

# Document Pack

## HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 25 JULY 2024

**PRESENT:** Councillor G.H. John (Chair)

**Councillors (In Person):**

B. Davies M. James F. Walters

**Councillors (Virtually):**

K. Davies A. Evans D. Owen P.T. Warlow  
J. Williams

**Also in attendance (In Person):**

Councillor J. Tremlett, Cabinet Member for Health & Social Services

**Also Present (In Person):**

A. Bracey, Head of Adult Social Care  
J. Jones, Acting Head of Integrated Services  
R. Page, Senior Business Support Manager  
L. Brown, Commissioning & Contracting Manager  
D. Jones, Lead Officer, Direct Payments  
A. Eynon, Principal Translator  
M. Runeckles, Members Support Officer  
E. Bryer, Democratic Services Officer

**Also Present (Virtually):**

R. Morris, Members Support Officer

**Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 11.35 am**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Donoghue, H. Jones and B.A.L. Roberts.

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

There were no declarations of personal interest or of any prohibited party whips.

**3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)**

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

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

#### 4. DIRECT PAYMENTS

The Committee considered the Direct Payment Service Report which they had requested. The report provided an up-date on the Direct Payments service in Carmarthenshire. It set out the progress that had been made since the management and support function was transferred to Carmarthenshire County Council.

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

- In response to a query regarding why the Sum of Active Week's cost per population group was low for Mental Health, officers advised that typically the number of direct payments for Carmarthenshire individuals with Mental Health was reflected across Wales. It was stated that Mental Health support could be more fluctuating with the peaks and troughs of the care needs of the individuals but that direct payments was still an active offer for all. It was highlighted that some of those included within the figures for Learning Disabilities often had dual diagnosis so they may have a Mental Health issue and also Learning Disabilities.
- In reference to the high figures for Learning Disabilities, it was asked if this was higher due to less activities happening in the communities. The Commissioning and Contracting Manager advised that through Direct Payments, people were having the opportunity to do the things that they're interested in while supported by a PA. It was noted that there had been a shift towards personalisation of care and support planning and people were exercising their choice and control and community support was the largest area of activity. It was stated that the number of recipients receiving community support was high and that it was very much about people having the opportunity to do the things that mattered to them. Additionally, the Commissioning and Contracting Manager advised that the Authority was looking at opportunities where pooled Direct Payments could benefit groups of people who have shared interests. The Head of Adult Social Care advised that part of the plan was to look at a more cost-effective service and as an example stated that you may have five individuals going to the same event taken by five Personal Assistants and that by pooling payments this would save resources.
- It was asked how the Authority knew that the payments were being spent appropriately. In response, the Senior Business Support Manager advised that one of the big drivers for bringing the service back in-house was to ensure more rigorous checks and the application of financial regulations. It was advised that improvements had been made however there were still some areas of concern that needed to be addressed by working closely with the Social Workers and the Direct Payments Advisors who were dealing with the families on a day-to-day basis.

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

- It was asked if there was a waiting list of people waiting to be assessed. Officers advised that there wasn't a waiting list however there were challenges around the recruitment of PA's however work was continuing to both communicate and increase the exposure of the role and to improve retention.

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

## **5. 2023/24 QUARTER 4 - PERFORMANCE REPORT RELEVANT TO THIS SCRUTINY CABINET VISION ACTION AND MEASURES**

The Committee considered the 2023/24 Quarter 4 - Performance Report Relevant to this Scrutiny's Cabinet Vision Action and Measures. The report showed the progress as at the end of Quarter 4 – 2023/24 of the deliverables for the Cabinet Vision.

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

- In response to a query regarding the Task & Finish Group that had been established to focus on the development of a rehab model for the Community hospitals, the Acting Head of Integrated Services advised that the Task & Finish included the Council and the Health Board and involved a number of clinical and medical professionals, therapy leads, social workers and nurses. It was stated that the group was looking at ways of improving the bed-based offer and to maximise outcomes for people. Currently the specific area of work was in relation to Amman Valley Community Hospital and was looking to mirror the roll out of the model implemented at Ty Pili Pala which is the bed based intermediate care centre located in Llys Y Bryn care home. The work had already resulted in the reduction of hospital stay by a third.
- In response to a query regarding the Section 33 agreement, the Acting Head of Integrated Services advised that the overarching legal document had been completed but the supporting schedules which were critical to the agreement had yet to be finalised. These schedules contained the detail of what each service delivers and underpins the overarching legal document. Work on the urgent care and flow schedule was almost complete but there was still work to be done on prevention and proactive care pathway and the long-term pathway schedules.
- In reference to the issue regarding the increase in the rates of suicide and self-harm in the County the Head of Adult Social Care advised that a significant amount of work was being undertaken including the establishment of a suicide review group. The group would be looking to see if there were any themes and geographical and demographical areas of risk that would drive the prevention strategy. In addition, it was stated that work was continuing on ensuring people were made aware of where to turn to for support. The Committee was assured that the mission was to

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reduce the number of suicides in the region and that this was being undertaken collaboratively with partner organisation.

- In response to a query regarding the appointment of a temporary co-ordinator role the Head of Adult Social Care advised that the post had been created as it was recognised that there were a number of initiatives and third sector groups providing support around suicide prevention but that there was limited cohesion or understanding on where to go or how to access these services. Funding had been provided by one of the GP clusters to appoint a person for an initial three months but they had now been in post for around nine months. Significant work had been done with 'mapping and gapping' and had now progressed to connecting organisation with each other. Ultimately the work would result in a Suicide Prevention Strategy for Carmarthenshire. While there was a regional strategy and a regional coordinator it was considered that the issue was significant enough for Carmarthenshire to warrant their own strategy and co-ordinator and that consideration was being given to a permanent resource for this important work.
- Clarification was requested regarding the 273 average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant. The Acting Head of Integrated Services advised that there would be multiple areas including the assessment for the work to be undertaken and also the appointment of the contractors to undertake the work. A more detailed response would be provided to the Committee however it was also noted that more people were now living at home independently which would have a knock-on effect on adaptations needed to enable people to live safely at home.
- An update was requested on the acquisition and development of the Llanelli home. As the Head of Children and Families was not in attendance an update would be provided following the meeting.
- In response to a query regarding details on how and why the number of children on the at-risk register had reduced the Committee was advised that the Head of Children and Families would provide the information following the meeting.
- It was asked how many adopters were now in place following the recruitment of the Marketing Recruitment Officer. Committee was advised that the Head of Children and Families would provide the information following the meeting.
- An update was requested on the collaborative work undertaken with Foster Wales in increasing and improving the recruitment and retention of foster carers. The Committee would receive an update from the Head of Children and Families following the meeting.

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

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**6. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT**

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

- Update on Early Help Strategy
- Dementia Strategy

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

**7. FORTHCOMING ITEMS**

**RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2024 be noted.**

**8. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 13TH JUNE, 2024**

**UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2024 be signed as a correct record.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CHAIR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

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

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