

# SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 20 December 2021

**PRESENT:** Councillor G. Thomas (Chair)

**Councillors:**

S.M. Allen, K.V. Broom, I.W. Davies, R.E. Evans, W.T. Evans, M.J.A. Lewis, K. Lloyd, K. Madge, E.M.J.G. Schiavone, B. Thomas, D.T. Williams and D.E. Williams (In place of K. Davies)

**Also in attendance:**

Councillor J. Tremlett, Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health

**The following Officers were in attendance:**

J. Morgan, Head of Homes & Safer Communities  
A. Williams, Head of Integrated Services  
S. Sauro, Performance, Analysis & Systems Manager  
E. Evans, Principal Democratic Services Officer  
S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator  
K. Evans, Assistant Democratic Services Officer  
E. Bryer, Democratic Services Officer

**Virtual Meeting - 2.00 pm - 3.05 pm**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K. Davies and B.A.L. Roberts.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.**

Councillor	Minute No (s)	Nature of Interest
K. Madge	4 - 2021/22 Quarter 2 - Performance Report (1st April to 30th September 2021) Relevant to this Scrutiny	Daughter works in Social Care.

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

**3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

**4. 2021/22 QUARTER 2 - PERFORMANCE REPORT (1ST APRIL TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021) RELEVANT TO THIS SCRUTINY**

The Committee considered the Quarter 2 Performance Report. The report showed progress as at the end of Quarter 2 - 2021/22 of the deliverables (Actions and Measures) linked to the Corporate Strategy and the 13 Well-being Objectives.

The Committee noted that 2021/2022 was the first year that the Authority would self-evaluate and report on, under the terms of the new Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, especially Part 6 of the Act on Performance and Governance.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care drew the committee's attention to the two off target objectives.

- WBO13 – Better Governance and use of Resources – the delay in the roll out of the eclipse system to March had impacted this work.
- WB07 – Help people live healthy lives – referrals to the National Exercise Referral Scheme had been impacted due to covid restrictions but had improving now that restrictions had been eased.

A number of questions were raised to which the officers responded. The main matters were as follows:

- Concern was expressed regarding the scale of childhood obesity and how the interventions and referral schemes appeared to be failing.  
The Head of Integrated Services advised that the Exercise Referral Scheme was free to all participants. The scheme was accessible to adults following a referral from a professional such as a GP. The scheme was targeted towards the older and frailer individuals. The Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care advised that schools had various initiatives such as healthy eating programmes, breakfast clubs and walk a mile every day to help alleviate childhood obesity.
- It was asked if figures and/or anecdotal evidence was available regarding anti-social behaviour in relation to WBO8 Support community cohesion, resilience, and safety.  
The Head of Homes & Safer Communities advised that he did not have the direct figures, but these would be provided to the committee at a later date. It was confirmed that service requests regarding anti-social behaviour had risen since the relaxation of covid restrictions. It was noted that there were no major issues in Carmarthenshire however, the Community Cohesion Team were monitoring the situation on a daily basis.
- In relation to WBO9 Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later years, it was asked if there were mechanisms in place to monitor if people were claiming the benefits that they were entitled to.  
The Head of Integrated Services advised that Delta Wellbeing worked with individuals and signposted them to the relevant agencies for benefit advice.
- Concern was expressed regarding the recovery of outstanding debts and the impact this would have on individuals who were already suffering financial hardship.  
The Head of Integrated Services advised that social care services were means tested to determine how much an individual could afford to pay. Assurance was given that no individual was charged outside of the national parameters, and this was currently capped at a means tested contribution of a maximum of £100 per week for care at home. The Committee was advised that the non-payment of on-going charges would be dealt with sensitively and payment plans put in place to deal with any arrears. It was also stated that should someone in residential care be unable to pay, the

Authority had the option of taking out a charge on their property so that the debt could be recovered from the estate at a later date.

- Reference was made to WBO12 Promote Welsh Language & Culture and how heartening it was to see that the target had been met. It was asked if staff had recently shown more of an interest in learning the Welsh language and how was the target set.

The Head of Integrated Services stated that the department actively encouraged all staff to improve their Welsh Language skills. The Committee was advised that there wasn't a set numerical target and that it was about actively promoting the Welsh language and encouraging staff to learn. Assurance was given that the department had a number of Welsh speakers and that should a client wish for an assessment to be undertaken in Welsh the department would be able to provide it.

- Concern was expressed regarding the closure of day centres and how some organisations had been able to maintain services and remain open despite the pandemic.

The Head of Integrated Services advised that in light of the guidelines continually changing this had been a difficult service to maintain. The Authority had taken a different approach for the varying client groups. With younger adults, the service closed early in the pandemic but re-opened quickly albeit on a scaled down basis. Support was also being provided at home and in other environments such as leisure centres. It was stated that the situation was more complex with older and more vulnerable people. Virtual day support had been offered as well as 1-2-1 support. Some had declined the alternative service and others had engaged well. The Authority was currently planning how to re-open the day centre service early in the new year however this would be dependent on the prevailing covid situation. It was recognised that things could have been done differently however the priority was on managing the risks. The Committee was advised that Carmarthenshire's approach was consistent with the rest of Wales and contact and support had been maintained throughout.

The Committee expressed thanks to the Head of Integrated services for regularly attending and positively contributing to the Scrutiny Committee meetings.

**UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.**

## **5. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT**

The Committee received an explanation for the non-submission of the following scrutiny reports.

- Mental Health Update
- Services and Support for Children and Young People

Concern was expressed regarding the non-submission of the Mental Health Update Report and the number of non-submissions received generally.

**RESOLVED that the explanation for the non-submission be noted.**

**6. FORTHCOMING ITEMS**

**RESOLVED** that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2022 be noted.

**7. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 29TH NOVEMBER, 2021**

**UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 be signed as a correct record.

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**CHAIR**

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**DATE**