming year.

- 5.4.** The April 2021 pay settlement for NJC staff remains unknown. The Employers offer of 1.5% was quickly rejected by unions. The September 2021 Teachers pay award recommended by the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body is 1.75% - this is in consultation phase at the time of writing. As was the case last year, there are pulls in both directions in national negotiations on staffing costs – on one hand the recognition and reward for the role which many have played in delivering services above and beyond at a time of great need; on the other hand there is the need to rebalance public sector finances, as seen in the English NHS employers offer as referenced in paragraph 3.2 above. Given these opposing forces, the financial model maintains the current assumption of 2.5% per annum pay growth.

Commissioned care costs may experience larger than normal increases over the MTFP period following the WG plans announced to raise care staff pay up to the real living wage, which is currently

6.6% above the national living wage. This will require full funding from WG, without which it will represent a substantial pressure on Local Authority budgets. Current modelling includes allowances for forecast National Living Wage increases only.

Inflation forecasts remain uncertain. Current year figures are highly skewed by the impact of restrictions (and their easing) and short term availability of goods, where supply chains have been interrupted by new regulations post Brexit and the Suez Canal blockage in March 2021. With the exception of July 2020, the 12 month Consumer Price Index has been below 1% since the start of the pandemic, but increased from 0.7% to 2.1% between March and May 2021, the largest increase in over a decade. As such assumptions are increased to 2.5% for prudence at this stage of budget development.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 5.5. The 5 year capital plan was approved by Council in March 2021. Alongside revenue budget development work, a review of existing and new capital projects will be undertaken to inform future development of the five year Capital Programme. It is likely that any projects approved for the Levelling Up Fund (see paragraph 3.6 above) may require match funding which will need to be identified.
- 5.6. An emerging risk to this is the supply and availability of construction materials, which could put pressure both on project budgets previously approved as well as timelines, particularly where there are fixed expenditure deadlines for specific grants.
- 5.7. Additionally, members should note that there may be significant capital costs associated with the Waste Strategy which are not currently included within the Capital programme. Based on the experience of other Local Authorities, it is hoped that a substantial contribution from Welsh Government can be secured, though this is not confirmed.
- 5.8. Validation assumptions for the three years have been revisited and are currently:

	Financial Model		
	2021/22 %	2022/23 %	2023/24 %
Expenditure Inflation	2.5	2.5	2.5
Income Inflation	2.5	2.5	2.5
Pay Awards	2.5	2.5	2.5
Employers Pension Rates	0	0	0
Fuel	2.5	2.5	2.5

Energy Costs	2.5	2.5	2.5
Capital charges	£500k	£500k	£500k
Revenue Implications of Capital schemes	£400k	£400k	£400k

5.9. Service Pressures:

The financial model assumes growth pressures of £5.5m per annum for every year. In addition to the normal pressures which might be expected, of particular note are the following:

- COVID19 related service expenditure – whilst this will no doubt reduce it is likely that some working practices will change as a result of experiences and will lead to additional costs.
- Commercial income – there may be need to consider any possible longer term reductions to income generating services such as leisure centres or parking.
- Waste strategy – as well as capital costs referred to above, there will be revenue cost implications of any future changes implemented.
- Decarbonisation – following the climate emergency declared by the County Council in February 2019, further actions required to meet our commitment to become net zero carbon may put additional pressures on capital and revenue budgets.

Over the MTFP period, there are likely to be additional funding requirements in respect of the City Deal projects. These include both interest costs (as it is forecast they will exceed the business rates retention deal agreed with WG) and additional staffing costs. These will need to be addressed within the individual business case appraisals before their commencement, and as such it is not anticipated these will impact upon 2021/22 budgets.

5.10. The modelling is based on Council Tax increases in line with the MTFP approved in March 2021, being 4.35% in 2022/23, 4.40% in 2023/24 extended to year 3 purely for planning purposes.

5.11. Based upon the above assumptions a financial model has been constructed (see table below) which highlights the impact of the proposed changes, and identifies the likely budget shortfall. Comparative figures from the current MTFP are included for information.

Summary of Financial Model

	Current MTFP		Financial Model		
	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Previous Year's Budget	386,185	396,637	386,185	396,609	407,419
General Inflation	1,822	2,184	2,278	2,730	2,798
Pay Inflation	6,287	6,271	6,287	6,271	6,200
Other	2,052	2,092	1,568	1,642	1,919
Growth	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500
Original & approved PBB Proposals	-4,644	-4,093	-4,644	-4,093	0
Net Expenditure	396,637	407,477	396,609	407,419	418,814
Revenue Settlement	290,517	296,327	290,517	296,327	302,254
Council Tax Receipts	106,120	111,150	106,092	111,092	116,560
Shortfall	565	1,115	565	1,240	5,023
Modelling Council Tax Increase	4.35%	4.40%	4.35%	4.40%	4.40%

5.12. Key points:

5.12.1. We are looking at requiring cumulative reductions of £15m over the three years. As well as additional cost pressures brought about by the pandemic, changes in working practices have the potential to provide the opportunity for some savings. A reduction in staff travel, printing costs and possible reduction of the corporate administrative estate could deliver valuable efficiency savings at no detriment to the quality of service delivery to the public. Clearly given the abnormality of the last year, it cannot be taken as a reliable benchmark, work is underway to estimate how large a contribution this could make towards savings targets over the longer term.

Many savings proposals require substantial lead in time to prepare for, or to follow prescribed statutory processes. This requires early planning and proactive work several years ahead of the implementation date.

5.12.2. Our budget, in common with all authorities will contain a number of expenditure items that are essentially 'fixed' such as our debt costs, payments to those in receipt of council tax reduction support, the cost of levies, insurance costs, external audit fees, etc. In terms of managing and addressing any reductions we need to exclude these budgets. It is proposed that the savings requirements for

each of the financial years be allocated between departments as follows, according to controllable budgets:

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive	432	443	417
Schools Delegated Budget	0	0	0
Education & Children	904	925	872
Communities	2,471	2,530	2,383
Corporate Services	180	184	174
Environment	1,222	1,251	1,178
	5,209	5,333	5,023

5.12.3. The above model, as stated above, is based upon increases to the AEF of 2% each year and council tax increases of 4.35% in 2022/23 and 4.40% for both 2023/24 and 2024/25.

6. SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

- 6.1.** Any budget forecast has an element of risk and a large degree of uncertainty when planning over the medium term, and this is particularly so in with the current outlook.
- 6.2.** Any changes to the assumptions will inevitably be the result of a number of factors. The following table identifies the individual impact of the main components of the budget:

Budget element	Movement	Annual Impact
Pay inflation	1%	£2.4m
General inflation	1% (expenditure only)	£2.3m
General inflation	1% (income only)	-£1.4m
WG Settlement	1%	£2.9m
Specific Grants	1%	£1.0m
Council Tax	1%	£1.0m

- 6.3.** The following table illustrates the scale of the impact on departmental savings targets in 2021/22 if some of the movements outlined above materialised (Tables do not reflect a cumulative effect) :

Department	1% change in WG settlement	1% change in Council Tax Increase	No schools protection – i.e. increased schools efficiencies
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Chief Executive	+/-241	+/-88	-160
Schools Delegated Budget	0**	0**	1,925
Education & Children	+/-504	+/-184	-334
Communities	+/-1,378	+/-503	-913
Corporate Services	+/-100	+/-37	-67
Environment	+/-681	+/-249	-452
	+/-2,905	+/-1,025	0

** Based on assumption that no savings target is applied to school budgets

- 6.4.** The Budget modelling will be monitored and refined as the likely position becomes clearer.

7. TAKING THE WORK FORWARD

There are a number of strands to develop in bringing about change to ensure we achieve balanced budgets:

- 7.1.** A continued real and focused drive to achieve efficiency in what we do – including business processes, taking advantage of technology and reviewing non-employee spend. This year's work will include a renewed focus on common and repetitive spend to identify the scale of budget reductions achievable in areas such as print/postage/staff travel which have been impacted by COVID19 new working practices.
- 7.2.** Establishing what is important to members (and other stakeholders) in terms of what they wish to prioritise and importantly what is not and can be 'given up'/or reduced, recognising that prioritising in one area unavoidably leads to difficult choices elsewhere;
- 7.3.** Demand management which explores all the drivers of demand for our services and asks whether we can reduce or manage that demand by other methods and/or by doing things differently – e.g.

earlier intervention in a cycle; changing user expectations of services; use of the third sector/other organisations or alternative delivery models etc;

7.4. Innovation and alternative funding sources – whilst innovation will be evident in all the other strands it is felt useful to also have it as standalone to allow some free thinking to emerge and understand whether that free thinking leads to approaches that may generate further avenues for attracting revenue support or generating income.

7.5. All of the above will involve:

7.5.1. Consideration of alternative delivery models/providers;

7.5.2. Acceptance of lower performance/reduction/cessation in some areas as an acceptable price to prioritise/protect others;

7.5.3. Consideration of alternative and perhaps as yet untapped sources of finance;

7.5.4. Some analysis of the cost/benefit equation of what we currently do and what we would propose to do.

7.5.5. Council will need to implement measures in 2021/22 to increase as far as possible its options in respect of the 2022/23 budget setting process. The aims of these measures would be to partially mitigate the risk of the council not achieving a balanced budget for 2022/23 and would need to be undertaken following consultation with members.

7.6. In considering the budget proposals, members need to take into consideration the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Act requires that we must carry out sustainable development, improving the economic, social environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

8. BUDGET PREPARATION FOR 2022/23

8.1. The financial model tabled above will be updated as and when more information becomes available, key amongst which will be the provisional settlement, currently expected from WG in October 2021, though subject to the CSR as referenced in paragraph 3.7 above. A timetable is provided at Appendix A.

8.2. As part of the current Medium Term Financial Plan, Departments are requested to update their efficiency/service rationalisation proposals for 2022/23 and 2023/24 and to consider possible areas to target for 2024/25. Savings development will be led by Department Service Directors with review and challenge from:

- Executive Board Portfolio Member, plus
- Executive Board Portfolio Member for Resources

Consideration will be given to inclusion of independent challenge to further support this process.

8.3. Officers will continue to refine the budget projections taking account of inflation factors, the collection rate and reviewing the potential for the use of reserves etc.

8.4. Virtual Member seminars on budget proposals to be convened in December/January 2022.

8.5. Public consultation on budget priorities and proposals will take place in October – January 2021. Specific consultation methods will need to reflect the COVID19 alert level prevailing at the time, but additional efforts will be made to engage as widely as possible given the circumstances, including the use of virtual meetings, and digital communications.

8.6. Scrutiny Committee consultation in January/February 2021.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that:

9.1. The Executive Board receives the initial budget outlook and considers the level of Council Tax rises and budget savings that it considers appropriate for developing the Medium Term Financial Plan;

9.2. Executive Board endorse the proposed approach to identifying the required savings

9.3. Executive Board note the proposed approach to the budget consultation

Medium Term Financial Planning

2022/23 - 2024/25

Timetable (including consultation & engagement process)

Meeting Date	Event / Session	Purpose
26 July 2021	Executive Board	Budget outlook report
Mid October 2021	Welsh Government (WG)	PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT
October 2021 – January 2022	Public Consultation / Commercial Rate Payers Consultation	Public consultation survey & events – dependent upon Alert Level / prevailing restrictions.
22 November 2021	Executive Board	Budget Strategy report with key data and savings proposals Launch public consultation
December 2021	Member Seminars	Departmental Budget Seminars – virtual
December 2021 -January 2022	Scrutiny Committees (Budget)	Scrutiny Budget consultation
December 2021	WG	FINAL SETTLEMENT
31 January 2022	Executive Board	Update on Budget, Feedback on Consultation, consider final Budget proposals
22 February 2022	Full Council	Final decision on budget and Approval of Budget Strategy
March 2022	Public communication of decisions	Public awareness of final budget decisions
2 March 2022	Full Council	Council Tax Setting report and final decision on budget

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Executive Board 26th July 2021

Subject:

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES IN CARMARTHENSHIRE 2020/21

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. It sets out the challenges of an unrepresented year due to COVID 19 and highlights those areas to be developed in the current year. It relates to performance for the year 2020/21.

This report provides CMT/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. It should be noted the report is still in Draft and will be further proofread and reformatted prior to completion.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

That the Annual report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2020/21 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 2021.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted : YES

Scrutiny Committee for Social Care & Health – 7th July 2021

Scrutiny Committee for Education & Children – 8th July 2021

Exec Board Decision Required	YES
Council Decision Required	YES

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

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

Cllr. G. Davies (Education & Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Directorate
Communities

Designations:

Tel Nos./ E Mail
Addresses:

Name of Head of Service:
Jake Morgan

Director of Community
Services (Statutory Director of
Social Services)

01267 224698
JakeMorgan@carmarthens
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
EXECUTIVE BOARD
26th July 2021

SUBJECT:
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES
ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES IN
CARMARTHENSHIRE 2020/21

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 2020/21 and an assessment on the future, together with our strategic priorities for 2021/22.

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 October to discuss their analysis and proposed plan. This will be followed by an Annual Letter to Council in late November/early December, confirming their analysis and inspection plan. The process will link in closely with the Wales Programme for Improvement and the Annual Letter from the Wales Audit Office.

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

The financial implications are included in the report. Budget pressures are identified clearly.

4. ICT

The PIMS system will be used to provide evidence of the Annual Report. Comment is made in the body of the report as to the need to better integrate Health & Social Care IT.

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

Workforce is a critical element included in the report. In particular, the development and retention of social workers to ensure that they continue their professional development and remain with Carmarthenshire.

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

The report was considered by the following Scrutiny Committees:-

Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee held on 7th July 2021 who

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- the Draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the Performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2020/21 be received,
- the Authority write to Welsh Government requesting a review of the issues experienced in care homes during the pandemic.

Education & Children Scrutiny Committee held on 8th July, 2021 who

RESOLVED that:

- The Director of Community Services arrange for the Care Leavers Data to be made available to the members.
- The Authority write to the new Minister at Welsh Government in relation to Home Education.
- 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.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED:**

YES

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

Directors Annual Report 2021/22

Jake Morgan

Statutory Director of Social Services at Carmarthenshire
County Council

April 2021 DRAFT

carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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Dates of Political meetings

DMT	15 th June
CMT	17 th June
PEB	28 th June
Scrutiny	7 th July SC&H 8 th July C&ED
Ex Board	26 th July
County Council	15 th September

Introduction



This is my eighth annual report as Statutory Director of Social Services. Although Social Services is only a part of my corporate role there is a statutory requirement on me to report annually on the council's Social Service's functions. Appended to this report is the Statutory Notice I issued last year. This was issued under the Code of Practice contained within the Social Services and Wellbeing act where the Director of Social Services has a duty to advise on the challenges, risks and circumstances where staff issues affect our ability to discharge statutory responsibilities.

This has, by any measure, been an extraordinarily difficult year. COVID 19 has tested every element of our organisation and our ability to discharge our Social Services functions. Our priority throughout has been to protect the most vulnerable in the community, the elderly and disabled whose health and lives have been so at risk because of Covid 19. During this time our teams in adult and children's social services have never faced such challenges and been so needed by our communities. It has been a year where the whole of society has recognised the central role Social Services functions play in all our lives and the importance of these services in keeping children and vulnerable adults safe. The council can be proud of the role its staff have played in supporting the most vulnerable.

The whole Country started the year unprepared for the pandemic in every way. It is easy to forget the emergency in March and April last year when public health advice felt short of to acknowledging the need for PPE in the care sector; When there was rapid discharge from hospital into nursing homes wholly unprepared to manage COVID 19 outbreaks and where basic protective equipment for staff at risk was nationally auctioned to the highest bidder by unscrupulous distributors. At this time vaccination programmes were a distant hope and our care staff faced anxiety daily. We all felt frustration at the slow pace of guidance change on PPE in relation to social care staff (See my statutory notice pg 33-34) The consequence of this was that even in June 2020 we were not always able to provide the protection to staff in social care that we felt was necessary. The corporate and political support in the council and from ADSS Cymru in advocating for action nationally was critical in ensuring a change of guidance.

Our partnership with health has strengthened throughout the pandemic with the authority leading on the creation of 3 field hospitals in the county and our integrated structure adding significant value in ensuring there was a coordinated approach. The role of key clinical health staff in supporting the care sector was invaluable. Review and reflection is needed locally and nationally on the use of 'do not resuscitate' instructions on the elderly in care and consideration whether the process used was the one we would want in the future.

As a Director you really find out about the strength and values of your team and organisation when you face adversity. For 6 months my team met 7 days a week to problem solve, manage risk, and support the care sector through the most difficult times it has ever faced. Unwavering support politically and corporately demonstrated the values of the organisation where the number one priority was to do whatever we can to best protect the most vulnerable. They did a great job and this was confirmed by the

Inspectorate earlier this year:

“The local authority ensures people’s voices are heard, their choices respected and people routinely achieved self-identified outcomes. Leaders have a line of sight on front line practice with clear plans that have led to creative practice.”

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021”

In the second wave in December the rapid rise of infections led to a total collapse of several of our private sector care homes. These homes found themselves with no staff or management and sick and frail residents having no one to care for them. In these circumstances I was constantly humbled by the lack of hesitation from our staff and managers from our in-house service who worked additional shifts in unfamiliar and risky environments to keep residents cared for. These staff were supplemented by corporate and leisure staff who volunteered to fill gaps where they had every right to simply stay at home. With limited family members in homes and overstretched care staff it fell on some of these staff to read to and care for the elderly who were frail, vulnerable and in many cases sick with COVID 19. We owe these staff a huge debt of gratitude.

In these days of social media comment it is easy to be cynical about *‘the council’* and Local Government. However looking back at Christmas Eve 2020 when I had the call that a home had collapsed with the whole staff team off with COVID 19 it was *‘the council’* and Local Government with our amazing staff who stepped up in these most difficult of circumstances. Over this period, I have never been prouder of the care sector and Local Government as a whole.

There has been extraordinary work nationally and locally to get us in the position we are now. We now have near unlimited protective equipment provided by government free to the whole care sector, benefit from the most successful vaccination programme in Europe and continue to receive substantial funding for the stretched care sector. Whilst the full impact on the mental health of our children and vulnerable adults is still being fully assessed the additional funding provided by the council for mental health services is further evidence that supporting and protecting vulnerable people remains a priority for the council.

In making statements about the state of Social Services in the county I always try and triangulate our internal judgement with both performance data and external independent evaluations. To this end we commissioned an independent external evaluation of our support to care homes. This independent evaluation is summarised in Appendix 4. In addition, Care Inspectorate Wales produced an evaluation of the whole of our Social Services functions through an inspection in February. This is attached to this report in Appendix 3. These outside views enable me to have real confidence in the positive statements I make in this report.

Of course, there is now much to do as we navigate the recovery from the pandemic, evaluating the impact on services and face those issues that have inevitably been put on hold. Budget pressure will undoubtedly play a part as the number of older people continues to grow and mental health in particular faces growing pressures. However, if the pandemic has

taught us nothing else then our staff and the organisation is more resilient than we could ever have known, and this gives me real cause for optimism moving forward.

Jake Morgan, Statutory Director of Social Services

Overview of an Unprecedented Year

A simple way to look at the impact of COVID 19 on Social Services for adults and children in the last year is to see it in four phases:

Phase one from March to May 2020 reflected high levels of risk, high levels of concern regarding the lack of adequate protection for residents and staff in care and nursing homes and the lack of protective equipment. (see statutory report in Appendix 1 and 2) This was a period of crisis management locally and nationally as we dealt with the overall lack of national preparedness for a pandemic of this type.

Phase two from May to October 2020 we established preventative services; embedded safe systems of work; distributed PPE, introduced testing and track and trace systems; mainstreamed agile working and monitoring of vulnerable children and established systems for infection control.

Phase three from November to January we experienced a second wave of COVID 19 with devastating effects in some of our care homes, staff absences increased due to larger numbers being tested and the total collapse of several care homes in the county. The pace of escalation in the number of those infected during December was extraordinary. This period whilst managed extremely well by our teams was challenging with staff already fatigued but continuing to work hard to keep people safe. At the end of this phase the roll out of the Covid vaccinations had begun, with care staff among the first in the County to receive their vaccinations.

Phase four from February to the end of March was a recovery from the second wave with infections low, care homes operating effectively, and a number of reviews and external inspections having been completed to ensure lessons were learnt and that we were prepared should there be further outbreaks. The vaccination programme was demonstrating its effectiveness with 97.7 % of care workers vaccinated and 96.4% of residents in care vaccinated. (at the time of writing this report) All the signs are that this programme is effective in protecting the most vulnerable residents in the county.

During this time, it was imperative that we continued to deliver essential services and meet our statutory responsibilities to support those in greatest need. At times we made difficult decisions on prioritising our resources for the most critical services as necessary. Emergency planning across Social Services, the Council and the region saw us develop a coordinated response across in-house and commissioned services supported by a strong partnership with the Health Board to keep those for whom we provide care and support as safe as possible.

Staff from different services were redeployed to areas of need, and we continue to work to the guidance issued by the UK and Welsh Government in relation to safe working practices. We have received an impressive response from the community,

with individuals, groups and businesses working together to support friends, neighbours and strangers. We hope that the networks built will remain after the pandemic has subsided, continuing to support those in need.

We have set a **budget for 2021/22** which balances our resources with known demand. However, demand across Children and Adult Services is volatile and we have seen a steep rise in demand for domiciliary care since March. This is reflected in the financial uncertainty we face. A contingency fund established by the Council for Social Services is a prudent approach in the circumstances.

The Council has made a commitment to protect budgets within Social Services and invest in our mental health services. This will ensure that we are able to continue to deliver high quality services that put people at the centre of their care and support.

We have drawn down substantial financial support from the Welsh Government Hardship Fund to help offset some of the additional costs associated with Covid. We have claimed a total of just over £9million to date. It is difficult to predict at this stage how this crisis will impact on long-term demand and consequently spend, but we will continue to monitor the position closely.

We have seen an overall reduction in the number of funded residential and nursing placements for older people, which has had a positive impact on the budget albeit not quite offsetting the rise in demand for domiciliary care, direct payments and mental health services.

Children's services have continued to function effectively during the Covid 19 Pandemic and lock-down working arrangements. Service delivery has been prioritised according to a regionally agreed model. This has ensured the safeguarding of children and young people residing in Carmarthenshire whilst also ensuring that our staff and the families we visit, stay safe by applying social distancing. The pandemic has demonstrated the benefits and opportunities of digital working with contact enhanced with many of our children and young people. However, a return to a greater level of in person contact will be essential in children's services as we move forward.

For young people leaving care, especially those who may not have previously been in regular contact has had a huge potential to increase engagement, develop better insight and improve outcomes. Whilst the focus has been on the pandemic it is also good to reflect what an excellent job our service has done in continuing to support children and families during this unprecedented year.

The Council's ability to maintain and even reduce our number of looked after children through good practice, investment in prevention and long term effective management is an area that is receiving positive national attention.

"In children's services, the pod meetings were embedded and highly regarded by all staff as an effective and supportive mechanism for themselves and the families they supported. These meetings combine a systemic and strengths based approach to evaluating work with families"

"Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 2021"

Within Mental Health and Learning Disability we have seen an increase in residential placements and high-cost community packages, as the work to place people in alternative settings was paused for the first six months of the pandemic. The impact of the pandemic on mental health, substance misuse and safeguarding and demand for services is likely to be significant and we have prepared for this in our budget setting for 2021/2022.

In relation to **supporting adults and older people**, we have continued to as far as possible to maintain business as usual. We have continued to support people who need our help in the community and need support to be discharged from hospital. We have continued to offer Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) in line with the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and carried out social care assessments where required.

We have inevitably, had to change the way we do things, and wherever possible we have tried to support people virtually when providing information and advice or undertaking assessments. We have however, also continued to visit people at home when needed on a risk assessed basis, to ensure that our assessments are thorough to inform what support we might be able to provide.

Despite all the challenges we continue to have sufficient supply of residential and domiciliary care in the county. Rural areas continue to be a challenge and work on a new commissioning framework will seek to address gaps in the next year.

At the start of the pandemic, in line with government advice and the high vulnerability of our client groups to Covid, we immediately had to close most of our **Day Services**, and suspend most planned respite in care homes. We have however tried to look at innovative ways of how we can continue to support those we support to meet their preferred outcomes and provide some degree of respite for individuals and families.

In relation to **Older People's Day Services**, we carried out a consultation with those that previously attended day services and their families in November last year on a proposal to provide alternative support whilst day services remained closed. This model includes 1 to 1 support at home, as well as greater digital connection where appropriate. Emergency respite can also still be arranged at a range of care homes across the County on a risk assessed basis, subject to a negative Covid-19 test and isolation for 14-days on admission to the care home. At the time of writing new guidance is anticipated from Welsh Government surrounding transfer to care homes, which may make bed-based respite a more realistic proposition going forward. Moving forward it is likely that day services will be required to focus on meeting the needs of highly vulnerable older adults whose carers require respite. This will require considerable remodelling of our day services.

Within **Learning Disability and Mental Health Day Services**, whilst some buildings have been closed, we have continued to provide care to our most vulnerable and we have in some instances successfully provided support in buildings following robust risk assessments. We have also offered support at home and a range of online virtual activities which remain popular with those who use our services and their

carers. Activities provided include, exercise, quizzes, and cookery sessions, Woodwork and craft activity packs have also been delivered to individual homes to enable them to join in with the virtual demonstrations.

In the autumn of 2020, some of our buildings reopened and we are gradually accommodating more numbers, prioritising those individuals and families who are struggling. However, this will be on a significantly reduced basis, so that we can maintain everyone's safety. Many services will not operate as they previously did. They will not be able to offer the range of activities or be able to support as many people as they did previously, as our priority is to keep everyone safe.

A review of the regional Shared Lives Scheme was undertaken in 2019 with a view to revising the model and structure for future sustainability. The consultation which was delayed during the pandemic is now being undertaken and a new model will be implemented following this.

The first phase of the new model for disability was also established during 2020 commencing with the 0 to 25 years old service. Initial feedback from those who use services, their carers and professionals is that this is a positive development. Phase 2 will be implemented this year.

We recognise that the pandemic has been a hugely challenging time for carers who have been managing with reduced support and respite. Through the Regional Partnership Board arrangements, we have continued to adapt our offer to carers to ensure that they can continue to feel supported. The Social Work teams and day services staff have kept in contact with carers and provided support when necessary. Many of our staff have either achieved or are undertaking the Investors in Carers Award which is an acknowledgement of the support provided to carers. All Social Work teams also have identified Carers Champions.

The pandemic is challenging for everyone, but the impact on the mental health and wellbeing of many people in Wales is significant. Contact with mental health teams has also increased by 136% over the last year, from 131 in April to September 2019, to 301 for the same period this year. For the Advanced Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP) service, it has been business as usual and they have had continued to undertake their statutory duties throughout the pandemic and often in high-risk situations.

All Mental Health Forums and Networks since March have reported increased demand and reported high levels of anxiety across West Wales and Carmarthenshire including reported significant increases in people contacting them for support for self-harm and eating disorders also.

The impact on mental health services is likely to be significant. In planning for this, the council has invested significant growth resource to address this which will be used to recruit more social work and social care staff to focus on two specific areas; early intervention and prevention and a more robust and timelier crisis response. During 2020, we have been collaborating with the Health Board and the third sector to develop initiatives in this regard developing a Single Point of Access and a 24/7 crisis response service. Substance misuse services has also seen an increase in the

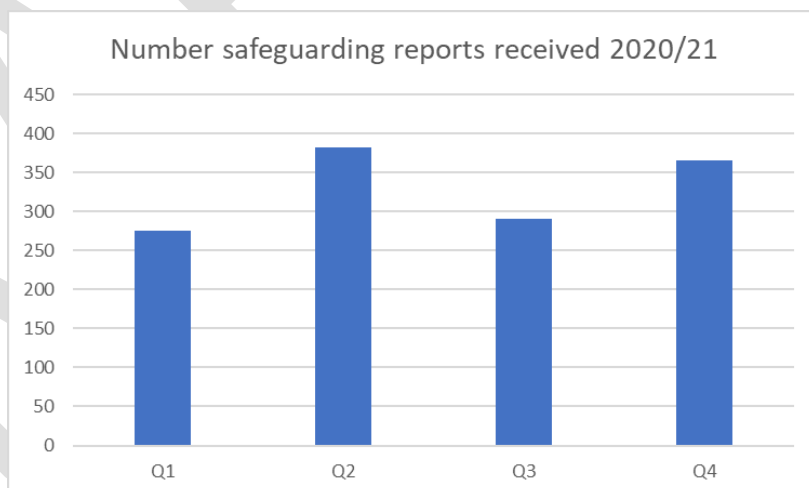
volume of work and the complexity of cases as isolation and lockdown has an impact on vulnerable people's lives.

Adult Safeguarding

In relation to Adult Safeguarding, the Regional Safeguarding Board and associated subgroups have continued to meet virtually. We were part of a Regional Multi Agency Covid response group which met weekly to have assurance regarding safeguarding responses during the pandemic. Attendance at strategy meetings has been improved. MAPPA, MARAC and VAWDASV arrangements have also continued. We have continued to work within the new All Wales Adult Protection Procedures and Carmarthenshire has led on several developments across the region including the development of a Covid Threshold document and training. We are now well prepared for the implementation of the new Liberty Protection Safeguards in 2022.

We have seen a small increase in safeguarding activity and an increase in the complexity of referrals. We are now seeing in the region of 100 to 120 referrals a month.

The number of adult safeguarding reports received during 2020/21 demonstrate a direct correlation with COVID-19 restriction periods in Wales. During enhanced restriction periods in Q1 and Q3 fewer safeguarding reports were received likely due to the limited opportunities professionals had to visit service users in person and the restricted access to service settings.

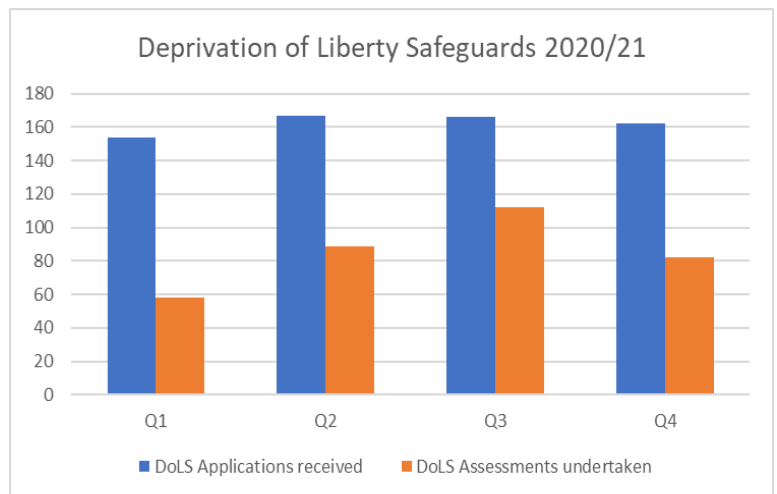


Co-produced solutions were evident and there were positive outcomes for people subject to safeguarded interventions. Safeguarding enquiries and investigations conducted in line with statutory requirements, good analysis of risk, protection plans in place and action taken when necessary. Providers and partners said they were supported by the adult safeguarding team; their willingness to offer advice, guidance and assist with training of social care workers was acknowledged.

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 2021”

A robust regional approach to managing new and existing Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard authorisations has been agreed as we have had to adapt our practice when we have been unable to visit care homes. This approach ensures the principles of the Mental Capacity Act are upheld and is consistent with the guidance received from Welsh Government.

The number of DoLS applications has been consistent during the past 12 months. Due to the visiting restrictions in place for care homes, the assessments have been undertaken remotely in line with national guidance and good practice. Assessments are prioritised in terms of urgency and a robust audit process in place for ensuring the principles of the Mental Capacity Act (2005) are followed.



Seraphim Call

We have developed an innovative trueCall nuisance call blocker device monitoring tool and dashboard that correlates call blocker activity data with user risk profiles to generate an alert when a service user is exposed to a high number of telephone fraud approaches and/or exhibits behaviours that put them at increased risk of telephone fraud victimisation.

The purpose of the alert system is to safeguard vulnerable service users and initiate a welfare call and/or visit from local officers and to protect service users from fraud victimisation. The nature of trueCall means that many interventions can be performed remotely. Such protection and remote oversight has proven invaluable during the pandemic. Since April 2020, active trueCall units installed by the authority have blocked **16277** nuisance calls made to vulnerable people in the county. Based on national intelligence, **4883** of these were identified as scam calls.

Delta wellbeing

Carmarthenshire has continued to work with its TEC trading company Llesiant Delta Wellbeing, to develop a TEC Prevention Strategy for the region, and the CONNECT project in particular has come into its own. The programme combines proactive integrated tele-monitoring and wellbeing calls, with a rapid response and community-based support.

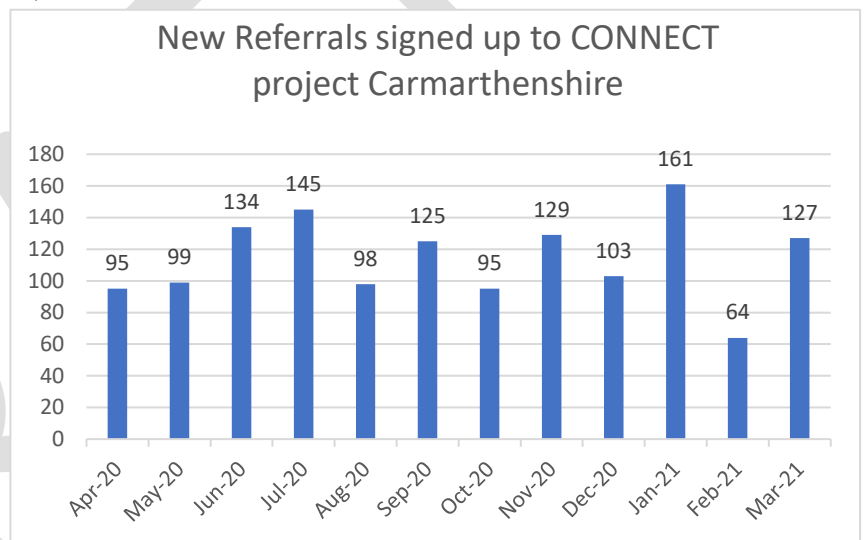
In adult services, the Delta / Connect project has been successful in promoting prevention and early intervention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies. We saw evidence of enhanced use of technology to support people's safety as well as reduce loneliness and isolation.

"Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021"

Throughout the Covid pandemic, Llesiant Delta Wellbeing has worked closely with Carmarthenshire County Council to ensure extremely vulnerable residents, who were shielding across the county, were supported appropriately. During the national emergency, staff worked 24/7 to provide the right support at the right time to our most vulnerable in the local community.

They conducted approximately 8,500 calls to residents within Carmarthenshire that received shielding letters from Welsh Government, ensuring they had everything they needed to stay safe during these difficult times. Through these calls, the team were able to check on individual's general welfare, providing peace of mind for loved ones and their families, and vitally, making sure they had enough help and support around them during the shielding period and also to prevent isolation and loneliness.

Technology Enabled Care equipment providing round the clock support if needed as well as essential food parcels or support while shopping for essentials. The team also checked if people were receiving their medication prescriptions and if pharmacies were unable to deliver, we referred this for assistance also. Delta Wellbeing's Community Welfare Response team, as part of its CONNECT service provision, was also on hand to visit people at home when required to solve any practical issues they had whilst shielding. The team went above and beyond on occasions to ensure our communities most vulnerable received the vital help they needed to prevent a possible crisis occurring.



Feedback about the outbound calls has been extremely positive and ensured any potential issues were identified and supported at the earliest opportunity as well as many expressing, they felt "reassured" by the call.

The project in Carmarthenshire is a finalist in the Public Sector Transformation Award for Excellence, as it exemplifies our ambition of working across sectoral boundaries to deliver a radical, person-centred approach to wellbeing, care and support. It involves implementing a new model of self-help and pro-active care, enabled by Technology Enabled Care (TEC), improving the wellbeing of individuals, which in-turn allows people to stay independent for longer, reducing demands on long term or acute care.

In June 2021, we established Test, Trace, Protect Strategy and team to enhance health surveillance in the community, undertake effective and extensive contact tracing, and encourage and support people to self-isolate. The Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) team's work was and still is vital, in helping reduce the spread of the Coronavirus by identifying recent contacts of people who have tested positive and giving them advice.

Contact tracing is being used to limit the spread of the virus in the community by breaking the link in transmission. Contact tracing starts with self-reporting of symptoms, followed by testing suspected cases, tracing the contacts of those who have tested positive and then protecting our families, friends and communities through self-isolation. Embedding infection control structures into the permanent work of the department will be a priority moving forward.

DRAFT

Children Services

This year has been even more challenging due to Covid 19 which has placed significant pressure on families and has led to an increase in demand for our services. This year saw an increase of Contacts/Referrals received by 770 in statutory services. However, we continue to perform well despite these pressures. During 2020/21 93.6% of new assessments were completed within statutory timescales.

We continue to follow the guidance within the CYSUR regional threshold document and multi-agency child protection arrangements ensuring early intervention, and utilisation of preventative services to reduce the need for statutory involvement

A family support ethos is strongly embedded in the authority and numbers of looked after children have continued to reduce slowly despite Covid 19. We have performed better than the Welsh Government expectation with 15 less children being looked after when compared with the same time last year. The on-going work of the specialist preventative services such as IFST, Edge of Care and Family Intervention Team (FIT) working across the teams to ensure as much as possible children remaining at home safely with families or alternatively securing permanency for children to maintain them out of the statutory services by promoting SGO's to further reduce numbers of children becoming looked after.

We found services such as the Emotional Health Support team, Edge of Care and Camau Bach have been planned and aligned to focus on the same aim. Files had clear personal outcomes recorded, particularly important in complex situations requiring co-ordination of support to address eligible need.

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021”

We have continued to focus on maintaining placement stability with good placement support being offered across the service to achieve this. During 20/21 only 7 children (out of 148) experienced 3 or more placement moves during the year (4.7%) which is below the Welsh average of 9% and reflects the excellent work going on to support placements with foster carers.

The number of children on the child protection register has remained stable and the use of virtual meetings for conferences has continued to progress good working together with professionals in attendance, and communication with families has been good to ensure safeguarding issues for children is managed as safely as possible.

The Fostering Team has continued to recruit, train, and assess prospective foster carers as well as providing ongoing support to foster carers to enable them to care for our most vulnerable children to meet their individual needs and emotional well-being, to ensure wherever possible that children are matched appropriately to foster carers and remain in Carmarthenshire.

The team has continued to work across the region collaboratively with National Fostering Framework (NFF) and work is progressing with implementing the new arrangements in

respect of Special Guardianship Orders. The new Foster Wales Brand Campaign is being taken forward and supported regionally with the websites being updated to reflect not only preserving our local website but a National approach which we hope will assist our marketing and improve fostering recruitment both locally and nationally. Fostering are also holding regular online information sessions.

As a result of Covid restrictions assessments have been completed using a combination of remote and various forms of face-to-face visits. Social Workers have made a lot of effort to ensure children are seen and sufficient relevant information is gathered for assessments despite the challenges of doing that during the last year. The monthly audit of assessments by senior managers has continued to ensure they are outcome focused, evidencing the voice of the child and reflect the underpinning principles of the SSWBA. This had led to discussions with social workers and managers about strengths as well as areas for further development.

In children's services, the pod meetings were embedded and highly regarded by all as an effective and supportive mechanism for themselves and the families they supported. These meetings combine a systemic and strengths based approach to evaluating work with families.

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021”

Mid & West Wales Adoption Service (MWAS) has continued to recruit, assess, and approve adopters. The level of enquiries has remained high and to respond to demand the required preparation training has been taking place every 2 months plus additional sessions where necessary. The content and delivery of training is now consistent across the region. We are making more use of social media to communicate messages about adoption and have updated and re-launched the website to make it more accessible to those interested in adoption. <https://vimeo.com/479780913>

The demand for adoptive placements has remained high this year. MWAS has continued to place children for adoption during the year even though Covid restrictions has meant the transition process takes longer in order to ensure moves are undertaken safely for all involved. We have been able to place sibling groups and older children for adoption.

Welsh Government investment in adoption support has enabled MWAS to develop support offered to adoptive families and those affected by adoption. This has been challenging as a result of lockdown. Staff have provided support remotely as well as face to face and have been very creative in finding alternative ways of supporting families. One support worker wrote a book about returning to school for children. However some therapeutic interventions can only be delivered face to face, so it has been more problematic to find ways of doing that resulting in some delay.

Adoption Worker's Back to School Story

Rachel Cook has always wanted to write a children's story. But she has never been able to find the time to sit down and do it. And then the coronavirus pandemic happened, which gave her some free time and also the inspiration too. Rachel who works for Carmarthenshire County Council as an Adoption Support Worker, used her time during lockdown to write and illustrate Sammy Sloth Goes Back to School. The story will hopefully help children who are felling anxious about going back to school after being home for so long. Rachel, aged 36, who has always worked with vulnerable children and children with additional learning needs said: "I have always enjoyed being creative and have dreamed of writing short children's stories and illustrating them for a long time. I never imagined that the first story I would write would be about a pandemic, but in times of so much change and uncertainty I found myself thinking of the many children I've supported over the years through transitions and how challenging this would be for so many. Children often find change particularly challenging, and with the changes approaching us as we begin to return to school, with it may come a mix of emotions and feelings. Stories are a natural way for children to learn about their feelings, to help them learn that their experiences of feeling worried or nervous about returning to school are faced by many. This story focuses on the familiar, particularly around relationships, as sometimes feelings of anxiety come from the unknown, and while we may not know everything about what school will look like in the coming months, by thinking of some of the things that will be staying the same, we can help our children feel more secure". The council's Translation Team has translated the story into Welsh, and the council has arranged to print copies to put into the county's primary schools.



Executive Board Member for Education and Children's Services Cllr Glynog Davies said: "This is a wonderful story which I am sure will help a lot of children feeling uncertain about returning to school. I would like to both congratulate and thank Rachel, I am delighted that the book will be going into primary schools for pupils to enjoy."

This year Adult and Children's Services have collaborated to create and implement a **0-25 disability service**. This will ensure support is based on children's needs, not their age so that they receive the services they need when they need them and where they can best access them. We have invested in the Early Help service to provide access to Information, Advice and Assistance to families sooner. We have also developed a multi professional approach within our statutory team so that the support needs of every family will be overseen by a team incorporating adult and children's social workers, specialist health and educational psychology staff. They

will employ a systemic relationship-based approach, building on the strengths of families to overcome their own problems. We continue to meet with parents of disabled children on a monthly basis. Our 'Working Together' groups have been used to review services and ensure we are focussed on delivering better outcomes for families.

We found a strong emphasis on professional disciplines working together; for example an education psychologist being part of the 0-25 Disability Team and other specialist posts in this team providing specialist knowledge. We received positive responses from staff about the 0-25 Team structural changes that occurred last year

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021”

We have also been developing a 'local offer' of support for disabled/autistic children and young people and their families. This will include the piloting of a proactive provision of information, advice, and assistance to families with Delta Wellbeing. A working group has been formed by Early Help Manager with representation from our parents' group to begin developing the content.

We are currently undertaking a review of our residential services for disabled children to ensure that they prepare children for adult life. Consultations have taken place with parents, managers, staff, and a number of changes agreed which will be taken forward to enable us to maintain the high quality of the existing service as well as plan for the future demand. The new residential services manager commenced in post from January 2021. They will undertake a programme of work to review our existing services as well as develop new services to prevent young people with a learning disability needing to leave Carmarthenshire to access residential college.

Family Information Service (FIS) has continued to ensure families and professionals have received Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) and been kept up-to-date with services, information, resources, and developments especially in relation to Covid-19 and priority issues. FIS social media platforms are continuing to grow and develop and the number of enquiries to FIS has seen a 62% increase over the last year.

Families First projects adapted quickly and innovatively to the changes in delivery during the pandemic and during the year 8362 individuals (2409 families) received support from the FF programme, 45% were new families.

Flying Start homework packs were successful in providing Early Years Learning for those FS children unable to attend their nursery due to the pandemic. Since September over 677 packs have been delivered. The Flying Start App has been pivotal in reaching families, delivering services, and providing key messages and information to all our families.

Team Around the Family (TAF) has continued providing targeted support to children and families mostly via the telephone and digital means and supporting families outdoors in accordance with WG requirements as well as visiting schools when they re-opened. <https://youtu.be/owHIBYyAFKY>

During the first lockdown the number of domestic abuse reports rose steeply. The Schools Safeguarding and Attendance Team (SSAT) responded to this by increasing awareness in schools of the impact of domestic abuse and promoting support services, and the Domestic Abuse Toolkit for schools was updated.

A child protection policy specific to Covid 19 was developed including information on Domestic Abuse. Families open to the team were RAG rated and where needed daily contact provided, especially as many children have struggled to cope with the impact of the pandemic alongside the periods of school closures, self-isolation, and remote learning.

Just before lockdown in March the numbers of electively home educated children (EHE) increased and continued to rise where on average 25 children were becoming EHE each week. The long-term failure of government to produce appropriate legislation to enable us to support and monitor these young people is well documented and subject to considerable concern from the regional safeguarding board, Children's Commissioner and the National Safeguarding board advising government. This issue will continue to be raised with government to act from Directors of Education and Directors of Social Services.

The Young Carers' team have continued to provide a range of services and support for young carers including emotional support and counselling.

Care Leavers have continued to be seen and have also had access to advocacy services and the team have provided a range of training and support. As at 31/3/21 out of the 135 care leavers – 15 are in University, 34 were in FE, 22 at school, 3 in 6th form, 16 in full-time employment, 11 in full-time training, 1 in full time paid work placement. 7 young people have been working as Key Workers alongside their studies and 10 young people who work full-time are Key Workers. 33 were NEET

Educational and Child Psychology Service (ECPS) and Emotional Health Team (EHT). ECPS and EHT have continued to provide consultation, assessment, training, and therapeutic interventions through remote means and where essential face-to-face. Additional pastoral support has been provided to school who provided Childcare Hubs for children of essential key workers and those who were vulnerable during lockdown. Continued to support Emotional Literacy Support Assistants and worked to rapidly introduce safe processes for pupils to continue to receive counselling during lockdown and piloted therapeutic interventions with year 5 pupils and below through the whole school approach to emotional well-being.

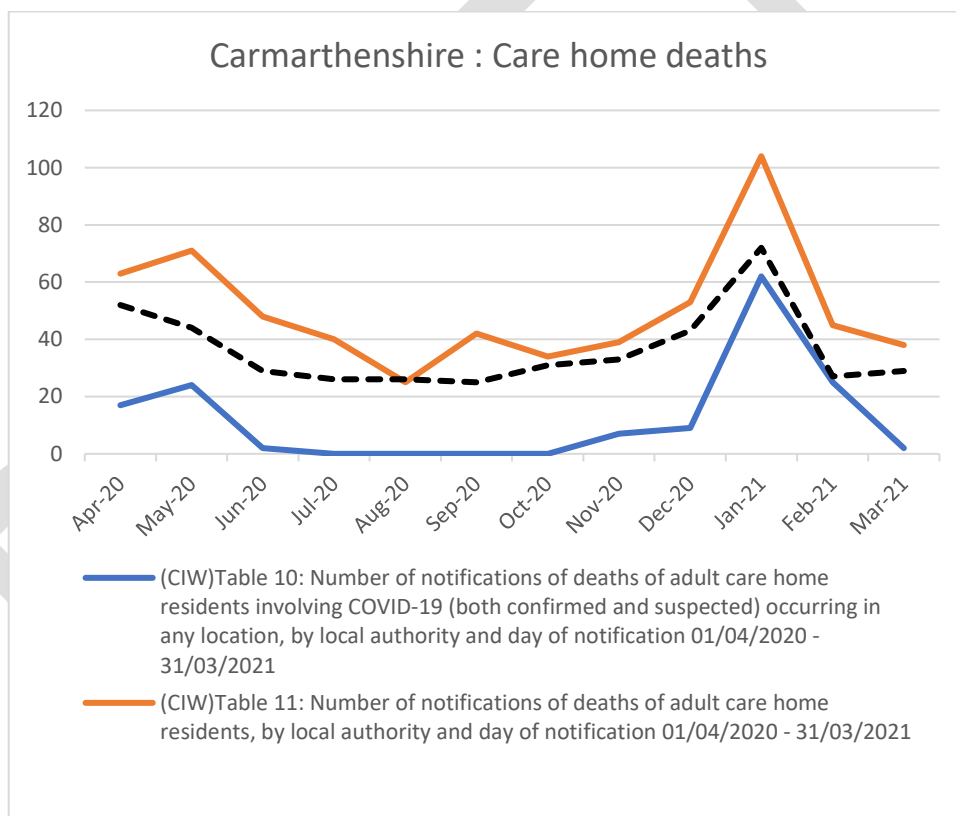
We found services commissioned through education colleagues making a positive difference to children's outcomes.

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021”

Direct Care Provision

Care Home

The most significant area of risk and greatest impact of Covid-19 has continued to be in relation to the care home sector in Carmarthenshire, in particular care homes for older people. In the second wave, we have experienced significantly more care home outbreaks and a very high level of homes under 'exclusion' to new admissions due to positive cases. In total, 33 older people care homes were subject to exclusion and of these, 16 were deemed as outbreak status. In addition, 23 care homes for people with a learning disability and or mental health were also subject to exclusions with 8 of these experiencing an outbreak. Outbreaks have looked very different in the second wave due to very high community transmission rates, and significant advances in both TTP (Test, Trace and Protect) and testing regimes.



Whilst there is a deep sadness felt by the sector for every individual lost to Covid 19 the external evaluations Appendix 3 and 4 has reassured the local authority that we have done everything in our power to support care homes within the County. Where things have not been right we have advocated and learnt to improve practice going forward.

The advances in testing and TTP processes led to much greater protection for both staff and residents and have undoubtedly helped reduce the number of potential deaths. However, these developments have also brought significant challenges which has meant that we have on several occasions been in positions where 50% of

a workforce establishment to be off work at the same time. Covid test results tended to come back in batches, so it was common for significant numbers of staff need to self-isolate at once.

We therefore developed a suite of options to be able to support homes with a workforce response when needed. This has included block contracts with agencies, deployment of our own staff, mutual aid from both Pembrokeshire County Council and the Health Board to support with staffing, management on call arrangements over weekends and bank holidays and in the two most serious cases the Local Authority temporarily taking over the management of the home. Thankfully, following the reduction in community transmission of Covid and the roll out of the vaccination programme, at the time of writing the report we had no care homes in an outbreak situation and only a handful under 'exclusion'.

Most of the care and support in Carmarthenshire is delivered by the independent commissioned sector. The Commissioning team in Carmarthenshire has played a significant part in supporting these services during the pandemic. The range of support has included:

- Coordination of the numerous communications and guidance.
- Coordination and supply of PPE.
- Proactive communications including a 24/7 helpline at the peak of the pandemic.
- Support for risk assessments surrounding admissions/returns from hospital.
- Initiating provider performance arrangements to address any Covid-19 or other concerns in relation to service provision.
- Support with testing and infection control.
- Financial support.
- Coordination of support and liaison with care homes experiencing outbreaks.

Providers told us about good communication and positive meetings with local authority commissioners during the pandemic. They said there was good communication and a culture of working collaboratively and making decisions together. We heard how the relationship between providers and care management teams had been strengthened during the pandemic.

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021”

Visiting care homes by families and friends has, and remains, a challenge. Within our own homes, we continue to follow Welsh Government guidance which has allowed us to implement a plan to allow managed visits, balancing infection control issues with the need for residents to see their loved ones. With external homes, we have encouraged them to follow the Welsh Government guidance.

In-house and external care homes have continued to face the following challenges:

- Increased number of vacant beds, due the numbers of residents who have sadly passed away during the pandemic, and difficulties surrounding new admissions linked to 'exclusion' status.
- Financial impact in terms of increased staffing needed due to shielding staff and residents being isolated; and
- Managing the mental and physical impact on staff e.g. Additional workload, dealing with end of life situations with little or no family involvement and pressures for the teams.

Wherever possible, we are taking the opportunity to reflect on how we can improve and do things better in the future. For example, we commissioned an independent review to evaluate our approach to supporting care homes (Appendix 4) in the first wave, and this has been hugely valuable in informing how we have responded in the second wave.

Domiciliary Care

Domiciliary Care services were also affected, with the Support from Executive Board and the Chief Executive we were able to take early action to support the domiciliary care workforce. These steps included:

- Redeploy day service and Leisure officers to deliver care.
- Reconfigure larger packages of care based on risk assessments.
- Introducing fast track training and rolling recruitment.
- Putting in place a recruitment and retention package for in house care staff. This is reviewed monthly.
- Increasing commissioned domiciliary care rates temporarily by a pound an hour.
- Introducing upfront payment for commissioned hours for domiciliary care agencies to ensure cash flow is maintained in the sector.

Our fast track recruitment process has been extremely successful. At the time of writing 25 new carers have been appointed in-house with this number compensating for the additional Covid 19 related absence. General sickness was substantially down and many staff who work part time are willing to do additional hours.

I am particularly proud of our in-house workforce who have demonstrated remarkable resilience and commitment and continued to deliver care to our most vulnerable throughout the pandemic even at the start when there was insufficient PPE. There were sickness challenges during 2020 although only a third was covid related so many have worked extra hours and have been flexible to cover calls. Senior staff and supervisors have also undertaken front line duties when necessary. Staff have also been vigilant in the application of safe working practices and use of PPE.

During the pandemic, a small independent domiciliary care company was transferred into the service. A new Senior Manager for domiciliary care was also appointed and commenced in March 2021. Regular compliance meetings with CIW for all registered services have taken place during 2020/21 and have been very positive. A key

objective going forward is to grow the in-house domiciliary service which will include supporting those with more complex needs.

Our children's residential sector worked throughout the pandemic and have been extraordinarily successful at protecting vulnerable children in their care.

Complaints and Compliments

Adults

At the end of Q4 20/21, the department received a total of 277 compliments, this is an increase of 156% compared to last year. The highest number of compliments are under our In-House Domiciliary care team who account for a total of 89 of these compliments.

A total of 34 complaints were recorded at either Stage 1 or 2 in relation to Adult Social Care. It provides a positive picture of the department's performance in the context of 4,355 individuals that received a social care service from Carmarthenshire County Council during this period. This means that well under 1% of individuals formally complained about the service they received. There were 28 stage 1 local resolution complaints and 6 Stage 2 formal complaints, this means the department have received 46% fewer complaints compared to the same period last year. The department received a further 52 'concerns' which did not go down the formal route of a Stage 1 or Stage 2. Two out of the six stage 2 complaints were escalated from stage 1. Of the three completed stage 2 complaints, 2 were not upheld and 1 was partially upheld.

Children

At the end of Q4 20/21, 11 compliments were received by parents, carers and other agencies. The compliments included comments relating to individual social workers reports, the way they communicated with parents and other professionals as well as their written work.

There were 9 Stage 1 complaints received in relation to Children Services. 5 of the Stage 1 complaints were upheld. There were 3 independently investigated Statutory Stage 2 complaint; these were not upheld by the IIO. A further complaint was investigated by an IIO; this complaint was a historic complaint and therefore did not fall under the Social Services Complaints Procedures, however it was looked at to consider if there was any learning for the department.

We undertook a proactive survey during the pandemic to those who had received care and support services during the year and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Feedback included:

"That has been their highest priority in setting up my care plan"

"Very comfortable and felt supported in an appropriate way."

"The ladies in question were extremely patient and forgiving, knowing I have a brain injury"

Very very fast response to my needs in a time of national lock-down"

Workforce

Having the very best people working for the Authority means the very best social care can be provided for our people in the community. It is important that staff feel proud about the social care they provide and feel they are connected to the Local Authority, their communities and the teams they work within.

During the Covid pandemic, our workforce has continued to amaze us with their flexibility and resilience. Most notably, our in-house residential staff have been deployed to support independent sector care homes where needed at times of Covid outbreaks. Leisure staff were redeployed to support our front line services. Their commitment and compassion can only be described as outstanding. Recruitment and retention remains good in most areas. Social work retention is generally good with all but a small number of posts relatively easy to recruit to.

Engagement has been maintained with the Trade Unions via Department Trade Union forums and issues have been addressed as needed.

The workforce had a high level of competence in how to work with people, this has been maintained as far as possible during the pandemic. Staff told us training online has been available and is accessible to partners. Given the pandemic circumstances we found staff morale was very good.

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021”

We recognise that the pandemic has had a huge emotional and psychological impact on many of our staff, and this should not be underestimated. We are doing all we can to support them ensuring that our staff benefit from our corporate wellbeing programme of support. We are paying particular attention to how we can support staff who have been involved in care home outbreaks, as we recognise how distressing this has been and the significant emotional toll that it has played.

Each of the childcare teams has been using a **systemic approach** to delivering social work services. 30 members of staff and managers are about to complete the qualification Foundation Year of Systemic Social Work Practice and in addition social workers across the service undertook a 3 day training event. As a result of this training staff now have the knowledge to underpin their practice which will increase confidence and provide consistency.

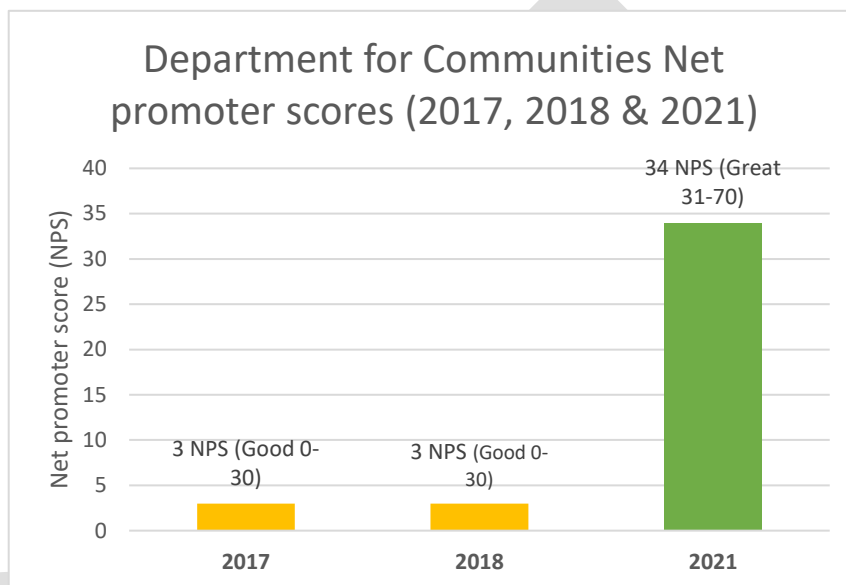
Covid restrictions have affected pod working as many staff find it harder to pick up on non-verbal communication and to be creative when discussing a case in a remote meeting. However, pod meetings continued throughout the year and staff made every effort to make them as effective as possible.

Staff continue to be positive about the benefits of the systemic approach. They find it supportive and also value how it makes the most of different perspectives in order to

understand better how a family functions as well as the impact on and meaning for the child of relationships in the family.

Outstanding support has been provided by IT services to modernise working practices as our whole workforce went agile in 2020. Moving forward we need to get the right balance between the use of digital solutions and face to face interaction.

A survey was undertaken in April 2021 on Rate Your Division as an Employer based on a Net Promoter Score analysis. We asked a question to all the staff in the Department if they would “Rate Your Division as an Employer” to understand their experience working in the department and division. The overall result was staff rated the department as a positive place to work. With staff views significantly improving from good to great since 2017.



Welsh Language

Over the last 9 months our Welsh language speaking levels have increased from 33% to 35%.

We found the Welsh language ‘Active Offer’ was being promoted with recognition of people’s first language recorded and services being delivered in people’s chosen language. Preferred language is recognised as a key factor in building effective relationships between people and practitioners.

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021”

Conclusion and Next Steps

Overall, this report demonstrates a strong response to the pandemic and the maintenance of effective service delivery for the last year. This was confirmed early this year by the national inspectorate. We inevitably go into the next year facing the unknown, unsure whether the end of the pandemic is in sight or exactly what the new normal will be. We have a workforce that is fatigued from a difficult year and our priority must be to support them in the changes to services that will be needed if we are to continue to perform well. The business plans for the services will drive the necessary change moving forward and we can be confident that we have the workforce and management needed to adapt to future challenges. In the tables below we have set out many of the key actions needed in the coming year:

Children's services:

No	Action	By Who
1	We will ensure the regional threshold and multi-agency child protection arrangements are working effectively.	Noreen Jackman
2	We will continue to develop the Flying Start programme, promoting early intervention for disadvantaged families with children (0-3) living in specific deprived communities, ensuring good multi agency support to families.	Noeline Thomas
3	We will continue to work with partners to improve appropriate accommodation options and housing support for all vulnerable young people (aged 16-25) and implement the care leavers' accommodation framework	Bethan James
4	We will implement a joint disability service for children, young people aged 0-25 and their families to ensure our services are based on need not on age.	Kelvin Barlow
5	We will continue to aim to reduce the number of children becoming Looked After and number of care proceedings in accordance with our LAC reduction target as agreed with Welsh Government, utilising appropriately Edge of Care (EOC), Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) and Family Intervention Team (FIT).	Jayne Meredith

Adult Social Care and Integrated Services

No	Action	By Who
1	We will develop our overall approach to Integrated Services, so we are able to help develop strong communities, help people to help themselves, provide help when people need it and provide long-term support whilst keeping people safe. We will ensure we are able to do this through agreement of a vision for Integrated Services between the Local Authority and Health Board, a new Section 33 agreement setting out our collective responsibilities and agreement and of a new structure to support delivery.	Alex Williams
2	<p>We will develop our overall vision and strategic plan/pathways for prevention, proactive care including approach dementia, intermediate care and long-term care, to ensure that we can deliver the vision for integrated services and effectively manage demand.</p> <p>As part of this, we will deliver the corporate objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop the Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) service by enhancing the Multi-Disciplinary Team, to ensure that as many individuals as possible are supported to achieve preventative outcomes. (14694) • We will continue to support people living with dementia and the development of more dementia friendly and supportive communities and provisions across the County (14695) <p>We will work with partners to ensure that people remain socially connected, particularly through the use of virtual support such as the Connect project, in order to reduce loneliness, tackle inequalities and poverty (14696)</p>	Alex Williams
3	We will reshape our approach to support patient flow and home first by developing the above pathways and ensure that monitoring and escalation processes are in place to ensure effective patient flow.	Alex Williams
4	We will further strengthen the provision and use of the Welsh language within social care services, supporting our staff to learn virtually currently, to be able to provide services in the language of service users' choice and ensure compliance with the `Active Offer` (14697)	Angharad Jenkins
5	We will develop an overall recovery model to redesign support and services during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. This will include how we safely restart day services/develop day opportunities as well as bed-based reablement.	Alex Williams
6	Establish Delta Connect as a primary prevented telecare service within the country. Develop with the health boards intervention with telecare/telehealth	Alex Williams
7	We will ensure that we have a through age approach to community support. This will include new models of service delivery to respond to Covid -19. (12540)	Sharon Frewin

8	Maintain a strong and sustainable in-house domiciliary provision for Council and support the commissioning team in developing a new framework including the redevelopment of the reablement services (13225)	Julie Duggan
9	We will continue to work with partners to transform mental health and learning disability services. We will promote independence, early intervention and prevention and ensure that support and services are accessible (14698)	Mark Evans/ Kelvin Barlow
10	Implement measures to respond to operational and strategic imperatives associated with Safeguarding including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) Liberty Protection Standards (LPS) and Violence Against Women , Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (VAWDASV)	Cathy Richards
11	Collaborate with colleagues in commissioning, housing and the Health Board to develop a range of supported accommodation	Mark Evans/ Kelvin Barlow

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Departments Management Structure



Appendix 1 – Statutory Notice March 2020

EXECUTIVE BOARD DATE: 1ST JUNE, 2020

SUBJECT:

REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Purpose:

Under the Code of Practice issued under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act the Statutory Director of Social Services has a duty to advise councillors on – amongst other things – the challenges, risks and circumstances where staff issues affect our ability to discharge our statutory responsibilities, and to brief the Chief Executive and councillors on matters likely to cause public concern, and strategies to deal with those situations.

This report reflects the position of key Social Services in Carmarthenshire during the National Emergency caused by Covid 19. This is a summary report only and does not include all areas of activity. These will be covered in the Director of Social Services annual report later in the year or by any further notes of advice deemed necessary to report.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

This summary report highlights actions and the position in:

- Domiciliary Care
- Residential Care
- Other Key Services

The Executive Board are asked to note the position and confirm these actions.

Reasons:

To inform members and the public of the position in relation to key services.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted : NO

Exec Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

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

Directorate

Designations:

Tel Nos.

Communities

Director of Community Services

01267 224698

Name of Head of Service:

E Mail Addresses:

Jake Morgan

JakeMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
EXECUTIVE BOARD
1ST JUNE, 2020**

**SUBJECT:
REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL
SERVICES**

Under the Code of Practice issued under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act the Statutory Director of Social Services has a duty to advise councillors on – amongst other things – the challenges, risks and circumstances where staff issues affect our ability to discharge our statutory responsibilities, and to brief the Chief Executive and councillors on matters likely to cause public concern, and strategies to deal with those situations.

This is a summary report only and does not include all areas of activity. These will be covered in the Director of Social Services' annual report later in the year or by any further notes of advice deemed necessary to report.

In March we were at the start of a National Emergency with pressures growing as the incidents of Coronavirus infection grew in the county. Many services had ceased altogether with provision being modified to prioritise care to our most vulnerable clients based on individual risk assessments. The position has since developed with new systems now in place to manage risk alongside serious concerns across Wales in relation to the residential sector. Immediate service failure is still a risk in some areas and in others the service delivery model is under increasing strain. This notice reflects that overall position.

Overall the response by the council has been effective in maintaining social care services in extraordinarily difficult circumstances. Significant support financially and direct intervention and support by the Leader of the council, Lead member and the Chief Executive has contributed to the maintenance of most core provision to a good standard despite facing unprecedented challenges. The impact of the virus on residents in care homes is a serious and ongoing concern in Carmarthenshire as it is across much of Wales.

Throughout this emergency our thoughts are with those residents, care staff and families who have been impacted on so tragically by this virus.

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 Community Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report

CONSULTATIONS

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

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

1. Scrutiny Committee – N/A
2. Local Member(s) - N/A
3. Community / Town Council – N/A
4. Relevant Partners - N/A
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED:
YES

Cllr. J. Tremlett has been fully consulted with the content of the report.

Statutory Notice June 2020

Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services 30/3/2020

1. Introduction

Under the Code of Practice issued under the Social Services and Wellbeing act the Director of Social Services has a duty to advise councillors on – amongst other things – the challenges, risks and circumstances where staff issues affect our ability to discharge our statutory responsibilities, and to brief the Chief Executive and councillors on matters likely to cause public concern, and strategies to deal with those situations.

I have been a Statutory Director of Social Services for seven years and this is the first time I have issued a formal advice note to councillors outside of my Annual report. This is a summary report only and does not include all areas of activity. These will be covered in my annual report later in the year or by any further notes of advice I deem necessary to report.

As members are all aware, we are at the start of a National Emergency with pressures growing as the incidents of Coronavirus infection grow in the county. Many services have ceased altogether with provision being modified to our most vulnerable clients based on individual risk assessments.

In some cases, families have withdrawn services as the lockdown enables children to care for parents. This has helped in many of our key areas to maintain statutory provision. Overall in the circumstances our services are holding up well but there are significant risks moving forward.

2. Domiciliary care

We are facing significant challenges to maintain staffing as Coronavirus absences increase (Primarily self-isolating because of underlying conditions or household members with symptoms). I am enormously proud of the teams running our service and we continue to deliver broadly the same number of hours of care. With all sickness considered our in-house services are functioning on approximately 30% reduced staff numbers. Actions to support and maintain services include:

- Reducing continuity of care with carers deployed to cover essential calls even when this reduces established call patterns.
- Risk assessing packages of care and reducing them where we can safely.
- Redeploy day service officers to deliver care.
- Reducing larger packages based on risk assessments.
- Introducing fast track training and rolling recruitment (we anticipate an additional 8 staff will start in the coming week).
- Temporarily increasing pay rates for in house carers, offering time and a half for every hour people work over 20 hours a week. This is reviewed monthly through our emergency command structures.
- Increasing commissioned care rates temporarily by a pound an hour.

- Introducing up front payment for commissioned hours for domiciliary care agencies to ensure cash flow is maintained. At present our commissioned care agencies are managing whilst reporting they are under significant pressure. My overall assessment is that our services are maintaining well in the circumstances. However, there is a considerable risk to be managed going forward. The national policy, provision and supply of protective equipment to the sector is causing some staff and clients anxiety.

3. Residential Care

Residential care for older people is holding up well in the circumstances with placements still being made and whilst we have reduced staff numbers levels remain safe. Our commissioned care homes are reporting that staffing levels are still adequate but are under pressure with a small number of homes periodically refusing new admissions. No significant problems have yet been identified in the Learning disability, Children's or Mental Health residential sector. Our fostering and adult placement services remain stable. Actions to support the sector have included:

- Paying time and a half for every hour over 20 hours. To be reviewed monthly.
- Funding every care place for older people we purchase with a temporary additional £50 per week. This is reviewed on a monthly basis through our emergency command structures. To be reviewed monthly.
- Ensuring a no visitors policy is adhered to in all homes.
- Rhyd y gors school has been made available for emergency children's placements.
- Our residential respite children's homes remain open for emergencies only.

My overall assessment is that our services are maintaining critical provision well in the circumstances. However, there is a considerable risk to be managed going forward. The national policy, provision and supply of protective equipment to the sector is causing some staff and clients anxiety.

4. Other key Services:

All day care provision has been suspended with care packages assessed and staff supporting clients in the community where necessary. Proactive calls from Delta and social work teams monitor those who are vulnerable. Wider council initiatives will also enhance our ability to respond to those in need thus preventing Social Service functions becoming overwhelmed.

Children's social work continues to maintain all statutory monitoring and to have the capacity to act when necessary. At least one set of care proceedings has been issued with courts still functioning effectively. Children's cases have been risk assessed by the Head of Children's Services so the most vulnerable can be prioritised for monitoring and support.

Adult Mental Health Practitioner numbers are low, and it is proving extremely challenging to maintain. It is possible that a reduced service will be offered going forward pending any temporary legislative changes although statutory requirements are still being met at present.

5. Protective Equipment:

Protective equipment for Social Care staff refers primarily to gloves, aprons, eye protectors and masks which have a water-resistant feature (there are detailed specifications as to what should be used). We include hand gel as essential and after considerable efforts we now have adequate supply for the next 2 weeks of this product. All items are disposable.

At the time of writing the National guidance is that face masks are only used where there is a suspected or confirmed case of Caronavirus. It does not, in my view reflect the nature of the care task domiciliary care workers are required to do in comparative isolation where their clients symptoms may change on a day by day basis and they are required to make decisions without the support of a location and immediate hierarchy to support any risk assessment.

Concerns regarding this area have been a permanent feature of correspondence and Dialogue between councils the WLGA and Welsh Government. Last week the Leader of the council wrote to the minister highlighting concerns.

Managing the anxieties of service users is extremely difficult for care staff along with managing their own. Care staff have reported to me as being 'terrified' before coming on shift and we are certain the lack of protective equipment being used routinely has reduced the overall capacity of the service.

Domiciliary Care – Following this guidance is challenging. Symptoms of Coronavirus include temperature, headache and/or a cough. These are common symptoms of many chronic conditions and infections that many of our clients have in the ordinary course of their lives Furthermore many infected people are not symptomatic. Thus, identifying when such symptoms relate to Coronavirus can be problematic and this causes anxiety amongst front line staff.

The national position is, in my view, made more complex by the guidance for isolation and shielding of many of our service users and those with some chronic conditions. Guidance indicates that many of our clients should '*Stay away from people, even friends and family. Do not go out at all*'.

Yet where they require care that can include feeding, washing and toileting by up to 6 different people a day we are not instructed that these carers should be given protective clothing to mitigate the risk to them or the client. All the front-line care workers and nurses I have spoken to see this apparent contradiction. I am yet to speak to someone delivering care who is supportive of the current guidance.

Care Homes The emerging evidence is that there have been a substantial number of deaths in other countries in nursing home facilities. Investigations into deaths in a Seattle nursing home in the US concluded that symptoms '*aren't enough to identify who is infected once the coronavirus enters a long term care facility*' The report concluded that '*as soon as there is a confirmed case all health care workers should don masks and other protective garments and residents should be isolated as much as possible*' The report found that of 23 residents who tested positive, only 10 had

symptoms on the day they were tested. Further indicating that symptoms alone are a poor indicator of the need to issue protective equipment (the current guidance).

Testing - My concerns are exacerbated by the delays and limited number of tests available. At present there only 80 a day for this health board area and the testing of care staff can only be requested on a case by case basis. Whilst substantial national work is underway to increase the capacity to test, we are yet to see the impact of it to the sector. Where symptoms were identified in one setting there was a substantial delay in getting results that confirmed they were negative.

Supply- The current position is that equipment will be issued 'when needed' by Health and local authorities from Welsh Government. The only source for the required standard of Facemasks is Welsh Government. We have a relatively good supply of gloves and aprons. I have not been made aware of any national shortage or supply issues by Welsh Government. Policy in issuing protective equipment is consistent across Community Health and Social Care.

As of last week, we have completed a daily return to Welsh Government at 3pm. However, I have no indication of what future supplies will be or the basis on which the current allocations have been made. Communication into those issuing equipment is limited and there is no dialogue on what amounts are released to us. This makes it extremely difficult to know what level of supplies to issue to hundreds of settings and thousands of employees across the social care sector in Carmarthenshire. At the time of writing we have approximately 5000 facemasks in store, enough for approximately one day if we were to use across the sector.

Later this week a new 24/7 store in the county will be established with a dynamic and flexible distribution process to ensure those most in need get it. This will address any shortfalls in communication and distribution that have been identified. Central to how we manage this risk is how limited the supply is nationally. It may be that we must ration because of a shortfall nationally however to advise the council on risk I would have to understand the rationale/ risk assessment for the supply we are getting.

The prudent and safest action to take to protect staff and vulnerable people would be to issue protective equipment for all community care workers to use as a matter of course in personal care. In addition, increasing the usage in residential settings is key to mitigating risk of multiple infections. Our initial estimate, based on a range of assumptions, would mean we require in the region of 25,000 masks a week for the county. Further work would need to be done on this to test these assumptions however this is not nearly achievable with the current supply from Welsh Government.

To conclude - I **am not able** to reassure the council as to the risk in relation to staff or service users without the issuing of protective equipment to domiciliary staff to use at all visits in the community. In addition, there should, as a minimum be enough stock to issue to all staff in a residential setting where there are suspected or actual cases.

6. Additional beds

- Central to the management of care pathways in preparing to meet predicted demand. Whilst there is a considerable range in terms of modelling of the virus spread we have been amongst the proactive authorities in Wales identifying, designing and building three settings for the NHS that will create more than 600 additional beds to be handed over to the Health Board in the next 2 weeks. Thus, whilst we anticipate considerable strains on the system and risk, we have already taken action that will mitigate this risk. Further expansion plans on the three sites and in our care homes is being considered. The estimated cost of this in capital build terms is £4.7 million. It is hoped this will be less as the building work progresses. It is intended that the bulk of this work for the NHS will be covered by ICF Capital regional fund although this is yet to be formally agreed.

7. Conclusion:

This report sets out the risks that are being managed well. Any significant risks going forward will be considered carefully and reported where necessary. At this stage I am not able to reassure the council regarding the use of Personal Protective Equipment.

- *The report was by state and local investigators, and scientists at the centre for disease control and prevention in Atlanta.*

Appendix 2 – CIW Assurance Check February 2021



Mr Jake Morgan
Director of Community Services
Carmarthenshire County Council
County Hall
Carmarthenshire
SA31 1JP

Date: 06 April 2021

Dear Director

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021: Carmarthenshire County Council
This letter summarises the findings of our assurance check on 1 February to 5 February.
The purpose of this assurance check was to review how well local authority social services continue to help and support adults and children with a focus on safety and well-being.

Overview

In March 2020, CIW suspended its routine programme in response to the Covid-19 pandemic to enable local authorities and providers to focus fully on responding to the challenging circumstances. A revised programme with local authorities recommenced in September to provide assurance about how people are being safeguarded and well-being promoted during the pandemic. We considered safety and well-being of people who use or may need to use services, the safety of services they access and the safety and well-being of people who work in services. We focused our key lines of enquiry within the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and have recorded our judgements and findings aligned to these: People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Partnerships and Integration, Well-being.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Our focus was on:

1. How well is the local authority discharging its statutory functions to keep people who need care and support and carers who need support, safe and promote their wellbeing during the pandemic?
2. What is the local authority doing to prevent the need for children to come into care; and are children returning home to their families quickly enough where safe to do so?
3. How well is the local authority providing early help, care and support and seamless transitions between services for disabled children and their families?

Summary of findings and priorities for improvement:

People - voice and control – We asked: How well is the local authority ensuring people, carers and practitioners are having their voices heard, making informed choices, and maintaining control over their lives. While also balancing the recommendations and requirements made by Public Health Wales and Welsh Government to limit the spread of COVID-19?

Overall we found the local authority ensures people's voices are heard, their choices respected and people routinely achieved self-identified outcomes. Leaders have a line of sight on front line practice with clear plans that have led to creative practice.

People's circumstances were represented in the files we reviewed, a personal element was noted in assessment and care and support plans. Practitioner analysis was clear and focused with a good balance of information proportionate to circumstance. This provided evidence of practitioners who prioritised and focused on understanding life for people they were working with. For example, we reviewed a safeguarding intervention where the practitioner made links to the third sector (Tir Dewi which provided on farm support) and other local support to meet the outcomes identified by the person.

People were able to have an influence over services they received and were supported by advocacy as appropriate. This supports a focus on what matters to people, the outcomes they want to achieve, and how they can use their own strengths and resources to promote their own wellbeing. The mental capacity assessments we reviewed indicated there were robust systems and processes in place to ensure people's mental capacity was assessed appropriately when needed. Health partners indicated there were strong links between social care and health for this process.

We found many examples of direct payments helping people to have flexibility in the care and support they received. People, including carers, were given the opportunity to tailor and manage their own support through use of direct payments. There was evidence of direct payments being utilised during the pandemic as a means of providing alternative respite. We found instances of carers' needs being considered and supported alongside the cared for person, these were often considered in an integrated holistic assessment. There was a clear intention recognised to support carers during the pandemic; one carer for example, told us about how they were able to maintain employment during the pandemic with support provided.

Carers' needs were also recognised and responded to in children's services with support ranging from financial, practical to therapeutic; all made available according to need. We found practitioners working to engage parents in complex circumstances. Where the local authority had shared parental responsibility there was clear evidence identified of parents being involved or attempts to achieve inclusion in decision making through attendance at legal meetings, conferences and reviews.

We found the Welsh language 'Active Offer' was being promoted with recognition of people's first language recorded and services being delivered in people's chosen language. Preferred language is recognised as a key factor in building effective relationships between people and practitioners. It is important the local authority builds on the 'Active Offer' for those people who are bilingual and explicitly address their preferred language in the provision of a service.

The geography and demographic of the local authority covers a large footprint with a range of services covering both highly populated and some very isolated rural areas. There was indication from some adult services staff that it can be difficult to keep track of the community based 3rd sector and volunteer resources available, this has the potential to limit options and information made available to people. This is an area the local authority should review to ensure the workforce has access to information about the range of services available.

Practitioners had high regard for approachable and supportive managers. The local authority has a culture of co-production and personal outcomes being developed with people and driven by leaders across the organisation. Staff have a shared motivation to work promptly and effectively with families. There is a clear strength based approach adopted across the service, evident in what we found about how social workers prioritise communication. The workforce had a high level of competence in how to work with people, this has been maintained as far as possible during the pandemic. Staff told us training on line has been available and is accessible to partners. Given the pandemic circumstances we found staff morale was very good.

Prevention - We asked: To what extent is the local authority successful in promoting prevention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies?

We found a positive integrated approach to a culture of prevention through joint working, supportive infrastructures across social and health care and aligned delivery systems. This was evident in a prudent approach to resource allocation ensuring the right help was available at the right time, this prevents escalation of need and improves the quality of the individual's journey through the health and social care system. We found services such as the Emotional Health Support team, Edge of Care and Camau Bach have been planned and aligned to focus on the same aim. Files had clear personal outcomes recorded, particularly important in complex situations requiring co-ordination of support to address eligible need.

In adult services, the Delta / Connect project has been successful in promoting prevention and early intervention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies. Staff and managers understood the need to ensure people are receiving appropriate care and support as well as the importance of making the best uses of resources, especially so during the pandemic. We saw evidence of enhanced use of

technology to support people's safety as well as reduce loneliness and isolation. Bespoke individualised equipment was provided to support peoples' well-being with plans monitored through proactive calls and a 24/7 welfare response focusing on community based solutions. This enabled people to be supported at home and whenever possible, avoiding the need for admission to hospital or residential care.

Practitioners said there was a focus on preventative services in the local authority, with the availability of step down and community resources to support people. Many of these services have not been available during the pandemic, but we heard of communities coming together and developing services.

In response to the pandemic there has been investment to support acute and field hospitals, with the local authority appointing a team manager to facilitate hospital discharges from West Wales General and Prince Phillip hospitals and support field hospitals. Since November 2020 the Well-being officers have been facilitating hospital discharges especially for people who do not have eligible needs for care and support. The community responders is another service the local authority has commissioned via Delta, using Transformation funding. Community responders have supported people to remain at home rather than be admitted to hospital and have also supported people to settle back home following a hospital admission.

We identified an encouraging culture of staff working together to the same aim. The approach to working with families was understood, there was a shared understanding in children's and adult services. In children's services, the pod meetings were embedded and highly regarded by all staff as an effective and supportive mechanism for themselves and the families they supported. These meetings combine a systemic and strengths based approach to evaluating work with families.

Our review of files found timely and proportionate interventions to support people's independence and to remain at home with families when it was safe for them to do so, taking in to account individual wishes. In children's services risks were dynamically evaluated to ensure decisions to instigate moves into care were made at points when relevant thresholds were met. We found early intervention to address problems before they escalated; this is an important contributor to improved stability of placements and security for children. Placement support was evident in many files we reviewed.

Partnership and Integration - We asked: To what extent is the local authority able to assure itself opportunities for partnership working are positively exploited to maximise person centred planning and ensure integrated service delivery and service sustainability?

At the individual level we found services co-produced based on a relationship of equals between practitioners and people who needed care and support and carers who needed support. Success was measured by gathering information about whether support was achieving the things that matter to people. There was evidence of practitioners developing professional working relationships with people built upon co-operation and shared understanding of what matters. People were supported to identify what matters to them and how they might achieve their personal well-being outcomes. The outcomes were clearly described and the actions to achieve them identified.

We had conversations with care leavers about their positive experiences; many of whom were still being supported by foster carers, others were in *When I am Ready* arrangements, and in further education.

Partnerships were found to be working well at all levels and delivering an integrated sustainable approach to meeting need and promoting well-being in line with legislation and expectations. Co-production was advanced and communities were engaged.

The local authority demonstrated opportunities for partnership working with health colleagues have been positively and successfully promoted to produce positive outcomes for people. Integrated services and posts have provided the foundations for joint working across health and social care. We found practitioners from different sectors and services working effectively together. This is significant as effective partnership working contributes to strengths based, person-centred plans that maximise potential for increased independence. We were told there could be disagreements about funding between health and social care packages of care and different interpretations about the lead care management practitioner. There was no evidence we found of adverse impact on people because of this.

Our review of files identified information sharing taking place, we were advised multi-agency regional training is being planned to further promote information sharing across agencies. When children or adults were identified at being at risk of harm, strategy meetings were convened in a timely manner and information to inform decision making was shared by professionals in attendance. For both children and adults, even where decisions were not necessarily welcomed, a focus on engagement between practitioners and people ensured these were accepted in good faith and people understood what was expected of them.

We found a strong emphasis on professional disciplines working together; for example an education psychologist being part of the 0-25 Disability Team and other specialist posts in this team providing specialist knowledge. We received positive responses from staff about the 0-25 Team structural changes that occurred last year.

We saw how school and education staff worked closely with social workers; teachers providing a nurturing environment for vulnerable children and fully contributing to care and support. We found services commissioned through education colleagues making a positive difference to children's outcomes. In children's services we heard about good relationships with paediatricians but more limited benefits from interactions with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Providers told us about good communication and positive meetings with local authority commissioners during the pandemic. They said there was good communication and a culture of working collaboratively and making decisions together. We heard how the relationship between providers and care management teams had been strengthened during the pandemic.

A challenge for the local authority has been the reduced capacity of some partner organisations during the pandemic; for example we were told school nurses had been redeployed and local authority practitioners found this hindered the assessment and planning process. Some Third Sector services were limited in their offer of support due to

strict Covid rules; this caused additional burden for front line practitioners. Conversely, we found safeguarding meetings had continued through the pandemic period and practitioners said remote meetings had resulted in improved attendance by partners.

Well-being - We asked: To what extent is the local authority promoting well-being, ensuring people maintain their safety and achieve positive outcomes that matter to them?

The local authority has exercised its functions under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 to ensure it makes a positive contribution to the well-being of people who need care and support and carers who need support. At an individual level this has included seeking out the person's wishes and feelings, respectful practice, building upon their circumstances and capabilities. Working in partnership with people to develop creative solutions was evident, improving the quality of care, securing well-being and preventing the development of people's needs for care and support. Identifying people's outcomes was a priority rather than process.

There was a collaborative response by all agencies to the pandemic including the development of a regional Escalation Policy for care homes. The Regional Safeguarding Board provided oversight and assurance in relation to safeguarding practice for vulnerable children and adults. During the pandemic we saw efforts made to maintain contact with people, with statutory visits and meetings taking place virtually but also some risk assessed face to face contact as appropriate.

The local authority has effectively promoted the well-being of people to ensure timely care and support was available to maintain their independence and safety. This was evident as we found assessments clearly recorded views in plain language with emphasis on personal circumstances, strengths, risk, barriers and what needs to happen to achieve personal outcomes. Care First prompts were helpful, they enabled practitioners to clearly articulate what they were worried about. The elements the person seeking support and protection brings to the process were recognised and valued.

Co-produced solutions were evident and there were positive outcomes for people subject to safeguarded interventions. From the files we reviewed, we found safeguarding enquiries and investigations conducted in line with statutory requirements. Strategy meetings and discussions were effective and involved relevant agencies. We found good analysis of risk, protection plans in place and action taken when necessary. Providers and partners said they were supported by the adult safeguarding team; their willingness to offer advice, guidance and assist with training of social care workers was acknowledged. Health colleagues indicated when things went wrong, social care and health would work collaboratively and openly to identify learning opportunities.

The pod meetings in children's services clearly promoted a holistic and strengths-based approach to working with families. This was demonstrated in records that clearly articulated outcome focused planning. Plans outlined clear achievable goals to safeguard children and improve their well-being through the provision of a range of services best suited to their needs. We reviewed a plan that included stringent risk measures to ensure a child's safety over the pandemic period. This comprised daily unannounced visits which focused on risk whilst also evidencing the quality of a positive working relationship between family and practitioner.

We saw care and support being adapted to meet peoples' changing needs and agencies contributing to the review process. Relationships and communication with people was collaborative in this process. Strengths-based conversations had replaced the traditional needs-based assessments with voice and choice prominent in the practice reviewed in both adult and children's services.

The files we reviewed demonstrated that whilst every effort was made to sustain independence, adults were also supported to make pragmatic decisions about when the time was right to move into care homes so they and could be more safely supported.

In children's services we found effective support from the multi-agency group and a good standard of reviews for care experienced children led by Independent Reviewing Officers. They had a mechanism in place to seek assurance about well-being in between formal reviews and hear from children and their carers.

Care Leavers were highly complementary about Personal Assistants (PAs) on the whole; they valued the dedicated support provided by PAs. There was, however, some feedback about inconsistency in support.

Methods

- we reviewed documentation supplied in advance of our visit
- we spoke with carers and people who were receiving or had received care and support, including nine care leavers
- we reviewed 30 files
- we held ten case tracking interviews with practitioners, managers and carers
- we held four focus groups
- we administered nine surveys
- we observed a carers champion meeting

Next Steps

We have identified strengths and areas for priority improvement and we will review the progress of these areas through our performance evaluation review meetings with the heads of service and director. We expect the areas of improvement we have identified to be included in the local authority's improvement plans. We would like to extend our thanks to all those who helped with the arrangements for this assurance check and to those people and staff who spoke with us.

Please see our Privacy Notice at <https://careinspectorate.wales/how-we-use-yourinformation>

Yours sincerely,



Lou Bushell-Bauers
Head of Local Authority Inspection
Care Inspectorate Wales

**Review of Carmarthenshire County Council's
Support to Care Homes during the Covid 19
Pandemic**

June 2020

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PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW:

Carmarthenshire County Council requested an independent review of its approach to supporting Care Homes through the Covid-19 pandemic, with a view to creating an evidence base of approach taken and identify any lessons learnt that need to be addressed or implemented going forward.

The picture is still emerging with considerable pressure on homes at the time of producing this report as the second/third COVID wave has a significant impact on the functionality of homes. Whilst there were significant challenges across all sectors nationally in March to May the purpose is not to apportion blame but to ensure early lessons are learnt and areas for further investigation are identified.

TIMESCALE:

The period under consideration is from March 1st leading up to lockdown through until 31st of August 2020, when the lockdown restrictions were lifted, and regulations eased.

I have also made reference to the current period from 31st Aug through to December as it is having an impact on responses as we hit a second wave of the pandemic.

METHODOLOGY:

Interviews: 16 staff across the Local Authority, Commissioning and Health partners were interviewed individually via Teams. I also attended 2 meetings with Senior Managers, again via Teams. A small number of staff were unable to be interviewed due work pressures and commitments.

A Snap Survey was distributed to all Care Homes in the Adult Services and 3 establishments within the Children services sector.

Response was good.

41 Adult Care Homes and 3 Children Residential settings were approached.

30 establishments completed the survey which saw 68% response rate

All 6 Care Home settings who experienced Covid-19 outbreak were approached for further information regarding the support process. 3 responded and were interviewed via Teams.

I had access via Teams Files to the numerous Policies/Procedures and processes adopted to deal with Covid-19. A key document that I referenced was the **Nursing & Residential Care Homes, Supported Living and Extra Care Risk & Escalation Management Policy v1.5**; This document developed initially in Carmarthenshire is now jointly agreed between Hywel Dda University Health Board and the 3 partner Local Authorities.

I also had sight of the Chronology of Communication to Care Homes detailing information, support and guidance offered to the sector.

I adopted a broad Signs of Safety methodology in formulating the questions. What worked well, what didn't work so well and what were/are the challenges.

The Scoping and discussions commenced on 22nd October, with the Questionnaire and interviews commencing on 10th November and running through November and early December. The last interview took place on the 10th December.

The key areas covered were as follows:

- Provision of overall advice and guidance to independent and Local Authority care homes.
- Infection, Prevention and Control.
- Sourcing and supply of PPE.
- Facilitation of hospital patient discharge to care homes.
- Management of outbreaks in care homes, to include involvement of other agencies including medical professionals.
- Identification, management and escalation of safeguarding concerns.
- Management of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.
- Testing in care homes.
- Overall support to care homes, including support to the workforce and financial support.
- Overall support to care home residents and families.
- Partnership working, particularly with Hywel Dda Health Board, surrounding all of the above.

Leadership surrounding all of the above

LEADERSHIP/SUPPORT/GUIDANCE

The universal feedback for the Local Authority from the Snap Survey and the interviews held with Staff across the Local Authority, Health and Care sector is of a County Council that displayed strong, decisive leadership. This is referenced as applicable from the Chief Executive and Statutory Director down throughout the

organisation. There is evidence of the effectiveness of the Gold/Silver/Bronze Command structure, staff were clear where they fitted into the structure and the roles they had to play. It has been noted on countless occasions in interview and survey that the ability to make agile decisions, responding swiftly in a solution focussed way; that staff had autonomy to make decisions and were able to problem solve.

The Leader of the Council and Lead member demonstrate considerable support for the sector in particular advocating nationally in relation to PPE supply and testing with ministers throughout the early days of the pandemic

The effectiveness of Inter-agency working was evident from the outset to all staff and daily SITREP meetings established. Senior Managers within CCC met 2 x daily and this pattern was replicated further down the management structure to ensure staff were fully briefed. There has been an effective audit trail of decision making and policies have been adapted as the situation has changed.

Safeguarding has continued to be a consideration during the Covid pandemic. The Regional Safeguarding Board has led on the discussions and considerations around safeguarding at what has been an extremely difficult time for the Care sector. There were weekly meetings held to consider the safeguarding requirements, with a Covid focus. There have been challenging discussions around safeguarding issues, at what point does the organisation become concerned about practice etc; these have been addressed at all senior management meetings. The Care Homes Escalation meetings did consider what was needed in the Care homes to support and promote safe practice whether that be staffing/equipment/support or advice. The safeguarding concerns that did come through have been around poor practice where processes weren't followed correctly.

The Coronavirus Act 2020 did not make any changes to the relevance or application of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. It did however mean that Local Authorities had to make significant changes to how it addressed meeting the requirements of the law. Carmarthenshire worked with its regional colleagues to produce guidance for staff. Work was undertaken to review the assessments and the review process. Skype and Teams

meetings were facilitated, although they did pose questions around the independence and efficacy of the process. Carmarthenshire sent its Guidance to Welsh Government for its consideration and it was commended. The Regional Group has continued to meet and consider whether the policy remains relevant and that the principles of the MCA 2005 are still being met.

The setting up of a dedicated Commissioning Team which was available 24/7 to advise and proactively support was also universally welcomed. They provided a centralised response, reporting and decision/discharge mechanism for the Care sector that was vitally important. The Local Authority was also ahead of the curve in recognising the potential impact of Covid-19 on market stability and introduced payments to help cover voids and extra costs such as deep cleaning and extra care

costs in the sector. Covid positive homes were offered extra support and assistance and this was highly valued.

Carmarthenshire CC also adopted a Safe Hospital Discharge Policy to support the Care Homes sector, insisting on Covid- tests prior to discharge. All discharge requests were processed through the Commissioning Team to help ease the burden on the Care Homes. This process appears to have been less well understood by Health colleagues within the Hospital setting and is something that will need addressing jointly going forward.

The focus was very much on keeping residents safe and on their care needs. Staff across the Local Authority were quick to pull together and that feeling of unity and support has remained; Staff were re-deployed to new roles to support efforts across the services. A number of challenges have emerged that will need attention in the longer term. Most staff spoken to feel it is too early to even contemplate an exit strategy yet, still feeling very much in the eye of the storm as the second wave hits our communities.

Monitoring of the Care Homes was suspended during the first lockdown. There were restrictions on visitors to the care homes. Staff from within Health were re-deployed to other Covid response roles, this continues to date. Health staff did note that when they did go back in to undertake mass TTP testing they were able to have some oversight. The Commissioning Team has been dedicated to focussing on the Covid Response as well. The CCC and Health were dependent therefore on any other professionals who went into the homes to be the eyes and ears and to report any concerns. CIW/HiW have undertaken their visits virtually. There haven't been any concerns reported.

There are concerns about future financial austerity impact on the Care Sector and Health & Social Care in general post the pandemic response. Carmarthenshire acted before National funding was agreed, at risk, with a formula that was then largely adopted by Welsh Government. Subsequent national funding providing top ups and void payments has been effective in stabilising the sector financially. The Care sector has depended on this support to sustain it.

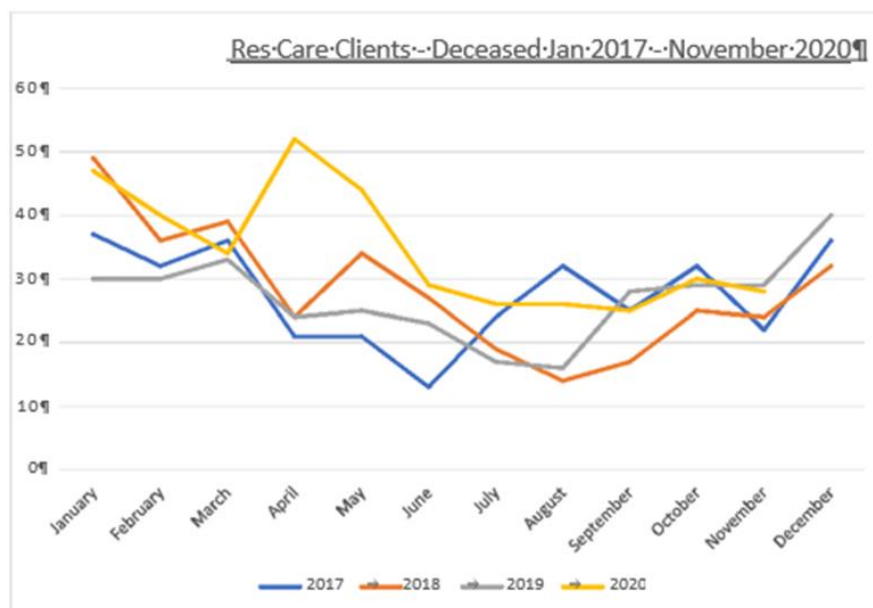
RECOMMENDATIONS

The Exit Strategy needs to be as equally robust and well planned as the Pandemic response- recovery will take longer

Consider a Review of the Safeguarding response during Covid Pandemic, possibly as a Regional Safeguarding Board with a focus on what worked well/what has been the learning

Build on and maintain the extended partnership working, maintaining the ability to make pragmatic agile decisions, with less bureaucracy.

Mortality in Commissioned Residential Placements for Older People



	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	37	49	30	47
February	32	36	30	40
March	36	39	33	34
April	21	24	24	52
May	21	34	25	44
June	13	27	23	29
July	24	19	17	26
August	32	14	16	26
September	25	17	28	25
October	32	25	29	30
November	22	24	29	28
December	36	32	40	

There was significant challenge in March to May 2020 with a specific spike in the mortality rates of residents. A small number of homes were tragically severely affected with a significant number of residents dying within 28 days of a positive test and further work on how improved care. Addressing this and protecting residents has been the highest possible priority across homes, health, and the local authority. This work across infection control, intervention in homes, testing, treatment, intervention, and care has dramatically improved the position with a lower rate of mortality in homes than pre COVID periods despite a rise in the number of homes affected

COMMUNICATION

In March and April of 2020 communication and guidance nationally was widely seen as inconsistent around the supply and use of PPE and admissions. There was significant challenge for all care homes as the evidence base of what was needed to protect staff and residents was seen to run ahead of appropriate national guidance being released. This left local authorities/ commissioners unable to be clear and consistent with homes. At this early stage considerable concern was raised with Welsh Government as to the vulnerability of care staff and residents where guidance and supply fell short of what was needed. Whilst some Care Homes highlighted that information and guidance was too slow in the first few weeks of the pandemic (leaving some care homes feeling somewhat adrift and confused) they do acknowledge that this was a completely new scenario for everyone.

All staff acknowledged that the volume of information flowing from various sources, the changing guidelines and pace at which the information was coming through was a significant challenge nationally. It has been commented on in several interviews that once the CCC machinery swung into action and started getting a handle on the information flow from central government then the support was evident and effective.

As noted above communication with the Care sector was viewed positively. At the early stage improvements could be made in co-ordinating phone contacts. Managers talked of 5/6 daily phone calls asking for similar data/information when they were stretched. Managers felt conflicted between dealing with administrative matters when they were needed on the floor to support caring duties.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Consideration for a Regional Communication Team comprising LA & Health to craft clear joint communication from one source

HEALTH & HOSPITALS

The role of the Frailty Consultant in supporting Care Homes with Covid outbreaks during the early weeks was been particularly commended. Health colleagues report that the swift ability to make decisions on hospital discharges without overly worrying about funding stream/splits was also critically important. Improved co-ordination and clarity on roles between this consultant and GP'S assisted as there were some risks of a lack of clinical coordination.

There were varied responses in terms of GP support to the Care homes during the pandemic; some Managers advised that GP practices were reluctant to attend the Care Homes; others felt the service was supportive. Some practices managed their patient lists virtually over the phone, with weekly surgeries undertaken remotely.

One area worthy of note raised by a number of staff was the issue of DNACPR forms. Some Care Homes felt a “blanket” approach had been taken with regard to their residents and they have since removed the DNACPR at the resident’s request. There was also concern from a Manager spoken to about a letter issued by a GP cluster very early on advising that residents would not be proactively treated. This caused tremendous upset for residents, families and staff. I believe the matter was raised with the Health Board and addressed rapidly.

The Hospital Discharge Policy has also been a hot topic for the Care Homes and Commissioning Team and evoked quite a response. What is clear is there appeared to be a lack of understanding and sometimes, even, an acknowledgement of the existence of the policy by ward-based Hospital staff. The Care Homes have felt very well supported during the pandemic with the Commissioning Team co-ordinating and agreeing hospital discharges. This will need to be closely monitored as we go into the second wave of the pandemic and the pressure on both Hospitals and Care Homes increase from staffing pressures or Covid positive perspective.

Several of the care homes also noted that they have been unable to get Occupational Therapy/ Physiotherapy or Dietician visits into the Care Homes since lockdown lifted in August.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Consideration be given to offer joint training with GP clusters to manage expectations of Care Homes around the support they need

To review the DNACPR processes and procedures and ensure that they are applied in a person-centred way with the needs and best interest of the residents at the heart of the decision.

Discussion between the Local Authority and Health regarding the Safe Discharge Policy and how Care Homes can be supported to feel confident and trust the Hospital assessment of patients in future

PPE/CONSUMABLES

Carmarthenshire CC had clear objectives on what they were trying to achieve for the Care Homes and care sector across Health and Social Care. Evidence from the Team suggests they achieved this from the outset. Prior to a centralised store supplied by Welsh Government the county managed its supply well, getting close to running out, but never actually doing so. There is evidence that seconded staff worked tirelessly to ensure all Care Homes were supplied. No care homes lacked supply once effective national guidance was established.

The changing guidance caused anxiety, conflict, uncertainty and upset in the early weeks. Considerable time politically and at the most senior levels was spent trying to resolve the challenges in this area. Senior council officers report significant political

support from the Lead member, Leader and Chief Executive in trying to resolve these very difficult issues. Once shared services were established and up and running the PPE supply has not been an issue. The PPE Team have worked closely with Commissioning, Environmental Health and Infection Control Team. They have modelled the demand across the Care Homes, accounting for multiple scenarios and have ensured that a consistent supply of PPE has been maintained. There was proactive support from across the Council to source suitable storage sites. Dispatch of PPE has been efficient and responsive.

Corporate Health and Safety have complemented the work of the Infection Control Nursing Team by providing online training for staff on the “donning /doffing” procedures and clear instructions on how to prevent cross contamination. This was a good example of effective joint working with the health board responsive to the care sector.

A weekly survey is sent out to establish a baseline of PPE stocks held in each Care home. Where care homes have tested positive for Covid- the PPE team have calculated the number of likely changes by the number of interventions likely to be required and sent out Booster packs.

The challenge going forward as we emerge from the Covid Pandemic will be to ensure we continue to maintain good PPE practice and protocols. There will also be a challenge for Care Homes in the private sector who are currently being provided PPE from the Welsh Government central supply; again, something for consideration in the exit strategy around extra costs and fee setting structures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Local Authorities to consider holding sufficient stocks of PPE/Consumables (such as dedicated waste bins) that could be quickly deployed in the event of any future infectious outbreak. To be included in any Emergency Plan going forward.

INFECTION/PREVENTION CONTROL

This has been a front-line service that has been universally praised by all. The Team have been in direct contact with the Care homes, on the floor offering, support advice and guidance. They have made themselves available at all times of day and night to support staff. Their input has been critical in ensuring the Care Homes have responded as well as they have in mitigating the risks as far as possible.

Environmental Health became more involved from the May period onwards to support the Infection Control effort. They developed an effective working partnership with Infection Control. There were challenges for the Team in terms of the layout of some of the Care Homes; many are in older buildings, not purpose built. Zoning the residents care in Covid positive homes became quite a logistical challenge. It was made more difficult in Care Homes where you had residents who

“walk with purpose”. Moving residents out of their rooms was also a challenge, leaving their personal effects and the comfort of their own rooms.

The necessity for deep cleaning in Covid Positive Care Homes also became an issue and highlighted how in some homes the Carers also double up as the cleaners. There has been a significant amount of learning in this area on the impact of good infection control.

The challenge will be in ensuring that Infection Control remains a high priority and its importance maintained in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

LA Commissioning & Health to work with the Care Home sector going forward to ensure that clear policies, procedures, advice, training and guidance re PPE and Infection Control remain central to good quality practice within Care Homes/Dom care

The role of Environmental Health in Infection Control to be established and resourced as a permanent function

STAFFING

The first priority is to acknowledge and commend the dedication of the Care Home staff and their Managers- they have gone above and beyond any job description. They have been honest about their fears, anxieties and struggles; they have kept providing quality care in a loving compassionate way to people who have been separated from seeing loved ones. They have sat with residents who were facing the final journey and ensured they didn't pass alone. They have displayed a “can do attitude” and have supported each other.

Other Local Authority staff have elected to be re-deployed into the care sector and have provided invaluable support. All have adapted to what was required of them, be that changing shift patterns to working extra shifts. Many have undertaken roles that were completely outside their normal experience.

Many Care Homes noted that the Local Authority supported swiftly when there were staffing issues. There appeared to be more challenges in the Nursing Homes where it was more difficult to get qualified Nurses. Bank agency rates were £3,000 per shift and this cost was prohibitive to most Nursing homes.

It has also been noted that Care Home staff are being called upon to assist in the assessment and review processes of residents in a different way to previously. Social Workers and Nurse Assessors are assessing & reviewing virtually which necessitates a member of the care Home staff providing them with updates and information from the files and care notes. Prior to Covid this would have been done by the Social Worker/Nurse Assessor when visiting the home. Managers find

supporting this a challenge when staffing numbers haven't been increased to support the extra demands.

There is a wider mental health issue to be considered when looking at the exit strategy. Staff, especially those in Covid hit homes, have been emotionally stretched and many are left traumatised at seeing so many deaths in a short period. The fear of Covid and its impact has been very real for all.

From a broader Local Authority perspective all staff spoken to have acknowledged that the notion of a 5-day working week disappeared when the pandemic hit. The Council has made sure that staff were available 7 days a week from very early on. There were teething problems early on when the scale of the pandemic and the impact wasn't known, e.g., being able to access stores for supplies. Once the scale of issues was understood the Local Authority responded effectively.

There is a greater sense that staffing may well become an issue during this second wave. Increased testing of people is seeing an increase in numbers needing to self-isolate. Also, an increase in community transmission which will inevitably put pressure on services. Added to this Managers talking of increase in staff anxiety/ Covid fatigue in the approach to this second wave. During the first wave people were running on adrenalin.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff support and counselling should be considered

Lead on the parity of esteem debate for Care Home sector workers that will inevitably arise post pandemic

Consideration is given to creating additional mental health capacity as part of the COVID exit strategy.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

From a Care Homes perspective one of the major areas of concern is the lack of internet access across the homes. It appears to be the same picture pretty much across the Local Authority and Private sector.

Care Home Managers have laptops and have been able to attend Teams Meetings etc with their line manager and also with fellow Managers. This was seen as extremely useful as a source of support and information sharing and the meetings have continued at the behest of the Managers.

It was reflected that much of the work in the care homes is paper based and as they tried to address this by trying to adopt a paperless system, they were hampered by the lack of available equipment. In the Local Authority homes the senior care staff and the carers do not have access to laptops. The carers themselves have not had local authority e mail address. This caused problems if staff were self-isolating and could potentially work from home writing or updating care plans. The frustration felt by Managers was evident.

Wi-Fi connectivity was an issue highlighted by the majority of Care Homes. Ensuring that relatives could remain in virtual contact with families and friends during lockdown this was problematic. Several homes had the equipment but it's ability to be used was patchy; either there was no internet access, or signal would drop off mid-conversation.

There was also an issue in the private sector of residents being told if they wanted internet access then they would need to pay. Many Managers felt given the required use of technology that Wi-Fi access should be a given.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consideration should be given to an investment programme in the IT infrastructure in Local Authority Care Homes, enabling all staff the opportunity to access work e mails, information relayed digitally, access online training etc in line with the majority of the Council's workforce.

Similar scoping and consideration with the independent sector Care Homes- although resolving that might necessitate Welsh Govt support to grant fund such a scheme.

Consider Wi-Fi access and increased use of smart technology to improve people's lives and maximise independence within care settings and include as part of the contractual requirements/negotiations. IT/Internet access to be a consideration when formulating care plans, how will prospective residents maintain contact with family and friends

TRACK, TRACE & PROTECT

Once the service got over the initial teething problems the co-ordination has worked well. There has been swift mobilisation into care homes, with proactive calls and advice & guidance.

All have commented that the Health Board testing service was consistently reliable with a swift turnaround. Staff were on fortnightly testing; some have resumed weekly due to the spike in community transmission.

There was an early challenge with Local Authority unable to get the test results of employees from the Health Board due to confidentiality and governance issues.

It seems the "Lighthouse testing" is proving more of a challenge from a resource intensive perspective as well as accuracy & reliability. There is also now the challenge of mass testing and finding higher numbers of cases; all has an impact on the Care Homes, staffing wise.

There is understandable caution from care homes with regard to the testing of visitors to Care Homes especially now we are seeing a rise in infection rates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NONE

CHILDREN SERVICES/MENTAL HEALTH & LEARNING DISABILITIES

Whilst Children Services, Mental Health and Learning Disability services were not included in initial core meetings, which focussed on older adults because of the high level of risk on older persons, they did nevertheless follow the same protocols. There were 3 specific units within Children Services and the RI/ Managers held their own meetings with the site managers. Children Services sits within Education but has the same regulatory requirements from a Residential care perspective as Adults. The Senior Managers ensured they were the direct contacts with their care homes to be able to offer the support and guidance. All the children that accessed the facilities had their care needs reviewed and arrangements put in place to support. There were some concerns as to where Children Residential services would have accessed staffing support if it had been a necessity due to the specialised nature of the client group- children with complex learning disabilities. However, an escalation process was in place should that have been needed.

Strategically the Head of Children's services and Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities attended strategic meetings with adult services colleagues and the Statutory Director to ensure the response was inclusive.

The Children services are now developing a specific Operational Policy for Children's Residential Services.

From a Mental Health and Learning Disability perspective Health worked closely with the Local Authority to ensure that hospital beds were reduced to take pressure from the acute sector. There was a great deal of proactive work undertaken to find suitable placement options; all the Mental Health and the vast majority of Learning Disability options are in the private sector. Funding agreements were reached, and it highlighted how quickly services can act when necessary.

One area that was highlighted as a risk if any Learning Disability Care home had to close down or people needed hospitalisation. There would be a requirement for specialist LD nurses to care for the more complex cases. It is acknowledged that the services are talking about lower numbers but significant needs, but this was seen as an area that sector specific contingency plans could be developed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure Children Services/Mental Health & Learning Disabilities are included from the outset in any future Emergency planning around residential care

Mapping the support needs of Children services/MH & LD

Children services to develop a specific Operational Policy for Children's Residential Services

FAMILIES/FRIENDS/VISITS

Some care homes have been extremely innovative and resourceful in how they have facilitated visits once the lock down was lifted. It has, nevertheless, been and continues to be a challenge for the majority of Care Homes to facilitate and support safe visiting arrangements.

During the summer it was far easier with some able to erect marquees or facilitate outdoor visits. Winter has made things far more difficult and challenging. Some homes have been able to create safe spaces in conservatories, others in their Day Care site which is closed to day users. Some have managed to utilise Skype/What's App more successfully than others.

End of life visits have been supported across the care sector, with one relative being able to be present, wearing the correct PPE. For families who could not attend staff have provided assurances that their loved one has not passed alone and had a staff member there with them.

What is clear is that all Care homes are seeing the negative impact on residents of loss of contact with family and friends. Those with cognitive impairment cannot understand the lack of visits and struggle with virtual meetings. The impact of increased testing and staff testing positive there is a real issue in care homes rolling from one 28-day period of closure to another.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Work with National Advisors/Regulators/LA & Health to consider and develop guidelines on how to promote and maintain safe visiting to Covid free residents when staff & other residents on site have tested positive. Consideration as to how to support Care Homes to develop safe visiting spaces and other innovative ways of maintaining contact

+++++

I would like to thank all the staff who participated in the interviews and all those who contributed by completing the survey. I have been impressed and truly humbled by the sheer hard work and dedication of all to work together during this pandemic. The overriding thought for everyone has been to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the people they serve and the care of the most vulnerable in our society.

Diolch yn fawr/Thank you

Carys James B.A.HONS; CQSW; Dip SW

YMGYNGHORYDD ANNIBYNNOL/INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT

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Executive Board 26th July 2021

Subject:

POLICY FOR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND BREACHES OF TENANCY 2021

Purpose:

To propose a policy that sets out the approach to be adopted by the Neighbourhood Team in Environmental Protection with regards to the investigation of complaints of anti-social behaviour and breaches of tenancy relating to Council Housing properties.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

1. The proposals for the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy be approved.

Reasons:

1. As a result of the development of the Neighbourhood Team in the Environmental Protection Section in 2018, complaints of anti-social behaviour have increased considerably from around 600 queries in 2018/19 to over 900 during 2020/21
2. Successful investigations have been achieved through increased and improved partnership working. The officers and partners ensure Anti-Social Behaviour of tenancy are investigated in accordance with legal requirements.
3. The demand on the service is resulting in the requirement for prioritising complaints in order to focus resources on more serious issues which could result in harm to neighbours/community.

Relevant scrutiny committee consulted : YES

Community & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – 1st July 2021

Exec Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Phillip Hughes (Public Protection Portfolio Holder)

Directorate

Communities

Name of Head of Service:

Jonathan Morgan

Report Author:

Sue Watts

Designations:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
EXECUTIVE BOARD
26TH JULY 2021

SUBJECT:
POLICY FOR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND BREACHES OF TENANCY
2021

Background

The Neighbourhood Team in the Environmental Protection Section was developed in July 2018. A significant part of the service includes investigating complaints of anti-social behaviour relating to Council Housing properties. This team also investigates general statutory nuisance which also falls within the definition of anti-social behaviour (e.g. noise, burning, rubbish accumulation, fly tipping etc).

Since the introduction of the team, the number of complaints and investigations with partners have increased steadily over time, as can be seen in the following table:

Team	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Neighbourhood Team (Council properties)	622	1019	927
Environmental Protection general nuisance complaints including noise, burning, waste, fly tipping etc	2716	2655	3486
Total	3338	3674	4413

The work is also becoming more complex, and we are spending more time on some cases such as evictions etc.

Council officers and partners ensure anti-social behaviour queries are investigated in accordance with legal requirements. The increasing demand on the service is resulting in the requirement to prioritise complaints in order to focus resources on more serious issues which could result in harm to neighbours/community.

It has been recognised that many anti-social behaviour complaints overlap with other statutory nuisance investigations particularly cross tenure. In order to get consistency in approach an Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator has been employed who works with individuals and partners to resolve issues and prevent future escalations of complaints cross tenure.

This not only improves the quality of life for the individuals concerned but also attempts to reduce the demands on the other sections dealing with complaints.

Context

Anti-Social Behaviour is defined in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 as:

- Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassments, alarm or distress to any person;
- Conduct capable of causing a nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation or residential premises or; and
- Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

Most of the issues considered to be anti-social behaviour requires partnership working with the police, other housing providers/landlords and agencies in an attempt to remediate. Intelligence and sharing of information are also key in an attempt to prevent incidents escalating to reportable anti-social behaviour cases.

Examples of the anti-social behaviour that the team deal with include:

- Excessive noise (unless considered a Statutory Nuisance by Environmental Health);
- Alcohol related incidents;
- Nuisance from vehicles;
- Intimidation / threatening acts or behaviour;
- Harassment;
- Garden conditions;
- Drugs / substance misuse / drug dealing;
- Vandalism / other criminal behaviour;
- Domestic violence / abuse – using referrals to other support agencies;
- Verbal or physical abuse / violence;
- Pets / animal nuisance;
- Misuse of communal areas;
- Litter / rubbish / fly tipping;
- Vehicle obstruction – when necessary;
- Hate related incidents;
- Prostitution / sexual acts; and
- Curb crawling.

The team also receive complaints such as staring or looking at someone, one off events (such as a party), sound of someone walking across the floor in shoes etc. These are not, however, considered to be 'anti-social behaviour' issues and are therefore not investigated.

What is the policy trying to achieve?

The policy also aims to prioritise council tenancy complaints into three categories, giving examples for each. The category will determine the response time from 24 hours for the highest priority to 10 working days for those considered to be lower priority. The policy also includes an Appendix which assists as a 'score card' for the complainant to complete which will assist in the categorisation/prioritisation of the issue of concern. As a result of discussions

with the partner agencies, Community Cohesion and Community Safety, the matrix mirrors that utilised by the Police and all concerned are in agreement with this approach.

The priorities are based on the following principles;

Proportionality – any action that we take will relate to the seriousness of the behaviour and its effects on individuals and the community.

Consistency – we will ensure that officers take a consistent approach when dealing with anti-social behaviour.

Transparency – we will help people to understand what the tenancy agreement and law requires of them and make clear what needs to be done.

Targeting – enforcement will be directed against those whose activities pose the most serious harm to individuals or communities.

Conclusion

Anti-social behaviour can have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of individuals. Partnership working and local intelligence will continue to take place to prevent an escalation of incidents into anti-social behaviour, where possible. The Policy has been collated, however, to ensure that where cases are raised, appropriate, proportionate and targeted actions are implemented to find appropriate resolutions.

Officers record each service complaint and update accordingly which will allow the service to monitor progress and outcomes.

Recommendation

The policy be accepted and approved.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?	YES
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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: Jonathan Morgan Head of Homes and Safer Communities

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Jonathan Morgan Head of Homes and Safer Communities

1. Scrutiny Committee

Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee was consulted on 1st July 2021 when it was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to recommend to the Executive Board/Council that the Policy for Anti-Social Behaviour and Breaches of Tenancy 2021 be approved.

2. Local Member(s) – N/A

3. Community / Town Council – N/A

4. Relevant Partners – N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED:

YES

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

POLICY FOR ANTI SOCIAL
BEHAVIOUR AND BREACHES OF
TENANCY 2021

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM



carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
POLICY FOR ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND BREACHES OF TENANCY 2021
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

Purpose

This policy sets out the approach to be adopted by the Neighbourhood Team in Environmental Protection with regards to dealing with complaints of anti-social behaviour and tenancy issues relating to Council Housing properties only. This will include taking formal action against council tenants that are causing antisocial behaviour to other tenures in the area.

Scope

The principles and terms of this policy will apply to the Safer Neighbourhood Team. The team will ensure ASB or breaches of tenancy are investigated in accordance with legal requirements, and will comply with the following principles:

Proportionality – any action that we take will relate to the seriousness of the behaviour and its effects on individuals and the community.

Consistency – we will ensure that officers take a consistent approach when dealing with ASB.

Transparency – we will help people to understand what the tenancy agreement and law requires of them and make clear what needs to be done.

Targeting – enforcement will be directed against those whose activities pose the most serious harm to individuals or communities.

Application of the policy

Anti-Social Behaviour is defined in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 as:

- Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassments, alarm or distress to any person;
- Conduct capable of causing a nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation or residential premises or;
- Conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

Examples of the anti-social behaviour that the team will deal with include:

- Excessive noise (unless considered a Statutory Nuisance by Environmental Health);
- Alcohol related incidents;
- Nuisance from vehicles – noise / parking / excess number of vehicles / repair work etc;
- Intimidation / threatening acts or behaviour;
- Harassment;
- Garden conditions – waste / overgrowth / boundary disputes;
- Drugs / substance misuse / drug dealing / cultivation;
- Vandalism / other criminal behaviour;

- Domestic violence / abuse – using referrals to other support agencies;
- Verbal or physical abuse / violence towards others;
- Pets / animal nuisance – too many pets / inappropriate type or number for property;
- Misuse of communal areas – storage / fire safety concerns;
- Litter / rubbish / fly tipping – at property or in wider estate;
- Vehicle obstruction – as above, relating to parking issues;
- Hate related incidents – working in partnership with the police; and
- Prostitution / sexual acts / curb crawling.

Examples of cases that may not be classed as anti-social behaviour include:

- People walking across the floor in shoes (in a property with poor sound insulation / adequate floor coverings) – formal action not appropriate as considered reasonable day to day living noises;
- Children playing in the street where no damage has occurred, perception maybe causing a nuisance;
- Intolerance to normal lifestyle issues – clash of lifestyles / personalities / cultures;
- Pets straying across gardens i.e., cats, which are entitled to roam (dogs are dealt with under tenancy conditions or dog warden service);
- Staring or looking at someone, can be a perception issue (unless harassment);
- One off events, such as a party (possibly words of advice only);
- 1 to 1 disputes or personal disputes where no breach of tenancy has occurred; and
- Problems arising from conflicts of lifestyle, such as shift work (could offer mediation if needed).

In these cases, we may provide advice and guidance, but it will be at the officer's discretion.

Preventing Anti-Social Behaviour

The team is committed to preventing and dealing with cases of anti-social behaviour. The following approaches will be used:

- Explaining and enforcing tenancy conditions to residents;
- Investing in our communities to prevent anti-social behaviour;
- Working with partner agencies;
- Marketing and promotion of services and outcomes to encourage victims to report incidents as well as discourage potential perpetrators; and
- Share information with other agencies and partners.

Reporting of Anti-Social Behaviour

Cases can be reported by:

- Telephone (please see below for further details)
- Email;
- Letter;
- Website; and
- In person or through third parties.

Further contact information

- General Anti Social Behaviour enquiries during normal office hours through Contact Centre (01267 234567)
- Councillor enquiries during normal office hours through the Democratic Services
- Anti Social Behaviour enquiries outside normal working hours through Delta Wellbeing which provides an emergency service on 0300 333 2222. This phone number is for emergencies and is available after 6:00pm and up until 8:30am on weekdays, and on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- Anti Social Behaviour that is a serious risk to life is to be reported to the Police on 101 or 999

The team will investigate all cases of anti-social behaviour but will prioritise cases in line with our priority matrix and officer's discretion.

Anonymous complaints will be investigated when possible and dealt with at the officer's discretion. Anonymous complaints are difficult to investigate as there is no one to gather evidence from or feedback to. There is also no ability to use an anonymous complainant as part of our evidence should Court action be required.

All cases will be treated fairly, recorded and monitored, and regular updates will be provided as the case progresses.

Supporting victims and witnesses

This is essential in helping to deal with allegations of anti-social behaviour. The team will:

- Adopt a victim centred approach;
- Assess the level of risk to victims and make appropriate plans to ensure their safety;
- Work with other agencies to resolve problems as quickly as possible;
- Provide support or refer for specific victim support services, internal and external;
- Consider legal sanctions to protect victims where an immediate risk is identified;
- Make regular contact with victims and witnesses;
- Consider improving home security by providing extra measures such as additional locks, security chains, alarms for properties; and
- Rehouse victims in exceptional circumstances, such as when an immediate threat or risk of harm to the victim is present which cannot be removed in any other way.

Tenancy Conditions

The tenancy agreement sets out the contractual obligations of the tenant and the Council.

The agreement requires tenants to act in a reasonable manner and not do anything that causes nuisance or annoyance to other people.

Anti-social behaviour in any form (by tenants or those who live with them, and visitors) is considered a breach of the tenancy agreement and will not be tolerated.

ASB / Tenancy breaches will be categorised and prioritised by the team using the table below. In addition, the scorecard in **Appendix 1** can be used to assess the urgency a case is dealt with.

Prioritising complaints

The team will prioritise complaints under **three** categories:

Category A - Urgent or serious issues

- Hate crimes;
- Sexual abuse and offences;
- Aggressive / abusive neighbours;
- Drug dealing / complaints / warrants;
- Criminal activity – in partnership with the Police;
- Perceived hate crimes - in partnership with the Police;
- Violence – between families or neighbouring properties;
- Domestic violence – linked with other agencies; and
- Any other complaints the officer deems to be urgent or serious.

These cases will be dealt with as quickly as possible (aim to contact within 24 hours)

Category B – serious issues

- Noise - (to also include cases being investigated under Statutory nuisance legislation with Environmental Health);
- Drug and substance misuse (e.g., personal cannabis use) where there is a nuisance to neighbours.
- Verbal abuse towards staff, neighbours or wider community;
- Alcohol related nuisance;
- Prostitution (misuse of property or wider community);
- Intimidation towards others;
- Criminal damage to other property;
- Nuisance being caused in the communal areas e.g., congregating / storing items;
- Waste stored at the property or garden (working alongside Public Health team);
- No access issues; and
- Any other complaints the officer deems to be serious from Category C.

Officers will aim to contact within 5 working days

Category C – low level

- Drug and substance misuse (e.g., personal cannabis use;) where not causing nuisance/no direct impact on neighbours;
- Caravans being kept at people's properties or within the estate without permission;
- Garden conditions – overgrown and unkempt;
- Parking issues – obstructions or number of vehicles without permission;
- Animals – inappropriate pets or number of animals kept at the property (unless causing nuisance to neighbours which will fall under discretion of officer to upgrade to Category B);

- Unsuitable vehicles on estate e.g., trailers / heavy goods vehicles in line with tenancy agreement;
- Low level damage to property, internal and external;
- Children causing a nuisance to the community (discretion of officers);
- Communal area problems e.g., arguments over communal gardens / leaving doors open (discretion of officers);
- Repairing vehicles / operating a business in line with tenancy agreement;
- Works carried out to the property without permission; and
- Cases where there is no complainant involved (anonymous).

Officers will aim to contact within 10 working days

The timescales will be monitored and reviewed periodically

Remedies of Anti-Social Behaviour

Our policy commits to trying to reach a fair and lasting solution to ASB problems as quickly as possible. In lower-level cases officers will try using low level informal action, but if this is ineffective stronger measures will be considered.

There are several options available to the team, and staff will consider the most appropriate action in each case.

Enforcement action will be taken when necessary, such as when cases are serious, or when instances of anti-social behaviour continue, and other solutions have been identified and exhausted.

Legal remedies may include:

- Discussions with concerned parties;
- Warning letters;
- Mediation;
- Injunctions;
- Demotion orders;
- Suspended demotion orders;
- Eviction / possession proceedings;
- Action against a starter tenancy;
- Community Protection Notices / Fixed penalty notices;
- Closure orders;
- Relocation (as a last resort);
- Referral to other agencies / services; and
- Legal action by others e.g., Environmental Health

It is recognised that sometimes we may not be able to resolve anti-social behaviour complaints to the satisfaction of all parties. If, after careful investigation and agreement

with senior officers that anti-social behaviour is un-actionable, we will let the complainant and perpetrator know.

Actions for other types of tenancy

Disputes in relation to tenants within the private sector, Housing Association properties or private owners will initially be reported to the Police (private tenants / owners). Some Housing Association tenants can report to their agencies' own ASB officers or the police.

The Authority's own Anti- Social Behaviour Coordinator can also provide additional support and advice to affected parties of private owners or housing association tenants, working in partnership with the police to help resolve any issues.

If a Council tenant is suffering from antisocial behaviour from another private property or housing association property, officers will link in with the police and the Anti-Social Behaviour Coordinator to help resolve the matter.

Appendix 1 - Assessing each case

The below scorecard will be used to determine whether your complaint is considered as high, medium, or low risk.

Other than this occasion how often do you have problems?	Most days Most weeks Most months Only occasionally	3 2 1 0
Do you think this incident is linked to previous incidents?	Yes No	2 0
Do you think that incidents are happening more often and/or are getting worse?	Yes No	2 0
Do you know the offender/s?	They know each other well They are known to each other They do not know each other	2 1 0
Does the perpetrator have a history or reputation for intimidation or harassment?	Perpetrator currently harassing complainant Perpetrator have harassed complainant in the past Perpetrator have not harassed the complainant, but have a history or reputation for harassment or violence Perpetrator have no history or reputation for harassment or violence	6 4 2 0
Have you informed any other agencies about what has happened, if yes, are you happy for us to discuss the problem with them? Agency details:	Yes No	0 1
Which of the following do you think that this incident deliberately targeted?	You Your family Your community None	4 3 1 0

Do you feel that this incident is associated with your faith, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, gender or disability?	Yes No	3 0
In addition to what has happened, do you feel that there is anything that is increasing you or your household's personal risk?	Yes No	3 0
How affected do you feel by what has happened?	Not at all Affected a little Moderately affected Affected a lot Extremely affected	0 1 2 3 5
Has yours or anyone's health been affected as a result of this and any previous incidents? If yes, details:	Yes No	3 0
Do you have a social worker, health visitor or any other type of professional support, can we speak to them about this? If yes, details:	No Yes	0 1
Do you have any friends and family to support you?	Complainant lives alone and is isolated Complainant is isolated from people who can offer support Complainant has a few people to draw on for support Complainant has a close network of people for support	3 3 1 0
Apart from any effect on you, do you think anyone else has been affected by what has happened?	No one else Your family Local Community Other	0 1 3
Total score		

Based on these factors and your own judgement, adjust the scoring accordingly

Low 0 4 8 12 16 20 22 24 26 28 30 High

0 – 15 = low risk

16 – 28 = medium risk

29 – 41 = high risk

The agencies listed below are there as a guide and should be used in conjunction with other local resources and your own judgement of what support and protection are required. All action taken as a result of your assessment should be discussed with the witness.

Actions to be taken

Safer Neighbourhood Team:

Environmental Health:

Other Local Authority depts.:

Police:

Other support services:

I consent to agencies obtaining and sharing information as part of the multi-agency work to help and secure my safety and that of my family.

If there are child protection concerns, information will be shared regardless of whether this form I signed

Signature:

Date:

Print name:

Executive Board 26 July 2021

DEVELOPMENT OF SITE 4, BURRY PORT

Recommendations / key decisions required:

The Executive Board is asked to approve the disposal of Site 4, Burry Port, through an open procurement procedure, to enable the delivery of a commercial leisure led scheme.

It is recommended that the Council disposes the land, through an open procurement procedure, to deliver a commercial leisure led development scheme and that delegated authority is granted to the Head of Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Resources, to negotiate and document appropriate terms for the sale of the land

Reasons:

- To promote and facilitate development of the land, held by the Council and Welsh Government, as part of the Llanelli Waterside Joint Venture, to support the regeneration aspirations for Burry Port.
- The regeneration of this site is key to the delivery of the Burry Port masterplan, providing a mix of commercial leisure uses that will add to the economic well-being of Burry Port and to the leisure and tourism offer of the town.
- To create over 100 new jobs, with the total number dependent on the final scheme.
- To generate a capital receipt for the Llanelli Waterside Joint Venture fund.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted NO

Exec. Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. David Jenkins
(Executive Board Member for Resources)

Directorate:

Name of Head of Service:

Jason Jones

Report Author:

Katie Crane-Davis

Designations:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE BOARD

26TH JULY 2021

DEVELOPMENT OF SITE 4, BURRY PORT

Background Information

The development site of 2.8 acres, shown in the document in Appendix 1, is a key element of the Council's regeneration aspirations for Burry Port and forms part of the Burry Port Masterplan. The ultimate objective of the Masterplan is to ensure the future wellbeing of Burry Port and its surrounding areas by creating residential, leisure and employment developments, which will promote Burry Port as a place to visit, live and work in. The document in Appendix 1 sets out additional background information regarding the subject site and the Council's wider Burry Port Masterplan aspirations.

The site benefits from outline planning permission (reference no. S/30597) for 'Commercial leisure development comprising a mix of retail, hotel, pub/restaurant and residential uses'.

The Council and Welsh Government Joint Venture wish to retain an element of control over the quality and delivery of the development, to ensure that the scheme is aligned with the outline planning permission and wider regeneration aspirations for Burry Port. As this will need to be reflected in the contractual terms and the cost of works are likely to exceed the public procurement threshold of £4,733,252, we have been advised by the Council's Legal Section, that the transaction falls under the scope of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and requires an open procurement procedure to select the developer.

The Council could decide not to sell the site at this time but due to the timeframes set out within the outline planning applications, it is advised that a disposal is progressed. A Reserved Matters application with details of the proposed scheme will need to be submitted by November 2022. Alternatively, the Council could decide to proceed with a land transaction rather than sale via Public Procurement, but this would mean that once sold, the Council would have no control over the delivery of the scheme, other than via the planning process.

The Development

Development proposals should have full regard to the site's prominent position within the marina, providing sufficient character to create a place with its own identity but also benefiting the current and proposed facilities within the harbour and Millennium Coastal Park.

The development must create added value, complimenting the offerings of the town centre and contributing to the vitality and viability of the Burry Port area, including job creation, and promoting tourism. Proposals will need to include an appropriate mix of land uses consistent with the planning permission and aspirations for the site.

Recommendations

The subject land forms part of the Burry Port Masterplan. The Council's Acquisition and Disposal of Property Policy requires Executive Board approval for the disposal of Strategic land.

It is recommended that the Council disposes the land, through an open procurement procedure, to deliver a commercial leisure led development scheme and that delegated authority is granted to the Head of Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Resources, to negotiate and document appropriate terms for the sale of the land.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

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: **Jason Jones**

Head of Regeneration

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The development scheme will contribute towards the Goals and Ways of Working within the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the Council's Well-being Objectives. The site will support the retention and creation of jobs, including apprenticeships and training opportunities, through the development. The scheme will add to the economic well-being of Burry Port and to the leisure and tourism offer of the town, whilst also striving to create a resilient and sustainable community.

The development of Site 4, in conjunction with the wider masterplan for Burry Port, will encourage urban living and utilisation of local offerings. The proximity of the site to the Millennium Coastal Path will encourage residents to utilise the local facilities to improve their health and wellbeing.

The Council will seek to maximise community benefits through the procurement process.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act Goals and Ways of Working and the Council's Well-being Objectives will be considered in further detail, as part of the procurement procedure.

The delivery of the site also supports the Carmarthenshire Economic Recovery and Delivery Plan (April 2021) and Carmarthenshire County Council's Transformations Strategy which identifies six key transformational projects, including Carmarthenshire Coastal Belt and Burry Port

2. Legal

As the Council and Welsh Government Joint Venture would want to retain an element of control over the quality and delivery of the development and the cost of works are likely to exceed the public procurement threshold of £4,733,252, we have been advised by the Council's Legal Section, that the transaction falls under the scope of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and requires an open procurement procedure to select the developer.

The disposal of the land will require appropriate legal documentation that will need to reflect the specific terms of sale to be agreed via the procurement process, ensuring the Council's best interests are maintained.

3. Finance

The disposal of the land will provide a capital receipt for the Llanelli Waterside Joint Venture to support further regeneration of South Llanelli.

5. Risk Management Issues

A risk analysis will be carried out, as part of the procurement requirements, to identify risks associated with the delivery of the scheme, with controls in place to ensure development objectives are met within appropriate timescales.

In addition to this, the Council's Principal Risk Officer will be asked to advise on minimum levels of indemnity for Employers Liability Insurance, Public Liability Insurance including Products Liability and Professional Indemnity, to be included within the Procurement and Legal documentation.

6. Physical Assets

If disposal of the site is approved, a commercial leisure led development scheme will be delivered by a private sector developer, to support the aspirations of the Burry Port Masterplan. Future management and maintenance of the site will be the responsibility of the developer.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Jason Jones

Head of Regeneration

1. Scrutiny Committee

n/a

2. Local Member(s)

Local Members have been regularly updated on proposals that form part of the Burry Port Masterplan. Further consultation is currently being carried out in relation to Site 4.

3. Community / Town Council

n/a

4. Relevant Partners

Meetings with the Llanelli Waterside Joint Venture Partner, Welsh Government, are held regularly to monitor progress and agree actions.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

n/a

**EXECUTIVE BOARD 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

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITE 4, BURRY PORT



SUMMARY

- 1.12 hectare / 2.8 acre brownfield development site
- Marina location
- Commercial, leisure and residential opportunity
- Outline planning permission granted



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Welsh Government



BURRY PORT MASTERPLAN



Introduction

The transformation of Burry Port is underway and already a number of exciting developments are being delivered, with more in the pipeline.

Burry Port offers 14 miles of landscaped parkland, with stunning views of the Gower Peninsula and Carmarthen Bay, providing an ideal base for exploring the South and West Wales coastline.

The regeneration of Burry Port Harbour is a major project supported by the Llanelli Waterside Joint Venture between Carmarthenshire County Council and Welsh Government. Investment has already been made in infrastructure and transport to make the area more accessible and to strengthen the link between the Millennium Coastal Path and town centre.

The masterplan of the area provides diverse development opportunities for commercial, retail, leisure and tourism, alongside new residential units. Recent and future developments opportunities include:

Ysgol Parc y Twyn

The new £9.6 million state-of-the-art Parc y Twyn School has recently been completed, providing spacious and inspiring places to learn, within a building of the highest energy standards, providing Passivhaus and BREEAM Excellent status.

Glanmor Terrace Development Site

The Council's Homes & Safer Communities Section are currently delivering a scheme of 32 eco-friendly homes, following a £4million funding package secured from Welsh Government.





New RNLI Building

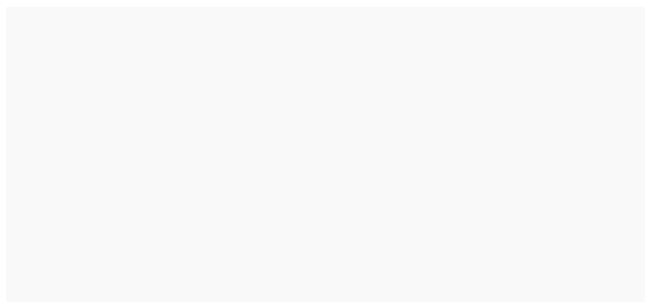
The new Lifeboat Station, located on the harbour front, offers major improvements for the RNLI crew and members of the public.

The building, which has been equipped with solar panels and ground source heating, will now house the two lifeboats in the same building.



Enterprise Village

The site will provide 10,500 sq m of employment space with an element of live work units and possible marine related uses to support and promote harbour activity.



Marina

Burry Port Marina offers 450 berths, enabling year-round cruising along the beautiful coastline. The marina is managed by The Marine Group and as part of the wider masterplan for the harbour, further plans are in place to upgrade and redevelop the marina area.

Planning permission has recently been granted for conversion of the former RNLI lifeboat station to a new marina offices and shower/toilet facilities.

Residential Site

The Grillo site at Burry Port was recently acquired by the Council to facilitate delivery of a residential scheme with the adjacent land held by the Llanelli Waterside Joint Venture. The first phase of this development will regenerate a brownfield site of 12.9 acres to provide approximately 320 residential dwellings and 465 sq m (5,005 sq ft) of retail and leisure use, further enhancing and complementing the offering at Burry Port Harbour.

A further, adjacent site of approximately 2.28 acres will be brought forward as a second phase to provide circa 40 residential units

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