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| Councillor H. Jones | 8. Charging Policy – Social Care Charges amendments to current policy | Personal and Prejudicial – late father had received care |
| Cllr. M. James | 8. Charging Policy – Social Care Charges amendments to current policy | Personal and Prejudicial – husband’s aunt receives care |

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

4. STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

The Committee considered the Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Care Services 2023/24 which detailed the performance of social care services in the county.

There was 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.

It was noted that the report was still in draft and would be further revised prior to completion.

The Director of Community Services highlighted some of the key headline issues detailed within the report.

The Chair thanked the Director of Community Services and staff involved for their hard work in preparing the report.

Amongst the questions/observations raised on the report were the following:-

- It was suggested that the word children be included in the explanation of the acronym (UASC).
- In response to a query regarding funding of nurse care beds and impact on budget, the Director informed members that the authority was undertaking various initiatives to ensure that residential care aligns more closely with nursing care requirements. There had not been corresponding increase in district nursing resources, which is likely to create additional pressures. Delays in care are prevalent, exacerbating the challenges in meeting patients needs. The local authority’s role is crucial, it is fundamentally about ensuring that individuals receive the care they require. The authority maintains a strong relationship with healthcare providers, focusing on refining pathways related to admissions, lengths of stay and discharge processes.

- In response to a question regarding what the advantages of the authority operating its own residential homes were, the Director stated that the authority would not rely solely on the private sector. It is anticipated that three units could be established over the next 30 years and the authority is currently working closely with health partners.
- A concern was raised about the low number of complaints that were responded to within the specified timeframe. In response, the Director clarified the situation by explaining the statutory timelines. The Director informed the committee, that a majority of complaints are successfully resolved at stage I, within the designated timeframe. However, in cases where the issues are more complex, it may be necessary to extend the timeline, but only with the agreement of all parties involved, which typically occurs at stage II
- In response to a query regarding the Welsh language, the Director emphasised that effective communication is crucial, and it is essential to engage in the clients preferred language. The Director explained that some individuals preferred to have assessments in Welsh, while requiring documentation in English, indicating that there is further work to do in this area. It is vital to avoid situations where interactions in English lead to subpar assessments.
- A request was made to include additional information in the report regarding the work of Delta/Llesiant, given its significant role within authority.

UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

5. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2024/25

The Committee considered the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report in relation to the Health & Social Services, which provided an update on the latest budgetary position as at 30th June, 2024 in respect of the 2024/25 financial year.

The Health & Social Services was forecasting an overspend of £5,667k on the revenue budget. The main variances on capital schemes indicated a forecasted variance of £0k against a net budget of £728k on social care projects, and a -£14k variance against the Children Services projects net budget of £136k.

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

- In reply to an inquiry about the in-house agency pilot initiated in the Llanelli area in May 2024, the Head of Housing conveyed to the members that there are plans to extend this approach to Llandeilo, Newcastle Emlyn and St Clears in the near future. It is expected that as the in-house agency develops, additional savings will be realised, significantly alleviating cost pressures.
- In response to a query regarding the £300,00 legal expenses, members

were updated that a review was underway, considering the potential recruitment of in-house personnel.

UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

6. REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT 2023/24

The Committee considered the Revenue Budget Outturn Report for 2023/24 which provided an end of year financial position. It was noted that the Health and Social Service showed a net variance of -£8,786k against the 2023/24 approved budget.

The report included information relating to the following:-

- Summary position for the services with the Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee remit;
- Report on Main Variances on agreed budgets;
- Detailed variances;
- Details of the Savings Monitoring position for the end of the year.

A number of questions were raised, the main matters were as follows:

- It was asked if reference to the recent Task and Finish report on Obesity could be included into report.

UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

7. THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24 (DRAFT)

[Note: during discussion Councillor Alex Evans declared an interest on disabled facilities grants and left the meeting during the debate]

The Committee considered the Council's draft Annual Report for the period 2023/24 which had been produced in line with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021. The Authority must publish an Annual Report on performance based on a self-assessment approach each year and under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the Authority was also required to publish an Annual Report on its Well-being Objectives.

Consideration was given to the information detailed within the Annual Report relevant to the remit of the Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

The following questions/observations were raised on the report:-

- In response for an update on the take up for the exercise referral scheme, the Head of Integrated Services informed the Committee that data was available and would be shared outside of the meeting.
- The Committee inquired about the status of the backlog for disabled facilities grant and whether any progress had been made in this regard. The Head of Housing acknowledged that this area continued to pose challenges but expressed optimism that the recent injection of resources

would lead to improved turnaround times.

- In response to a question regarding data for domiciliary care in care homes and for residents in their own homes, it was stated that comparative data is available and would be distributed outside of the meeting to members.
- The Committee was informed that the authority had multiple instances of residents providing care for their relatives at home. These individual cases are regularly evaluated at the hospital, and only when all other options have been explored, do individuals move to care homes.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Council's Annual Report 2023/24 be received.

8. CHARGING POLICY - SOCIAL CARE CHARGES AMENDMENTS TO CURRENT POLICY

(NOTE: 1

1. Councillor H.Jones, having earlier declared an interest in this item, re-declared that interest and left the meeting during its consideration.
2. Councillor M.James, having earlier declared an interest in this item, re-declared that interest, stayed for the debate and voted.)

The Committee was asked to review and assess the proposed changes to the Social Care Charging Policy.

The key changes being proposed within the report were:

1. To introduce an Annual Management fee for Managing Deputyship, Appointeeships, and Protection of Property cases.
2. To charge Service Users in Care Homes the full charge for Holidays, short stays away from the Care Home.
3. To charge in full for Hospital admissions or Temporary absences from the Care Home for a maximum period of 4 weeks.
4. To charge a set admin fee for Self-Funded residents who ask the authority to arrange their Care Home placement on their behalf.
5. To introduce a management fee for formal Deferred Payments, and where charges are held against a property.
6. To change the basis of the calculation for "Additional Costs" for Out of County Placements.
7. To amend the policy to include the Night-Time component of Attendance Allowance (AA) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) into the Financial Assessment

A number of questions were raised, the main matters were as follows:

- In response to a query, members noted that there would be an annual fee of £520 plus an additional fee of £100 for new referrals.
- In response to a query regarding charging for temporary absences whilst at

hospital, it was clarified that the decision would depend on whether the absence was temporary or permanent. In such cases, alternative care options would be explored. Comparative data on this matter would be distributed after the meeting.

- Members were advised that the report presented comparisons with neighbouring authorities and indicated that there would be an alignment of fees between the counties within the Hywel Dda region.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

9. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

The Committee considered an update on delivery to date against the Children and Transformation Programme plan and programme measures. The service have developed a vision and principles required for a modern children's social services function.

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

- In response to a query regarding the financial impact due to Glyn Mwrwg not opening as a children's home, the Director informed members that various options were being explored and that any delays were financially detrimental, as reflected in this year's expenditures. The authority must decide whether to construct new facilities, acquire existing ones, or modify current buildings while managing the market and budget effectively. Carmarthenshire has the lowest number of looked-after children in Wales and the spending per capita is lower than in most other regions, with fewer children in residential care. This along with schools, remain top priority and the authority's services continue to perform relatively well.
- The Director informed members that the authority had submitted a proposal for a re-balancing grant.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

10. 2024/25 QUARTER 1 - PERFORMANCE REPORT (01/04/2024-30/06/2024) RELEVANT TO THIS SCRUTINY

The Committee considered the 2024/25 Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 1, which set out the progress against actions and measures linked to the Corporate Strategy and the Well-being objectives relevant to the Committee's remit.

The Committee noted that overall, 85% of the actions and measures were on target.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

11. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

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

- Progress Update Against the Cabinet Visions & Actions
- Llesiant/Delta Annual Report Update – scheduled for Committee on 28/11/24
- Youth Justice Plan – scheduled for Committee on 28/11/24
- Update on Early Help Strategy – scheduled for Committee on 28/11/24

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

12. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 28th November, 2024 be noted.

13. HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND REFERRALS UPDATE

The Committee received a report which detailed the progress achieved in relation to requests or referrals emerging from previous meetings of the Health and Social Services Scrutiny Committee during the 2024/25 municipal year.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report detailing progress in relation to actions, requests or referrals emerging from previous scrutiny meetings be noted.

14. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 25 JULY 2024

UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 25th July, 2024 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE