

Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the **Council of the City and County of Swansea** to be held in the Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Guildhall / MS Teams on Thursday, 6 October 2022 at 5.00 pm.

Watch Online: <https://bit.ly/3qMGREp>

The following business is proposed to be transacted:

1. **Apologies for Absence.**
2. **Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**
www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests
3. **Minutes.** 1 - 8
To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.
4. **Written Responses to Questions asked at the Last Ordinary Meeting of Council.** 9 - 10
5. **Announcements of the Presiding Member.**
6. **Announcements of the Leader of the Council.**
7. **Public Questions.**
Questions can be submitted in writing to Democratic Services democracy@swansea.gov.uk up until noon on the working day prior to the meeting. Written questions take precedence. Public may attend and ask questions in person if time allows. Questions must relate to items on the open part of the agenda and will be dealt within a 10 minute period.
8. **Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service - presentation by Chief Fire Officer.**
9. **Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22.** 11 - 34
10. **Annual Report 2021-2022 - Director of Social Services.** 35 - 115
11. **Review of Revenue Reserves.** 116 - 143
12. **West Glamorgan Regional Market Stability Report 2022.** 144 - 245

13. Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond.	246 - 256
14. Recruitment of a Community / Town Councillor to the Standards Committee.	257 - 258
15. Membership of Committees.	259 - 260
16. Councillors' Questions.	261 - 264
17. Notice of Motion - Nuclear Free Wales.	265

Webcasting: This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet Site. By participating you are consenting to be filmed and the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and / or training purposes.

You are welcome to speak Welsh in the meeting.

Please inform us by noon, two working days before the meeting.

Next Meeting: Friday, 28 October 2022 at 2.00 pm



Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Guildhall,
Swansea.

Monday, 26 September 2022

To: All Members of the Council

Agenda Item 3.



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Council

Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Thursday, 1 September 2022 at 5.00 pm

Present: Councillor J P Curtice (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P Downing
C R Doyle
M Durke
C R Evans
V M Evans
E W Fitzgerald
R Francis-Davies
L S Gibbard
F M Gordon
K M Griffiths
J A Hale
T J Hennegan
C A Holley
B Hopkins
D H Hopkins
L James
Y V Jardine
J W Jones
L R Jones
M H Jones
S M Jones

Councillor(s)

E J King
E T Kirchner
H Lawson
A S Lewis
M B Lewis
W G Lewis
P Lloyd
P M Matthews
P N May
H M Morris
D Phillips
C L Philpott
S Pritchard
A Pugh
B J Rowlands
R V Smith
R C Stewart
G D Walker
L V Walton
T M White
R Fogarty

Councillor(s)

S Bennett
P N Bentu
A Davis
C M J Evans
M Bailey
N Furlong
H J Gwilliam
V A Holland
D H Jenkins
S Joy
M W Locke
N L Matthews
J D McGettrick
F D O'Brien
A J O'Connor
J E Pritchard
S J Rice
M S Tribe
R A Williams
A J Jeffery

Officer(s)

Huw Evans
Tracey Meredith
Ben Smith
Samantha Woon
Martin Nicholls

Head of Democratic Services
Chief Legal Officer / Monitoring Officer
Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer
Democratic Services Officer
Interim Chief Executive

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): A M Day, P R Hood-Williams, M Jones, S E Keeton, R D Lewis, K M Roberts, A H Stevens, L G Thomas and W G Thomas

37. Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

The Chief Legal Officer gave advice regarding the potential personal and prejudicial interests that Councillors and / Officers may have on the agenda.

The Head of Democratic Services reminded Councillors and Officers that the "Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests" sheet should only be completed if the Councillor / Officer had an interest to declare. Nil returns were not required. Councillors and Officers were also informed that any declarable interest must be made orally and in writing on the sheet.

In accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea no interests were declared.

38. Minutes.

Resolved that the following Minutes be approved and signed as a correct record:

1) Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 7 July 2022 subject to the following amendments:

i) Minute 32 "Membership of Committees". Resolution 3 being amended to read "Add Councillor S A Joy".

ii) Minute 33 "Councillors' Questions – Question 7" being amended slightly to reflect that Councillor L R Jones asked for wood skips to be placed at Gorseinon as well as Clyne. The Minute should read:

"Councillor L R Jones asked if wood skips could be placed at Clyne Civic Amenity Site and Gorseinon Civic Amenity Site prior to be taken to the Bailing Plant, Llansamlet. This approach would reduce the need for vehicles to travel to Llansamlet thereby reducing greenhouses gases.

The Cabinet Members for Community stated that a written response would be provided."

2) Ceremonial Meeting of Council held on 22 July 2022.

39. Written Responses to Questions asked at the Last Ordinary Meeting of Council.

The Chief Legal Officer submitted an information report setting out the written responses to questions asked at the last Ordinary Meeting of Council.

40. Announcements of the Presiding Member.

a) Condolences

i) Anna Holland, Daughter of Councillor Victoria Holland

The Presiding Member referred with sadness to the recent unexpected death of Anna Holland, daughter of Councillor Victoria Holland.

ii) Honorary Alderman, Former Councillor & Former Lord Mayor June Stanton

The Presiding Member referred with sadness to the recent death of Honorary Alderman, Former Councillor & Former Lord Mayor June Stanton. June represented the Sketty Ward for approximately 29 years serving:

- Swansea City Council – 5 May 1988 to 31 March 1996.
- West Glamorgan County Council – 4 May 1989 – 31 March 1996.
- City & County of Swansea - 4 May 1995 to 4 May 2017.

June was Lord Mayor 2013-2014 and became an Honorary Alderman on 24 August 2017.

iii) Former Councillor Ron Thomas

The Presiding Member referred with sadness to the recent death of Former Councillor Ron Thomas. Ron represented the Gowerton Ward for approximately 13 years serving:

- City & County of Swansea - 4 May 1995 to 1 May 2008.

iv) Former Chief Executive of Swansea City Council, Andrew Boatswain

The Presiding Member referred with sadness to the recent death of Former Chief Executive of Swansea City Council, Andrew Boatswain.

All present sat in silence as a mark of sympathy and respect.

b) Green Flag Community Awards

The Presiding Member stated that the Friends of Mayhill Washing Lake and Community Food Garden had yet again received the Green Flag Community Award. This is the fourth year in a row that they have won it.

She also paid tribute to and thanked all volunteers involved with the 14 Parks / Green smaller community-based gardens and green spaces in Swansea.
Those areas being:

- i) Cadle Heath Local Nature Reserve.
- ii) Clydach Community Garden.
- iii) Coed Bach Park, Pontarddulais.
- iv) Crwys Community Woodland.
- v) GRAFT: A Soil Based Syllabus.
- vi) Llys Nini.
- vii) Mayhill Washing Lake & Community Food Garden.
- viii) Pennard Garden Society Wellness Garden.
- ix) Polly's Park.
- x) Rosehill Quarry Park.
- xi) St Madoc Centre.
- xii) Swansea Canal.
- xiii) Swansea Community Farm Swansea.
- xiv) Swansea Vale Nature Reserve.

The work by these volunteers is invaluable to Swansea and its citizens.

c) Corrections / Amendments to the Council Summons.

i) Minute 47 “Notice of Motion – Funding Formulas”

The Presiding Member stated that Councillors J P Curtice, M B Lewis, W G Lewis, N L Matthews, K M Roberts & L V Walton should be added to the list of those submitting the Notice of Motion.

41. Announcements of the Leader of the Council.

a) Cabinet Portfolios – Minor Amendments

The Leader of the Council stated that he had made some minor amendments to the Cabinet Portfolios to clarify some responsibilities. He asked the Head of Democratic Services to update the Council Constitution and to send a link to all Councillors.

b) Shortlisted for Council of the Year in the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Annual Service Awards 2022

The Leader of the Council stated that Swansea Council has been shortlisted for Council of the Year in the APSE Annual Service Awards 2022. The Award recognises the best and most innovative Local Authority in the UK. APSE say that focusing on their delivery of frontline services, the Award seeks to celebrate those councils who are achieving excellent results in a wide range of different service areas.

The Council had also been shortlisted for awards in the following areas:

- Best Workforce Initiative.
- Best Housing, Regeneration or New Build Initiative.
- Best Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship Initiative.
 - Swansea Council – One person's rubbish is another's treasure.
 - Swansea Council – Swansea Market: At the heart of the city centre and the local economy.
- Best Service Team: Housing, Construction and Building Service.
- Best Service Team: Street Cleansing and Streetscene Service (Public Realm).
- Best Service Team: Cemetery and Crematorium Service.

The awards will be held in the Swansea Arena where the winner of the prestigious APSE Overall Council of the Year Award 2022 will be announced at a Charity Dinner on Thursday 15 September 2022.

c) Shortlisted for City of the Year in the Estates Gazette (EG) Awards 2022

The Leader of the Council stated that Swansea Council had been shortlisted for City of the Year in the Estates Gazette Awards 2022. The Award seeks to celebrate the UK's cities and the work they are doing to create liveable, successful places.

The awards ceremony will be held on 2 November 2022.

d) Volvo 2022 World Triathlon Para Series Event – 6 August 2022 & Ironman 70.3 Swansea – 7 August 2022

The Leader of the Council stated that the Volvo 2022 World Triathlon Para Series event and Ironman 70.3 Swansea held recently attracted thousands of athletes and spectators. The events significantly boosted the local economy. He congratulated and thanked all involved.

e) Dragon Energy Island Tidal Lagoon

The Leader of Council provided an update.

42. Public Questions.

There were no public questions.

43. Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report 2021-2022.

The report was deferred to the next Ordinary Meeting of Council.

44. Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2021-2022.

The Head of Democratic Services submitted the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2021-2022 for information.

45. Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-2022.

The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee submitted the Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-2022 for information.

46. Councillors' Questions.

1) Part A 'Supplementary Questions'

Twelve (12) Part A 'Supplementary Questions' were submitted. The relevant Cabinet Member(s) responded by way of written answers contained in the Council Summons.

Those supplementary questions required a written response are listed below.

Question 1

Councillor J W Jones stated that previously independent consultation on cleanliness had been carried out. He asked that such consultations be recommenced.

The Cabinet Members for Community stated a written response would be provided.

2) Part B 'Questions not requiring Supplementary Questions'

Eleven (11) Part B 'Questions not requiring Supplementary Questions' were submitted.

47. Notice of Motion - Funding Formulas.

Proposed by Councillor R C Stewart and Seconded by Councillor A S Lewis.

"This council deplores the statement by the ex-chancellor Rishi Sunak that he has deliberately changed funding formulas to remove funding from deprived urban areas like Swansea and diverted them to leafy Tory held constituencies like Tunbridge Wells.

His public admission that he has redirected funding away from deprived communities should be condemned.

We are already aware that funding formula changes have already been made to funding which previously came via the EU and now comes via the shared prosperity fund.

The formula has been changed, despite opposition from Swansea council and the WLGA to exclude 'need' from the calculation.

Minutes of the Council (01.09.2022)
Cont'd

The new formula has resulted in a reduction of £35 per head for every person in the South West Wales region. The money has been diverted to communities in mid Wales.

This will mean communities in Swansea and the South West Wales region will lose £4.2m this year and £21m over the next 5 years.

We believe this to be unfair, unethical and contrary to the levelling up commitments made by U.K. government. It also mean local communities in South West Wales will be worse off as a result of the post Brexit funding arrangements despite many assurances to the contrary.

We call upon the Leader to write to the new Prime Minister to ask them to reverse the formula changes, and to commission an independent investigation into the claims made by Mr Sunak.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 30 “Voting” a recorded vote was requested. The voting on the amendment was recorded as follows:

For (57 Councillors)		
Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)
C Anderson	T J Hennegan	P Lloyd
S Bennett	V A Holland	M W Locke
P N Bentu	C A Holley	N L Matthews
P M Black	B Hopkins	P M Matthews
J P Curtice	D H Hopkins	J D McGettrick
A Davis	L James	H M Morris
P Downing	Y V Jardine	D Phillips
C R Doyle	A J Jeffery	C L Philpott
M Durke	D H Jenkins	J E Pritchard
C R Evans	J W Jones	S Pritchard
C M J Evans	M H Jones	A Pugh
V M Evans	S M Jones	S J Rice
R A Fogarty	S A Joy	R V Smith
R Francis-Davies	E J King	R C Stewart
N Furlong	E T Kirchner	M S Tribe
L S Gibbard	H Lawson	G D Walker
F M Gordon	A S Lewis	L V Walton
K M Griffiths	M B Lewis	T M White
H J Gwilliam	W G Lewis	R Andrew Williams

Against (0 Councillor(s))		
Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)
-	-	-

Abstain (5 Councillors)		
Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)
M Bailey	F D O'Brien	B J Rowlands
L R Jones	A J O'Connor	-

Minutes of the Council (01.09.2022)
Cont'd

Withdrawn from meeting due to declarable interest (0 Councillors)		
Councillor	Councillor	Councillor
-	-	-

Resolved that the Notice of Motion outlined above be adopted.

The meeting ended at 6.27 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 4.



Report of the Chief Legal Officer

Council – 6 October 2022

Written Responses to Questions asked at the Last Ordinary Meeting of Council

The report provides an update on the responses to Questions asked during the Meeting of Council held on 1 September 2022.

For Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It was agreed at Council on 8 April 2010 that a standing item be added to the Council Summons entitled “Written Responses to Questions Asked at the Last Ordinary Meeting of Council”.
- 1.2 A “For Information” report will be compiled by the Democratic Services Team collating all written responses from the last Ordinary Meeting of Council and placed in the Agenda Pack;
- 1.3 Any consequential amendments be made to the Council Constitution.

2. Responses

- 2.1 Responses to questions asked during the last ordinary meeting of Council are included as Appendix A.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix A (Questions & Responses)

**Providing Council with Written Responses to Questions asked at Council
1 September 2022**

1.	<p>Councillor J W Jones</p> <p>In relation to Minute 46 - Councillors Questions – Question 1</p> <p>Councillor J W Jones stated that previously independent consultation on cleanliness had been carried out. He asked that such consultations be recommenced.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Community (Services)</p> <p>Further to your supplementary question concerning ‘independent consultation on [street] cleanliness’, I can confirm that inspections of all Welsh Local Authorities are carried out by Keep Wales Tidy (KWT) under the Local Government Audit Management System (LEAMS). Annual reports are provided by KWT following bi-monthly inspections of a 6% sample of adopted highways. No reports were provided during 2019/20 and 2020/21 due to Covid-19.</p>
-----------	---

Agenda Item 9.



Report of the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee

Council – 1 September 2022

Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22

Purpose:	This report provides the Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report for the 2021/22 municipal year.
Policy Framework:	None
Consultation:	Legal, Finance and Access to Services.
Report Authors:	Paula O'Connor, Simon Cockings, Jeremy Parkhouse
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report for the 2021/22 Municipal Year is attached in Appendix 1. As the Chair of the Committee, I am pleased to present this report prepared by the Chief Auditor and Democratic Services that reflects on the work of the Governance & Audit Committee

2. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 2.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

2.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

2.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

2.2 The completion of the Integrated Impact Assessment Screening revealed that:

- The Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report has a low positive impact across all groups.
- It has been subject to consultation with Legal, Access to Services and the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee.
- All Well-being of Future Generations Act considerations are positive and any risks identified are low.
- The overall impact of the Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report is positive as it will support the Authority in its requirement to protect public funds.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 Part of the role of the Governance and Audit Committee as set out by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 is to make reports and recommendations in relation to the authority's financial affairs, including an assessment of the risk management and corporate government arrangements and the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 - Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22
Appendix 2 – Integrated Impact Assessment



Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22

City & County of Swansea

Contents

	Page
1. Foreword by the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee	2
2. Role of the Governance and Audit Committee	5
3. Work of the Governance and Audit Committee in 2021/22	7
4. Looking Forward	11
5. Committee Membership and Attendance	12
6. Future Governance and Audit Committee Meetings	13
7. Governance and Audit Committee Contact Details	13

1. Foreword by Mrs Paula O'Connor, Chair of the Audit Committee

- 1.1 The Council has continued to face significant challenges during 2021/22 with the ongoing impact of the COVID virus. Once again I pay tribute to all staff and officers of the Council in dealing admirably with the challenges brought about by the COVID pandemic. Throughout this year officers of the Council as well as the Council's Partners were fully committed to meeting their responsibilities. I also acknowledge that the Council continued its efforts to maintain continuity of governance.
- 1.2 I am pleased to present this report prepared by the Chief Auditor and Democratic Services that reflects on the work of the Governance & Audit Committee.
- 1.3 This report provides an overview of the Governance & Audit Committee's work in the municipal year 2021/22. On 9th June 2021 the Governance & Audit Committee considered the election of Chair for 2021/22 Municipal Year where it was resolved that I be re-elected as Chair. At the meeting on 13th July 2021 Councillor P R Hood-Williams was elected Vice-Chair for the 2021/22 Municipal Year. In addition, at the September 2021 meeting the Committee considered the requirements of the Local Government and Election (Wales) Act 2021 (the Act) that states that the Governance & Audit Committee shall consist of one third Lay Members. The Committee was asked to consider its new size and the implication that one third would be Lay Members. The recommendation made by Members to Council was to opt for 15 members consisting of 10 Councillors and 5 Lay Members. The Council approved this and in March 2022 progress was made in recruiting for three Lay Members.
- 1.4 As a result of the Act the Governance & Audit Committee Terms of Reference was amended to reflect the new membership plus the additional roles of the Committee. The new Act requires careful coordination between the Governance & Audit Committee and the Scrutiny Committee as both embark on the new co-ordinated responsibilities. It is a benefit at this time that the Scrutiny Committee Chair is also a Member of the Governance & Audit Committee. I have also ensured that the Work Programme of the Scrutiny Committee is appended to every meeting of the Governance & Audit Committee. With regard to the Governance & Audit Committee's responsibility to review the annual Self-Assessment Report and also the Panel Performance Assessment Report, I have liaised with the Chair of the Performance Committee who has agreed to attend the Governance & Audit Committee when these reports are presented.
- 1.5 The Committee's terms of reference form part of each Agenda as an aide to ensure that Members are sighted of the Committee's effectiveness in satisfying its role. I have continually reviewed Committee Agendas in consultation with Democratic Services to ensure they meet the requirements of the Terms of Reference. In addition, I have liaised with the Deputy Chief Executive to establish a formal Training Programme for Members to include the new areas of responsibility plus a clear understanding of the roles of the

Performance Committee and Scrutiny Committees that also consider these subject matters.

- 1.6 Part 5 of the Local Governance and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provided for the establishment through regulations of Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs). This resulted in the establishment of the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee. At the September 2021 Governance & Audit Committee further insight was given to Members as to the current status and progress of the CJC and then in December 2021 the Governance & Audit Committee were informed of progress and next steps being taken in establishing a formal governance framework. The status and progress of the work of the CJC will be brought back to the Governance & Audit Committee during the early part of 2022 where consideration will be given to any further changes to the Terms of Reference of the Governance & Audit Committee.
- 1.7 Changes were taking place with the Management Structure in February 2021 and these changes remained under consideration and consultation during 2021/22. The Governance & Audit Committee have continued to express concern around the absence of the Workforce Strategy and the challenges placed on resource throughout 2021/22. In February 2022 the Strategic HR&OD Manager confirmed that a proposed Workforce Strategy had been developed for the financial year April 2022-2025. It was also confirmed that the Strategy took into consideration the Council's Corporate Plan "Delivery of a Successful and Sustainable Swansea" as well as the provisions of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Subject to any final changes the Strategy was to be launched in March 2022.
- 1.8 The Committee has previously reported on the shortfall in assurances being received around the Council's Risk Management arrangements. However, I have ensured that the Service Directors have attended the Governance & Audit Committee during the year to provide assurance to the Committee that individual functions are exercised effectively and there is economic, efficient and effective use of resources and effective governance.
- 1.9 The development and roll out of the new electronic risk management system continued into early 2021 and improvement had been made in the reporting format of the Risk Register. However, during the majority of 2021 the content of the Risk Report still required improvement. A Risk Report was presented to the Committee in September 2021, November 2021 and February 2022. It should be noted that additional Training had been undertaken along with Video Training access and towards the end of 2021/22 some improvement was recognised in the February 2022 report.
- 1.10 The new Act has placed responsibility on the Governance & Audit Committee to review the Council's draft response to the Panel Performance Assessment report, any Audit Wales recommendations arising from the Council's performance as well as the Council's draft annual Self-Assessment report. The Governance & Audit Committee Work Programme has been updated to reflect the presentation of these reports in 2022.

- 1.11 The Annual Complaints report was presented to the Governance & Audit Committee in December 2021. The Committee welcomed the report but noted that it was important not to overlap the work of Scrutiny Committee. The Chair of Scrutiny Committee confirmed that the Complaints report was due to be considered by Scrutiny in March 2022 but this meeting was cancelled.
- 1.12 The Committee has reviewed the work programme at each meeting, taking account of risks and priorities and in particular pandemic issues and Internal Audit Moderate Assurance reports issued.
- 1.13 I attended a further meeting of the All Wales Audit Committee Chairs network in September 2021 where there was opportunity to network, share ideas and problem solve with peers performing similar roles. The event was dedicated to understanding Governance and Audit Committee 'performance' responsibilities resulting from the Local Government Elections (Wales) Act 2021, to support us to discharge our new responsibilities effectively. Presentations were given by the Welsh Local Government Association and also the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales. An interactive section was also facilitated by Audit Wales to consolidate some of the learning from the Act.
- 1.14 The Governance & Audit Committee terms of reference states that the Committee “oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place”.
- 1.15 The Committee received the 2021/22 Internal Audit Plan and Charter on 20th April 2021 and has received reports regularly during the year from the Chief Internal Auditor. I expressed my gratitude to the Chief Auditor in progressing with the plan alongside the pressures of the pandemic and also for responding to a request to enhance the detail in the reports to provide further understanding of the work undertaken and the risks identified. During 2021/22 the Chief Auditor reported a number of Moderate Assurance audit reports that resulted in those responsible attending Governance & Audit Committee to give assurance that appropriate action was being taken where significant weaknesses in control were identified. During the year the Chief Internal Auditor updated the Governance & Audit Committee of those audit assignments that had to be deferred as a result of the pandemic impacts. The final Chief Internal Auditor opinion was presented to the Audit Committee in May 2021.
- 1.16 In March 2021 the Chief Internal Auditor presented the Draft Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22 and methodology applied. The Committee was able to support approval of the Plan to Council with the caveat that assurances had been obtained from the Chief Internal Auditor that the Plan was risk based and complied with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. The Committee would seek to gain further understanding of the scope of the reviews during 2021/22.

- 1.17 Audit Wales presented their 2021 Audit Plan to the Governance & Audit Committee on 20th April 2021, and has provided the Committee with regular updates to their work. The most recent update to the Quarter ending 31 December 2021 was presented on 8th March 2022. In 2017/18 and continuing to date the committee suggested that consideration be given to developing a tracker to give focus to improved completion of external audit recommendations. This work is yet to be completed, but I acknowledge the attempts being made to develop an electronic system to track action against recommendations. However in the interim the Scrutiny Committee has the opportunity to challenge non implementation of recommendations as well as the Governance & Audit Committee.
- 1.18 I have met during the period with the Deputy Chief Executive, S151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, Chief Internal Auditor and Audit Wales. When necessary during the year I have been in communication with the Chief Executive.
- 1.19 On 20th April 2021 the Committee received the 2021/22 Fraud Function Annual Plan. The 2020/21 Anti-Fraud Annual Report was received at the meeting in July 2021.
- 1.20 An additional report was presented to provide the Governance & Audit Committee with an update against progress being made against recommendations in the Audit Wales report 'Raising our Game - Tackling Fraud in Wales', in March 2021 with an update on progress in November 2021. The Committee noted that some further work was required to address all those recommendations.
- 1.21 Cllr Lesley Walton is the Governance & Audit Committee Representative on the Council's Governance Group. The Governance Group was established to review the production of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) during the year. The Group met in March 2022 to discuss the draft AGS for 2021/22. The draft AGS was presented to Corporate Management Team before being presented to the Governance & Audit Committee on the 31st May 2022.
- 1.22 I attended the Scrutiny Panel Conference 12th October 2021. The Governance & Audit Committee also received the Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report and Work Programme.

2. Role of the Governance and Audit Committee

- 2.1 The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act became law in January 2021. The Act has amended the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. The Act also extended the remit of the Governance and Audit committee, with Members now having additional responsibility to review and assess the Council's performance management and complaints handling procedures.
- 2.2 The Measure requires the Governance and Audit Committee to:
- Review and scrutinise the Council's financial affairs.

- Make reports and recommendations in relation to the Authority's financial affairs.
 - Review and assess the risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements of the Authority.
 - Make reports and recommendations to the Authority on the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements.
 - Oversee the Council's internal and external audit arrangements and review the financial statements prepared by the Authority.
 - Review the Council's draft response to the Panel Performance Assessment Report, and make any appropriate recommendations for changes.
 - Review and assess the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively and to make any associated reports and recommendations in relation to the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively.
- 2.3 The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 also stipulates that at least one third of the Governance and Audit Committee must be Lay Members. The current Chair of the Committee is a Lay Member and a second Lay Member was appointed to the Committee in November 2020. The Council is currently in the process of recruiting additional Lay Members to ensure the requirements of the Act are met for the new Municipal Year.
- 2.4 The work of the Governance and Audit Committee is structured so that the Committee can gain assurance over the areas identified above and to comply with its terms of reference as amended to reflect the changes introduced by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Terms of Reference of the Committee can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.5 This draft report describes the assurance that has been gained by the Governance and Audit Committee from various sources during 2021/22 and also outlines a number of other areas where briefings have been provided to the Committee.
- 2.6 The draft Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22 was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in May 2022 to provide Members with the opportunity to give their views on the assurances received and to identify the key messages arising from the work of the Committee during the year which should be reported to full Council.

3. Work of the Governance and Audit Committee in 2021/22

- 3.1 The Governance and Audit Committee has received regular reports in relation to standard agenda themes and received reports of interest based on risk, governance and internal control. Each aspect is reported on below.

Standard Items

Internal Audit Assurance

- 3.2 The Governance and Audit Committee approved the Internal Audit Charter 2021/22 as required by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.
- 3.3 The Committee also approved the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2022/23 and has received quarterly monitoring reports from the Chief Auditor showing progress against the 2021/22 Audit Plan.
- 3.4 The quarterly monitoring reports identified any audits that received a moderate or limited level of assurance along with an outline of the issues which led to the audit receiving the negative assurance level. A second quarterly report has also been presented to the Committee to allow members to review and monitor the implementation of the recommendations made in the internal audit reports that had been issued.
- 3.5 From April 2018 the relevant Head of Service and Service Manager (or Headteacher and Chair of Governors) have been required to attend the Governance and Audit Committee following a moderate or limited audit report being issued in order to provide an update to members as to what action is being taken to address the issues that have been highlighted by the audit.
- 3.6 The Internal Audit Annual Report for 2020/21 was reported to the Committee in May 2021. The report included a review of actual work completed compared to the Annual Plan.
- 3.7 The Internal Audit Annual Report for 2020/21 also included the Chief Auditor's opinion on the internal control environment which stated that, based on the audit testing carried out, reasonable assurance could be given that the systems of internal control were operating effectively and that no significant weaknesses were identified which would have a material impact on the Council's financial affairs.
- 3.8 However, it should be noted that the Committee has continued to raise concerns in relation to risk management arrangements across the Council. In addition, the Committee has also commented upon the weaknesses in internal control that are continuing to emerge as a result of staff resource pressures and reductions.
- 3.9 The Internal Audit Annual Report of School Audits 2020/21 was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in July 2021. This report summarised the findings of the thematic audits and a small number of school

audits undertaken during the year and identified some common themes across the schools that had been included in the audits undertaken.

Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 and 2021/22

- 3.10 The draft Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21 was presented to the Committee in May 2021 and the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 was presented to the Committee in May 2022, prior to the statements being reported to Council for approval.
- 3.11 A Governance Group was established by the Council in 2018/19 comprising of the Deputy Chief Executive, the Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, Strategic Delivery and Performance Manager and the Chief Auditor (in an advisory capacity). A member of the Governance and Audit Committee is also a member of the Group. The Group is tasked with overarching responsibility for ensuring existing corporate governance arrangements are effective across the Council.
- 3.12 The presentation of the draft Annual Governance Statements gave the Committee the opportunity to review and comment upon the Statements to ensure they properly reflected the assurances provided to the Committee.

Annual Statement of Accounts 2020/21

- 3.13 The Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer presented the draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21 for the Council in August 2021. Officers answered a number of queries raised by members of the Committee.
- 3.14 Following completion of the audit of the Statement of Accounts 2020/21, Audit Wales presented its ISA 260 reports on the audit of financial statements of the Council to the Governance and Audit Committee prior to the report going to full Council. The report presented the detailed findings of the audit and stated that Audit Wales's view was that the accounts gave a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council.

External Audit Assurance

- 3.15 As well as the Audit of the Statement of Accounts (ISA 260) reports mentioned above, Audit Wales also provided an update report at a number of the scheduled meetings. The reports outlined the progress being made in financial and performance audit work to the Committee.
- 3.16 Audit Wales also provided assurance to the Governance and Audit Committee by presenting the following reports:
- Audit Wales - ISA 260 Report - City and County of Swansea.
 - Audit Wales - Financial Sustainability Assessment - City and County of Swansea Council.
 - Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable – City and County of Swansea Council – December 2021.
 - Audit Wales Work Programme and Timetable – City & County of Swansea Council – March 2022.

- Audit Wales Report – City & County of Swansea Annual Audit Summary 2021.

3.17 The Audit Wales Annual Audit Summary 2021 Report (ISA 260) was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in August 2021. The report summarised the work undertaken by Audit Wales as part of their annual audit of the financial statements for 2020/21, which also highlighted the high quality of the draft statement of accounts. The auditors gave a qualified opinion on the Council's financial statements on 2nd September 2021, in line with the statutory deadline.

3.18 The report also outlined the findings of the additional financial sustainability assessment that Audit Wales completed in 2020/21. The review examined the financial sustainability of each Council in Wales, and concluded that the Council was well placed to maintain its financial sustainability and had a plan in place to strengthen some aspects of its financial management.

Implementation of Audit Recommendations

3.19 An important role undertaken by the Governance and Audit Committee is monitoring the implementation of agreed audit recommendations arising from both internal and external audit.

3.20 The implementation of any Internal Audit recommendations arising from fundamental audits is reported to the Governance and Audit Committee in the Recommendations Tracker Report. For 2020/21, the results of the tracker exercise showed that 76% of agreed recommendations had been implemented by September 2021.

3.21 The implementation of any high or medium risk recommendations arising from non-fundamental audits that received a moderate or limited level of assurance are subject to follow up visits by Internal Audit to confirm they have been implemented. The results of the follow up audits are reported to the Governance and Audit Committee in the Quarterly Internal Audit Monitoring Reports.

3.22 The Internal Controls Report presented to the Governance and Audit Committee by the external auditors includes any recommendations made as a result of their work and the action taken by management to implement the recommendations.

Governance and Risk Management

3.23 The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 makes the overview of risk management a function of the Governance and Audit Committee

3.24 The Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager provided regular updates to the Committee in relation to Risk Management throughout the year via the Quarterly Overall Status of Risk Reports.

3.25 A new Risk Management System was introduced in December 2019. Following the introduction of the new system, work was undertaken to

embed the new risk management processes across the Council. The Strategic Delivery and Performance Manager began presenting reports outlining the contents of the new Risk Management System from February 2021 and work has continued in year to enhance the reporting functionality of the system. Members have also highlighted concerns in relation to the lack of assurance that could be taken from some of the control measures that were recorded against the risks on the new system. Whilst progress has been made in this area in year, further improvements would be welcomed. This remains one of the key areas of focus for the Governance and Audit Committee in 2022/23.

Relationship with Scrutiny Function

3.26 The Governance and Audit Committee has continued to develop a relationship with the Scrutiny function. The relationship is intended to ensure the following:

- Mutual awareness and understanding of the work of Scrutiny and the Governance and Audit Committee.
- Respective workplans are coordinated to avoid duplication / gaps.
- Clear mechanism for referral of issues if necessary.

3.27 The Chair of the Scrutiny Programme Committee last attended the Governance and Audit Committee to provide an update on the work of Scrutiny in October 2021. The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Cllr. Peter Black, is also a member of the Governance and Audit Committee and it is proposed that Cllr. Black will update the Committee on the work of Scrutiny in the new Municipal year.

3.28 The Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee has also attended the Scrutiny Programme Committee and provided an update on the work of the Committee in October 2021. The Chair will also attend one of the Scrutiny Committee meetings in the new Municipal Year.

Anti-Fraud

3.29 A Corporate Fraud Function was established during 2015/16 within the Internal Audit Section. The Corporate Fraud Annual Plan 2021/22 was presented to the Committee in April 2021. The Corporate Fraud Function Annual Report 2020/21 was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in July 2021. The Fraud Function Annual Report for 2021/22 is due to be presented later in the 2022/23 Municipal Year. The Governance and Audit Committee also received a new Mid-Year Fraud Function Update Report in November 2021.

Governance and Audit Committee Briefings

3.30 The Governance and Audit Committee received a number of briefings during 2021/22 as noted below:

- Fraud Function Annual Report 2020/21
- Draft Governance and Audit Committee Training Programme

- Follow Up Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements - Children in Swansea Council
- Corporate Risk Overview 2021/22 – Quarter 1
- Education Directorate: Internal Control Environment 2021/2022.
- Update Report South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee.
- Absence Management Audit Report 20/21.
- Service Centre – Accounts Receivable Update.
- Lay Members on the Governance & Audit Committee.
- Employment of Agency Staff Audit Report 2019/20 - 2021 Update.
- Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21 & Scrutiny Work Programme.
- Auditor General for Wales Review of Town Centre Regeneration.
- Corporate Risk Overview 2021/22 – Quarter 2.
- (Directorate): Internal Social Services Department Control Environment 2021/22.
- Annual Report Corporate Safeguarding 2020-21.
- Update on Swansea Achieving Better Together.
- Impact of the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020.
- Annual Complaints Report 2020-21.
- City and County of Swansea Administered Trust Funds.
- Update Report South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee – January 2022.
- Service Centre – Accounts Receivable Update.
- Corporate Risk Overview – Quarter 3 2021/22.
- Place: Internal Control Environment 2021/22.
- Workforce Strategy.
- Draft Internal Audit Annual Plan 2022/23.
- Internal Audit Annual Plan Methodology.
- Absence Management Audit Report 20/21.
- Draft Internal Audit Charter 2022/23.
- Internal Audit Strategy & Annual Plan 2022/23.
- Corporate Risk Overview – Quarter 4 2021/22.
- Achieving Better Together – Recovery Plan.
- Governance and Audit Committee Training Programme.

Governance and Audit Committee Training

- 3.31 Following discussions with Democratic Services, it was agreed that repeated annual training in core areas was no longer necessary. Instead, Members agreed that specific training should be arranged based on training needs. The Governance & Audit Committee Training Plan 2022/23 was approved by the Committee on 12 April 2022.

4. Looking Forward

- 4.1 Looking ahead to 2022/23 the Governance & Audit Committee's membership and responsibilities will need to have careful consideration and support. The Deputy Chief Executive has confirmed that following the May 2022 local elections it will be his intention to enact the Training Programme to support the work of the Committee in all new areas of responsibility. Also, this programme will reflect the needs of all new Councillor and Lay Members.

4.2 The Committee’s concerns expressed during the 2021/22 Municipal year will be appropriately reflected in the Annual Governance Statement and will include the absence of the Workforce Strategy, the further improvements to embedding the risk management arrangements and enhanced reporting and the Moderate or Limited Assurance Internal Audit reports where audit recommendations remain outstanding.

5. Committee Membership & Attendance

5.1 The membership of the Governance & Audit Committee at the start of the 2021/22 Municipal Year consisted of two Lay Members and 12 Non Executive and 1 Executive Councillor elected by Council. Independent Members are appointed for no more than two administrative terms with Council Members reappointed annually.

5.2 The Committee is serviced by Council Officers, principally the Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer, Chief Legal Officer, Strategic Delivery & Performance Officer, Chief Auditor and Democratic Services. Representatives from Audit Wales also attend Committee meetings.

5.3 During 2021/22 the Committee has followed a structured workplan which covered all areas of the Committee’s responsibilities with the aim of obtaining assurance over the areas included in its terms of reference. The Committee includes 2 Lay Members and will have to amend its membership in 2022 as required by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. One Lay Member is also the Chair of the Committee.

5.4 The Governance and Audit Committee met on 11 occasions throughout the Municipal period 2021/22 on the following dates: 9th June 2021, 13th July 2021, 24th August 2021, 14th September 2021, 12th October 2021, 9th November 2021, 14th December 2021, 12th January 2022, 8th February 2022, 8th March 2022 and 12th April 2022. The meeting agendas, minutes and recordings can be located at:

<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1&LLL=0>

5.5 Committee Member attendance in 2021/22 is shown in the following table:

Attendance 2021/22	Possible	Actual
Independent Lay Members		
Mrs Paula O’Connor (Chair)	11	11
Julie Davies	11	11
Non-Executive Councillors		

Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams (Vice Chair)	11	9
Councillor Cyril Anderson	11	10
Councillor Peter Black	11	10
Councillor David Helliwell	11	9
Councillor Terry Hennegan	11	4
Councillor Oliver James	10	7
Councillor Jeff Jones	11	8
Councillor Hannah Lawson	1	0
Councillor Mike Lewis	11	10
Councillor Clive Lloyd	11	6
Councillor Sam Pritchard	11	11
Councillor Jen Raynor	11	8
Councillor Lesley Walton	11	10
Councillor Mike White	11	10

6. Future Governance and Audit Committee Meetings

- 6.1 As agreed by the Head of Democratic Services, the Council Diary for the current municipal year includes Governance and Audit Committee meetings on a monthly basis.
- 6.2 Additional/special meetings may need to be held at certain times of the year to ensure the smooth delivery of the Committee's work programme. The Committee also has the ability to call additional meetings when required.

7. Governance and Audit Committee Contact Details

Paula O'Connor Chair of Governance and Audit Committee	Chair.Audit@swansea.gov.uk
Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams Vice Chair of Governance and Audit Committee	Cllr.Paxton.Hood-Williams@swansea.gov.uk 01792 872038
Ben Smith Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer	Ben.Smith@swansea.gov.uk 01792 636409
Jeff Dong Deputy Chief Finance & Section 151 Officer	Jeffrey.Dong@swansea.gov.uk 07810438119/ 07811847582

Simon Cockings Chief Auditor	Simon.Cockings@swansea.gov.uk 01792 636479
Gillian Gillett Audit Wales	Gillian.Gillett@audit.wales
Tracey Meredith Monitoring Officer & Chief Legal Officer	Tracey.Meredith@swansea.gov.uk 01792 637521
Richard Rowlands Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager	Richard.Rowlands@swansea.gov.uk 01792 637570

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix A - Governance and Audit Committee Terms of Reference

Governance & Audit Committee Terms of Reference

Governance & Audit Committee

Statement of Purpose

The Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of the City and County of Swansea's corporate governance. It provides an independent and high level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

The purpose of the Governance and Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the performance assessment of the Council. It provides an independent review of the governance, performance assessment, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

Membership

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 provides that two thirds of the members of the Committee are to be members of the council and one third must be lay members. Only one member of the Cabinet or Assistant to the Cabinet may sit on the Committee, and that person must not be the Leader. The Chair must be a lay member and the vice chair must not be a member of the Cabinet or an Assistant to the Cabinet.

Governance, Performance, Risk and Control

- a) To review the Council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework and consider annual governance reports and assurances.
- b) To review the Council's draft annual Self-Assessment Report, and make any appropriate recommendations for changes to the conclusions or actions the Council intends to make.
- c) To review the Council's draft response to the Panel Performance Assessment Report, and make any appropriate recommendations for changes.
- d) To review the Council's draft response to any Auditor General's recommendations arising from a special inspection in respect of the Council's performance requirements and to make any appropriate recommendations for changes.
- e) To review and assess the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively and to make any associated reports and recommendations in relation to the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively.

- f) To review the Annual Governance Statement prior to approval and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances.
- g) To consider the Council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements.
- h) To consider the Council's framework of assurance and ensure that it adequately addresses the risks and priorities of the council.
- i) To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the Council.
- j) To monitor progress in addressing risk related issues reported to the Committee.
- k) To consider reports on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
- l) To review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the Council from fraud and corruption.
- m) To monitor the counter fraud strategy, actions and resources.
- n) To review any proposals in relation to the appointment of external providers of internal audit services and to make recommendations.
- o) To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations.

Internal Audit

- p) To approve the internal audit charter and resources.
- q) To approve the risk-based internal audit plan, containing internal audit's resource requirements, the approach to using other sources of assurances and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources.
- r) To approve significant interim changes to the risk based internal audit plan and resource requirements.
- s) To make appropriate enquiries of both management and the Chief Internal Auditor to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resource limitations.
- t) To consider the Chief Internal Auditor's annual report and opinion, and a summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance it can give over the Council's corporate governance arrangements.
- u) To consider the Chief Internal Auditor's annual report.

- v) To consider reports from the Chief Internal Auditor on Internal Audit's performance during the year including the performance of external providers of internal audit services.
- w) To consider a report on the effectiveness of internal audit to support the Annual Governance Statement, where required to do so by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- x) To consider any impairments to independence or objectivity arising from additional roles or responsibilities outside of internal auditing of the Chief Internal Auditor. To approve and periodically review safeguards to limit such impairments.
- y) To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.
- z) To receive reports outlining the action taken where the Chief Internal Auditor has concluded that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the authority or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions.
- aa) To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of the providers of internal audit services.
- bb) To consider a report from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.
- cc) To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and the report to those charged with governance.
- dd) To contribute to the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme and in particular the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.
- ee) To provide free and unfettered access to the Governance and Audit Committee Chair for the Chief Internal Auditor, including the opportunity for a private meeting with the Committee.

External Audit

- ff) To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports, and to those charged with governance.
- gg) To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
- hh) To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.
- ii) To commission work from external audit.

- jj) To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external audit and other inspector agencies or relevant bodies

Financial Reporting

- kk) To review the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.
- ll) To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

Accountability Arrangements

- mm) To report to full Council on a regular basis on the Committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference and the effectiveness of the Committee in meeting its purpose.
- nn) To report to Council on an annual basis and to publish an annual report on the Committee's work, its performance in relation to the Terms of Reference, and its effectiveness in meeting its purpose.
- oo) To raise the profile of probity generally within the Council and to report on matters of concern to the individual Cabinet Member, relevant Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet or to Council as necessary and appropriate.
- pp) To work in synergy with the Scrutiny Committees of the Council and liaise with other Council Committees as and when appropriate to avoid duplication in work programmes.
- qq) To report to those charged with governance on the committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the Appendix 1 adequacy and effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements, and internal and external audit functions
- rr) To publish an annual report on the work of the committee.

Training and Development

- ss) To attend relevant training sessions including specialist training tailored for Members of the Governance and Audit Committee.

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Internal Audit

Directorate: Resources

Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

Review of the Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22.

Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

Consultation undertaken with the Director of Finance, Legal, Access to Services and the Chair of the Audit Committee.

Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?
Yes No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?
Yes No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?
Yes No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?
Yes No

Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (*Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...*)

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?

Yes No If yes, please provide details below

Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?

(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)

To ensure an effective Governance and Audit Committee is in place for the City and County of Swansea as set out by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to make reports and recommendations in relation to the authority's financial affairs, including an assessment of the risk management and corporate government arrangements and the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements.

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Outcome of Screening

Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:

The completion of the Integrated Impact Assessment Screening revealed that:

- The Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report has a potentially low positive impact across a number of identified groups.
- It has been subject to consultation with the Director of Finance, Legal, Access to Services and the Chair of the Audit Committee.
- All WFG considerations are positive and any risks identified are low.
- The overall impact of the Annual Report is positive as it will support the Authority in its requirement to ensure an effective Governance and Audit Committee is in place as set out by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and to protect public funds.

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

Screening completed by:
Name: Simon Cockings
Job title: Chief Auditor
Date: 02/03/22
Approval by Head of Service:
Name: Ben Smith
Position: Director of Finance & S151 Officer
Date: 02/03/22

Please return the completed form to accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 10.



Report of the Director of Social Services

Council – 6 October 2022

Annual Report 2021/22 - Director of Social Services

Purpose:	This report is the Director of Social Services' account of the Council's improvement journey to 2022/21, and how well the Council is meeting statutory requirements under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. The report looks back at last year's areas for improvement, the challenges we face and sets new priorities for 2022/23. It highlights changes that have taken place within social services to achieve progress towards national well-being outcomes.
Policy Framework:	Part 8 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal, Social Services
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that Council: 1) Receive and approve the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services, 2021/22.
Report Authors:	David Howes, Simon Jones
Finance Officer:	Chris Davies
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services is to evaluate the local authority's improvement journey to 2021/22, improving services to people in Swansea, those who access information, advice and

assistance, and to those individuals and carers in receipt of care and support. This report also sets out to demonstrate how well Swansea's Social Services has implemented new requirements under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act) and how well we have promoted and accounted for the delivery of well-being standards to the citizens of Swansea.

- 1.2 This Annual Report is a statutory requirement under the Part 8 Code of Practice on the Role of Director of Social Services (Social Services functions) under the SSWB Act, which prescribes a format and template for the report to follow. Part 8 of the SSWB Act also states that the annual report should be published "as soon as reasonably practicable" after the year to which it relates. The report is required to be presented to Council by the Director, then copied to the Welsh Minister, as well as Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), and finally published on the Council's public website.
- 1.3 The main background paper to this report is the Director of Social Service's Annual report 2021/22.

2. Annual Report

- 2.1 The main report, as appended, has been written with a close eye on Reg. 3 of the *Local Authority Social Services Annual Reports (Prescribed Form) (Wales) Regulations 2017*, which came into force in September 2017.
- 2.2 This statutory regulation sets out in detail the information which is required to be included in the Director of Social Services' annual report, although this is likely to change in the next year or two alongside the introduction of a new national performance framework. As things stand, the Director of Social Services' Annual report is still set out using the following headings:

Part One:

- Introduction
- Director's summary of performance
- How are people shaping our services?

Part Two:

- Promoting and improving the well-being of those we help,

Part Three:

- How we do what we do
- Accessing further information and key documents

- 2.3 The information in Section 4, National Quality Standards has to be set out in six parts, highlighting progress in meeting the national Local Authority quality standards under the following headings. The six national quality standards are:

- NQS 1: Working with people to define & co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve
- NQS 2: Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- NQS 3: Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm
- NQS 4: Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society
- NQS 5: Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships
- NQS 6: Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life It covers the outcomes expected, what we are doing how well we are doing and the priorities for the year ahead

- 2.4 The Director of Social Services' Annual Report 2021/22 is an opportunity to show how Swansea is meeting the new statutory requirements under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and how we are applying the five ways of working within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 2.5 Current guidance suggests that the annual report is produced and presented to Council, and that this report together with last year's is made available to Care Inspectorate Wales (CiW) and Welsh Government by October 2022.
- 2.6 The Welsh Government has commissioned Practice Solutions Wales to lead on proposals to amend the Annual Reporting template and guidance. The new reporting is likely to align more closely to the needs of each target audience, with closer attention to services delivered regionally and in partnership. An important consideration as always is how well available performance and activity data is used within self-assessment, and how this analysis integrates with service plans and improvement programmes.
- 2.7 In the meantime, the annual report must conform to the performance framework and outcomes as laid out in the Code of Practice for measuring social services performance, including a new set of quality standards, and the national Performance and Improvement framework for Social Services, has recently been published:
- 2.8 There is some impact on the continuity of data in this report, due to a number of factors
 - Additional data requirements under the National Social Services Performance framework
 - Covid-19 pandemic and the impact this had on social services, with additional situation reporting regionally and nationally, and reduced capacity in business support.
 - Changes in Welsh Government reporting requirements (statutory returns) under the New Performance and Improvement Framework for Social Services

- New reports remain in development within Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)

3. Other Issues

3.1 Care Inspectorate Wales (CiW) expect to hold an annual performance review meeting with each local authority social services. Senior management, cabinet members and scrutiny chairs are generally invited to the meeting to share in feedback from recent inspection activity and to discuss progress against the statutory requirements, improvement priorities and against performance measures.

3.2 In December 2021, CiW published a National Overview Report of Assurance Checks with Children's and Adult Social Services. This report gives the key finding from the 19 assurance checks carried out across Wales between September 2020 and July 2021, and sets out the future challenges for social services:

Future challenges identified within this report can be summarised as:

- Unprecedented increase in demand for social care
- Partnership working
- Recruitment and retention
- Fragility within domiciliary support services
- Placement insufficiency within the childcare sector
- Advocacy
- Support for Carers
- Grant funding

4. Integrated Impact Assessments

4.1 Integrated Assessment Implications

The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage

Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language

Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- 4.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 4.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 4.2 An Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form has been completed, with the agreed outcomes as follows:
- **Summary of Impacts (Q2)** Impacts are positive and low on specific groups due to the nature and purpose of the report as explained above.
 - **Summary of involvement (Q3) Social Services work closely with other** Swansea Council services, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Third Sector organisations, Social Care providers, West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Boards and works co-productively on services development and commissioning plans. This development work and the involvement of others has been involved in his report.
 - **WFG considerations (Q4)** Well-being of Future Generation forms part of the overall plan and as part of the transformation and improvement programmes within social services, which are working towards a sustainable model of social care. Health, social care and wellbeing is a significant part of the local and regional economy of Swansea, and the report focused on the range of services and other organisations which form part of this economy. A skilled, qualified social care workforce is vital to improving wellbeing outcomes for Swansea citizens. The report shows how we are looking to the future by ensuring that we are well placed to recruit, retain and better support social care workers in their professional development, and how we can help them be the best that they can be in their work with vulnerable people and their carers.
 - **Any risks identified (Q5)** The improvements and transformation programmes set out within this plan are risk managed closely. Any risks identified, and agreed, are mitigated as routine within social services at service, directorate and corporate levels through monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meetings and escalated accordingly through to appropriate corporate and political structures. Some of the wider impacts for example those emerging during the Covid pandemic, and their associated risks have been, and will continue to be, managed through the regional partnership structures.

- **Cumulative impact (Q7)** There is a positive impact on the wellbeing of Swansea citizens through the continuous improvement of social services, and the benefits this brings to the social care economy and wider social care workforce.

The screening exercise concluded it is not necessary to complete a full Integrated Impact Assessment on this report.

- 4.3 The Director of Social Services' annual report also sets out progress towards the Council's objective on Well-being and corporate priority of Safeguarding people from harm, as described in the Corporate Plan 2022-25, and as required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and associated statutory guidance.
- 4.4 The Director's Annual Report takes into account the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by outlining (p36) how Swansea Council is committed to taking forward these rights through the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership Board, and action plan.
- 4.5 The Annual Report also summarises Swansea Council's progress on mainstreaming Welsh language standards, and "Mwy Na Geriau / More than Just Words" framework for Health and Social Care. In particular, whether there has been progress on delivering the 'active offer' in social services whereby staff initiate a response to the public by offering to provide services in Welsh language. Also progress is expected by the Council on implementing the Welsh Language standards in other business as usual areas; by mainstreaming the Welsh language into service delivery, commissioning and workforce planning.
- 4.6 The Director's Annual Report has to be comply with Welsh Language Standards. The full report will be translated in a Welsh Language version, then published on the Council's public website, following its presentation at the Full Council meeting in October 2022.

5. **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. **Legal Implications**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix A Director of Social Services Annual Report 2021/22

Appendix B Integrated Impact Assessment screening form, relating to Annual Report



Appendix A

Annual Report of Statutory Director of Social Services 2021-22



Draft v3 (July 2022)

REPORT CONTENTS

Part 1.	Introduction by Director of Social Services.....	p03
Part 2.	Analysis of Current Performance.....	p05
2a.	Director's Summary of Performance.....	p05
2b.	How we are performing – Child and Family Services...p06	
2c.	How we are performing –Adult Services.....	p13
2d.	How we are performing –Tackling Poverty.....	p19
2e.	What did we plan to do last year?/ progress.....	p24
2f.	Improvement Priorities for next year.....	p24
Part 3.	How People Are Shaping Services.....	p25
Part 4.	Reports on the Six Quality Standards.....	p31
4a.	Prevention & Well-Being.....	p32
4b.	Front Door.....	p37
4c.	Safeguarding.....	p41
4d.	Social Work Practice / Interventions.....	p45
4e.	Range of Services.....	p49
4f.	Partnership working and Integration	p54
Part 5.	How We Do What We Do.....	p57
5a.	Workforce.....	p57
5b.	Finance.....	p59
5c.	Governance & Partnership.....	p62
Part 6.	ADDITIONAL.....	p64
6a.	Compliments, complaints, and representations.....	p64
6b.	Mwy Na Geiriau.....	p64
6c.	Further information on Social Services.....	p66
APPENDICES.....		p67

a) Adult Services Transformation.....	p68
b) Child and Family Services Improvement.....	p69
c) Tackling Poverty Transformation.....	p70
1. Introduction by David Howes, Director of Social Services	

Welcome to my sixth annual report as Swansea Council’s Director of Social Services, which covers our improvement journey during 2021-22. This report is a statutory requirement, as set out in Part 8 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

We have continued to face major challenges this year; managing and mitigating the continued impact of covid, addressing changes to our workforce linked to Brexit and more latterly responding to consequences of the war in Ukraine.

The starting point for any review of the past year must be to again acknowledge the incredible efforts of the workforce across social care, social work and wider community services in Swansea. All those working in health and social care and with and in our communities whether employed by the Council, in the independent and third sectors, our statutory partners, all the unpaid carers, volunteers and other members of the community have shown remarkable resilience, commitment and humanity to support our most vulnerable citizens during these past two years. You will see from the detailed performance analysis contained within the various chapters of this report that performance across the full range of social services and other community services has held up remarkably well during these remarkably difficult times. This is a testament to the extraordinary efforts of all those individuals I have named above.

Our social services carried on throughout this extraordinarily difficult period; some in new ways and some meeting different and additional demands. We are now learning the lessons of these different ways of working to inform future delivery models that ensure that we are the best that we can be in meeting the needs of our most vulnerable citizens.

The Council’s post pandemic recovery programme – “Achieving Better Together” is necessarily heavily informed by the Adult Services transformation programme, and Child and Family Services Improvement programme. I also expect the revised corporate priorities within the new Corporate Plan for 2022-25 to maintain a strong emphasis on safeguarding, tackling poverty, social care delivery and other forms of support to the most vulnerable within our communities.

Swansea Council has a proud track record of respecting the rights of adults and children, by listening closely to and working with them in making decisions that affect them. There are many and varied ways in which we support people want to exercise their right to take part in decisions that affect them at different times and in ways that make sense to them. I am particularly proud of our participation and coproduction

work with young people, young carers and parent carers who are increasingly playing full part in helping reshape our services for the future.

Safeguarding remains as the top corporate priority, and this is at the heart of how Council services are prioritised. We have fully embraced the need for the Council to work even more closely and effectively with statutory and third sector partners to ensure safe and effective delivery of health and care services. This collaborative ethos informs both our local partnership work and our commitment to working with and through the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board.

Properly discharging my responsibilities as Director of Social Services would be impossible without the professionalism, resilience and expertise of the Heads of Children and Adult Services and their senior management teams. I am constantly in awe of the way they have led their services through this most difficult period.

Likewise, the unwavering support of my CMT colleagues has been much appreciated and I would pay particular tribute to our previous Chief Executive, Phil Roberts who had many reasons to retire feeling proud of his contribution to Swansea but not least that he always championed support for the most vulnerable.

Another of Swansea's great strengths is the Council's political commitment to the delivery of excellent social care and other community services. I would again acknowledge and commend the calm leadership of Cllr's Clive Lloyd and Elliot King during the worst impacts of the pandemic. I would also like to thank Cllr's Alyson Pugh and Louise Pritchard for championing and leading the expansion of wider community well-being, third sector and tackling poverty services. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Cllr Mark Child. Over many years, Cllr Child has been a fierce advocate for and driven the transformation and modernisation of social care and social services.

I would also like to thank the Chairs of Scrutiny and the policy development committees not least for the flexibility they have shown in ensuring their work programmes focussed on what matters during the worst periods of the covid pandemic.

Post the recent local elections, I look forward to working with our new Cabinet Members Cllr Louise Gibbard, Cabinet Member – Care Services, Cllr Alyson Pugh, Cabinet Member – Well-being and Cllr Hayley Gwilliam, Cabinet Member - Community.

By way of a final introductory comment, whilst the worst impacts of covid are likely behind us given the success of the roll out of vaccination programmes, we still face considerable challenges looking forward.

There will be further waves of covid infection that impact communities, our workforce and the health and care system particularly during the Winter period.

Unprecedented backlogs in health and care provision have built up during this period and will need to be caught up and workforce shortages across health and care are at a record high.

The cost-of-living crisis will disproportionately impact on the most vulnerable and on the cost of providing health and care services.

Investment in the funding of public services will likely be cut back to pay for the unprecedented level of covid related public expenditure.

I don't expect a return to the tough times of the past two years but there are different tough times ahead.

The Council will need to maintain its commitment to investing in social care and other community well-being services as best it can.

2. Analysis of Current Performance

2a. Overall Summary

In this section, I give my view, as Director of Social Services, on how effective we have been in supporting Swansea's most vulnerable citizens to achieve their wellbeing outcomes. On how we are delivering on the full range of statutory requirements set for us; progress towards our improvement priorities and in achieving our performance targets.

As always, I am immensely proud to represent a small part of the exceptional work undertaken by my social services colleagues within this report.

Through the many challenges we faced this year, I remain confident that Council resources have been managed not only effectively and efficiently, but with real impact on people's lives. Throughout the pandemic, our service activity levels have been consistently high, and performance standards have been maintained.

Although 2021/22 has not been like a usual year demand for social services has remained high. Of the local population those most impacted by the pandemic were those people with vulnerabilities, and those who are socially isolated. Among some people there has been a tendency not to seek help from Health services, though we have seen in social care that demand has been steady. People are presenting with a combination of issues associated with the detrimental impact of social isolation on mental health, well-being, and life skills. People are generally approaching social care at a later stage in their care journey than would normally have been the case, with more complex levels of need, and carers are more likely to accept an assessment of their own wellbeing needs

In children services, we have been concerned about the impact of school closures during the pandemic, as this means there are fewer opportunities to consider the welfare of each child, and to intervene where there is a possibility of a child

Annual Report of Director of Social Services. Draft 2

experiencing harm. As schools and communities are returning to business as usual, again we are seeing more and more requests coming to the front door of statutory social services. Fortunately, Swansea may be reaping the benefits of investing in Early help and prevention services, as we are seeing few children placed on the child protection register and fewer children looked after.

This year's report also reflects how integral our Tackling Poverty range of services has become to the preventative and wellbeing approaches within Child and Family, Adult Services, and Tackling Poverty Services

It cannot be stated often enough, the performance that has been achieved this year in circumstances that none of us could have imagined is nothing short of miraculous.

Our workforce, our frontline managers, our Heads of service and their senior management teams have achieved extraordinary things and should all be extremely proud

2b. How we are performing – Child and Family Services

i) Vision /strategy

Child & Family Services are responsible for the provision of services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Vision statement:

"Doing what matters to make things better for children, young people and families"
This updated vision for Child and Family services was recently voted on by staff across the service.

These are challenging times for children, young people and families, and the whole service has responded magnificently to the new and existing challenges, and we continue to deliver core business effectively and with innovation.

How our service has adapted to the pandemic demonstrates the resilience of staff, their continued hard work and professionalism. Of course, a major issue remains the high numbers of looked after children and whilst the focus of the work has been around children and young people in residential care, with a high level of success, we are working to achieve permanence through placements in supportive families when possible.

Regional Transformation Plan for Health and Social Care

The key priorities to provide better services for children, young people and families in the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board (RPB) transformation plan are transforming mental health services and transforming complex care.

Mapping of safer accommodation support is currently underway within the region, under the Transforming Complex Care programme. This planning work is taking into account multi-agency approaches to filling gaps across services including working with Health and Education colleagues to ensure the right support is made available to children and young people.

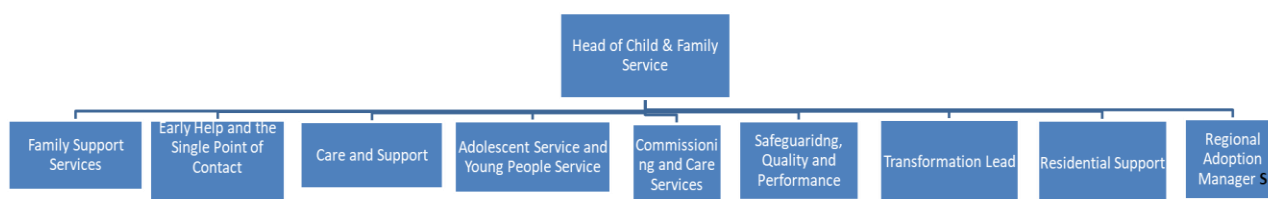
Child and Family Services Improvement Programme underpins the Council's Recovery Plan and our Safe LAC reduction strategy.

Child and Family Improvement programme

Our Safe LAC reduction strategy has now changed – to become a ‘Supporting children and young people to be safe with family’ strategy.

Within the overarching Child and Family Services Improvement Programme –we are taking forward the Systems Thinking Approach.

Building on the successes in areas such as Early Help, Prevention and Family Support over a number of years, a whole system approach is being scaled-up across the service to support more sustainable, outcomes focused model.



Our leadership team changes are aiming at developing a culture committed to continual learning and development of our staff.

What we want to see is:

- fewer children and young people looked after in our system.
- those children and young people already looked after or about to be looked after, are with us for less time.
- a stable, highly skilled and experienced workforce of sufficient capacity, who are confident, well supported and well managed.
- early intervention and prevention for children, young people, and families on the edge of care.
- effective practice across the continuum of need – proportionate assessment, intervention, and direct work; robust decision-making; a clear trajectory / permanency planning.
- effective collation and shared use of data and intelligence on our current system.
- sufficient capacity and effective use of resources to achieve what matters to children, young people, and families.

ii) What we do (Activity in 2021/22)

Table 1. Child and Family Services activity in 2021-22 (Front Door/ Assessment)

Population est. (2020): there are approximately **46,840** (46,988) children and young people aged 0-17, who are living in Swansea,

NB Data shown as reported to Welsh Government as part of new Social Services Performance and Improvement framework- first year of reporting to new metrics /definitions)

CH/001 No. of contacts for children received by statutory Social Services during the year = **8,119** (9,309)

CH/006 The total number of new assessments completed for children during the year= **602** (4306)

NB the figure provided for 2021-22 only includes more comprehensive assessments, therefore it is not comparable with 2020-21, which is the total number of assessments (proportionate and more comprehensive).

CH/006b. No. of new comprehensive assessments completed for children during the year = **602** (818)

CH/007 Total number of new assessments completed for children during the year= **602** (4306)

Of those new assessments identified (CH/007):

CH/007a, needs were only able to be met with a care and support plan = **458** (487)

CH/07b needs were able to be met by other means = **93** (3,693)

CH/07c there were no eligible needs to meet = **51** (126)

CH/008 Total number of more comprehensive assessments for children completed during the year for children born at time assessment concluded = **547** (747)

Of the number of assessments for children completed (CH/006) during the year where:

CH/009aNew There was evidence of the active offer of Welsh = **602**

CH/009bNew The Active Offer of Welsh was accepted = **0**

CH/009cNew The assessment was undertaken using the language of choice = **25**

CH/012 Percentage/ No. of new assessments completed for children within statutory timescales = **21.10%, 127** (N/a, 4,054)

NB- see comment above

CH/015 The total number of children with a care and support plan at 31st March = **886** (1,271)

CH/016 The total number of children with a care and support plan where needs a met through a Direct Payment at 31st March = **107** (105)

Overall, the front door to Child and Family Services has been getting busier and busier as the year progressed, and there are signs that the early help offer is managing to impact on reducing the number of cases needing to be referred to safeguarding and supported care planning for assessment.

Table 2. Child and Family Services activity in 2021-22 (Child Protection)

CH/020 Total number of Initial Strategy Meetings held during the year = **803** (812)

CH/021 Total number of Strategy Discussions held during the year that progressed to Section 47 Enquiries = **572** (531)

CH/022 Total number of Section 47 Enquiries completed during the year that progressed to Initial Child Protection Conference = **270** (303)

CH/023 Number of children placed on the child protection register = **255** (295)

CH/024 Of those children who were placed on the child protection register during the year, the %/ number that has been previously registered under any category, at any time during the previous 12 months = **18.09%/ 18** (N/a, 18)

CH/026 Number of children on the child protection register at 31st March = **200** (253)

CH/027 Total number of initial core group meetings held during the year = **255** (294)

CH/028 Number of initial core group meetings held during the year that were held within statutory timescales = **214** (280)

CH/029 Total number of visits to children placed on the child protection register that were due during the year = **5,050** (6,125)

CH/030 The total number of visits to children placed on the child protection register that were due during the year that were completed within approved timescales = **4,231** (6,270)

CH/033 The total number of children reported during the year where child exploitation was a factor = **125** (75)

Of the total number of reports of child exploitation received during the year where the *primary* factor was:

- CH/034a Child sexual exploitation = **62** (119)
- CH/034b Child criminal exploitation = **294** (235)
- CH/034c Child trafficking = **1** (-)

CH/034 Total number of children reported during the year where child exploitation was a factor = **357** (354)

CH/035 The total number of days on the child protection register for children who were removed from the register during the year = **86,825 days** (85,719 days)

Average length of time for all children who were on the child protection register during the year **277 Days** (86,825 Days – 314 De-Registrations)

CH/036 The total number of children removed (de-registered) from the child protection register during the year = **314** (309)

CA3/002 Number of pre-birth child protection conferences convened during the year = **50** (33)

Whilst caseloads in the social work teams show a decreasing trend, the level of complexity in the cases that are open remains significant.

Table 3a. Child and Family Services activity in 2021-22 (Looked After Children)

NB Data shown as reported to Welsh Government as part of new Social Services Performance and Improvement framework- first year of reporting to new metrics /definitions)

CH/038 Number of part 6 care and support plans that were completed within 10 working days from the start of becoming looked after = **13** (98)

CH/044 The total number of children looked after on the 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school during the year (excluding transitional arrangements, moves associated with adoption or moves home) = **22** (28)

CH/053 Total number of care-experienced young people in all categories at the 31st March = **344** (464)

NB Figure is populated by Welsh Government from LAC census

Percentage of looked after children on 31st March who have had three or more placements during the year **6.9%*** (34 with 3 or more placements – 489 Looked After Children)

*Figure will be post-populated by Welsh Government from the LAC Census return

Swansea has worked hard to reduce the number of children becoming looked after in Swansea, and to understand the profile this population group to inform better practice. Our aim is also to reduce the amount of time that children need to be looked after by. We regularly review and monitor plans for children/young people to ensure there is no drift in achieving permanence. Support is provided to address barriers and obstacles where any delay is apparent.

At the same time, we aim to improve outcomes for looked after children and offering the right placement, at the right time. Over recent years, Swansea has been successful in avoiding residential or secure placements unless absolutely necessary, Also, we have maintained the proportion of children placed with families, preferably with in-house foster carers, and closer to home. We work hard to maintain children with their own families, where this is in their best interests.

We are making better use of direct payments to support parents-carers of children with disabilities and complex needs.

iii) Performance against targets

Table 4 Child and Family Services Key Performance Results in 2021-22

As reported in Corporate Annual Performance Monitoring Report 21-22 **v2.3** (Last Year 2020-21 in Brackets)

Targets not set this year.

CFS2 (CH039) Number of children looked after per 10,000 of the 0-17 Swansea population = **488** (550) **down by 11%**

CFS19a Percentage of visits to children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) which were not overdue = **91.75%** (88.19%) **improved by 4%**

CFS24 The number of Children / Young People Supported by Child and Family Services at the end of the period= **1254** (1303) **down by 3.8%**

CFS25NEW The number of Children / Young People supported by the Early Help Hubs at the end of the period = **1034**

CFS26NEW The Number of contacts to the Child & Family IAA (Information, Advice and Assistance) Hub that are subsequently passed on to the Integrated Safeguarding Hub = **350**

CH015NEW The total number of children with a care and support plan at the end of the period = **806**

CH026NEW The number of children on the Local Authority's Child Protection Register (CPR) at end of the period = **200**

CH036NEW The number of children being removed from the Local Authority's Child Protection Register (CPR) within the Period = **248**

CH037bThe number of children becoming Looked After (LAC) within the Period = **84**

Child and Family Service is maintaining a high level of performance against key measures and indicators despite the staffing challenges and changes in demand that continue to be seen

iv) Service Improvement Priorities in 2022/23

As set out in Child & Family Service Plan 2022-23.

To achieve our vision, “Doing what matters to make things better for children, young people, and families” by

- Helping children to remain living safely at home with their families and be the best that they can be.
- Providing the right services at the right time.
- Working together to achieve what matters and supporting our service users to be safe and well.
- Focusing on practice to design appropriate processes that help us do the value work.
- Embedding our quality assurance framework that articulates our agreed measures.
- Developing our performance framework.
- Integrating our pathways and processes with partners at a local and regional level.
- To recruit, support, develop and nurture a talented and passionate workforce
- To maintain a focus on staff wellbeing.
- To only spend what we have, ensuring we maintain tight fiscal discipline
- Strengthen opportunities to work regionally.
- Work within effective procurement frameworks.

Additional Child and Family Services priorities, noted as areas for Focus and Development, taken from recent presentation, given as part of Care Inspectorate Wales (CiW) Assurance visit (June 2021):

- Purposeful recordings that are written in the voice of our children, young people and families
- Reduce system waste that gets in the way of our practice
- Develop a culture based on trust, empowerment and accountability across the workforce and with our children, young people and families
- Increasing our preventative offer to support a reduction in the casework entering statutory services and de-escalation of need
- Understanding the needs of adolescents and developing our response across the whole service
- Supporting children to remain safely at home
- Keeping children, young people and families at the centre of what we do and remaining focused on what matters

2c. How we are performing - Adult Services

i) Vision /strategy

Adults Services are responsible for the provision of services to the most vulnerable adults in Swansea.

Adult Services vision

“People in Swansea will have access to modern health and social care services which enable them to lead fulfilled lives with a sense of wellbeing within supportive families and resilient communities”

Our mission

We will help people to keep safe and protected from harm and give opportunities to exercise voice, choice and control in all aspects of their lives.

Our services will focus on prevention, early intervention and enablement and we will deliver better support for people making best use of the resources available supported by our highly skilled and valued workforce.

Covid-19 has highlighted the increased risks for individuals of being cared for in closed care settings such as care homes. Our approach is about supporting more people to remain safe and well at home, within supportive communities.

By working preventatively, we are making progress toward the safe and sustainable service model within Adult Services.

Adult Services Service model

The Adult Services Service model continues to focus upon wellbeing and building resilient communities through a commitment to early intervention, prevention and enablement

We will deliver better support for people making best use of the resources available supported by our highly skilled and valued workforce.

The pandemic has also further heightened the need to improve safe hospital discharge processes. Work within the region to enhance and expand our approach to the hospital to home service has continued to be a particular priority as part of our response to Covid-19.

We have to be careful with the limited resources, so we have to focus on efficient and effective approaches though regional integration with health and by improving local partnerships.

Adult Services Senior Management Team



We are working towards a whole-system, integrated approach with Health and regional to support better outcomes for individuals.

Adult Services Transformation and Recovery Plan 2022-23

Our transformational ambition for Adult Services is based on our vision, our objectives and service priorities as we move forwards.

Across all areas of the transformation programme the following will support delivery:

- Collaborative communication
- Quality Assurance, Improvement & Customer Service
- Adult Services Financial Management
- Performance Monitoring
- Transformation Governance

We have to carefully balance service level objectives with a financial context; therefore our recovery plan is firmly based on a sustainable model for adult social care. There is a full programme of work are aligned to these aims- full detail in Appendix 1

It is too early to make a judgement about whether our ambition of transformation towards a more preventative, integrated model is having the intended impact, particularly in the wake of Covid-19.

By ensuring co-production underpins our planning and commissioning we are delivering services with people, rather than for them.

ii) What we do (Activity in 2021/22)

Table 5. Adult Services activity in 2021-22 (Front Door & Assessment)

Est. population (2020) -number of Adults aged 18 and over living in Swansea = **199,723** (200,005)

NB Data shown as reported to Welsh Government as part of new Social Services Performance and Improvement framework- first year of reporting to new metrics /definitions)

AD1/001	Number of contacts received by statutory social services during the year = 4,830 (3,753)
AD/002	Number of contacts received by statutory social services during the year, where advice or help was provided = 4,298 (3,203)
AD/004	Number of new assessments completed for Adults during the year = 3,859 (4,238)
AD/005aNEW	Needs were only able to be met with a care and support plan = 1,049
AD/005bNEW	Needs were able to be met by any other means = 2,659
AD/005cNEW	There were no eligible needs to meet = 151
AD/006aNEW	Number of new assessments where evidence of active offer of Welsh = 1,756
AD/007	Number of new assessments completed for adults in secure estate = 2 (1)
AD/010	Total number of packages of reablement in year= 625 (738), of which Home Care = XXX (600), RCAS = XXX (138)
AD/011aNEW	Reduced the need for support = 45
AD/011bNEW	Maintained the need for the same level of support = 189
AD/011cNEW	Mitigated the need for support = 305
AD/011dNEW	Neither reduced, maintained nor mitigated the need for support = -86
AD/012	Number of Adults with a care and support plan at 31 March = 5,323 (4,654)

Adult Services continues to be very busy with high levels of, and increasing demand for information, advice and assistance through our front door, Common Access Point (CAP).

Table 6. Adult Services activity in 2021-22 (Support to Carers)

CA/001 Total number of contacts to statutory social services by adult carers or professionals on their behalf received during the year = **333** (50)

CA/002 Of this number (CA/001), where advice or assistance was provided = **311** (50)

CA/004 Total number of carers assessments for adults undertaken in year = **348** (209)

CA/006 Number of carers assessments refusing during the year = **888** (1,384)

Other:

CA/005aNEW Needs could be met with a carer's support plan or care and support plan =225

CA/005bNEW Needs were able to be met by any other means = 111

CA/005cNEW There were no eligible needs to meet = 12

CA/007aNEW There was evidence of the active offer of Welsh = 310

CA/007bNEW The Active Offer of Welsh was accepted = 0

CA/007cNEW The assessment was undertaken using the language of choice = 0

We recognised that our approach to carers assessment had to improve. Our work this year has continued to extend the offer of a what matters conversation to carers in their 'own right'. We aimed to increase the number of carers assessment, and to support carers on their own wellbeing journey.

This table above shows that there has been improvement in how the offer to carers is made, using our 'Collaborative Communication' approach. Working in partnership with carers to support their wellbeing & caring role.

Table 7. Adult Services activity in 2021-22 (Safeguarding)

Percentage of adult protection enquiries completed within statutory timescale: enquiries completed within 7 days = **73.83%** (N/a)

AS/002NEW The total number of adults reported more than once for the same category of abuse or neglect during the year= 78

AS/003NEW The total number of adults reported for different categories of abuse or neglect during the year = 140

AS/006aNEW The number of criminal investigations that concluded during the year 63

AS/006bNEW The number of non-criminal investigations that concluded during the year 22

AS/006NEW Total investigations 85

There are signs that the new dedicated Adult Safeguarding team And Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Team are working effectively, although direct comparison to last year is not possible.

Table 8. Adult Services activity in 2021-22 (Care & Support)

AD/013	Number of Adults with a care and support plan whose needs are met through a direct payment = 399 (494)
AD/015	Total Number of services for Adults started during the year = 1,309 (1,423), of which
AD/015a	Residential Care = 254 (335)
AD/015b	Domiciliary Care = 751 (907)
AD/015c	Day Care = 126 (13)
AD/015d	Short Breaks (including respite) = 178 (168)
AD/016	Number of Care and Support plans due to be reviewed during the year = 4,874 (5,295)
AD/017	Number of Care and Support plans due to be reviewed that were completed within statutory timescales = 2,345 (3,387)
AD/018NEW	The number care and support plans for adults supported with direct payments that were due for review during the year = 364
AD/019NEW	The number care and support plans for adults supported with direct payments that were due for review during the year that were completed within statutory timescales = 158
AD/020	Total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during the year = 959 (1,150)
AD/029	Number of adults who paid the maximum weekly charge towards the cost of care or support during the year = 839 (813)
AD/030NEW	The number of adults who paid the flat-rate charge for care and support or support for carers during the year = 0 (0)

Toward the end of the performance year, we started to see improved stability across Health and Social care regionally and local with higher numbers of assessments and reviews being carried out. These results are encouraging, the position remains vulnerable to change, particularly with workforce capacity and further disruptions possible.

Looking forward, we can expect increasing demand linked to demographic changes, such as those associated with an aging population, and more people living with greater complexity of need. We have a good understanding of our day-to-day performance and activities with a strong culture of using data and management information to improve decisions.

iii) Performance against targets

Adult Services is delivering on a more sustainable, integrated model of health and social care. The service offer is impacted by additional demand at the front door, workforce capacity and rising costs associated with the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

Adult Services has maintained performance during 2021/22. However direct comparison to last year is not always possible as the service offer and measures are very different. Many services were provided in very different ways during the pandemic, and this is likely to continue into next year.

Our focus remains on the transformation journey, towards a 'what matters' conversation at our front door to ensure that we are giving the right level of response, to the right person at the right time.

The transformation work includes development of a Performance Framework and this will include a refresh of the information included in these performance reports in the coming months. This will include progress on our statutory requirements along with transformation programmes

iv Services Improvement Priorities in 2022/23

- Better Prevention & Better Early Help
- Promoting Independence / Keeping People Safe
- Our Workforce
- Integrated Services
- Quality Assurance
- Financial Efficacy

Service Objectives (as set out in Adult Services Service Plan 2022-23):

- To provide the right support at the right time to people
- Achievement of Well-being outcomes; IAA, Assessment, Care & Support plans and Review
- Providing more support in the community and home-based settings, including in partnership with voluntary and community sectors.
- Focus on people's and communities' strengths, not just needs.
- Enhance focused outcomes and experiences for people
- Seeing people and communities as the co-producers of health and wellbeing, rather than recipients of service,
- Support carers' well-being
- Embed the principles of co-production across all services.
- People are empowered to be involved in the ongoing coproduction of their care and support and all Adult Services delivery.
- Provide information & advice / facilitating person centred solution Develop information and advice initiatives
- Pilot and implement new technological capabilities to drive better service provision and better outcomes for our population.
- Ongoing development of the Discharge to Recover and Assess model
- Social Care avoidance and hospital admission avoidance through the promotion and delivery wellbeing and prevention focussed services.
- A reduction in those needing long term care and / or support or placement
- Support people who are homeless or vulnerably housed, or at risk of becoming so, to ensure that they get the support they need
- Ensuring communities can work with us to take collective responsibility for the best use of resources to improve health outcomes and quality of care.
- Development of agreements/ processes/ procedures for Health and the Council to form a single multi-agency complex care approach.

2d. How we are performing –Tackling Poverty

i) Vision /strategy

Swansea Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy outlines our proposed approach to reducing and alleviating the impacts of poverty on children, families and our most vulnerable people. The overarching themes are:

- Empowering local people through involvement and participation
- Changing cultures to reflect that tackling poverty is everyone's business
- Targeting resources to maximise access to opportunity and prosperity.

The Tackling Poverty Service offers a range of interventions to prevent hardship and suffering, which are vital as issues such as the costs of living crisis, fuel and energy prices, access to affordable housing and wage levels are impacting on more and more households. To provide the whole Council and citizens of Swansea with a vital service to mitigate the worst impacts of poverty and to maximise opportunities to break the cycle.



Our enhanced service offer covers everything from Welfare Rights to employability, from Lifelong Learning to Tackling Poverty and Prevention services.

We will be adopting the following principles to this work:

- A whole Public Services Board and whole Council approach.
- Building resilience, social capital and social networks.
- Involvement and participation of service users.
- Implementing 'what works' in future delivery.

We work with residents through a strengths-based approach to increase their well-being, skills and qualifications and to gain sustainable and fulfilling employment and maximise household income.

Also, by working collaboratively through the Swansea Poverty Partnership forum.

We also contribute to the reduction of urgent and emergency requests, and the growing demands placed on statutory services, by contributing positively to Swansea citizen's resilience, health and well-being.

The Tackling Poverty Service objectives are as follows:

- Increase the number of Swansea residents in sustainable and secure employment
- Increase the number of adults with skills and qualifications
- Maximise household income

- Embed Tackling Poverty and Prevention as Everyone's Business within Swansea Council and reduce and prevent the impact of poverty
- Contribute to the reduction of demand on services
- Contribute to citizen's Well-being

ii) What we do (Activity in 2021/22)

Table 8. Tackling Poverty Services activity in 2021-22

Most recent estimate (2020) of the population of the City and County of Swansea= **246,563** (247.000)

Examples of strategic service developments in the last year:

- **1,892** people accessed employability support through Swansea Working
- **348** people secured employment through Communities for Work and Communities for Work Plus
- **1,250** people enrolled on Adult Community Learning courses, including essential skills, digital literacy, and family learning
- **£1,014,532.85** welfare benefits were secured
- **£77,670.63** worth of debt was addressed
- **97 projects** were funded to tackle food poverty, period dignity and address social isolation.
- Partnership working was supported through the Swansea Council Poverty Forum, Swansea Poverty Partnership Forum, Financial Inclusion Steering Group and Swansea Food Poverty Network.
- Local Area Coordinators are now in place with coverage right the across Swansea Council area

Tackling Poverty Service has been working closely with partners to address the Covid-19 impact on poverty, through our established networks. To ensure that appropriate support is available at the right time to the public, including some of the most vulnerable people and families.

iii) Performance in year

Table 9. Key Performance results In Tackling Poverty Services In 2021-22

As reported in Corporate Annual Performance Report v2.3 (Last Year 2020-21 in Brackets)

POV05	Value of welfare benefits raised, securing rights and entitlements through Welfare Rights = £1,139,249 (£1,418,850)
POV06	Average number of days all homeless families with children spent in Bed and Breakfast accommodation = 10.38 (1.75)
POV10	Number of people gaining employment through Employability Support = 481 (453)
POV11	Number of accredited qualifications achieved by adults with local Authority support = 620 (450)
Local	Level of debt addressed during year= £77,670.63 (£167,143)

There is a wide range of preventative services working within Tackling Poverty from benefits, finding work to lifelong learning, which are working hard within established partnerships to help reduce demands on statutory services and to improve the wellbeing of Swansea citizens.

The continued pressure on temporary accommodation throughout the pandemic has meant that the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation has been unavoidable, given these exceptional circumstances.

iv) Service Improvement priorities in 2022/23

Our overall priority is taking forward the Council's Tackling Poverty strategy, as reflected in the Tackling Poverty Service 2022/23 Service Improvement Transformation And Recovery Plan.

2e. What did we plan to do last year? Progress made

This annual report allows me the opportunity to assess our progress, as we have moved into a year dominated by Covid-19.

What we planned to do (Last Year's annual report): We set out to progress through our existing improvement programmes, in the following areas:

- Implementing the optimum model for adult services
- Child and family services improvement programme / Safe Looked After Children (LAC) reduction strategy
- Implementation of integrated early help, early years and family support arrangements
- Cross cutting commissioning reviews in Social Services (employability etc.)

Progress is being made against all our improvement priorities above, and there was a huge amount of additional work we still have to do to keep people safe and protected. Updates on progress are set out in the relevant sections of this report.

This organisational flexibility and staff commitment demonstrates to me the strength in our service corporate and political leadership, the solidity of our partnerships and most of all the professionalism of our brilliant workforce.

2f. Overall Improvement Priorities for next year 2022/23

Our overall priorities remain as follows, with a focus on implementing the Council's recovery programme – "Achieving Better Together", in particular, Transforming Council Services relating to social care, in the following areas:

- Care Services
- Future Workforce and Equalities
- Community Support

Also achieving the agreed budget for 2022-23, the budget priorities set within the refreshed Medium-Term Financial Plan (see section 5b), and in supporting the Council to deliver its new corporate priorities.

3. How People Are Shaping Services

Everyone, adult or child, should be given a voice, an opportunity, their right to be heard as an individual and a citizen, to shape the decisions that affect them, to have control over their day to day lives and to be firmly at the centre of their own wellbeing journey.

In this section, I will give some examples of how we are working differently with Swansea's citizens, how as a Council we are listening and working in new ways, and how we are using this to promote change in how we work.

Reflections on Covid

Service managers and service users have taken time to reflect on the past year, look at how our lives have changes, what has been good, and whether there are opportunities to do things differently.

The use of technology has enabled us to take a more creative approach to service delivery, the benefits of being able to speak to families on skype and face time, to meet social work and health professionals in the comfort of the individuals own home. Services have been creative using technology for assessments, technology has meant that the assessment period to return home or move to a new home is completed in a much shorter timescale with the individual fully involved and informed.

Similar innovative stories have been shared from our other services such as Maesglas and Alexandra where individuals were able to be fully involved in decision-making via teams. Technology has also meant that the use of My Health online and ask my GP has meant that services have streamlined systems, saving time, such as repeatedly calling the GP surgery with a query and enabling people to have 1-1 GP consultations in the privacy of their rooms.

Supporting families in need

Child and Family Services - Integrated Children Centres made a huge difference Two thousand sandwiches, 178 emergency food parcels, 112 baby/clothing packs, over 1000 hot meals, emergency childcare sessions and over 700 activity packs all delivered and transported around Swansea.

These are just some of the very many creative responses that Mountain View and Penlan Integrated Children's Centres have developed during what has possibly been almost two of the craziest years in history.

The children's centres based in both Mayhill and Penderry have been a whirlwind year of creativity, chaos, innovation and resilience, fuelled by the whole team's passion and drive to serve the community they work and live in.

Set in the heart of two of our most vulnerable communities, the children's centres have been working hard over the past 20 months to deliver services that most meet the needs of the people who live there.

Coproduction

We have a strong Co-production Network in Swansea, hosted by Swansea CVS, and together, a coproduction strategy aims to give people clarity and resources to build their knowledge and practice in this area. This includes the development of a training programme for staff to better understand and implement co-productive practice.

Coproduction is central to how we commission services and develop policy, for example:

- Direct Payments Co-Production Group has designed a new Direct Payments process for Swansea
- Practice Framework Co-Production Group is developing a guide to support people prepare for their assessment
- Learning Disabilities Co-Production Group has supported the involvement of citizens in contract awards
- Advocacy Co-production Group has designed a new advocacy service.

We can keep in touch with Swansea Co-production Network on:

<https://twitter.com/swanseacopros>

Young carers

YMCA Swansea and Swansea Council are working together to improve the support available to young carers. The young carers support service was the subject of a Council procurement and tendering process early in 2021 to reflect the scale and ambition of this new, emerging service. Through the formation of a Young Carers Board, engagement is taking place on a broad vision to create an inclusive movement, transforming communities so that young people belong, contribute & thrive. Work will include:

reshaping a new young carers service.

support the deployment of young carers champions within communities and schools.

a programme to enhance the physical and mental wellbeing of young carers.

a locally coproduced young carers strategy, building on work undertaken regionally

A Young Carers Action Day in March 2022 with theme focusing on 'Tackling Isolation'.

The YMCA Swansea Young Carer also now have an enhanced training offer to Council staff growing awareness of young carers and their individual, unique wellbeing needs.

<https://ymcaswansea.org.uk/what-we-do/family-youth-work/young-carers-service/>

Children and Young People's Rights Scheme

The Children and Young People's Rights Scheme sets out the arrangements the Swansea Council will put in place to ensure compliance with its duty to have due regard to the UNCRC.

A plan on a page of the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme, was co-produced with children, young people and the Children's Rights Network in preparation for formal consultation.

Swansea's Children's Rights Network is made up of over 80 stakeholders with a vested interest in furthering the children's rights agenda in Swansea.

We now know, based on feedback from children and young people, the key issues they wish to work on to make Swansea a better place to live are:

1. Protecting the Environment and Green Spaces
2. Quiet voices – developing systems for listening to children and young people who do not wish to ‘speak up’ but do want to have their say, e.g. digital platforms and virtual suggestions boxes
3. Supporting disabled children – working on making change so that disabled children feel integrated and able to have their voices heard as any other child would.
4. Equality for LGBTQ+ children and young people – developing resources that address discrimination and promote diversity and equality for children and young people who identify as LGBTQ+
5. Politics – developing resources for children and young people to understand what politics is, who local politicians are and how to organise change
6. Listening to Learners – strengthening collective pupil voice across the County, build

[Children-and-Young-Peoples-Rights-Scheme 2021](#)

Local Area Coordination

The Local Area Coordination team, Swansea, have been involved in research from both Swansea and Hull universities, conducting evaluations into Local Area Coordination. The researchers have reflected on meeting people from across Swansea, who willingly share their journeys, and the challenges they have faced and community activities they have been involved in.

One researcher stated: "I spoke to numerous individuals yesterday who were so grateful for Local Area Coordination and how it had helped them. You must be so proud of what Local Area Coordination is achieving and the difference it is making to the people of Swansea."

Stories from Local Area Coordinators: [storiesfromlac](#)

PAN Parents Advisory Network

PAN West Glamorgan is a group of parents and professionals, working for a more compassionate and humane response to parents who may be at risk of losing their children, or who have lost their children to the care system. The project is parent-led, supported by professionals.

The Parent Café is extending engagement to inform, support, educate and influence parents and professionals in promoting the voice and participation of parents in decision making in the safeguarding arena.

<https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/article/64663/Child-and-Family-Services---PAN-Parents-Say-Thanks>

PAN aims to:

- Develop a direct Parent Peer Advocacy and Support Service
- Support, recruit and nurture parent–parent support networks
- Develop a local regional and national, Parent Advocacy Network,

Stories of outcomes are being heard and captured, as part of the evaluation process.

[PAN \(Parent Advocacy Network\) West Glamorgan \(dewis.wales\)](#)

Swansea Parent Carer forum

Swansea Parent Carer forum are interested in how the system can learn from individual stories. The Forum listens and feed the voice of parent carers into decision making. Then to feed back to parent carers.

The group sits on working groups with the Local Authority, Health Board and West Glamorgan Regional Partnership. They also arrange training for other parent carers.

<https://swanseapcf.org/>

Sensory Impairment Hub/ Swansea Vale/ MDT- first in Wales

Responding to views of Swansea citizens, we are working in collaboration with Welsh Low Vision Services to initiate a multi-disciplinary low vision / vision service based within the Swansea Vale Resource centre;

- Low vision aid assessments
- Low vision therapy
- Vision Rehab –
- ICT/Assistive Technology
- Care management/specialist social work
- Voluntary/third sector links to social group and other activities

This model of provision provides for a centre based, multi-disciplinary, fully staffed and equipped 'one-stop' shop for people with sensory impairment and sight loss.

Corporate Parenting

Swansea's Corporate Parenting Board is a group of councillors who have a lead role in promoting the role of corporate parenting within and outside the local authority and additional formal responsibilities relating to corporate parenting. Board members have an in-depth understanding of the issues that affect our Care Experienced Population and will champion their rights.

They review and monitor services and support for Care Experienced Children Young people and care leavers to ensure that outcomes are met and that there is a robust planning process. Forum members must aim to have direct contact with children and young people to understand their views and what matters most to them, and support events involving looked after children.

A current programme of work is concentrating on "what a best life" looks like for our Care Experienced population in Swansea. These pledges focus on 7 key areas -

- No barriers to opportunity
- Good education/good job
- Healthy relationships
- Safe place to live
- Mental health
- Love, family and friendship
- Happiness

These pledges will be developed into the work stream for the Corporate Parenting Board for the next 18 months

West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Governance framework

A new Governance Framework has been developed and agreed to support the partnership arrangements for the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board. Citizen and Carer Representatives are actively involved and engaged in the work of the Regional Partnership Boards and should be able to demonstrate how they have engaged with citizens and carers at all levels including assessing need, strategic planning, service design and delivery.

Third Sector and Care Provider representatives are also engaged and able to influence and be involved in the design and delivery of integrated services

Most of the examples presented here reflect Swansea's commitment to coproduction, as integral to how we plan, commission and provide social care, and in collaborate to achieve a sustainable model that meet the needs of future generations.

Our priority remains to ensure co-production remains central to how we plan, design, commission and deliver our services. We can learn the many positives lessons from our response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and how innovative solutions can be found to the most complex problems when we work together.

Examples of Feedback received this year

Parent Advocacy Network testimonies, on what being part of PAN steering group/parent café means to them:

“I’ve met some wonderful people it’s been a life changer for me.”-

Parent-GM

“It gives me hope and I can share my experience and knowledge with others we part of one big family (parent café)” - **Parent KC**

“I like being part of something I don’t have friends and as my partner is in work I’d be on my own. It’s really good to be around people to feel included and an opportunity to make friends”- **Parent DD**

“I’ve made new friends and connection and its helped me shows that I’ve got something to offer and give back and I’m thankful for that”-

Parent GD

Reflections on the pandemic: “I realise how hard this has been on the staff and I must say they have worked tirelessly through this unique and challenging situation. They always come to work with a smile on their face regardless of their personal situation and are always going above and beyond to make sure we are safe and content. There have been lots of activities and film nights to keep us occupied and these have really helped me. I like to keep my brain active, and the various quizzes have really contributed to my wellbeing.”- care home resident

Intergenerational work at The Hollies During Covid 19- some comments:

' it's nice to hear your voice, even nicer to see your smiley faces'

' It's great to see you again'

Residents comments

'I found our time together hilarious, I would love to do this again'

Young people Speak Up

'The residents were fully engaged with our sessions, and they especially loved the hula hoop skirts and wigs!'

PSU Facilitators

4. Reports on the Six Quality Standards

This next section of my annual report provides an overview of social services quality and performance, using the National Standards Framework: Code of Practice: measuring performance addressing the **six national quality standards** (under review).

It also reflects the Well-being of Future Generations Act, which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales by helping to create a place where we all want to live, now, and in the future.

The six national quality standards are:

1. **Prevention** -working with people to define and co-produce personal wellbeing outcomes that people wish to achieve **NQS 1**
2. **Well-being - What Matters conversations- help received via Early Help & Front Door** - working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing **NQS 2**
3. **Safeguarding** - taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm **NQS 3:**
4. **Wellbeing outcomes achieved by managed Care and Support and good Social Work Practice**-By encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society **NQS 4**
5. **Quality Of Services** -supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships **NQS 5**
6. **Working in Partnership and Integration** - working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic wellbeing, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs **NQS 6**

Each of the 6 parts in Section 4 covers the outcomes expected, what we are doing how well we are doing and the priorities for the year ahead

4a. Prevention

Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people.

Our expectation is that Swansea citizens are well informed, understand what care, support and opportunities are available and they can access support themselves to help achieve their own wellbeing outcomes.

The strategic aims of Swansea Council's Recovery Plan – Achieving Better Together is to focus on:

- The core purpose of the Council
- Transforming services to be effective and efficient
- Greater collaboration with other Councils, organisations, community groups and residents, with a focus on regionalisation
- Greater and more meaningful engagements with our residents and community
- Balancing the budget for current and future years
- To meet the aspirations and targets within the Medium-Term Financial Plan

A key aspect of Swansea's Adult Services Transformation and Child & Family Services Improvement programmes is to support these aims will be to target the range of preventative approaches, as set out in Swansea's Wellbeing plan, due to be updated this year.

What we planned to do

How well we responded during the pandemic was based on working with and in communities, alongside third sector and other partners and by providing clear and easily and accessible information for the public.

We set out to achieve this by:

- Continue to work with partners and communities in promoting prevention and early help
- Improving prevention and early help within our social services transformation programmes, as part of Council's Recovery plan, and the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership work programme.

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Swansea citizens can access information on the Council's public website to help them better understand and choose from the wide range of care, support and opportunities which are available, and use these to help achieve their wellbeing outcomes. Swansea continues to develop our range of public web resources available to help people make informed choices.

There is help available on a daily basis to ensure people access the full range of Council services to achieve their own wellbeing outcomes.

Pandemic responses

The pandemic has dramatically changed the way we all live, work and spend our time; requiring us to adapt and behave, in a different ways to how we lived before.

All social care workers, whether employed by the Council, in the independent and third sectors, all the unpaid carers, volunteers and other members of the community showed astonishing resilience, commitment and humanity to support our most vulnerable citizens during these extraordinarily difficult of times.

Swansea's Social services carried on throughout this difficult period, some in a different form, some meeting additional demand, and we are now reflecting how what we learned and looking to the future in how we can best to meet the growing demand and more complex needs of our most vulnerable citizens.

We have had to respond to urgent and emergency care requests in new and innovative ways, by working collaboratively. We relay up our workforce, to achieve this and we have worked hard to ensure their wellbeing is also looked after.

Public Information

A wide range of Public information is available to all Swansea citizens, via Swansea's updated public website: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/socialcare>

There are links to SCVS website with even more resources:

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/3849/Swansea-Council-for-Voluntary-Service>

Also, to the Family Information system. [FamilyInformationService](#)

There is help to find childcare and early support available to parents and families, including the Best Start Squad: [BestStartSquad](#)

Dewis Cymru is a national wellbeing directory providing an online library of community assets with contact information and organisational information, maintained by organisations themselves, as and when changes to provision occur. Swansea has increased the number of local resources available to **924** (833).

<https://www.dewis.wales/>

Family Support

Following a systems-thinking review, Family Support has a new purpose: "Family Support will work together, with me, and the important people in my life, to understand what matters to me to ensure I get the right support."

Family Support Single Point of Entry:

Swansea's Family centres provide a range of quality community services to children, young people and families to build and strengthen relationships.

Child and Family Early Help offer

Child and Family Early Help service has progressed well since its restructure in April 2019. Early help offer continues to evolve and develop its offers of support to ensure it can meet 'what matters' for the children, young people, and families it works with.

The service continues to receive a high level of requests for support through its duty function.

Data from 21/22 shows they responded to **1863 requests**, (1369 requests in 20/21) showed they responded to for support.

The recent development of a Family Referral scheme is a "significant game-changer" for the service. Since its inception two months ago, early reviews have determined that the system works "really well". It has made caseloads clearer for staff and TCOs and has allowed them to offer more practical support to their service users.

Additional investment via the Regional Investment Fund has improved capacity in the integrated children's centres, the early years team, supervisory roles and two specialist posts - a Neuro-diversity Worker and a Parental Conflict Worker.

These new roles will play a significant part in the upscaling of staff across the service and reflect the increase in demand in these areas.

Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

Shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Council's response to VAWDASV shifted to a rapid and adaptable partnership approach to the emerging crisis and the impact it had on the safety of women.

During the early weeks of the pandemic, there were frequent reports in the media of heightened domestic abuse rates, however this was not reflected in number of police reports or referrals into specialist services. The domestic abuse helplines were seeing record numbers of contacts, but this was not reflected locally. The concern was that victims of domestic abuse were 'staying put', fearing that the 'stay at home' messaging would prevent them from leaving.

In response to this, Swansea Council prioritised awareness raising campaigns with a strong message that help is available. We developed multimedia campaigns involving staff from Child and Family services, supporting national messaging such as #youarenotalone, and ensured that local information on support services was regularly promoted.

The VAWDASV Practice Lead also worked with Microsoft to develop the first domestic

abuse 'Chatbot' in Wales, allowing professionals and members of the public to access round the clock information, advice and details of local support services in an interactive, anonymous way.

Our VAWDASV offer works alongside early help, our safeguarding hub and the Child and Family Single Point of Contact to ensure a more coordinated response to requests for help. Also strengthening the work between adults and child and family services by working together on whole systems thinking.

Equilibrium project

Swansea has become one of the first local authorities in Wales to have developed and implemented its own accredited domestic abuse perpetrator programme.

Equilibrium has achieved prestigious accreditation from Respect - a leading national organisation on domestic abuse.

To achieve this, the Equilibrium team had to go through an incredibly detailed, nationally recognised, quality assurance process that ensures best working practices are evidenced throughout the programme.

Swansea now boasts having one of only four accredited programmes in Wales and one of only 25 accredited programmes across England and Wales.

Community Alarms- rapid response

Delta wellbeing connect have been working with Swansea Council to provide a rapid response service to Swansea citizens who have a lifeline in their own homes, and who have a greater risk of falling. Initially running as a pilot, individuals and their carers are able to press the lifeline for support or non-medical emergencies at any time (responders are available 24/7). A response team will provide care and support to the individual, this avoids long ambulance waits and hospital admission. All calls are triaged to ensure the response service is the right option for the person. Carers have the 'safety net' of knowing someone will always come if the alarm is triggered.

Welfare Rights team

Our Welfare Rights Team is also worth thinking about when evaluating support to vulnerable people, carers, and families. It provides a vital service specialising in welfare benefit and tax credits law and supports those who are providing a front tier service working with claimants with their benefits issues.

Our Team have been representing clients at appeal hearings by using alternative methods are making a huge positive impact on these families and allowing them to maximise their income. The Welfare Rights Team provides a second-tier service specialising in welfare benefit and tax credits law and supports those who are providing a front tier service and working with claimants with their benefit issues. It is not open to families directly but supports Social Workers and Support Workers seeking information and advice on their behalf.

The team have raised over £1 million in social security benefits for the residents of Swansea and have addressed in excess of £77,000 of debt.

Stories of Achievement

Continuum of Need Indicators for Support (CONIFS)

All children, young people and their families are unique with different backgrounds, strengths, needs, worries and aspirations. This means that the support a child needs, whilst growing up or when things are not going so well will also be unique to them. For this reason, Swansea Council has developed an approach that aims to provide children and families with the Right Support at the Right Time. This approach includes:

1. Helping people to problem solve and find their own solutions by working with the whole family and systems around children, young people and families
2. Providing an information advice and assistance service
3. Having meaningful conversations with people about what matters to them
4. Delivering preventative services across the council
5. How departments and organisations work in partnership with each other and develop plans with children, young people and families
6. Provide a service in the Welsh language, or the preferred language of children, young people and families

Local Area Coordination

Swansea has a Local Area Coordination team to help people find the right help and support, now working in all areas, helping people to 'Get a life not a service'.

A Local Area Coordinator can help anyone build relationships within their community. We support older people, disabled people, people with mental health problems, and their families and carers to:

- to build their own vision of what a good life looks like
- to stay strong and connected
- to feel safer and more confident in the future

You can follow the team's progress and stories of outcome on Twitter: https://twitter.com/Swansea_LACs

Tacking Poverty strategy development

Tackling Poverty Strategy Development Team secured a total of £239,630 external funding during 2021/22 and reallocation to **97** successful applications for funding via the Food Poverty Grant, Period Dignity in Communities Grant, Household Support Grant and Men's Shed's funding. Swansea Council is partnering with 'Food Cycle' to explore locations for a project in Swansea's Phoenix Centre to launch in May 2022.

Work around development of prevention and early help is progressing well., building on the excellent response to the Covid pandemic. Such innovative work has presented further opportunities for change and improvement particularly in respect of citizen and carer's direct access to information, and support to improve their wellbeing.

During 2022/23, our priorities are to:

- Continue to work with partners and communities in promoting prevention and early help
- Improving prevention and early help within our social services transformation programmes, as part of Council's Recovery plan, and the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership work programme.

4b. Wellbeing – What Matters

Working with people and partners to protect and promote people’s physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

Our expectation is that each citizens’ voice is heard by our service and listened to; people can speak for themselves and that they have control over any decisions that are made. That our most vulnerable people who need help to do the things that matter most to them, to promote their independence, and those carers can access support they need for their wellbeing.

Children have the right to reliable information under the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It is important, as early as possible in our processes to provide as much up to date information about services and resource as we can to adults, children and young people. This can help people decide what to access, have an improved understanding of how services have changed, as a result of Covid-19, and to see details of how to access services, if they are needed either directly or via Information, autonomy and access to services.

Additional information included public health information, resources to support being at home, e.g. learning, play, and a specific section on access to services that specifically supported children and young people to have their voices heard in Swansea.

Our multi agency approach to Information, Advice and Assistance whether accessed directly, via Early Help or at the social services front door is set out for citizen’s on the Council’s public website: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/contactsocialservices>

What we planned to do

During 2021/22, our priorities were to continue to meet the impact of Covid-19 on the most vulnerable adults, children and their carers:

- Working together to achieve ‘what matters most’ to the person, building on their strengths and by supporting service users to achieve safety and their own well-being outcomes, and carers in their own wellbeing
- Further embedding new approaches to ensure we are providing the right service to the right people at the right time

Across the whole services we are working together to achieve what matters and supporting our service users to be safe and well. By providing the right services, at the right level of care and support, at the right time.

By our targeted approach, fewer children, young people and families require a statutory intervention from Social Services by receiving the right help when they most need it. Helping children to remain living safely at home with their families and be the best that they can be.

Within Adult Services, there is a collaborative communications approach, building on an integrated services model to support outcomes for individuals

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

We now have the multi-agency response available at the Social Services front door. By this we mean that there is a wider range of professionals who are available on a daily basis to support our information, advice and assistance (IAA) offer.

Across all services, we are offering 'What matter to you' assessments, which help us to focus our assessment on what is important to people, and their own view of wellbeing outcomes they wish to achieve.

Our front door Information Advice and Assistance services are using the practice models such as 'Signs of Safety' and 'Collaborative Communication' (refer to section 4d) to strengthen links to our frontline social work teams, which focuses on strengths, outcomes, voice, choice and control.

Adults Common Access Point

Adult Services Common Access Point (CAP) remains at the forefront of our transformation, in applying a strengths-based, outcomes focused framework, by using Collaborative Communication practice and the 'what matters to you' conversation.

Our front door team has a highly skilled, multi-disciplinary team that promotes positive discussions with citizens and carers at often difficult times.

We work closely with third sector to find the best support available to meet the person's own outcomes.

C&FS Single Point Of Contact

Formerly the IAA team, the new 'Single Point of Contact' is an enhanced advice and advocacy offer to help understand what is happening to a child, and within their family, to help decide if support is needed and to find the best help quickly.

Swansea's SPOC explore the unique strengths and risks in families, in order to stabilise and strengthen a child and family's situation. Families living in the city and county of Swansea can contact us themselves to ask for help or advice. Sometimes people such as teachers or health visitors also contact us to see whether we can offer a family extra support. We aim to inform, support and empower people to make choices to stay safe, happy and well. Support might be from within their natural network of family or friends, and could also be from places in their communities like charities.

Our Integrated Safeguarding Hub (ISH) team is now part of Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to support what matters conversations. We have a Culturally Harmful Behaviour support worker. We also have an experienced practice lead who specialises in disability located at our front door.

Mental Health

Through regional collaboration, we are progressing with implementation of the Single Point of Access (SPOA) service and implementation of the 112 access pathway as a priority. This will make it easier for citizens to get advice and guidance on what mental health support is available for them in their area.

Engagement with the third sector is crucial with a number of services such as counselling seeing an increase in referrals. Mapping of available third sector mental health support services is being updated and we have sought feedback from mental health workers on the front line (e.g. Mental Health Link officers in GP Cluster areas) on the pressures they are facing and what ideas we can implement to improve the wellbeing of our population.

Also regionally, working towards a bridging service for Children and Young People awaiting a service from Child and Adolescence Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Carers

Swansea Parent Carer forum continued to meet virtually during the pandemic. They have co-produced a FAQ leaflet in partnership with Social Services, been part of the task and finish group working to develop a pilot Parent Carers Assessment model and met weekly with Social Services to discuss any issues that arise

Building on our partnership with Swansea Carers Centre and utilizing grant funding available to us, we are piloting a new model of undertaking proportionate Carers' Needs Assessments. When unpaid carers are identified at our Common Access Point they are offered a proportionate Carers' Needs Assessments which will be undertaken by staff at Swansea Carers Centre. The reason we have taken this approach is that we had identified that increasing numbers of unpaid carers when offered a Carers' Needs Assessment were refusing the offer. We have now completed 4 months of the pilot and are evaluating the outcomes.

Hospital to Home (H2H)

Initially launched as a regional Optimal Model of Care in 2016, the key aim of the service is to help older people who become unwell to remain in the comfort of their own home, avoiding a hospital stay unless it is necessary and to assist them in living independently for as long as possible, using a "what matters to me" approach.

If hospital admission becomes necessary, the service aims to support older people in returning to their home as soon as they are well enough to be discharged. This model was further enhanced by the launch of a bespoke H2H Service incorporating a "Home First" ethos first launched in December 2019.

InfoNation / BAYS 16+

Since the systems thinking review last year, the BAYS+ Service has been through lots of changes. The primary focus of the service's changes is to ensure we improve standards and get better at meeting the new vision:

"BAYS+ will listen, understand, care about, and support me to make the best choices in my life. If I need to, I can rely on them 'no matter what.' "

The initial focus of the review was on reducing duplication, and ensuring internal systems are young person and outcomes focused. For us, this meant moving away

from a focus on permanence and towards transition planning with adult services. It also means coproducing young person friendly information, and approaches We continue to focus on redesigning services to ensure the right people were doing the right things. For Info-Nation, redesign of our front door and the development of a new Front of House Team. This change ensures a more responsive approach to meeting needs through our drop-in service and improved coordination of preventative service.

Stories of Outcomes

Carers

Positive Feedback received from unpaid carers following changes mentioned above has helping us identify areas where we can improve:

Just some of the quotes from unpaid carers include:

- “She was a breath of fresh air, she felt awkward asking me lots of questions but she was very professional and she let me know how much she cared. She listened to me and it made a huge difference. I didn’t feel I was being judged. I would 100% recommend this to other carers”
- “I was happy for Swansea Carers Centre to do the assessment, I felt comfortable, listened to and she had empathy. When the Social Worker rang to arrange the respite there must have been good communications between them as she had lots of information and I did not have to justify why I needed respite, it all worked out smoothly.”

Adults Services Domiciliary Care pressures

Pressures within our community services, particularly access to domiciliary care support, were extremely high for long periods during the pandemic and remain so. Teams across internal Homecare, Residential Care, the resource support team, integrated Therapies, nursing, social work teams and of course Brokerage/contract monitoring teams and Transformation have been doing everything possible to support the release and creation of any capacity to meet some of the demand and support those most in need. This will be a long road to rebalance care and support, and more than ever the strengths-based conversations and exploration of alternative sources of support came to the fore within our social work practice.

During 2022/23, our priorities are to:

- Working together to achieve what matters, building on their strengths and by supporting service users to achieve safety and their own well-being outcomes, and carers in their own wellbeing
- Further embedding new approaches to ensure we are providing the right service to the right people at the right time

4c. Safeguarding

Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm.

Our expectation is that the most vulnerable people in Swansea are safe and protected from abuse and neglect. There are strong and effective arrangements in place to make any concerns known.

Again the Covid-19 pandemic further emphasised the importance of ensuring robust safeguarding arrangements and complicated arrangements to intervene with vulnerable individuals, children and families. Our workforce and partners have demonstrated considerable dedication, skill and innovation in making sure that we continue to support safety and safeguarding planning.

Our approach to Safeguarding and keeping people safe is reflected in that Safeguarding our most vulnerable people is the council's number one priority, and we have strong leadership in place to drive forward both a regional and corporate approach. Safe practice underpins the professional frameworks guiding our social work models in Child & Family and Adult Services.

A Corporate Safeguarding policy and work programme ensures the 'Everybody's business' approach is extending the expectation to partners and providers, as well as Council staff.

What we planned to do

- To continue improving our safeguarding practice in all service areas, whilst recognising adjustments required by Covid-19, supported quality assurance frameworks

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Child Protection

We respond to child protection concerns or eligible care and support needs on a daily basis. Following a referral, the child's case will be allocated to a Social Worker in one of the Statutory Supported Care Planning Hubs who will fulfil a statutory function. This means that they will be the lead professional and agency to support the family. Our Statutory Supported Care Planning Teams (SCP) manage several different cases and different levels of complexity, needs and risks.

Children where there are concerns that they are at risk of harm ongoing or have suffered significant harm are therefore in need of immediate care and protection. These are children and young people whose care is so compromised as to place them at risk of significant harm and in need of a Child Protection Plan, and includes all children and young people already subject of a Child Protection Plan. The threshold is met for statutory intervention, based on the legislation and practice frameworks social workers use on a daily basis. A child's welfare and safety is always paramount. Children and young people's welfare is everyone's responsibility.

Advocacy

An individual must be made to feel safe, and that they are an equal partner in their relationship with professionals. It is open to any individual to invite someone of their choice to support them to participate fully and express their views wishes and feelings. This support can be provided by someone's friends, family or wider support network. We are extending the advocacy offer within our work with children and adults, and incorporating 'safe voice' into our practice.

Adult Safeguarding

Last year we established a dedicated safeguarding team with the restructure of Adult Services. From the feedback received these arrangements are working well, with the specialist capacity to provide advice and assistance, and to work with closely with practitioners has been valued. We will continue to review and monitor how well this is working, and to further improve our processes.

Corporate Safeguarding

"Safeguarding" is everyone's business in every service within the Council, and a corporate priority for a number of years now "Safeguarding" is seen a much wider concept than the protection of vulnerable children and adults. It involves the promotion of children's and adults rights, working co-productively, supporting individuals to live safely and minimising risk, where possible, and the protection of citizen rights by helping to improve their own wellbeing.

To achieve this corporate priority, and to apply corporate safeguarding as everyone's business, we have revised our corporate safeguarding policy under the governance of the Corporate Safeguarding Group, and implemented a work programme to take forward improvement actions and report on progress

Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to harm that adolescents face beyond their family homes, this type of harm is referred to as Extra familial harm and can include Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), youth violence and peer on peer abuse.

Since 2019 Swansea Children services have been working with Dr Carlene Firmin and her team at Bedfordshire university to evaluate our systems in responding to risks outside the family home in Swansea. Since then, Swansea have been working on embedding a contextual approach to Referring, Assessing and intervention in different contexts

Child Sexual Exploitation is covered in the Exploitation, Contextual Safeguarding, Online-harm and Child Protection and Safeguarding Training. Contextual Safeguarding Training includes training and exercises on the use of words that label and stigmatise young people. This training is not just available to staff but has been rolled out and accessed beyond the Council by our multi-agency partners. So far over 400 people have done that training including over 180 from partners including health, education, and the 3rd sector.

We are also working in partnership with LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender) Cymru helpline and YMCA to support young people and also parents to give them the know-how to provide support and understanding in a bid to prevent young people from being vulnerable to exploitation because they are seeking that elsewhere. We support the work of the Junior Safeguarding Board whose membership includes young people from across Swansea, Neath, and Port Talbot, to raise awareness of LGBTQIA+ issues.

DoLS

The restructure of Adult Services teams also resulted in the creation of a standalone Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) team.

Swansea has significantly improved performance in relation to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) through implementing dedicated team arrangements, and in readiness for the new Liberty Protection Safeguards expected next year.

Quality Assurance- Getting it right

Staff in our Child and Family Services Service Quality Unit hold an independent role in reviewing care plans. Independent Reviewing Officers oversee the work being achieved by the Supported Care Planning teams and scrutinise the quality of Local Authority's care plans.

Workers often support children/young people until either they return home or leave care and "help them to be the best they can be". They are a constant link with children, young people and the social workers.

A Local Judge once said: "If the State is to justify removing children from their parents it can only be on the basis that the state is going to provide a better quality of care".

We have developed a robust quality assurance framework to ensure that we are Getting it right for right child at the right time.

Stories of Outcomes

Mayhill Response

Everyone will be aware of the rioting incident that occurred in Mayhill Following this our links within the CMET forum allowed us to pull together over 30 agencies the following day to provide a response that stretched from cradle to grave. CMET stands for Contextual, Missing, Exploited and Trafficked, linked to contextual safeguarding (as above).

This restorative work included – counselling support for schools staff and pupils, youth work in areas where other vigils were meant to take place, our front door contact to offer support to all those affected and youth offending service intervention to all the young people linked to the disturbing events of that night.

- Sessions to understand what matters
- Youth Forum is being supported by Participation
- Pop up youth club is being run by Evolve, Swansea Council's Young People Service
- Swans foundation are supporting our youth work

CMET and Local area coordinators are working with the community to look at how this pop up provision could be sustained by community volunteers who are eager to support their community.

Parent Advocacy Network.

A number of parent testimonies have been from the new Parent Advocacy Network, a project seeking to support parents with lived experience of the child protection process to become advocates, through professional training and development, for others experiencing the system.

On what being part of PAN steering group/parent café mean to those involved:

- “ I’ve meet some wonderful people it’s been a life changer for me.”- Parent-GM
- “ It gives me hope and I can share my experience and knowledge with others we part of one big family (parent café)” - Parent KC
- “I like being part of something I don’t have friends and as my partner is in work I’d be on my own. It’s really good to be around people to feel included and an opportunity to make friends”- Parent DD
- “ I’ve made new friends and connection and its helped me shows that I’ve got something to offer and give back and I’m thankful for that”- Parent GD

During 2022/23, our priorities are to:

- To evidence how well we are listening to / working with voice of child and vulnerable adult in all aspects of our safeguarding work.

4d. Wellbeing outcomes by managed care and support

Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in Society.

Our expectation is that Swansea citizens can learn, develop to their full potential, and to do the things that matter most to them. People accessing managed care and carers can engage, contribute to communities and feel valued in society. People are supported by care and support plans, which promote their independence, choice and wellbeing

Our approach to social work practice development in helping people to achieve their own personal wellbeing outcomes is set out in practice handbooks and through our overarching practice models of Signs of Safety (Child and Family Services) and Collaborative Communication (Adult Services)

What we planned to do

Swansea citizens can learn, develop to their full potential, and to do the things that matter most to them.

We set out to

- Embed strengths-based, outcomes-focused practice within social work, set within quality assurance framework reflecting right service at the right time

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

We continue to demonstrate we are being the best we can be in all our work with adults, children, young people and families is no matter the challenges faced.

Swansea is a leading authority in implementing positive way of working through established practice based on Sign of Safety and Collaborative Communication. This report highlights many examples of how we are listening to the people we serve and to the people in their lives in shaping future services

Our excellent staff, managers and partners are all contributing to the best outcomes for children, young people, families, and adults.

Strategy to support children and young people to live safely at home with their family- a Child and Family Practice Framework

Child and Family social workers are experts in how we use Signs of Safety/Wellbeing models to work in partnership and collaboration, to understand what matters and explore strengths and risks, to stabilise and strengthen a child and family's situation.

- Working with children, young people and families to help them identify their needs and the right support for them.

- Wherever possible, ensuring children can live in permanent homes with their parents or wider family network, with the necessary support, but under an arrangement where those caring for them feel enabled and able to meet their children's needs, and exercise their parental responsibility.
- Improving outcomes for looked after children in our care and strive to achieve genuine permanence and security for those children, until at least they reach adulthood.
- Ensuring practitioners have access to a forum of experts who can support them to address barriers and obstacles when progressing children's cases towards achieving permanence.

[Swansea Staffnet - New - Strategy to support children and young people to live safely at home with their family](#)

Adult Services Practice Framework- Collaborative Communication

The practice framework used by Adult Services social work teams is 'Collaborative Communication', which changes the conversation that we have with people about what matters to them in having a good life. This requires a major shift in our social work and our thinking to allow us to move from a service-led approach, towards focusing on people's wellbeing and their own outcomes, at the same time putting people at the centre of their care and support planning.

[Swansea Staffnet - Collaborative Communication Case Examples](#)

C&FS Team structures

Child and Family Services team structures are continuously improving. Our team hubs in supported care planning, child disability and looked after children ensure we are working with across the service to make it easier for us to undertake meaningful work with children, young people and families in Swansea.

We have made changes to a number of systems with the help of children, young people and families, staff and stakeholders which will enable us to spend more time with those that need our help and less time on paperwork and processes, so that their needs can be met at the earliest opportunity and there is a seamless transition between services as their needs escalate and de-escalate. We are redesigning our forms so that the focus is on what matters to children, young people and families, and creating plans that they are fully involved in that are reviewed regularly with their natural support network and any professionals that may help them.

Child Disability Team (CDT)

Swansea's Child Disability Team works with children and young people who have moderate to severe disabilities. In Swansea there are many professionals from statutory services and voluntary organisations available to help and support parents with the realisation that their child may have a disability.

CDT is a specialist team who look after the specific needs of children and young people with disabilities. It is one of the services provided by Child and Family Services in Swansea. The team is made up of social workers and family support workers. They work closely with lots of different professionals, health visitors, health support workers and occupational therapists.

Adult Services Restructure Project

Adults Services is undertaking a Social Work Restructure project, to help inform what a fit-for-purpose structure for all social work teams.

Working collaboratively, the remit includes:

- consideration of staff voice and client feedback on what good looks like.
- establishing business needs and business wants and a strategic vision for the service.
- confirming statutory requirements and associated roles and responsibilities.
- reviewing current systems and processes.
- establishing baseline performance measures.
- ensuring we utilise all the above information to create a business case for change and agreed measures for evaluating future Social Work structure options.

Adult Services Practice Handbook

This handbook originated as part of our efforts to respond to the Social Services and Wellbeing Act. We want to become more outcome-focused and move towards a strength-based approach in terms of our social work practice.

This handbook is an online aid to help social workers easily access resources, information and tools, but it is not a substitute for your professional judgement. We want to try and keep all things in one place, and to help you find what you need, whether you are new to Adult Services or whether you just need some support when dealing with an issue that is out of the ordinary. The handbook is also intended to help you to understand more about how other teams work and the best way to get in touch with them.

Wales Community Care Information System (WCCIS). Development group

Our WCCIS computer system aims to help health and social care teams work together to provide high quality, person centred, joined up health and social care closer to people's homes. WCCIS is interoperable- working across health and social care, and between local authorities.

Swansea's WCCIS system went live in April 2021 A national upgrade was also completed in October 2021. The system implementation has been successful, not without some performance issues. As well as a more outcomes focused social work assessment and case management review, WCCIS includes information related how people are receiving a range of services, including:

- Internal Home Care
- Domiciliary Care
- Day Care
- Direct Payments
- Residential and Nursing Care

It can support social workers to track the costs of their client's social care/

Over 170 staff attended a recent online meeting with the Director to keep staff up to date with system developments. The focus of the meeting was to sharing survey findings, experiences and the national discussions on WCCIS future. Overall, the findings were positive, hopeful and there was considerable praise for the support staff had received from the Swansea WCCIS team.

Jig-so Team

The JIG-SO team is a multidisciplinary team made up of Midwives, Nursery Nurses, Early language Development Workers and Parenting Workers. We have a focus on supporting young parents up to the age of 24. Helping to piece families together. It can be challenging being a young parent and as a team we aim to help and support parents through the early years. We provide our services antenatally and postnatally through Group work and 1-to-1 home visits up until the child's 2nd birthday. Our midwives and Nursery nurses provide high quality service including Health and wellbeing for mum and unborn during pregnancy and care of the newborn. JIG-SO aims to build parental skills and knowledge to increase confidence, enabling parents to develop personally while giving their children the best start in life. We use a range of tools and materials such as "Gro Brain" to show parents how they can best support their child's developments.

Stories of Outcomes

Child & Family

An appreciative enquiry (video story) was undertaken with a mum who has experienced an incredible journey. She has had one of the most difficult starts in life imaginable, was using heroin from the age of 15 right up to her pregnancy with her daughter last year, and during the initial child protection case conference, so great was the worry that professionals scaled 0s in relation to the safety of the baby. Despite this, she has completely turned her life around, and is doing an absolutely beautiful job of caring for her daughter, whose name has now been removed from the CP register, with all professionals at the final conference scaling 9s and 10s. During the discussion, Mum explained how the social worker helped her to understand what safety looks like, through talking to her about 'being around safe people'. Mum stated that Jigso and Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) were also a big help to her and she now feels happier and is closer to her family. Mum states that at first she thought her child would be removed from her care and would score her initial confidence in Social Services a 2. Mum was supported through the Public Law Outline to access a mother and baby placement and now has full care of her daughter in her own tenancy, the first she has ever had. Mum now scores her confidence in Social Services at a 9/10

During 2022/23, our priorities are to:

- Continue to embed strengths based, outcomes focused practice within social work practice and processes, set within quality assurance framework reflecting right service at the right time

4e. Range of Services

Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.

Our expectation is that Swansea citizens are supported within and by their communities, in which they can contribute and enjoy safe and healthy relationships. People are also helped to recognise unsafe relationships and to protect themselves from abuse and neglect. The views of families, carers and other personal relationships are taken into account when assessing and planning care and support needs.

Swansea's approach to commissioning for better social care outcomes is set out in the commissioning work being undertaken regionally, and locally through Swansea's commissioning cross cutting reviews.

This can be found regionally within the Western Bay Health and Social Care Programme Area Plan for Care and Support Needs 2018-23, and locally through the Council's Recovery Plan, delivered via the transformation and improvement programmes and the Council's corporate procurement methodology.

What we planned to do

We are looking to continually improve our approach to commissioning through coproduction, robust commissioning framework and by working closely with partners:

- Working with corporate procurement and regional commissioning arrangements to promote financial efficacy
- To review commissioning of adult residential, respite and day support services

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

Health and Social Care is currently challenged with a growing demand. Both Adult Services Transformation and Child and Family Services Improvement programmes, together with cross cutting commissioning reviews set out to improve our service offer, moving away from traditional models of service delivery.

We aim to make continuous service improvements, avoid service costs increasing and to ensure services are both high quality, yet sustainable for the future. In order to do this our change programmes must ensure coproduction and effective collaboration are featured, so that shared capacity and integrated approaches are used where possible, to be deployed in a more efficient and effective way, saving time, resources, sharing expertise and contributing to improved citizen wellbeing.

There are many examples of Swansea's approach to commissioning and service improvement within this report. It is vital we are getting the most value from the money we have available to provide or commission social care. We are always looking to become more efficient, promote better outcomes and realise savings where we can.

Looked After Children Residential Placements

Swansea has successfully managed to safely reduce the numbers needing to be looked after we are detrimentally impacted by the implications this national trend has on placement availability, particularly for those with the most acute and complex needs. Recent analysis by the County Council Network indicates that the numbers could increase by an additional 20-25% by 2025.

Our in-house service offers emergency and short-term placements for up to three young people. When we require additional placements these are commissioned from independent private providers. Over the past three years there have been approximately 30 children living in an independent residential care service at any one point in time.

In line with the Welsh Government's policy to remove profit from children's residential care. Swansea is taking steps to ensure there is sufficiency in residential care placements for children available locally.

[C&FSInHouseResidentialCapitalInvestment](#)

Foster Wales Swansea

In July 2021 Swansea Council's Foster Swansea joined forces with all other local authorities in Wales to become part of 'Foster Wales', and are now called Foster Wales Swansea.



As teams across the nation combine their efforts and expertise to significantly increase the number and diversity of Local Authority foster carers. Despite over a third (39%) of Welsh adults claiming they have considered becoming a foster carer, there is still a need to recruit an estimated 550 new foster carers and families across Wales every year. This is to keep up with the numbers of children who need care and support, whilst replacing carers who retire or are able to provide a permanent home to children.

[Fostering in Swansea | Foster Wales Swansea \(gov.wales\)](#)

Digital Projects in Care Homes

Swansea Council are working in partnership with Digital Communities Wales, The Discovery volunteer project, Macmillan paramedic lead, Consultant Ty Olwen, Macmillan end of life community lead and professionals from across Pembrokeshire and North Wales who have come together to develop a bespoke immersive Virtual Reality (VR) experience to enhance the lives of individuals. People are at the heart of the pilot, and their individual wishes are what drives each bespoke digital experience.

An addition to the VR project is the use of VR and exercise to enhance individuals physical and mental well being. This section of the project is undertaken with the support of colleagues from Digital Communities Wales and will be part of the pilot in our Reablement services based at Bonymaen House and Swansea Vale resource centre.

Swansea council mental health services are joining forces with Pembrokeshire to explore the VR inclusive Mental Health Interventions project which has been accepted onto the Bevan exemplar programme, which explores the ways in which tailored VR experience creation can improve treatment outcomes in older adult patients presenting with low mood and/or suicidal thoughts or attempts.

Tŷ Waunarlwydd care home

Tŷ Waunarlwydd has had well deserved, positive feedback from a recent inspection. One of our residential care homes on the front line of delivering safe and secure care to older people during the pandemic has been gained significant praise for their work from the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

- People benefit from receiving consistently good care and support from a highly committed experienced and professional team of staff.
- People are very happy living in a service that actively supports their well-being.
- Comments from people include "I love the staff, they are so kind and considerate" and "they really care about us"
- Feedback was very positive from visiting relatives. Feedback includes "it's an excellent service, staff are so kind" and "x is a different person, they are so much happier now."
- Comments from staff include "it's a fab place to work, team are very supportive."

Ty Waunarlwydd was among the many residential and social care services that stepped in during the pandemic to play a vital role in supporting older people through the crisis.

Day Care in Swansea

Swansea Local Day services are transforming into innovative hubs and spaces where care and support is provided alongside a broader wellbeing offer.

St Johns is a great example, having been nominated for a social care accolade recently, the service has continued to grow.

Men's shed has gone from strength to strength, there are around 20 members who visit regularly, and they have formed valuable friendships that go beyond the weekly meet.

A ladies group was started through covid so people would have a safe space to meet and make friends, relieving loneliness and isolation.

Also, an emergency food bank has grown to support people who found themselves without food for a variety of reasons, with the "food pantry" now sponsored by Morrisons. Through a 'period poverty' grant, they can offer sanitary products as well.

Their community garden now grows a variety of fruit and vegetables which support the foodbank so people are able to have fresh, wholesome items to supplement their weekly parcels. We are looking at having a weekly farmers market through the summer this year so people can pick their own, with the men's shed group are dedicated to making the garden a success.

St Johns also participated in a "kite project" last year, led by the Glyn Vivian art gallery. A giant kite was produced by the community and woven together from individuals postcard sized pieces of material. The theme was - what you want to hold onto and what you want to let go of from the covid pandemic.

The "People's library" has now started and is about bringing people together and sharing stories. It is the first one in Wales and is proving to be very successful. We are going to produce a book this year of storied that people want to share with others. It proves that people are people and were not so different regardless of background, age, gender or where we originated from.

There are similar stories emerging in other local day services.

New Models of Delivery

Working with the Council's People Policy Development Committee, building on a pilot funded through the Foundational Economy Fund we have continued to develop micro enterprises in partnership with Swansea Council for Voluntary Service. Working alongside colleagues from assessment and care management, commissioning, local area coordination and direct payments we have supported the development of a range of micro enterprises meeting a range of need. Current work includes a focus on the development of domiciliary care micro enterprises in areas of Swansea that traditional providers struggle to operate within.

Funding secured from Covid Recovery Grant was used to pump prime micro enterprises which were able to deliver services to unpaid carers free of charge for a temporary period. We are hopeful that this will change the narrative within carers assessments leading to practical solutions to meet carers needs via direct payments in the long run.

We are also looking into a pilot working with existing supported living providers and micro providers to look at how we can deliver collaborative care and support at a hyper local level.

Stories of Outcomes

Story 1: End of Life Outcomes

Our residential care service's end-of-life champions and SBUHB End of Life Co-ordinator have helped to collate a response, on behalf of Swansea Council, to a Senedd cross party committee on Hospices and Palliative Care. The group explained how our approach, working with people with complex needs is both person-centred and in the moment.

Swansea Council care homes worked in partnership with the SBUHB to introduce Advance and Future Care Planning using the 'Living Well' document. Our team of End-of-life champions can help open discussions and minimise the fear and anxiety that can be associated with death and dying. Through both these initiatives we began capturing the person's life story of 'magic moments' to illustrate how their effective use can make a difference to the individual's life and end of life care. It is the small things which make the biggest difference.

The team of Champions continued to meet virtually throughout the pandemic to ensure teams were fully supported. Our approach is about:

- Celebrating life
- Spending quality time
- Contact with loved ones (heartbeat)
- Respecting wishes
- Keeping faith

Direct Payments for carers

We have extended the use of direct payments to support carers, and as an alternative to domiciliary care. The new Direct Payment team have been listening to stories of carers who have been receiving direct payments to support them in the care of a loved one:

'C' said direct payments is a fantastic service in terms of giving him flexibility by employing a Personal Assistant (PA) which work flexibly for him and his family's needs and requirements, as opposed to maybe domiciliary care with fixed days times of calling etc.

Having direct payments has enabled 'K' to utilise her time in doing lots of basic things which everyone takes for granted like. These are things that most people take for granted, to eat to feel fresh, improve health & well-being. K would like to primarily have time away from her caring role, and have a holiday, respite, quality of time on her own to rest, recuperate, and think.

'R' said the DP has made a HUGE DIFFERENCE to her quality of life

The [DP] has enabled her to do basic things in life, like sitting down, RELAXING, making telephone calls to family / friends and paying household bills. Sometimes the PA is caring for her husband at home, so this gives R some time to lie down and rest as well.

During 2022/23, our priorities are to:

- To rebalance care and support to meet the growing demand for care at home and within our capacity to deliver through our existing models of care
- Work within effective procurement frameworks locally and regionally

4f. Working in Partnerships and Integration (Exit Strategies)

By working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

Our expectation is that our most vulnerable people are supported to participate as active citizens both economically through work and socially, and within suitable accommodation.

Our approach to working in partnership to maximise people's independence is set out in the corporate plan, wellbeing plan, service plans and improvement programmes.

What we planned to do

To Implement the West Glamorgan regional partnership work programme, with links to Swansea's programme – "Achieving Better Together".

How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?

We are supporting people to participate as active citizens economically and socially.

We are supporting vulnerable people to access and sustain engagement with meaningful work.

We are also supporting people to access financial advice and help with benefits and grants.

Here are some examples of how regional work benefits people locally.

Example 1: West Glamorgan Regional Partnership

The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership now focuses on three areas of 'transformation', all with associated projects and work streams being delivered in the context of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

These are:

- **The Adult's Transformation Board** (the key priorities of which include Older Adults, the Commissioning for Complex Needs Programme, Dementia, the Mental Health Strategic Framework, the Learning Disability Strategic Framework).
- **The Children and Young Adults' Transformation Board** (key priorities of which include the Multi Agency Placement Support Service, Children with Complex Needs and the Regional Strategic Development Plan).
- **The Integrated Transformation Board** (the key priorities of which include Carers, Digital Transformation, Transformation in Networks and the Welsh Community Care Information System).

Regional Population Assessment and updated Area Plan

Work is underway to update the West Glamorgan Area Plan. The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places a duty on Local Authorities and Local Health Boards to produce an Area Plan. The Plan will consider people's care and support needs, based on the findings of a revised Population Assessment, and then outlines the priorities required to address these needs.

<http://www.westernbay.org.uk/areaplan/>

Regional Carer strategy

The West Glamorgan Carers Partnership Board has developed a Regional Carers Strategy, Swansea Social Services has been involved in its development. To drive forward the Regional Strategy but most importantly how we are going to support the need of our carers across Swansea and in doing so also to meet our duties under the Act we have developed a Swansea Carers' Action Plan, the plan will enable us to improve the lives and experiences of carers living in Swansea.

The plan includes:

- Identify priorities
- Identify areas to improve practise
- Inform commissioning of carers services
- Positive impact on the delivery of services for Carers
- Ensure we meet our legal duties towards Carers
- Improved relationships
- Partnership working

[WGRegionalCarersStrategy](#)

Assistive Technology

Swansea is working with regional partnership to develop our use of Assistive Technology both in type and process of provision, as the digital offer will be an essential to our future preventative and early intervention model. In areas where citizens are digitally connected, technology can be a useful enabler of helping people to remain within their own homes for longer, by promoting access to service, health monitoring, maintaining independence and joining up with family and friends to prevent social isolation.

Digital technology is advancing at such a fast pace, there will be many more opportunities to emerge.

Stories of Outcomes

Youth Justice

The regional arrangement, inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in October 2018 had received an 'Inadequate' rating. Significant improvement has been made over the three years since and the Swansea arrangement has now moved to a 'Requires further improvement' rating. Importantly the reviewers had no concerns with the outcomes of the cases they looked at. In taking forward an Improvement Plan fully endorsed by HMIP, the Service has come a very long way in a short time

Systems review of the whole of the Service will be taking place from March 2022. Children and young people will be involved in helping to shape and redesign the Service.

Regional Adoption Service

The regional adoption service offers an enhanced adoption support service to potential adopters, adopters, adopted children and those adults who were adopted as children. The service is committed to ensuring the experience of adopters in the region is second to none. By seeking to place children in Wales as close as possible and where it is right for the child and adopters. This extended choice helps us to work more closely for everyone's benefit to help the wide range of children in need of loving families.

In December 2021, for the 2nd year running, the service was celebrating the outstanding life journey work of social workers, birth parents and adopters in this field, by hosting the WBAS Life Journey Awards.

During 2022/23, our priorities are to:

- Collaborate with regional partners to drawn in maximum levels of grant funding
- Implement the West Glamorgan regional partnership work programme, and by establishing close links to Swansea's transformation programme – "Achieving Better Together".

5. How We Do What We Do

5a. Workforce

We have continued to support and develop our social care workforce and managers to be the best they can be, and to provide the highest quality services. As we move away from Covid-19 restrictions, our focus is now on our workforce and making sure we have the capacity in teams to do what you want and need to do

We need to reinforce our workforce with the range of skills, passion, humanity and creativity to achieve what matters to people in our communities. We need to support their wellbeing and professional development. That is why we have an ambitious Workforce Programme to help us do all we can to make Swansea Social Services a place to be proud of and a place of choice.

Young People's Voice at centre of Recruitment

Young people are supporting our service to recruit staff to help us achieve what matters.



As part of the Independent Reviewing Officer recruitment four young people created questions for candidates. providing model answers and scores.

The questions they devised included:

- What are your top 5 steps to building a relationship with children and young people?
- How should the transition from one IRO to another be supported?
- What in your experience is the difference between the IRO and SW role?
- What do you think is important to children and young people about their IRO?

The work is part of our continuing commitment to children and young person's voice in recruitment.

Example 2: Workforce engagement

Adult Services SW staff survey which ran from December last year to February this year with the aim of better understanding staff views on what works currently, what doesn't work, and any opportunities/ideas they have for positive change. A team of volunteers, pulled together, and identified themes from that feedback to help inform the transformation journey.

Child and Family Services carried out their own Annual Well-being and Engagement Survey and held two briefing events

CFS Briefing November 2021 titled Inspiration, Celebration and Learning

Staff heard about service developments and success including an update from the Head of Service, Contextual Safeguarding, Equilibrium, and the Youth Justice service

CFS Summer Briefing 2021 was themed around celebrating our success and setting out a future vision.

Workforce Development activities

Some of the workforce strategy activities supported in Adult Services:

- Management & delivery of Welsh Government (WG) special payment schemes during the pandemic to carers, staff within whole social care sector and also the statutory sick pay arrangements
- Management & delivery of WG Statutory sick pay for all staff in both commissioned services and social care businesses based in Swansea
- Recruitment drive for both residential services and homecare (resulting in bolstering our workforce considerably during the pandemic)
- Provided Psychological First Aid for Front Line Workers via Corporate Services
- Working with Human Resources to manage sickness levels across the Directorate supporting staff to return to work, supporting staffing pressures within team
- Additional Support Team (AST) – Creation of a crisis team that could work across our residential services, commissioned services both within Swansea and NPT if the need arose (as Covid increased in homes this provision provided a certain amount of security to Managers/Staff knowing we always had a team to provide support with the shortest of notice)
- Creation of a Well-being group of staff volunteers from within Adult Services to help develop and promote wellbeing within the Service Area
- Development of a weekly Tuesday Training bulletin (Containing all courses for staff development)
- Attendance of job fairs and a presentation to Trinity St David's College to try to increase recruitment in care roles
- Management & delivery of the WG social care payment aligned to the real living wage (Internal & commissioned services and social care businesses based in Swansea)

Compliments

Many compliments are received for Social Services staff, and a number have been included in the Director of Social Services weekly Covid-19 Briefings. These briefings have been emailed to staff and have also been used to inform

Return to Office/ Agile

Swansea Council's agile accommodation working arrangements have supported workers carrying out the full range of work tasks, either at home or flexibly and safely

across many council offices. With the introduction of new digital technology and agile working, staff can work smarter and more efficiently throughout the pandemic. Post-pandemic, gradually, more and more staff are choosing to return to offices to resume working face to face within their teams.

5b. Finance

The Social Services Directorate achieved all of its existing Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) target savings commitments by close of financial year 2020-21.

Future pressures on local authority funding in Wales are expected, alongside increasing demand and service costs, and there are challenges ahead for the Council to be more sustainable and to contribute a greater impact. The Welsh Government's Financial Settlement for 2022/23 no longer protects funding for social care. As a Local Authority, we mitigate against risks associated with the reductions in grant funding, as well as any changes to Welsh Government regional grant funding.

Our approach for the years ahead is set out within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

Swansea Council's Medium Term Financial Planning 2023/24 - 2025/26

The Council's latest plan acknowledges a very positive provisional settlement for Council services in 2022/23, yet it also recognised there is no certainty this will continue in future years and there is a risk of real terms reductions in future core funding, increasing costs of living, as well as a wide range of service and demographic pressures which will inevitably impact on demand for services.

The Plan also considers the impact of wider changes could have:

- Any voluntary or joint arrangements, including regionalisation, in lieu of
- compulsory Local Government reorganisation in Wales;
- Wider events that could impact on the Global economic position;
- The impact of the final exit package agreed by the UK Government in respect of Brexit.
- The on-going impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

The Council's overall aim is to protect frontline delivery of services as far as possible, and to support service transformation.

[MediumTermFinancePlanning 2023/24 - 2025/26](#)

Statement Of Budget Priorities: Social Services

COVID 19 has had an impact on the way we deliver services for children and families and an even more significant impact on our population of adults requiring care and support and their families and carers. The pandemic has also highlighted the crucial role community based early help and prevention and tackling poverty services play in supporting the most vulnerable members of our communities. Over the past 18 months the whole directorate has become even more focussed on ensuring a joined up,

strengths and assets-based approach to working with and in communities with targeted support for the most vulnerable.

Future pressures on Social Care funding are expected, with increasing demand and service costs, and the challenge ahead to transform services to become more sustainable and meet future need and demand in the most effective and efficient way as we continue into recovery. This Plan sets out to address the additional pressures such as increased costs of externally commissioned care in line with inflation and a commitment to achieving the Real Living Wage, as well as embarking on a transformation and investment in some front-line services positively impacting those needing care and support and our communities

The focus for the coming year remains on prioritising improvements to services that best support individuals, families and carers in recovering from the huge impact that COVID-19 has had on all their lives including that care and support has been so significantly disrupted this year.

Statement Of Budget Priorities: Social Services- Child & Family Services

Doing what matters to make things better for children, young people, and families

- Maintain the current strategy of Getting it Right for children and young people
- Continue our investment in preventative services
- To reduce the number of looked after children, to achieve the planned savings and service improvements
- Taking into account changes necessary to mitigate the impact that COVID-19 has had on the well-being of vulnerable children, families and staff.

Our priority will be to embed new approaches as business as usual and promote further integration with both wider social services and other support available from across the Council.

Statement Of Budget Priorities: Social Services- Adult Services

Continue to work across with regional colleagues to ensure clear and seamless pathways for those needing care and support

Further develop the agreed optimum model for adults, by embedding the following;

- Better prevention and early help
- A new approach to assessment
- Improved cost effectiveness
- Working together better
- Keeping people safe

Statement Of Budget Priorities: Social Services- Tackling Poverty Services

- Further embed tackling poverty services and prevention approaches across the Directorate and wider Council
- Continue to ensure we maximise the use of the various grant income streams available to delivery priorities

Service planning in 2022/23 has a strong focus upon efficiency through transformation, and the current programmes support the Medium-Term Financial plan savings, and targets for Social Services. We monitor progress as part of governance arrangements in monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meetings.

Corporate budget consultation takes place on a wide variety of specific proposals. This includes consultation with children and young people. Others are consulted on using service-specific groups and/or activities, and feedback is considered within the budget proposals and impact assessment.

Social Services Charging Annual Review

Swansea Council carried out its fifth annual review of social services charges set out under Part 5 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act

- Statutory considerations- any changes to national policy
- How Current charging policy is working in practice
- Improvements made this year. Changes planned
- Opportunities for any new charges
- What people are telling us
- How Swansea's list of charges compares to other Welsh Local Authorities
- Integrated Impact assessment

The review considered the impacts of Covid, in particular on citizens and families, alongside the demand for and charging for care and support within the pandemic; how a context of growing demand and rising costs within social care is impacting on the levels of income generated in the period. The list of charges for social services to apply in 2022/23 was agreed by Cabinet earlier this year.

Client Finance

The Client Property and Finance Unit provides support to adults who lack the mental capacity to manage their own affairs where there is no suitable person willing or able to act. This can prevent the risk of financial abuse or sometimes by intervention where the abuse has already taken place, often by those close to and trusted by the client.

In December 2021 the son of a client was given a custodial sentence for abusing a position of trust for personal gain, leaving his mother with significant debt and the threat of eviction until Client Finances directly intervened. Reaching actual trial is thankfully rare (for example the perpetrator may plead guilty in the face of the evidence beforehand or the victim has the capacity to decide not to take action against a close relative). This case took several years to reach trial following extensive work between Client Finances and South Wales Police, during which time the Unit has ensured that the victim's finances and debts have been managed in her best interests.

Story 2: Joint funding

Swansea Council has statutory responsibility for their functions and budget. However, under the Partnership Arrangements (Wales) Regulations 2015, established through the Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 regional partnerships are required to manage a pooled fund to cover care homes and Integrated Family Support, using section 33 agreements. Pooled funds are a recognised way of achieving an integrated, coordinated response to complex needs. Pooled funds created under the Social Services Act can be seen as clear demonstration of our commitment to partnership working.

West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board oversees the implementation of the section 33 arrangements.

5c. Governance and Other Partnerships

Social Services cannot be effective in meeting the wide range of statutory obligations, and facing such complex challenges, unless we have strong support from within our organisation and from each of our partners.

Political Leadership-

Social Services has continued to benefit from strong support from Cabinet and elected members within the Council, and through the constructive support and challenge offered by scrutiny performance panels

Corporate Leadership

The Directorate has always enjoyed strong corporate support from the Chief Executive and the wider Corporate Management. An independent senior management review is underway. The new structure will be equipped to guide the organisation through recovery, especially economic, education and social services as well as our transformation programme. And at the same time to give sufficient capacity to really push ahead with regionalisation.

West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board

West Glamorgan Safeguarding Adults supports organisations in their arrangements to safeguard adults with managed care and support needs. It does this by: assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place; checking these are working effectively. Board activities include:

- Publishing a business plan setting out how they will meet their objectives and how their members and partner agencies will contribute
- Publish an annual report detailing how effective their work has been
- Carrying out a work programme to check the effectiveness of current arrangements,
- Holding events to promote safeguarding and preventative practices

Overall, the West Glamorgan Regional board has statutory responsibilities, defined within regulations, statutory guidance, and codes of practice by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, to lead and coordinate adult safeguarding arrangements across its locality and oversee and coordinate the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of its member and partner agencies.

Overall priorities in 2022/23:

- Implementation of a social services workforce development strategy
- Delivery of improvement programmes as set out in Swansea Council's Recovery Plan 'Achieving Better Together', and to achieve priorities as set within Medium Term Financial Plan

6. ADDITIONAL

6a) Compliments, Complaints, and representations

Compliments

Many compliments received for Social Services staff have been included in the Director of Social Services weekly Covid-19 Briefings.

These briefings have been emailed to staff and have also been uploaded to Staffnet.

Complaints

Annual Reports summarising the Compliments and Complaints received relating to Adult and Child and Family Services, are reported to Governance & Audit Committee

[AnnualComplaintsReport](#)

Representations

The number of complaints to the ombudsman doubled during this period, as more citizens are informed of their rights:

For more information: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/sscomplaints>

6b) Mwy Na Geiriau “More than Just Words”

Mwy Na Geriau progress

Mwy Na Geriau “More than Just Words – Swansea social services are working across all services and team to continue to implement Health and Social Care framework, Swansea remains committed to the Fforwm Mwy Na Geiriau, the regional partnerships.

Swansea Council have extended the offer to social care staff to learn Welsh through work. Courses now run up to intermediate level, and these opportunities are advertised widely on the staff intranet and through #TrainingTuesday.

In addition, there is support for Welsh speakers new learners across the organisation. There is a corporate Welsh Language training group which meets to coordinate opportunities, to support each other and to share good practice.

Active Offer

The ‘Active Offer’ is being promoted within social services front doors (IAA) backed by contingency plans to ensure that there is access to suitably informed, Welsh speaking social worker or staff trained to provide advice and assistance. The ‘Active Offer’ is promoted within frontline services, in the context of the pandemic.

Bonymaen House- Welsh speaking resident who asked to have her Multi -Disciplinary Team (MDT) meeting, and review of her care and support plan to be carried out in Welsh and a Welsh Language Social Worker was appointed to ensure her wishes were carried out. The lady was very happy the meeting was carried out in her language of choice.

Example 2: Adult Services Champions

The Welsh Language Standards Act has strengthened the provision of bilingual services in Health and Social Care, and across the Council as a whole.

Swansea Council promotes best practice approaches in using the Welsh language to improve the service offer to both citizens and amongst staff involved in delivering health and social care.

Swansea social services have continued to improve quality of services, practice and to enhance the lives of those people whose preferred language is Welsh.

Here are some of the areas of development in Adult Service Provision:

- Reflecting Welsh culture within all our services
- Capturing information on how we promote Welsh culture in our services through our quarterly quality observations
- Identifying Welsh Language Champions within care services (Adult Services)
- Welsh Dementia Friends Champions who make an 'active offer' in care homes/ day services
- Delivering a bilingual Dementia Friends Awareness session at our staff event
- Capturing magic moments poster and Welsh speaking individuals feedback through the medium of Welsh- Maesglas
- Inclusive communication board in Welsh – Alexandra road
- Intergenerational work with school children (The Hollies / Pontardulais)

Celebrating Welsh Language and Culture in services to Adults

Here is some of the Welsh artwork and poetry that was drawn/written by people staying at Maesglas.

This artwork was shared by a group of the service users who designed – this was sent to CIW for a Welsh celebration



One Service user wrote the following poem, about their covid experiences:

Annual Report of Director of Social Services. Draft 2

Dechreuodd Cofid
Stopiodd ein bywyd
Ond ddim I ni
Gofalwyr yw'r Gorau
Mae pobl yn marw
Dagrau yn cwmpo
O gwmpas celwyddau
Ond nid y gofalwyr!
Colomen wen, heddwch a chariad
Swnio'n ddamatig
Mae'n wir, welesi
Tra'n segur trwy'r ffyrlo
Netfflics a'r radio
Yn gofalu am y gorau tra'n gwisgo PPE
Mae'n wir, welesi
Dechreuodd Cofid a chariwn ymlaen
Wnath bywyd dim stopio
Gofalwyr yw'r Gorau!

6c) Further information on Social Services

This Annual Report provides detail about Swansea's improvement journey within statutory social services in 2021/22.

The Full Report is available in other languages and formats upon request.

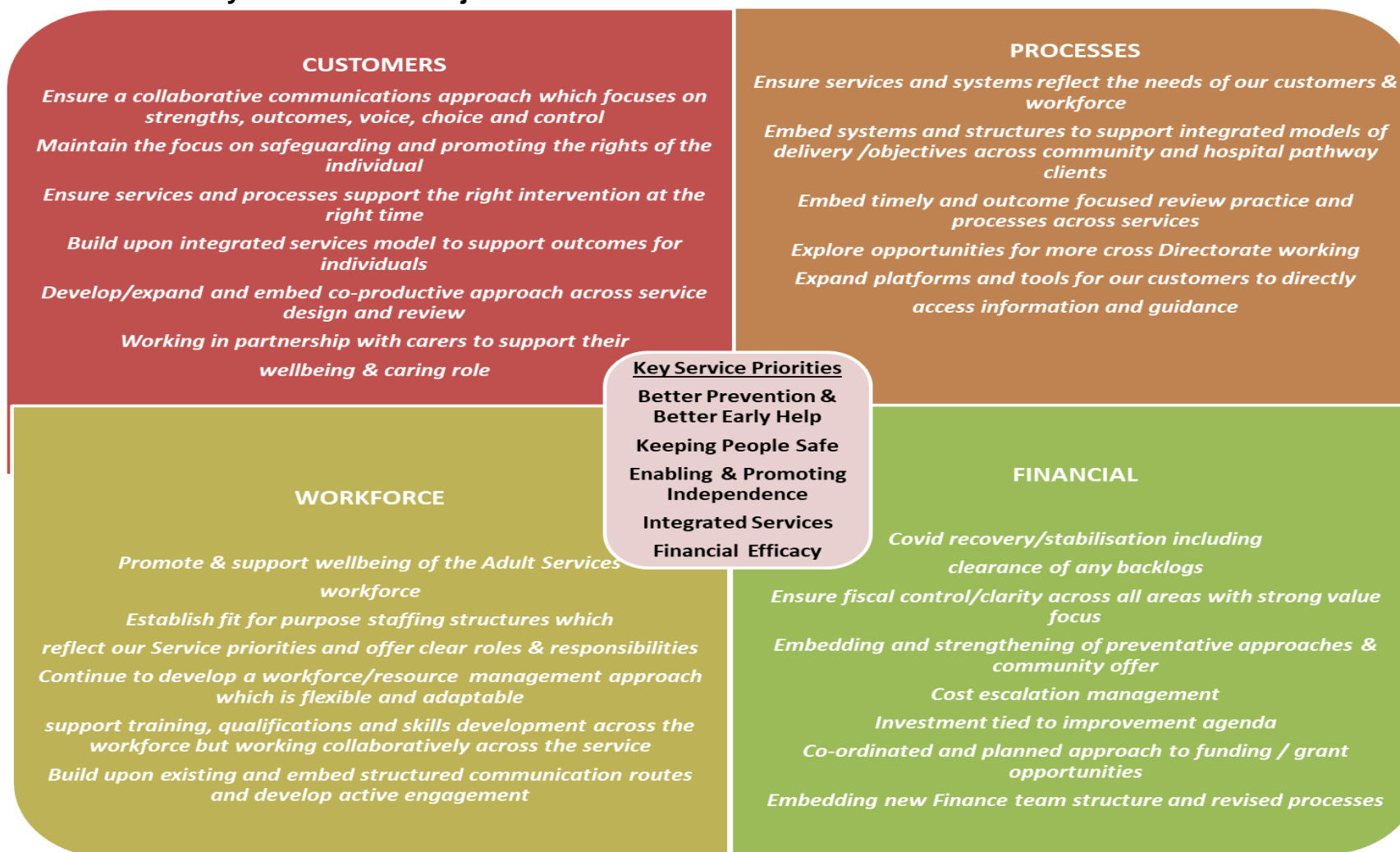
There is a wide range of information available through the Council's website:
<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/socialcarepublications>.

For further information on accessing Social Services, check out the Council's public website at: <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/2929/How-Social-Services-can-help-with-your-care-and-support>.

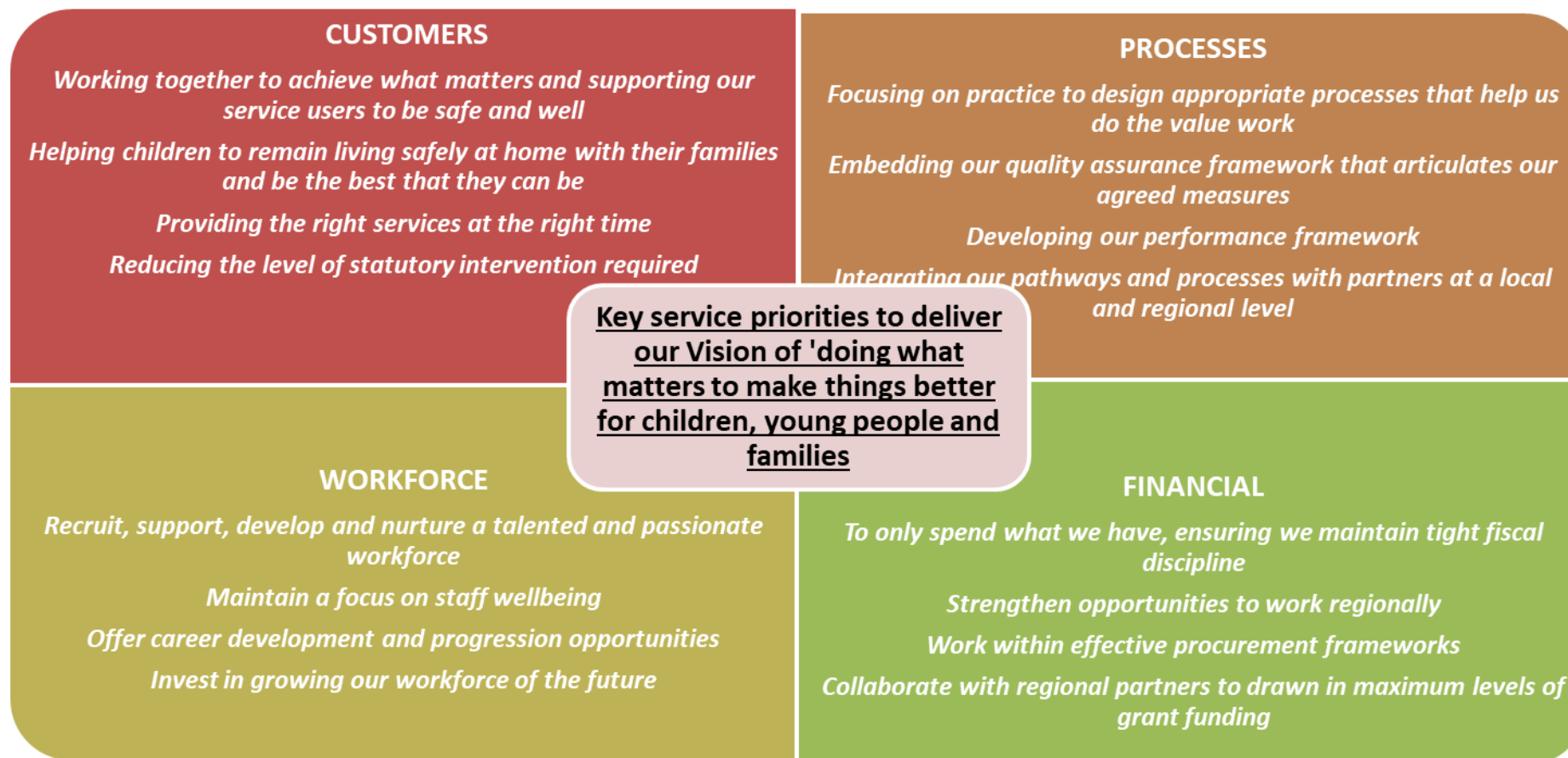
APPENDICES

- a) Adult Services Key Priorities and Objectives For 2022/23**
- b) Child & Family Services Key Priorities and Objectives For 2022/23**
- c) Tackling Poverty Services Key Priorities and Objectives For 2022/23**

a) Adult Services Key Priorities and Objectives For 2022/23



b) Child & Family Services Key Priorities and Objectives For 2022/23



c) Tackling Poverty Services Key Priorities and Objectives For 2022/23

Customers	Processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigate the impact of the pandemic and cost of living crisis on the public Maximising the benefits of effective communications Localising real time information for public Increasing awareness of offers Increased coproduction opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the corporate Tackling Poverty Strategy Increased availability of bilingual offer Reporting Quality information Sharing client information Increased use of Teams e.g. training library
Workforce	Financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support groups for staff, increased awareness of what's available Valuing workforce - mini projects Ongoing training, training plans staff Succession planning and stability of workforce Trepidation for staff and people we're working with Cross team working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Beyond 2023 planning Maximising opportunities
Key Priorities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that preventative approaches are embedded into our work Further develop co-productive approaches / Engagement forums <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff well-being Build upon effective partnership working / collaboration Identify and implement new opportunities to tackle poverty and enhance well-being <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide learning opportunities to increase skills and well-being of residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage new clients and support them to access employment Ensure residents can successfully access benefits and entitlements Use strength-based connections with people to pursue their goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective use of available resources 	

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Social Services

Directorate: Social Services

Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2021-22

Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

- Q3** What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

The purpose of the Director of Social Services' Annual Report is to evaluate the local authority's improvement journey to 2021/22, in providing services to people in Swansea, those who access information, advice and assistance, and to those individuals and carers in receipt of care and support. The report sets out the evidence –based view of the Director, at this point in time, and the priorities for improvement in 2022/23.

- Q4** Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?
Yes No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?
Yes No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?
Yes No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?
Yes No

-
- Q5** What is the potential risk of the initiative? (*Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...*)

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

-
- Q6** Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

-
- Q7** What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?

(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)

Director of Social Services' Annual Report is a statutory requirement under Part 8 of the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and this report is expected to be written by, or on

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

behalf, of the person responsible for carrying out the full range of statutory roles and responsibilities.

As a statutory annual report, this “Plan” reflects the views of the Director of Social Services in Swansea, to whom people are entitled to express their views of how effective the services are:

- In meeting wellbeing and needs of targeted populations
- In delivering on priorities set in past annual report
- Achieving a sustainable model of social care
- In providing assurances about the quality of services, against national standards

The report provides the public and stakeholders with the summary views of the statutory director of social services, and the priorities for future improvement. This report in containing the viewpoint of the statutory director does not need to change, whether during or following its document lifecycle, and through extended engagement with council elected members and/or partners. This report is informed by service user views, and the report sets out examples of how services now provided or commissioned are shaped by participation and coproduction.

The report also contains a summary of Swansea Council’s progress against implementing the changes expected by new legislative framework for social care in Wales, and a set of improvement priorities for 2022/23.

- new statutory requirements under the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, through the many regulations and codes of practice:
<http://gov.wales/topics/health/socialcare/act/assessments?lang=en>
- Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act <http://gov.wales/docs/equality-impact-assessments/150223-cymraig-en.pdf>
- Welsh Language standards (Regulatory Impact Assessment)
<http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/sub-ld10587-em/sub-ld10587-em-e.pdf>
- Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015
- How Swansea’s social services function, particularly through its Child and Family Services, is supporting the Council’s commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the best interests of children (0-18 years) and families in Swansea.
- How well the Council’s Corporate Priorities are being met, and its own transformation programme “Sustainable Swansea” is supporting the improvement programmes in Adult Services and Child and Family Services.
- How Swansea is contributing to the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board to build collaboration and effective governance arrangements to support a regional approach to safeguarding, commissioning, workforce development and business as usual activities in order to make best use of resources..

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Outcome of Screening

Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:

- **Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)**
- **Summary of involvement (Q3)**
- **WFG considerations (Q4)**
- **Any risks identified (Q5)**
- **Cumulative impact (Q7)**

• **Summary of Impacts (Q2)** Impacts are positive and low on specific groups due to the nature and purpose of the report as explained above.

• **Summary of involvement (Q3) Social Services work closely with other** Swansea Council services, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Third Sector organisations, Social Care providers, West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Boards and works co-productively on services development and commissioning plans. This development work and the involvement of others has been involved in his report.

• **WFG considerations (Q4)** Well-being of Future Generation forms part of the overall plan and as part of the transformation and improvement programmes within social services, which are working towards a sustainable model of social care. Health, social care and wellbeing is a significant part of the local and regional economy of Swansea, and the report focused on the range of services and other organisations which form part of this economy. A skilled, qualified social care workforce is vital to improving wellbeing outcomes for Swansea citizens. The report shows how we are looking to the future by ensuring that we are well placed to recruit, retain and better support social care workers in their professional development, and how we can help them be the best that they can be in their work with vulnerable people and their carers.

• **Any risks identified (Q5)** The improvements and transformation programmes set out within this plan are risk managed closely. Any risks identified and agreed, are mitigated as routine within social services at service, directorate and corporate levels through monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meeting sand escalated accordingly through to appropriate corporate and political structures. Some of the wider impacts for example those emerging during the Covid pandemic, and their associated risks have been, and will continue to be, managed through the regional partnership structures.

• **Cumulative impact (Q7)** There is a positive impact on the wellbeing of Swansea citizens though the continuous improvement of social services, and the benefits this brings to the social care economy and wider social care workforce.

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

Screening completed by:

Page 114

Appendix B. Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Name: Simon Jones
Job title: Social Service Strategic Performance & Improvement Officer
Date: 1st July 2022
Approval by Head of Service:
Name: David Howes
Position: Corporate Director of Social Services
Date: 1st July 2022

Please return the completed form to accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 11.



Report of the Section 151 Officer

Council – 6 October 2022

Review of Revenue Reserves

Purpose:	To undertake a mid-year review of the Revenue Reserves position and to agree any suggested reclassification of reserves based on current requirements.
Policy framework:	Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget Strategy
Consultation:	Cabinet Members, Corporate Management Team, Legal and Access to Services.
Recommendations:	That Council approves the recommendations made in this report at Sections 3.10 and 3.11
Report Author:	Ben Smith
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction and Context

- 1.1. Local Authorities have a corporate responsibility to operate within available resources and to remain financially sound over the short, medium and longer term.
- 1.2. One of the key tools available to Authorities in managing its affairs is the creation and use of both General and Earmarked reserves to assist in delivering services over a period longer than one financial year.
- 1.3. In terms of guidance on the review and management of reserves, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), via the Local Authority Accounting Panel, issued a bulletin in July 2014 (LAAP 99) intended to give guidance to Local Authorities on the management and review of reserves. This bulletin is considered best practice in terms of Local Authority

financial administration and effectively must be followed. A copy of the bulletin is at Appendix A to this report.

- 1.4. Within the existing statutory and regulatory framework, it is the responsibility of Chief Financial Officers to advise Local Authorities about the level of reserves that should be held and to ensure there are clear protocols for their establishment and use. Reserves should not be held without a clear purpose.
- 1.5. It is the duty of the Chief Financial Officer to specifically report on the robustness of estimates and reserves when the Council considers its budget requirement, as such the Revenue Budget approved by Council in March 2021 made specific references to the adequacy of reserves at that time.
- 1.6. Notwithstanding that specific statutory requirement, it is the duty of the Chief Finance Officer to regularly review the position regarding available reserves of the Authority having specific regard to:
 - The original and current need for each category of reserve held
 - An assessment of current and future risks (both operationally and financially) facing the Council
 - The impact of known and predicted funding levels likely to impact on the Council going forward.
- 1.7. Swansea Council's Chief Finance Officer is the Section 151 Officer and Chief Finance Officer.
- 1.8. This report considers the position regarding both General and Earmarked reserves as at 31st March 2022 and makes specific recommendations in respect of reclassification of elements of those specific reserves.

2. Position as at 31st March 2022

- 2.1. The draft Statement of Accounts 2021/22 will include the following entries in respect of reserves as at 31st March 2022, which are still subject to audit:

Cash-Backed Usable Reserves	£'000	Purpose
1. General Fund Revenue Reserves		
a) General Fund Balance	10,000	Used as an overall contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies and as a means of smoothing out annual budgets where there is significant change
b) Earmarked Revenue Reserves	157,992	Consisting of sums set aside for specific purposes to support Corporate and Service needs
2. General Fund Capital Reserves		(only usable for capital purposes)

a) Capital Receipts Reserve	5,597	Capital monies received by the Council set aside for funding ongoing Capital schemes per the Capital Programme. These sums are committed to current schemes and cannot be used to support Revenue expenditure
b) Capital Grants Unapplied Account	30,427	Relates to committed funding on Capital schemes and cannot be used to support Revenue expenditure
3. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Reserves		(only usable for HRA purposes)
a) Housing Revenue Account	5,239	Exists to support expenditure for Housing Revenue Account purposes only and cannot be used to support General Fund Council Revenue or Capital expenditure
Total Usable Cash Backed Reserves	209,255	

- 2.2. Usable reserves are cash-backed and can be used to support expenditure – albeit occasionally with some specific rules around the type of expenditure that they can be used for. For example the Housing Revenue Account Reserve has been created from rents received, it is a cash reserve, however it is ring-fenced for use within the Housing Revenue Account only; it can only be spent on items relating to Council Housing.
- 2.3. In addition the Council holds unusable reserves arising purely from accounting technicalities (this includes capital financing and pensions liabilities). These reserves are not cash-backed and therefore cannot be spent. They tend to arise from entries that have to be made for accounting purposes, but which are not permitted to affect the taxpayer. A net £102.496m was held as at 31st March 2021, as was flagged by the external auditor last year the authority is carrying out considerable work to restate the split (net nil effect overall) between two of these technical non-useable reserves in future years.
- 2.4. **These cannot be used to support revenue or capital expenditure of the Council in any form and as such are not part of this review.**
- 2.5. The HRA reserve and the Capital reserves detailed above are ring-fenced and are regularly reviewed as part of business planning. As such they are provided for general information only, no further review is proposed at this time.
- 2.6. The General Fund Balance of the Council as detailed above takes account of decisions made by Cabinet based on the 2021/22 Revenue Outturn position considered on 21st July 2022.

- 2.7. Comparisons with other Welsh Councils show that, as a percentage of Gross Revenue Expenditure, the level of the General Fund reserve is below the All Wales average (as at 31st March 2021) and as such no planned use of the balance is recommended. At the end of 2020/21 the opportunity was taken to make a moderate increase to the General Fund Reserve, however it is still deemed to be low both in absolute and proportionate terms both historically and compared to all other Councils in Wales. For Members to achieve that aim of increasing general reserves, whilst trying to maintain services in the face of significant budgetary constraint, especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic and rising inflationary costs, is accepted by the Section 151 to be exceptionally equally difficult to consider.
- 2.8. The draft Statement of Accounts due to be presented to our external Auditors (Wales Audit Office) will include an analysis of earmarked reserves with the proviso that each reserve will be subject to strategic review by the Section 151 Officer based on an analysis of current need and changing Council risks.
- 2.9. This report is the result of that strategic review.

3. Outcomes and recommendations

- 3.1. The Medium Term Financial Plan approved by Council on 3rd March 2022 forecast a cumulative deficit on General Fund Revenue Expenditure of some £38m by 2025/26, based on a 3.5% increase in Government funding for year 1 down to 2% by year 3, with an immediate savings requirement of £4.5m for 2023/24. This is in addition to the current year savings requirement of £4.8m. More recent forecasts indicate an even larger savings requirement will be likely, predominantly as a result of ongoing demographic pressures, issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and most notably the current levels of inflation including pay awards.
- 3.2. Equally, there is clear and compelling evidence that it is unlikely that any Directorate will be able to live within original budget this year primarily due to the latest pay offer from the employers and the ongoing COVID pressures. The pandemic has also limited the ability of departments to achieve savings planned in the 2021/22 budget, which may put future years' savings in jeopardy.
- 3.3. To put it into context, if all planned savings for 2022/23 are achieved it still leaves a minimum gap of £4.5m to be addressed for 2023/24, as per the previous medium term financial plan assumptions. The current levels of inflation are likely to significantly affect this, and whilst still under review and waiting for (for example) pay awards to be agreed, it is more likely that this figure will be in excess of £20m.
- 3.4. The Council's strategy for dealing with ongoing budget reductions and Service reforms – through the Recovery Plan – is ongoing and it is clear that there is likely to be considerable cost in relation to change, together with potential significant investment in digital technology solutions.

- 3.5. Dealing with the cost of future structural change is a significant financial risk facing the given the scale and pace of budget pressures to be addressed by the Council.
- 3.6. In assessing both the level and use of Earmarked and General reserves, the LAAP bulletin sets out some of the factors that should be considered, including:-
- The treatment of demand led pressures
 - The treatment of planned efficiency savings/productivity gains
 - The financial risks inherent in any significant new funding partnerships or changes in service delivery
 - The general financial climate to which the Authority is subject.
- 3.7. Having considered the above, and in the context of a medium term financial plan that shows ongoing and sustained budget reductions, it is the opinion of the Section 151 Officer that the Council needs to continue to prepare for significant change in service delivery that will inevitably impact on direct employment levels going forward.
- 3.8. Changes on such a scale will inevitably come with substantial up-front costs and it is important at this time that the Council plans operationally and financially to meet these changes. There is £3m held in the Restructure Reserve for these costs.
- 3.9. It is vitally important that the Restructuring Reserve is protected as much as possible to enable the Council to carry out any necessary restructuring as it continues to transform under the Recovery Plan – Achieving Better Together.
- 3.10. As recommended previously a capital equalisation reserve was created from the underspending on debt charges and the fundamental review by council last year of our approach to the Minimum Revenue Provision calculation. The recommendation continues to be that this reserve is topped up wherever possible, by capital financing underspending in year, to help with any timing issues around the need to fund any City Deal projects in advance of receipt of funding from other bodies. Exceptionally, however, as reported in the Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report to Cabinet on 1st September, the S151 Officer has identified that the £4.5m rolled forward contingency fund will be required to fund the IT development fund and the additional cost arising from the latest employers' pay offer, on top of the full use of the in-year contingency fund. This may change significantly if additional UK and Welsh Government support is announced to assist with costs and income losses However at the current time it is not expected that any additional draw from reserves will be required in any scenario.
- 3.11. **To this extent, and following a review of current earmarked reserves, no re-classification of earmarked reserves is recommended at this juncture:-**

Category of Earmarked Reserve	Current Balance 31/03/22 £'000	Proposed Change £'000	Recommended Position £'000
Technical/third party	2,869	0	2,869
Insurance	17,776	0	17,776
Transformation and efficiency	15	0	15
Schools delegated reserves	28,391	0	28,391
Equalisation reserves	14,547	0	14,547
Commuted sums	7,597	0	7,597
Repair and renewal funds	2,212	0	2,212
Profit share on joint ventures	1,614	0	1,614
Service earmarked reserves	36,424	0	36,424
Capital reserves	0	0	0
Restructuring costs reserve	3,000	0	3,000
Contingency	4,479	-2,500	1,979
IT Development Fund	0	2,500	2,500
Recovery Fund	39,068	0	39,068
Total Earmarked Reserves	157,992	0	157,992

3.12. It should be noted that there are no changes identified for the Capital Equalisation Reserve or the Recovery Fund as these two reserves are effectively fully committed over the next few years unless they are topped up. The Capital Equalisation reserve is likely to continue to receive top ups if debt charges continue to be underspent in the short term, however the Recovery Fund is less likely to receive top ups in the future.

4. Evaluation of reserve requirements

- 4.1. A number of the reserves highlighted above have been set aside for specific purposes; these include the insurance reserve set aside to meet the potential cost of excess payments should a claim on external insurers materialise or should the Council have to meet claims from its own resources. Repair and renewal funds set aside to meet future major repair and renewal costs on strategic assets (for example Crematorium, Quadrant Bus Station), and reserves set aside for profit share on disposals of assets where reclamation has been funded by the WDA/Welsh Government.
- 4.2. Following the extremely favourable 2020/21 outturn result, a new reserve was created called the Recovery Fund, and £20m was set aside to aid the recovery from COVID-19. The fund has operated successfully during 2021/22 and the 2021/22 outturn report to Cabinet on 21st July recommended a further £24.705m to be added to the fund. At the date of writing this report, in the region of £20m has been approved for schemes.
- 4.3. It is essential that monies set aside for the above purposes are regularly reviewed in order to confirm their accuracy and relevance.

- 4.4. To that extent formal assurance will be sought on the adequacy of these reserve levels as part of the annual budget setting process.
- 4.5. As part of the budget setting process for 2023/24 a review will be carried out again of all service earmarked reserves to test their continued relevance and value.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires each Local Authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and that the Chief Finance Officer (in our case the Section 151 Officer and Chief Finance Officer) has responsibility for those affairs.
- 5.2. Under guidance detailed at Appendix A to this report the Chief Finance Officer is required at all times to monitor the purpose and use of reserves.

6. Integrated Assessment implications

- 6.1. The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
 - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
 - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English. Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 6.2. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 6.3. Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

- 6.4. As this report is a technical review and reclassification of reserves held by this authority there is no impact on anyone with a protected characteristic. The review is the duty of the Section 151 Officer only, there is no wider involvement. Any consideration of the Well-being of Future Generations Act would take place as part of any proposal to use the reserves, and risks and impacts would be assessed as part of any proposal. An IIA screening form has been attached as Appendix C

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A – LAAP Bulletin 99 – Local Authority Reserves and Balances

Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Appendix C – IIA Screening Form

LAAP BULLETIN 99

Local Authority Reserves and Balances

July 2014

The Local Authority Accounting Panel issues LAAP Bulletins to assist practitioners with the application of the requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, SeRCOP and Prudential Code and to provide advice on emerging or urgent accounting issues. Bulletins provide influential guidance that is intended to be best practice, but are not prescriptive and do not have the formal status of the Code, SeRCOP or Prudential Code.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
Registered with the Charity Commissioners of England and Wales Number
231060

CIPFA, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, is the professional body for people in public finance. Our 14,000 members work throughout the public services, in national audit agencies, in major accountancy firms, and in other bodies where public money needs to be effectively and efficiently managed. As the only UK professional accountancy body to specialise in public services, CIPFA's qualifications are the foundation of a career in public finance. They include the benchmark professional qualification for public sector accountants as well as a postgraduate diploma for people already working in leadership positions. Our in-house CIPFA Education and Training Centre delivers the range of our programmes at locations across the UK, and works with other places of learning to provide our courses locally. We also champion high performance in public services, translating our experience and insight into clear advice and practical services. They include information and guidance, courses and conferences, property and asset management solutions, consultancy and interim people for a range of public sector clients. Globally, CIPFA shows the way in public finance by standing up for sound public financial management and good governance. We work with governments, accounting bodies and the public sector around the world to advance public finance and support its professionals.

**the people
in public finance**

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. LAAP Bulletin 55 (Guidance note on local authority reserves and balances) was issued in February 2003. This was followed by its replacement in 2008 by LAAP Bulletin 77. LAAP Bulletin 77 included a number of events and changes that occurred including the publication of the Prudential Code and the beginnings of the financial downturn. Since the issue of LAAP Bulletin 77, the IFRS-based Code¹ has been published and this bulletin has been updated to reflect the new requirements of that Code. In addition, during a period of financial austerity for the public sector, the Local Authority Accounting Panel considers that it is necessary to update the guidance on local authority reserves and balances.
2. The “New Reporting Framework” described in LAAP Bulletin 55 has now largely been overtaken by statutory requirements, but is included in Appendix A for information.
3. The advice previously provided by LAAP Bulletin 77 which focussed on the financial impact of flooding is included in Appendix B.
4. Further resources and information are provided at Appendix C.
5. Relevant extracts from the IFRS-based Code are provided at Appendix D.

PURPOSE

6. This bulletin provides guidance to local authority chief finance officers in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales on the establishment and maintenance of local authority reserves and balances.

APPLICATION

7. In England, Scotland and Wales the guidance is applicable to local authorities, joint committees and joint boards of principal authorities.
8. In England and Wales the guidance is applicable to Police and Crime Commissioners, Chief Constables and fire and rescue authorities.
9. In Northern Ireland the guidance applies to all district councils.
10. The general principles set out in this guidance apply to an authority’s General Fund, Council Fund, Police Fund and, where appropriate, to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
11. The advice in this bulletin relates to reserves, not provisions. The Code definitions of provisions and reserves are included in Appendix D to this bulletin for information.
12. This bulletin replaces LAAP Bulletin 77.

¹ *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* (the Code).

LEGISLATIVE / REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

13. The requirement for financial reserves is acknowledged in statute. Sections 31A, 32 42A and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require billing and precepting authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. Section 93 of the 1992 Act requires Scottish authorities, in calculating council tax, to take into account 'any means by which those expenses may otherwise be met or provided for'. This includes reserves.
14. In Scotland there are explicit statutory powers under schedule 3 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1975 permitting certain local authorities to establish a renewal and repair fund, an insurance fund and a capital fund alongside a requirement, as in England and Wales, to maintain a General Fund (section 93 of Part VII of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973). LASAAC has published guidance on reserves which is available from the LASAAC website. In Northern Ireland, Section 9 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 enables councils to maintain other funds in addition to the General Fund. Local authorities may however ' earmark ' specific parts of the General Fund reserve. This earmarking of a proportion of the General Fund is referred to in this Bulletin as Earmarked Reserves.
15. There are also a range of safeguards in place that help to prevent local authorities over-committing themselves financially. These include:
 - the balanced budget requirement:
 - England, sections 31A, 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended
 - Wales, sections 32 and 43 and Scotland, 93 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and
 - section 85 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999
 - chief finance officers' duty to report on robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves (under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003) when the authority is considering its budget requirement (England and Wales)
 - chief finance officers' duty to report on the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of reserves (under sections 4 and 6 of the Local Government and Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
 - the legislative requirement for each local authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and that the chief finance officer / proper officer has responsibility for the administration of those affairs section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 95 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and section 1 of the Local Government and Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
 - the requirements of the Prudential Code.
16. These requirements are reinforced by section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 which requires the chief finance officer in England and Wales to report to all the authority's councillors if there is or is likely to be unlawful expenditure or an unbalanced budget. This would include situations where reserves have become seriously depleted and it is forecast that the authority will not have the resources to meet its expenditure in a particular financial year. The issue of a section 114 notice cannot be taken lightly and has serious operational implications. Indeed, the authority's full council must meet within 21 days to consider the s114 notice and

during that period the authority is prohibited from entering into new agreements involving the incurring of expenditure.

17. Whilst it is primarily the responsibility of the local authority and its chief financial officer to maintain a sound financial position, external auditors will confirm that there are no material uncertainties about going concern. Even where as part of their wider role auditors have to report on an authority's financial position, it is not their responsibility to prescribe the optimum or minimum level of reserves for individual authorities or authorities in general.
18. CIPFA's Prudential Code requires chief finance officers in local authorities to have full regard to affordability when making recommendations about the local authority's future capital programme. Such consideration includes the level of long term revenue commitments. Indeed, in considering the affordability of its capital plans, the authority is required to consider all of the resources available to it/estimated for the future, together with the totality of its capital plans and revenue forecasts for the forthcoming year and the following two years.

ROLE OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (PROPER OFFICER IN SCOTLAND)

19. Within the existing statutory and regulatory framework, it is the responsibility of chief finance officers (proper officer in Scotland) to advise local authorities about the level of reserves that they should hold and to ensure that there are clear protocols for their establishment and use. Reserves should not be held without a clear purpose.
20. CIPFA and the Local Authority Accounting Panel consider that local authorities should establish reserves including the level of those reserves based on the advice of their chief finance officers. Authorities should make their own judgements on such matters taking into account all the relevant local circumstances. Such circumstances vary. A well-managed authority, for example, with a prudent approach to budgeting should be able to operate with a level of general reserves appropriate for the risks (both internal and external) to which it is exposed. In assessing the appropriate level of reserves, a well-managed authority will ensure that the reserves are not only adequate but are also necessary. There is a broad range within which authorities might reasonably operate depending on their particular circumstances.
21. Section 26 of the Local Government Act 2003 gives Ministers in England and Wales a general power to set a minimum level of reserves for local authorities. However, the government has undertaken to apply this only to individual authorities in the circumstances where an authority does not act prudently, disregards the advice of its chief finance officer and is heading for serious financial difficulty. This accords with CIPFA's view that a generally applicable minimum level is inappropriate, as a minimum level of reserve will only be imposed where an authority is not following best financial practice (including the guidance in this bulletin).

TYPES OF RESERVE

22. When reviewing their medium term financial plans and preparing their annual budgets local authorities should consider the establishment and maintenance of reserves. These can be held for three main purposes:
 - a working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing – this forms part of general reserves;
 - a contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies – this also forms part of general reserves;

- a means of building up funds, often referred to as earmarked reserves (or earmarked portion of the general fund in Scotland - see below), to meet known or predicted requirements; earmarked reserves are accounted for separately but remain legally part of the General Fund.

Category of Earmarked Reserve	Rationale
Sums set aside for major schemes, such as capital developments or asset purchases, or to fund major reorganisations	Where expenditure is planned in future accounting periods, it is prudent to set aside resources in advance.
Insurance reserves (note that the Insurance Fund is a statutory fund in Scotland)	Self-insurance is a mechanism used by a number of local authorities. In the absence of any statutory basis (other than in Scotland) sums held to meet potential and contingent liabilities are reported as earmarked reserves where these liabilities do not meet the definition of a provision under the requirements of the Code's adoption of IAS 37 <i>Provisions, Contingent Assets and Liabilities</i>).
Reserves of trading and business units	Surpluses arising from in-house trading may be retained to cover potential losses in future years, or to finance capital expenditure.
Reserves retained for service departmental use	Authorities may have internal protocols that permit year-end underspendings at departmental level to be carried forward.
Reserves for unspent revenue grants	Where revenue grants have no conditions or where the conditions are met and expenditure has yet to take place. The Code Guidance Notes recommend that these sums are held in earmarked reserves (see paragraph 29 below).
Schools balances	These are unspent balances of budgets delegated to individual schools.

FINANCIAL REPORTING FOR RESERVES

23. The IFRS-based *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* (the Code) introduced the Movement in Reserves Statement to local authority financial statements in the 2010/11 financial year. This Statement presents the movement in the year of the reserves of the authority analysed into usable reserves, (eg General Fund, HRA Balances and earmarked reserves) and unusable reserves (see paragraph 24 below).
24. Unusable reserves arise out of the interaction of legislation and proper accounting practice either to store revaluation gains or as adjustment accounts to reconcile accounting requirements driven by reporting standards to statutory requirements.

These reserves², which are not resource-backed and cannot be used for any other purpose, are described below:

Revaluation Reserves

- The Revaluation Reserve - this is a reserve that records unrealised gains in the value of property, plant and equipment. The reserve increases when assets are revalued upwards, and decreases as assets are depreciated or when assets are revalued downwards or disposed of. Local authorities might benefit from these gains in the future from the continued use of the assets or from their sale. The Reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date that the Reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.
- The Available-for-Sale Financial Instruments Reserve – this is a reserve that records unrealised revaluation gains arising from holding available-for-sale investments, plus any unrealised losses that have not arisen from impairment of the assets. Local authorities might benefit in the future from the gains when the investments mature or are sold or they might be lost in falls in value.

Adjustment Accounts

- The Pensions Reserve – this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the payments made for the year to various statutory pension schemes in accordance with those schemes' requirements and the net change in the authority's recognised liability under the Code's adoption of IAS 19 – *Employee Benefits*, for the same period. A transfer is made to or from the pensions reserve to ensure that the charge to the General Fund reflects the amount required to be raised in taxation. For example, the debit balance on the Reserve shows that an authority has made commitments to fund pensions that the Government has permitted it to fund from contributions to be made in future years.
- The Capital Adjustment Account - this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the different rates at which assets are depreciated under proper accounting practice and are financed through the capital controls system. Statute requires that the charge to the General Fund is determined by the capital controls system. For example, the credit balance on the Account shows that an authority has generally financed capital investment in advance of receiving the benefits of that investment. The Account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains.
- The Financial Instruments Adjustment Account – this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the different rates at which gains and losses (such as premiums on the early repayment of debt) are recognised under proper accounting practice and are required by statute to be met from the General Fund. For example, the debit balance on the Account shows that an authority has incurred expenses on borrowings that the Government has permitted it to spread over future years.

² In addition to the Reserves included in this list authorities may hold the deferred capital receipts reserve and the accumulated absences account. Further details on these reserves are included in the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom Guidance Notes for Practitioners 2013/14 Accounts*.

- The Unequal Pay Back Pay Account - this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the different rates at which payments in relation to compensation for previous unequal pay are recognised under proper accounting practice and are required by statute to be met from the General Fund. This account is not applicable to Scotland.
 - Collection Fund Adjustment Account – this is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the differences arising from the recognition of council tax and non-domestic rates income (England) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to those amounts required to be charged by statute to the General Fund. For example, the credit balance on the Account shows that more tax has been collected on behalf of the authority and the precepting bodies (and central government in England for non-domestic rates income) than an authority is permitted to transfer out of the Collection Fund by 31 March. This account is not applicable to Scotland.
25. Other such reserves may be created in future where developments in local authority accounting result in timing differences between the recognition of income and expenditure under proper accounting practice and under statute or regulation.
26. In addition authorities will hold the following two usable reserves:
- a Major Repairs Reserve (England and Wales), where relevant – in England this reserve records the unspent amount of HRA balances for capital financing purposes in accordance with statutory requirements for the Reserve. In Wales this represents the amounts unspent from the Major Repairs Allowance capital grant.
 - a Capital Receipts Reserve (Capital Fund in Scotland³) – this reserve holds the proceeds from the sale of assets, and can only be used for those purposes specified in the capital finance and accounting regulations⁴ in England, Northern Ireland and Wales and for capital purposes in Scotland.
27. The Code recommends that earmarked reserves are reported on the face of the Movement in Reserves Statement. Particularly significant movements might need to be reported individually on the face of the Statement to ensure key messages are presented clearly to users. However, effective reporting may either as an alternative or as a supplementary report necessitate similar disclosures in the notes to the financial statements (see paragraphs 3.4.2.41 and 3.4.2.42 of the Code which are also included in Appendix D for ease of reference).
28. When establishing reserves, local authorities need to ensure that they are complying with the Code and in particular the need to distinguish between reserves and provisions. Definitions of reserves and provisions are included in Appendix D of this Bulletin.
29. The introduction of the IFRS-based Code on 1 April 2010 has meant that grant income should be recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (and therefore against the General (Council) Fund or HRA Balances for

³ *The Statutory Basis for Accounting and Disclosing Reserves in Local Authorities in Scotland* [LASAAC, 2005] states "Useable capital receipts reserves are considered to be allowable under the power contained within Schedule 3, para 22 of the 1975 Act. Such a reserve effectively acts as a subset of the capital reserve specifically permitted by legislation."

⁴ The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting)(England) Regulations 2003, as amended, The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Wales) Regulations 2003, as amended and the Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011.

revenue grants) where grant payment is unconditional or grant conditions have been satisfied⁵. The Code Guidance Notes recommend⁶ that where these grants have been received prior to the expenditure having taken place authorities should consider establishing earmarked reserves. This will ensure that amounts are set aside from the General (or Council) Fund and HRA balances in earmarked reserves to provide financing to meet the requirements of the grant. The amounts set aside will be posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund and HRA expenditure in future years. It is likely therefore that since the introduction of the IFRS-based Code there is an increased tendency to hold earmarked reserves.

30. The statutory reporting regime described earlier and effective financial management underpin the need for clear, transparent reporting arrangements for reserves and therefore in addition to the financial reporting requirements above, LAAP recommends that for each earmarked reserve (earmarked portion of the general fund in Scotland) held by a local authority there should be a clear protocol setting out:
- the reason for / purpose of the reserve;
 - how and when the reserve can be used;
 - procedures for the reserve's management and control; and
 - a process and timescale for review of the reserve to ensure continuing relevance and adequacy.

PRINCIPLES TO ASSESS THE ADEQUACY OF RESERVES

31. In order to assess the adequacy of unallocated general reserves when setting the budget, chief finance officers should take account of the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the authority. Where authorities are being reorganised, this assessment should be conducted on the basis that the services will continue to be provided, and adequate reserves will therefore be required by successor authorities. The assessment of risks should include external risks, such as flooding, as well as internal risks, for example, the ability to deliver planned efficiency savings. In England and Wales, statutory provisions require authorities to review at least once in a year the effectiveness of their system of internal control, which will include risk management. The CIPFA/SOLACE framework *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* details an approach to giving assurance that risk, control and governance matters are being addressed in accordance with best practice.
32. The Codes of Audit Practice in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland make it clear that it is the responsibility of the audited body to identify and address its operational and financial risks, and to develop and implement proper arrangements to manage them, including adequate and effective systems of internal control. The financial risks should be assessed in the context of the authority's overall approach to risk management.

Budget Assumptions	Financial standing and management assessment/impact
The treatment of inflation and interest rates	The overall financial standing of the authority (level of borrowing, debt outstanding, council tax collection rates)

⁵ See Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom Section 2.3.

⁶ See *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom Guidance Notes for Practitioners 2013/14 Accounts*, paragraphs C39 and C40.

	<p>etc.). Rises in the prices of some commodities, eg fuel, highlight the relevance of using a number of inflation rates in the budget and financial strategy, and considering whether general reserves are adequate to deal with unexpected increases. Volatility in the financial markets also points to the need to consider investment and borrowing risks and their impact on income.</p>
<p>Estimates of the level and timing of capital receipts</p>	<p>The authority's track record in budget and financial management including the robustness of the medium term plans. Authorities will also need to take into account changes in the property market, and adjust estimates and assumptions for reserves accordingly.</p>
<p>The treatment of demand led pressures</p>	<p>The authority's capacity to manage in-year budget pressures, and its strategy for managing both demand and service delivery in the longer term.</p>
<p>The treatment of planned efficiency savings/ productivity gains</p>	<p>The strength of the financial information and reporting arrangements. The authority should also be in a position to activate contingency plans should the reporting arrangements identify that planned savings or gains will either not be achieved or be delayed.</p>
<p>The financial risks inherent in any significant new funding partnerships, major outsourcing arrangements or major capital developments</p>	<p>The authority's virement and end of year procedures in relation to budget under/overspends at authority and department/directorate level. Risk management measures in relation to partnerships, including consideration of risk allocation. Contract provisions designed to safeguard the authority's position in the event of problems arising from outsourcing arrangements.</p>
<p>The availability of reserves, government grants and other funds to deal with major contingencies and the adequacy of provisions</p>	<p>The adequacy of the authority's insurance arrangements to cover major unforeseen risks. When considering insurance cover, the structure of the cover as well as the overall level of risk should be taken into account. Risk assessments should be used when balancing the levels of insurance premiums and reserves.</p>
<p>The general financial climate to which the authority is subject</p>	<p>External factors, such as future funding levels expected to be included in Spending Reviews and expected referenda principles and limits, will influence an authority's ability to replenish reserves once they have been used. Any plans for using reserves will</p>

	need to consider the need and ability of the authority to replenish the reserves, and the risks to which the authority will be exposed whilst replenishing the reserves.
--	--

Whilst many of these factors relate to setting the annual budget, the level of risk and uncertainty associated with these factors will be relevant in determining an appropriate level of reserves.

33. Authorities have been faced by increasing financial pressures since 2008. This has been followed by a period of significant reduction in government funding which is anticipated to continue for some time, ie the spending review 2013 announced that the government will reduce total spending in 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 in real terms at the same rate as during the spending review 2010 period. Demands on local government services continue to increase. In addition to reduction in government funding other pressures include:
- councils striving to constrain council tax increases,
 - reductions of income,
 - new service demands and responsibilities such as:
 - the transfer of public health functions
 - the localisation of non-domestic rates retention, council tax freezes and council tax benefits/support
 - severe weather and floods.

Furthermore, events such as the losses in Icelandic banks and the problems in global financial markets are likely to mean that Councils will focus on cautious investment strategies. Council budgets and reserves have remained under pressure and are likely to continue to do so for some time.

34. The many factors involved when considering appropriate levels of reserves can only be assessed properly at a local level. A considerable degree of professional judgement is required. The chief finance officer may choose to express advice on the level of balances in cash and/or as a percentage of budget (to aid understanding) so long as that advice is tailored to the circumstances of the authority. The Audit Commission Report (December 2012) *Striking a Balance* makes a number of recommendations to both Chief Finance Officers and elected members to better assist councils in their decision making. Similarly the Accounts Commission in its report *An overview of local government in Scotland 2014*⁷ commented that more needs to be done to provide information on why reserves are held, how this fits with the councils financial strategy and how they will be used. The principles and financial reporting established in this and the previous LAAP bulletins on reserves will provide for the information requirements and an appropriate framework for this.
35. The advice should be set in the context of the authority's risk register and medium term plans and should not focus exclusively on short-term considerations. Balancing the annual budget by drawing on general reserves may be viewed as a legitimate short-term option. However, it is not normally prudent for reserves to be deployed

⁷ Issued by the Accounts Commission in March 2014

to finance recurrent expenditure. CIPFA has commented⁸ that Councils should be particularly wary about using one off reserves to deal with shortfalls in current funding. Where such action is to be taken, this should be made explicit, and an explanation given as to how such expenditure will be funded in the medium to long term. Advice should be given on the adequacy of reserves over the lifetime of the medium term financial plan, and should also take account of the expected need for reserves in the longer term.

36. Events such as the floods and severe weather that occurred earlier this year (2014) and previously in the floods during the summers of 2007 and 2008 have emphasised the need for authorities to be prepared for major unforeseen events. Adequate insurance cover combined with appropriate levels of reserves will enable authorities to manage the demands placed on them in such circumstances. However, these arrangements need to take account of all possible scenarios. An example quoted in the Audit Commission report *Staying Afloat* is that the total cost of the flooding was reduced where authorities had specifically considered the impact of a wide scale, serious event affecting many assets, and had taken appropriate action, for example, negotiating insurance policies that capped the total excesses linked to one event.
37. Part of the risk management process involves taking appropriate action to mitigate or remove risks, where this is possible. This in turn may lead to a lower level of reserves being required, and it would be appropriate to consider reducing the level of balances held where appropriate action to mitigate or remove risks has been successfully undertaken. A balance will need to be found between maintaining adequate levels of reserves and investing in risk reduction measures. This balance should form part of the risk management process and be considered as part of the annual budget process.
38. Emergency financial assistance from central government may be available to assist authorities in dealing with the immediate consequences of major unforeseen events, normally under the Emergency Financial Assistance to Local Authorities scheme (commonly known as the 'Bellwin' scheme). However, there is no automatic entitlement to financial assistance, and where financial assistance is given, it will not cover all of the costs even in exceptional circumstances. Further details of the scheme are available on the relevant government web sites (links can be found in Appendix C of this bulletin). Authorities should plan to have access to sufficient resources (through reserves, insurance or a combination of both) to cover the costs of recovering from events that are likely to be unavoidable.
39. When considering the level of reserves, it would be appropriate for authorities to take into account the likely level of Government support that would be available, and to consider how the balance would be funded in the event of an unforeseen event occurring.
40. Flooding, the effects of severe weather and the impact of the problems experienced by the global financial markets are examples of external risks which local authorities may need to take into account in setting levels of reserves and wider financial planning. An assessment of external risks should not be limited to those issues, but should range more widely, to take account of all significant external risks identified through the authority's risk management processes.

⁸ See comments by CIPFA Chief Executive *Building up council reserves to protect the public from future financial problems is good financial management* – CIPFA
<http://www.cipfa.org/about-cipfa/press-office/latest-press-releases/building-up-council-reserves>

EXTRACT FROM LAAP BULLETIN 55

7 A New Reporting Framework

7.1 The finance director has a fiduciary duty to local taxpayers, and must be satisfied that the decisions taken on balances and reserves represent proper stewardship of public funds.

7.2 The level and utilisation of reserves will be determined formally by the Council, informed by the advice and judgement of the finance director⁹. To enable the Council to reach its decision, the finance director should report the factors that influenced his or her judgement, and ensure that the advice given is recorded formally. Where the finance director's advice is not accepted this should be recorded formally in the minutes of the council meeting.

7.3 It is recommended that:

- the budget report to the Council should include a statement showing the estimated opening general reserve fund balance for the year ahead, the addition to/withdrawal from balances, and the estimated end of year balance. Reference should be made as to the extent to which such reserves are to be used to finance recurrent expenditure
- this should be accompanied by a statement from the finance director on the adequacy of the general reserves and provisions in respect of the forthcoming financial year and the authority's medium term financial strategy
- a statement reporting on the annual review of earmarked reserves (including schools' reserves) should also be made at the same time to the Council. The review itself should be undertaken as part of the budget preparation process. The statement should list the various earmarked reserves, the purposes for which they are held and provide advice on the appropriate levels. It should also show the estimated opening balances for the year, planned additions/withdrawals and the estimated closing balances.

⁹ LAAP Bulletin 99 normally refers to Chief Finance Officers – previous editions of this Bulletin referred to Finance Directors.

EXTRACT FROM LAAP BULLETIN 77

27. "...Alternative arrangements, for example mutual aid agreements, may help to reduce the reliance on reserves or insurance. The Pitt Review into the 2007 floods, although specifically focused on England, will be of relevance to all local authorities. This recommended that "Local authorities should continue to make arrangements to bear the cost of recovery for all but the most exceptional emergencies, and should revisit their reserves and insurance arrangements in light of last summer's floods." The Government's position remains that it is primarily the local authority's responsibility to bear such costs, and authorities should note this position when considering the appropriate level of reserves."

28 "... However, both the Pitt Review and Staying Afloat noted that most central government assistance provided to local authorities in relation to the 2007 floods was ad hoc in nature. The government has been keen to stress that they should not be seen as setting a precedent and should not be relied on in the future. Authorities will therefore need to make their own assessments of the likely level of support. "

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The Pitt Review can be downloaded from:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100807034701/http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/pittreview/thepittreview/final_report.html

Staying Afloat can be downloaded from:

http://archive.audit-commission.gov.uk/auditcommission/SiteCollectionDocuments/AuditCommissionReports/NationalStudies/StayingAfloat_REP14Dec07.pdf

Both reports provide additional advice to local authorities on planning for and managing the financial impacts of exceptional events.

LASAAC Guidance on Reserves in Scotland can be downloaded from:

<http://www.cipfa.org/regions/scotland/policy-and-technical/local-authority-scotland-accounts-advisory-committee/guidance-and-publications/accounting-for-interest-on-reserves>

Details of the Emergency Financial Assistance (Bellwin) Scheme can be downloaded from:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210953/The_Bellwin_Scheme_of_Emergency_Financial_Assistance_to_Local_Authorities.pdf

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/local-government/17999/Bellwin>

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/finandfunding/emergency/publications/efas-guidance-notes-14-15/?lang=en>

The Audit Commission Report *Striking a Balance* can be downloaded from:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/2012/12/striking-a-balance-improving-councils-decision-making-on-reserves/>

Accounts Commission *An overview of local government in Scotland 2014* (March 2014) can be accessed at:

http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/docs/local/2014/nr_140327_local_government_overview.pdf

CODE OF PRACTICE ON LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM
DEFINITIONS (AND RELEVANT EXTRACTS OF) RESERVES AND PROVISIONS

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

2.1.2.25 Reserves – the residual interest in the assets of the authority after deducting all its liabilities. The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the true economic cost of providing the authority's services, represented by the line 'Surplus or (deficit) on the provision of services'. Some income and expenditure is required to be recognised on a different basis or in a different accounting period (ie in accordance with legislation) in the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account. These differences are shown in the line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations'. Voluntary transfers to or from the General Fund Balance and Housing Revenue Account Balance also affect the amount to be funded from council tax or council dwelling rents; these are shown in the line 'Transfers to or from reserves available to fund services'. The Movement in Reserves Statement also shows Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure, for example revaluation gains.

CHAPTER THREE: FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

3.4.2.41 The classification of reserves presented in the Movement in Reserves Statement shall include the following items; authorities may choose to present additional items on the face of the statement:

- a) General Fund Balance (in Scotland, includes earmarked portion of General Fund Balance)
- b) Earmarked General Fund Reserves (not Scotland) (recommended but not mandatory)
- c) Housing Revenue Account Balance (in Scotland, includes earmarked portion of Housing Revenue Account Balance)
- d) Earmarked Housing Revenue Account Reserves (not Scotland) (recommended but not mandatory)
- e) Major Repairs Reserve (England and Wales)
- f) Revenue statutory funds (Scotland)
- g) Capital Receipts Reserve (England and Wales); Capital statutory funds (Scotland)
- h) Capital Grants Unapplied Account
- i) Total usable reserves
- j) Unusable reserves
- k) Total reserves of the authority
- l) Authority's share of the reserves of subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures (Group Accounts only)
- m) Total reserves (Group Accounts only).

3.4.2.42 A local authority shall present, either in the Movement in Reserves Statement or in the notes, an analysis of the amounts included in each item of the classification of reserves required by paragraph 3.4.2.41. This analysis shall present amounts held for capital purposes separately from those held for revenue purposes, and shall separately identify the total reserves held by schools.

CHAPTER EIGHT: LIABILITIES

8.2.2.9 A **provision** is a liability of uncertain timing or amount.

8.2.2.12 A provision shall be recognised when:

- an authority has a present obligation (legal or constructive) as a result of a past event
- it is probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits or service potential will be required to settle the obligation, and
- a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

8.2.2.13 If the above conditions are not met, no provision shall be recognised.

8.2.2.14 In some cases it is not clear whether there is a present obligation. In these cases, a past event is deemed to give rise to a present obligation if, taking account of all available evidence, it is more likely than not that a present obligation exists at the reporting date. A past event that leads to a present obligation is called an obligating event.

Glossary of Terms	
Reserves	A sum or sums of money held by the Council for future use or application
General Reserves	A sum of money set aside by the Council for general use in an emergency. Should not be considered for everyday use.
Earmarked Reserves	Sums of money set aside by the Council for use in specific instances. Some of these may be legally enforceable (such as commuted sums), others are just an indication of what the Council wishes to set monies aside for.
Commutated Sums	Monies given to the Council to carry out specific works as per Section 106 agreements - as an example a developer may wish to give the Council a sum of money to maintain open spaces on new housing estates. These monies must be used for the purpose for which they were given, or returned under the terms of the agreement.
Chief Finance Officer	The Officer of the Council with ultimate responsibility for all things financial. Also referred to as 'The Section 151 Officer' as this is the legislation awarding the powers.
Usable/Unusable Reserves	Reserves can be usable or unusable - to be usable they must be cash backed ie there must be cash available to support the reserve. Unusable reserves are those created through technical accounting entries and will have no cash to support the reserve.
Gross Revenue Expenditure	A particular calculation of a Council's gross spend, this can be used to compare across Councils
Medium Term Financial Plan	The Council's three year forecast of budget pressures and savings
Minimum Revenue Provision	The minimum amount of money the Council needs to set aside each year to repay debt.

Appendix C - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: Accountancy

Directorate: Finance

Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

Annual mid-year review of revenue reserves to suggest and agree any reclassifications of those reserves.

Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix C - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

- Q3** What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement

There is no consultation undertaken on the review of reserves – this is a task for the Section 151 officer only, as it is just a technical reclassification of the reserves. Use of the reserves is decided as part of the budget process, which follows all requirements for consultation

- Q4** Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?
Yes No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?
Yes No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?
Yes No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?
Yes No

-
- Q5** What is the potential risk of the initiative? (*Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...*)

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

-
- Q6** Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?

Yes No If yes, please provide details below

-
- Q7** What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?

(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)

There is no cumulative impact on people and/or communities. This is a technical review and reclassification of reserves. Any use of reserves to fund initiatives would be subject to assessment as part of that proposal.

Appendix C - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Outcome of Screening

Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:

- Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)
- Summary of involvement (Q3)
- WFG considerations (Q4)
- Any risks identified (Q5)
- Cumulative impact (Q7)

As this report is a technical review and reclassification of reserves held by this authority there is no impact on anyone with a protected characteristic. The review is the duty of the Section 151 Officer only, there is no wider involvement.

Any consideration of the Well-being of Future Generations Act would take place as part of any proposal to use the reserves, and risks and impacts would be assessed as part of any proposal.

As this is a technical report then no full IIA needs to be completed.

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

Screening completed by:
Name: Sarah Willis
Job title: Principal Finance Partner
Date: 12/07/22
Approval by Head of Service:
Name: Ben Smith
Position: Section 151 Officer and Chief Finance Officer
Date: 12/07/2022

Please return the completed form to accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 12.



Report of the Cabinet Member for Care Services

Council – 6 October 2022

West Glamorgan Regional Market Stability Report 2022

Purpose:	To approve the regional market stability report, which is a tool to assist the Regional Partnership Board in planning and commissioning quality care and support for their populations.
Policy Framework:	Section 144B of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 The Partnership Arrangements (Amendment) and Regulated Services (Market Stability Reports) (Wales) Regulations 2021.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that Council: 1) Notes that the Regional Partnership Board approved the regional market stability report on 7 th July, 2022. 2) Approves the regional market stability report attached in Appendix A.
Report Author:	Nicola Trotman
Finance Officer:	Chris Davies
Legal Officer:	Caritas Adere
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Market stability reports are a tool to assist Regional Partnership Boards (RPB's) in planning and commissioning quality care and support for their populations. The reports should help RPBs to determine the overall shape and balance of the market for care and support within the region. This is the first year that market stability reports have been required.
- 1.2 The primary audience for the market stability report is local authorities and Local Health Boards, in their role as statutory partners of RPBs. The report will also be of interest to other partner agencies and sectors represented on RPBs including the third sector, care and support providers, housing representatives, citizens who need care and support, and their families and carers.

2. Background

- 2.1 Section 144B of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 requires local authorities to prepare and publish market stability reports, and make provision for regulations setting out the form these must take. These matters are set out in the Partnership Arrangements (Amendment) and Regulated Services (Market Stability Reports) (Wales) Regulations 2021.
- 2.2 In preparing their market stability reports (MSR), local authorities are required to consult with the Local Health Board. The preparation and publication of market stability reports must be carried out on a regional footprint. From the individual reports the RPB must consolidate into a Regional MSR.
- 2.3 The West Glamorgan MSR was approved at the Regional Partnership Board meeting on the 7th of July. Following formal approval at RPB, the report requires approval by full council and similar decision-making body within the Health Board.
- 2.4 The market stability reports are the next step in the development of long term commissioning strategies for the care and support needs of local communities, including the development of accommodation that is fit for the future.

3. Findings

- 3.1 There are 12 chapters in the West Glamorgan Market Stability Report which is attached at **Appendix A**.
- 3.1.1 **Care Home Services – Older Adults**
 - There are sufficient numbers of available residential and dual registered beds in the area, however it is not always possible to place in the beds available

- There are relatively few homes offering specialist/complex dementia nursing care
- There is instability in the sector due to severe workforce issues combined with the current cost of living crisis
- Monitoring visits and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection reports demonstrate an overall high quality of care home provider
- There is good partnership working between providers and commissioners
- Demand for care home beds reduced over the pandemic but is now returning to pre-pandemic levels
- More work is required with providers to support them to adapt to be able to meet the needs of the future population of the region, and to gain a better understanding of the type of support that will be required

3.1.2 Care Home Services – Children

- The Children's Social Care Market Study by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)'s concluded that the residential (and fostering) market is challenging. This is an issue shared by many local authorities across Wales and England
- Partners will review its strategic and commissioning plans in 2022 and continue to work with regional and national partners to support market wide developments
- The independent residential care market is at risk from the potential implementation of Welsh Government policy commitments. This will need to be monitored closely

3.1.3 Care Home Services – Younger Adults

- The specialist care homes market across the region is considered to be stable
- There have been increases in the number of placements for both learning disability & mental health over the 5-year period
- Monitoring visits and CIW inspection reports demonstrate an overall high quality of care home providers
- Workforce pressures and rising costs present stability risks
- Work is being undertaken by each Local Authority to redevelop the market so that it better reflects the preferred wishes of individuals

3.1.4 Secure Accommodation - Children

- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council own and operate Hillside Secure Children's Home
- Hillside is the only secure children's home in Wales and has been assessed as providing sufficient levels of provision to meet previous, current, and future local demand
- Hillside is currently reviewing its service model to 'future proof' its service to ensure it is able to accommodate the future demands of the provision as well as being financially sustainable in the long term

3.1.5 Fostering

- Foster carer retention/recruitment is a problem across the region – as it is across Wales and England - as the numbers entering fostering each year is struggling to keep up with demand
- The most notable market gap is the limited availability of local placements for children aged 11+
- Overall, service quality is good across the foster care market

3.1.6 Adult Placement – Shared Lives

- Demand has differed with each Local Authority
- Over the last 5 years there has been only a small number of unsuccessful placements
- Monitoring visits and CIW inspection reports demonstrate an overall high quality of provision
- The number of carers has grown steadily over the period
- Expansion of services to promote use amongst other population groups is being explored

3.1.7 Advocacy - Adults

- There is one provider that covers the region, and provision is currently stable
- Further promotional work is underway to increase use of advocacy services for hard to reach groups
- Demand is expected to increase over the next 5 years
- Monitoring reviews demonstrate an overall high quality of provision

3.1.8 Advocacy - Children

- The Independent Professional Advocacy (IPA) Service is commissioned on a regional basis. It has been assessed as sufficient to meet previous, current and future demand
- Young people have provided positive feedback on the quality of the IPA Service and their achievement of personal advocacy outcomes
- Monitoring reviews demonstrate an overall high quality of providers

3.1.9 Domiciliary Care – Older Adults

- Domiciliary care demand continues to exceed supply
- Future longer-term demand is expected to increase in line with population growth
- Workforce issues, coupled with increased demand, is making it difficult for the region to meet current demand
- Monitoring visits and CIW inspection reports demonstrate an overall high quality of provider
- There is good partnership working between providers and commissioners
- Alternatives to traditional domiciliary care are required to keep pace with demand for services

3.1.10 Domiciliary Care - Children

- The domiciliary care market has seen a substantial growth in demand throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

- In response, the market has demonstrated flexibility and growth to meet levels of demand but at times this has led to maximised market capacity
- Overall, the market is delivering good quality services

3.1.11 Domiciliary Care – Younger Adults

- Services are of a good quality with low incidence of formal contract compliance or breaches in regulatory standards
- Since the pandemic, staffing has become one of the key risks to market to market stability and sufficiency
- Increased future demand for specialist services and care at home is anticipated and more accurate demand forecasting is needed

3.1.12 Adoption

- The Western Bay Adoption Service (WBAS) is a regional service across Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend
- The number of children coming through for adoption has reduced
- The number of adopters has increased demonstrating that the process is working effectively
- Working regionally has supported resilience and quality
- Entry to the market is highly regulated and the arrangements are working well

3.1.13 Conclusion

- The sector across the region is currently under severe pressure. The lack of available staffing is at crisis point across both health and social care. This coupled with the cost of living crisis is compounding the situation for external providers. Health and Social Care have historically worked in isolation, however now more than ever, a joint response and closer working together is required.
- Throughout the COVID19 pandemic, partners within the West Glamorgan Region demonstrated that when working together with the same goals, it was possible to overcome the challenges presented. New models of care now need to be considered to support individuals and communities, and working as a region will enable this challenge to be met, where working in isolation making unilateral decisions can unwittingly impact on the other partners.
- Under the West Glamorgan Region, there are nine programmes of work that can take responsibility for their areas of work to look at where having a regional response would be beneficial. This work will be started as a matter of urgency, with the aim of establishing a sufficient and stable market that promotes outcomes for individuals and communities.

4. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

4.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

4.2 An IIA Screening Form has been completed with the agreed outcome that a full IIA report was not required at this stage. The reason for which is that the market stability report is a tool to assist RPB's in planning and commissioning quality care and support for their populations and the report includes the data collated. The next stage of the process will be to ensure the development of long-term commissioning strategies for the care and support needs of local communities, including the development of accommodation that is fit for the future.

4.3 The IIA screening document is included in **Appendix B**.

4.4 The market stability report covers the long term implications, in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as outlined below:

Long term: Development of long term commissioning strategies to support local communities with their accommodation needs

Integration: Development of care and support that is fit for the future of our local communities

Involvement: Commissioning strategies will have involvement from individuals that require care and support at the moment and in the future, along with providers currently delivering services

Collaboration: This is a regional piece of work, developed in collaboration with other RPB partners

Prevention: Developing care and support to have the least restrictive option available when required, preventing the escalation into higher levels of support

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications associated with this report, the amendment of commissioning strategies to respond to the issues raised is likely to result in increased costs to the Council. Any future decisions will need to consider the overall financial position of the Council and the Medium-Term Financial Plan at that time.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The market stability report code of practice is issued under sections 145 and 169 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The matters set out within the West Glamorgan Market Stability Report are in accordance with Partnership Arrangements (Amendment) and Regulated Services (Market Stability Reports) (Wales) Regulations 2021. The market stability report covers the long term implications, in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as outlined above.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

- Appendix A Regional Market Stability Report
Appendix B IAA Screening Form



Partneriaeth
Ranbarthol
Gorllewin
Morgannwg

West
Glamorgan
Regional
Partnership



WEST GLAMORGAN REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

MARKET STABILITY REPORT 2022

If you require this information in an alternative format, please contact the

West Glamorgan Transformation Office via email at

west.glamorgan@swansea.gov.uk

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Partnership and Arrangements.....	3
3. Welsh Language.....	4
4. Equality, Socio-Economic Duty & Human Rights.....	4
5. Social Value & Community Benefits	4
6. Executive Summary.....	6
7. Chapters	9
7.1 Care Home Services – Older Adults	9
7.2 Care Home Services – Children	16
7.3 Care Home Services – Younger Adults.....	22
7.4 Secure Accommodation – Children.....	33
7.5 Fostering	38
7.6 Adult Placements – Shared Lives	44
7.7 Advocacy - Adults	48
7.8 Advocacy – Children	54
7.9 Domiciliary Care – Older Adults	62
7.10 Domiciliary Care – Children.....	68
7.11 Domiciliary Care - Younger Adults	77
7.12 Adoption.....	82
8. Conclusion.....	91

1. Introduction

The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership is one of seven 'regional collaboratives' across Wales. Our membership comprises of:

- Swansea Bay University Health Board
- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
- Swansea Council
- Third and independent sector partners
- Citizens and Carers

The primary purposes of this Partnership are:

- To promote prevention and wellbeing from a citizen centred perspective, that will support and strengthen both the care delivered and the health and wellbeing benefits to the people of the region.
- To integrate services more effectively for the benefit of service users and carers.
- To focus on the person through an approach committed to personalisation, independence, social inclusion and choice.
- To fulfil a shared responsibility that adults and children at risk of harm are safeguarded against all forms of abuse by working together to keep adults and children safe and to promote their welfare.
- To make service improvements, to avoid service costs increasing and to ensure services are sustainable for the future, in the face of growing demand and the current financial climate.
- To recognise that incremental changes to existing models of care will not be sufficient and that a bolder approach is needed to bring about innovative models that are appropriate to the needs of the population.

2. Partnership and Arrangements

Section 144B of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 requires local authorities to prepare and publish market stability reports, and make provision for regulations setting out the form these must take. These matters are set out in the Partnership Arrangements (Amendment) and Regulated Services (Market Stability Reports) (Wales) Regulations 2021.¹

In preparing their market stability reports, local authorities are required to consult with the Local Health Board. The preparation and publication of market stability reports must be carried out on a regional footprint.

Market stability reports are a tool to assist RPB's in planning and commissioning quality care and support for their populations. The reports should help RPB's to determine the overall shape and balance of the market for care and support within the region.

¹ Welsh Government: Market stability reports: code of practice. Code of Practice and guidance on the exercise of social services functions and partnership arrangements in relation to market stability reports. 29 March 2021

Partner organisations have completed this document locally and intelligence, feedback and data provided by partners has been received and is included. Contributors to this MSR include Swansea Council Social Services Adults and Children's commissioning teams; Swansea's commissioned Independent Professional Advocacy Provider (IPA); Swansea's commissioned Shared Lives Scheme Provider and Swansea Bay University Health Board, Neath Port Talbot council's internal sections; residential/nursing/secured/ learning disability & mental health care homes; independent professional advocacy provider; shared lives scheme provider and the local health board.

3. Welsh Language

The importance of the Welsh language and bilingualism in its Welsh language strategies and schemes is clear for all partners, providers are required to commit to the delivery of the Welsh language at the procurement stages in their contracts. Commissioners benchmark providers when reviewing compliance of services to contract and regulations. The aim will always be to standardise expectations around the Welsh Language and all Social Care contracts have clauses which require these legal obligations to be met.

4. Equality, Socio-Economic Duty & Human Rights

There is a duty by partners to carry out its functions in line with the Equality Act 2010.

How 'rights' feature in our services are embedded in our contracts and contract monitoring processes. Wales is a land of equality and equal opportunities, where having rights, whether they be rights under the founding principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, The Equalities Act 2010, and the principles of human rights under the Human Rights Act 1998 forms the foundation of everything when commissioning services. Partners fully integrate these basic principles in the service design, and work proactively with providers to ensure individuals who experience these services have their rights fully respected under law.

All commissioning decisions are subject to Integrated Impact Assessments, which includes identifying the impact of decisions on equality and social-economic duties. This helps to ensure that commissioning does not lead to negative equality and socio-economic impacts and to also help identify if there are additional actions we can take to further ensure any activity has a positive impact on these areas.

5. Social Value & Community Benefits

'Social value' is a way of thinking about how scarce resources are allocated and used. It involves looking beyond the price of each individual contract and looking at what the collective benefit to a community is, when a public body chooses to award a contract. Partners understand that bringing added value to individuals and communities by

commissioning services that strengthen communities where they operate and bring 'added value' or additional benefits to people's lives.

Partners continue to find ways in which to fully integrate social value and community benefits in how they delivers services. As part of its ongoing modernisation agenda, service models have been updated and refreshed to be fully consistent with the founding principles of 'The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014' that embrace areas such as independence, choice and control and aims to give people a real say in how services are designed, tendered, awarded and delivered.

6. Executive Summary

Care Home Services – Older Adults

- There are sufficient number of available residential and dual registered beds in the area, however it is not always possible to place in the beds available
- There are relatively few homes offering specialist/complex dementia nursing care
- There is instability in the sector due to severe workforce issues combined with the current cost of living crisis
- Monitoring visits and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection reports demonstrate an overall high quality of care home provider
- There is good partnership working between providers and commissioners
- Demand for care home beds reduced over the pandemic but is now returning to pre-pandemic levels
- More work is required with providers to support them to adapt to be able to meet the needs of the future population of the region, and to gain a better understanding of the type of support that will be required

Care Home Services – Children

- The Children's Social Care Market Study by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)'s concluded that the residential (and fostering) market is challenging. This is an issue shared by many local authorities across Wales and England
- Partners will review its strategic and commissioning plans in 2022 and continue to work with regional and national partners to support market wide developments
- The independent residential care market is at risk from the potential implementation of Welsh Government policy commitments. This will need to be monitored closely

Care Home Services – Younger Adults

- The specialist care homes market across the region is considered to be stable
- There have been increases in the number of placements for both learning disability & mental health over the 5-year period
- Monitoring visits and CIW inspection reports demonstrate an overall high quality of care home providers
- Workforce pressures and rising costs present stability risks
- Work is being undertaken by each Local Authority to redevelop the market so that it better reflects the preferred wishes of individuals

Secure Accommodation - Children

- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council own and operate Hillside Secure Children's Home

- Hillside is the only secure children’s home in Wales and has been assessed as providing sufficient levels of provision to meet previous, current, and future local demand
- Hillside is currently reviewing its service model to ‘future proof’ its service to ensure it is able to accommodate the future demands of the provision as well as being financially sustainable in the long term

Fostering

- Foster carer retention/recruitment is a problem across the region – as it is across Wales and England - as the numbers entering fostering each year is struggling to keep up with demand
- The most notable market gap is the limited availability of local placements for children aged 11+
- Overall, service quality is good across the foster care market

Adult Placement – Shared Lives

- Demand has differed with each Local Authority
- Over the last 5 years there has been only a small number of unsuccessful placements
- Monitoring visits and CIW inspection reports demonstrate an overall high quality of provision
- The number of carers has grown steadily over the period
- Expansion of services to promote use amongst other population groups is being explored

Advocacy - Adults

- There is one provider that covers the region, and provision is currently stable
- Further promotional work is underway to increase use of advocacy services for hard to reach groups
- Demand is expected to increase over the next 5 years
- Monitoring reviews demonstrate an overall high quality of provision

Advocacy - Children

- The Independent Professional Advocacy (IPA) Service is commissioned on a regional basis. It has been assessed as sufficient to meet previous, current and future demand
- Young people have provided positive feedback on the quality of the IPA Service and their achievement of personal advocacy outcomes
- Monitoring reviews demonstrate an overall high quality of providers

Domiciliary Care – Older Adults

- Domiciliary care demand continues to exceed supply
- Future longer-term demand is expected to increase in line with population growth

- Workforce issues, coupled with increased demand, is making it difficult for the region to meet current demand
- Monitoring visits and CIW inspection reports demonstrate an overall high quality of provider
- There is good partnership working between providers and commissioners
- Alternatives to traditional domiciliary care are required to keep pace with demand for services

Domiciliary Care - Children

- The domiciliary care market has seen a substantial growth in demand throughout the COVID-19 pandemic
- In response, the market has demonstrated flexibility and growth to meet levels of demand but at times this has led to maximised market capacity
- Overall, the market is delivering good quality services

Domiciliary Care – Younger Adults

- Services are of a good quality with low incidence of formal contract compliance or breaches in regulatory standards
- Since the pandemic, staffing has become one of the key risks to market to market stability and sufficiency
- Increased future demand for specialist services and care at home is anticipated and more accurate demand forecasting is needed

Adoption

- The Western Bay Adoption Service (WBAS) is a regional service across Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend
- The number of children coming through for adoption has reduced
- The number of adopters has increased demonstrating that the process is working effectively
- Working regionally has supported resilience and quality
- Entry to the market is highly regulated and the arrangements are working well

7. Chapters

7.1 Care Home Services – Older Adults

Section A – Market Sufficiency

There is a diverse provider base with the majority of the current 66 care homes being individually owned. A large number of care homes are run by small to medium organisations, many of which are Welsh based, whilst five care homes are owned by larger national corporate operators. Five homes are owned internally by Swansea Council. As of May 2022, the region has a total of 2645 beds which are broken down as follows:

- 26 residential care homes in the region which provides a total of 881 beds for older people that have been assessed as requiring residential care
- 32 dual registration/nursing homes with provides a total of 1498 beds. These are registered to provide care to people requiring either nursing or residential care
- 3 specialist dementia nursing homes which together can provide a total of 110 beds
- 5 services Swansea Local Authority homes which account for 156 beds

Occupancy Rates

	Occupancy Rate %	Total Number of Registered Beds
May 2022	86%	2645
March 2021	79%	2707
March 2020	94%	2844
March 2019	95%	2842
March 2018	94%	2828

During the pandemic the average occupancy rates decreased significantly to 78% however this has now increased to 86% and whilst slowly increasing, it is lower than historical occupancy rates. It has been purported for some time that people want to remain in their own homes and communities for as long as practicable, with admission to care homes being viewed as a 'last resort'.

There is a lack of providers that can provide specialist Dementia nursing care for people with challenging behaviour.

Section B - Market Stability

Care home provision has decreased over the past five years.

Year	Total number of homes
2021/22	66
2020/21	68
2019/20	68
2018/19	69
2017/18	71

Providers have expressed an interest in expanding their services however active development work has stalled during the pandemic and will resume as capacity permits.

Action due to Failure

To support care home providers over the pandemic, emergency staff teams were created to enable a quick response to threats or continuity of service. This involved working across the region to organise staff who were able to be deployed into care homes and provide essential support. This service was used a small number of occasions where COVID depleted staffing levels and threatened safety of services.

Failure which is anticipated to be time limited, partners in the region will support as necessary. In situations where a care home can no longer operate, and is likely to close the Home Operation Support Group (HOSG) toolkit is implemented to support residents in finding a suitable alternative care home placement.

Commissioners adopt a collaborative relationship with care homes and providers are actively encourage to seek support in the early stages if they have any issues that might cause disruption to services.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places quality and continuous improvement at the very heart of the delivery of residential and nursing care services in Wales. The Act places a clear statutory duty on service providers to deliver care in a way that meets or exceeds statutory regulations and to self-assess and continually improve the way services are delivered to vulnerable people. The onus under the revised regulations is for providers themselves to identify shortfalls in standards and to be proactive in making improvements so that services can continually improve and progress beyond what is required by regulations.

A Regional Quality Framework (RQF) tool has been created within West Glamorgan so that care homes and commissioners can monitor and review

standards in older person's residential and nursing care homes. This tool is used to help commissioners and providers identify the shortfalls in service standards and to help care homes improve how they deliver care. The tool requires input from a number of contributors, including health colleagues, social work colleagues, care home staff, residents and family members so that an assessment of quality and performance is as inclusive and comprehensive as possible.

The RQF continues to be updated to achieve greater consistency with the higher level regulatory domains used by Care Inspectorate Wales in their inspection framework.

Routine Contract Monitoring

Commissioners across the region ensure that regular contract monitoring is carried out to ensure quality is maintained. This is done by:

- Planned Annual Service Provider Reviews
- Unplanned Focused Monitoring
- Service User Reviews
- Regular provider forums
- Individual Provider Meetings

In 2017 a regional Market Position Statement (MPS) was produced setting out the factors impacting on market stability, including current and future demand and level of resources. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the care sector across the region, with a full analysis on its impact to be carried out over the next 12 months.

Current and Projected Trends

The population numbers for over 65's is expected to increase across the region over the next 10 years:

- 2020 – 78,662
- 2025 – 83,211
- 2030 – 89,215

This is combined with an aging population however whilst people are living longer many are also remaining fitter and healthier for longer. Most people tend to enter residential care later in life, often with more complex and multiple care needs. People who enter care homes later in life with multiple needs also tend to occupy beds for shorter durations than in the past.

The growth in the number of people aged over 65 with dementia is also expected across the region:

- 2020 – 5607
- 2025 – 6310
- 2030 – 7098

The most prevalent increase is expected to occur in people aged 85 and over, where the incidence of dementia increases significantly with almost with one quarter of the over 85 population showing some level of dementia. Whilst it is not possible to forecast it is generally accepted that this is likely to lead to increased demand for specialist dementia care.

Combined with the overall trend for individuals in staying at home longer with domiciliary care, people are only moving into care homes when they require 24 hour support, with an increasing amount requiring dementia care. There continues to be a demand for care homes and the current level of beds is sufficient to meet demand, however consideration on the type of support based on population numbers is needed to ensure the market can meet future changes in population needs.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

Robust monitoring processes means that commissioners are successful in working with providers to maintain good levels of service quality and support providers where issues have been identified. This close partnership working with providers helped support homes face the challenges that arose from the COVID19 pandemic.

Contingency planning and the creation of the emergency response teams sustained services and avoided care home failure during the pandemic. Support to implement other COVID related measures such as distribution of PPE, a regional web page dedicated to care homes ensuring they had access to the most recent COVID related guidance, support to coordinate testing and vaccinations, assessment of financial viability and implementation of hardship subsidies has also played an important part in sustaining sector wide services.

Care homes were awarded an uplift mid-year in 21/22 to support with the additional financial demands placed on them, along with an additional uplift at the beginning of 22/23 in order to help improve staff terms and conditions, including payment of the Real Living Wage.

Sustainability of Provision

COVID has disrupted the care home market and longer term impacts are not yet clear. Commissioners may need to support care homes to adapt to changing market forces as patterns of demand become clearer. There is concern that some care homes may become financially unsustainable due to the level of voids, however it has been assessed that the market will be able to respond to any potential closures.

Risks to Market Stability

Care home providers continue to experience pressures and influences from a range of sources:

Care Need

Future demand forecasting is suggesting that there is a need for more complex dementia services. Currently the sector continues to be impacted by reduced demand, financial pressures and workforce pressures, and remains fragile.

Occupancy

Since October 2021 the number of vacancies is slowly decreasing within care homes. However, a number of beds are occupied with people placed on extended care rather than long term placements.

Financial

The sustainability of some providers remains fragile due to increased void levels, challenges with accepting new placements, additional unprecedented costs associated with both the COVID19 pandemic (such as insurance) and the cost of living, as well as the rates of pay required to retain and recruit staff. Staff recruitment is a significant problem with care staff leaving to take up jobs in different sectors such as retail. Care home operators may be required to respond to market forces by adapting their services as the pattern of demand changes.

Providers are concerned that people's needs are higher on admission into care homes than previously experienced, which requires higher levels of staffing.

Staff pay is an ongoing issue impacting on retention and recruitment. This is resulting in some care homes being unable to accept admissions due to insufficient staffing levels. Running costs have also increased due to COVID-19 (such as increased insurance) and unprecedented increases in cost of living (such as food and fuel).

Fee rates paid to homes are set each year. The rates are standardised per category of care irrespective of the choice of home. Each home is able to set its own rate for those residents who are self-funders and are able to charge a third party payment for additional services.

Staff

Recruitment and retention of qualified nursing staff and social care staff has been an ongoing concern since 2017 for providers, however competition for workforce is greater than ever. In some cases, shift patterns have become longer to cover sickness and vacancies, leading to speculation that this may be affecting the health and well-being of staff.

Without sufficient staff, care homes have been unable to accept new admissions and there is a risk that care homes may give notice on placements if they assess that they are unable to safely continue delivering care with their current staff levels.

Recruitment of Registered Mental Health Nurses has been especially difficult and is a barrier in extending dementia services.

Section D – Other Considerations Affecting the Market

Resources

Fee setting takes into account the legitimate current and future costs faced by providers as well as the factors that affect those costs, and the potential for improved performance and more cost-effective ways of working. These processes ensure that, in so far as possible, fees set are adequate to enable providers to meet the specifications set by the Commissioners together with regulatory requirements.

The process for establishing a fair price for care is based on consulting with providers and understanding their costs through the use of questionnaires, financial records and consultation. Whilst all providers are strongly encouraged to participate, response is limited.

Third party payments are charged by most of the contracted elderly independent care homes across the region. The difference in cost between funded residential / nursing care and the cost to self-funders is not readily available and may vary from home to home.

There are limited resources available with partners. The funding received from Welsh Government restricts the level of uplift that can be applied. The gap between the cost of implementing Real Living Wage and the level of funding received by Welsh Government which makes only a contribution towards total costs will exacerbate these problems.

Direct Payments

There are facilities in place for people to receive a direct payment to purchase care home services. There are no individuals currently using direct payments to purchase long term care from care homes although direct payments are used to purchase respite care.

Self-funders

All care homes across the region accept privately funded placements. Information regarding the cost and number of placements is not available.

Workforce

The sector is finding it increasingly difficult to recruit care staff and in particular qualified nurses. Care staff are leaving the care sector to work in other areas

Commissioners are considering ways to support providers in regards to their workforce issues with the emphasis on rates of pay. SBUHB are considering ways to recruit nurses as well as providing courses to upskill care staff.

Section E – Summary of the Market

- There are sufficient number of available residential and dual registered beds in the area

- There are relatively few homes offering dementia nursing care
- There is instability in the sector due to severe workforce issues combined with the current cost of living crisis
- Monitoring visits and Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection reports demonstrate an overall high quality of care home provider.
- There is good partnership working between providers and commissioners.
- Demand for care home beds has reduced over the pandemic and average sector wide occupancy has reduced
- More work is required with providers to support them to adapt to be able to meet the needs of the future population of the region, and to gain a better understanding of the type of support that will be required

7.2 Care Home Services – Children

Section A – Market Sufficiency

The options for placing a looked after child are set out in section 81 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. If it is not possible for the child to remain with their parents or a person who has held Parental Responsibility for the child, if there is a friend or family member (connected person) that could potentially care for the child. By doing so it helps to ensure the child continues to be brought up within their family or community environment which is usually what matters to them. Where it has not been possible to place a looked after child either with a parent or connected person, the Local Authorities must consider which of the following is most appropriate:

- placement with an unconnected foster carer registered with a fostering agency
- placement in residential care
- placement in accordance with other arrangements – for example, supporting young people aged 16 or over to live independently or in supported accommodation

Popular Based Demand

In the past year Children Looked After (CLA) population has been steadily falling. However, the number of CLA assessed as needing a placement in residential care has been reasonably consistent since March 2018.

The use of residential provision is determined by the assessed needs of the child and although the overall the council's CLA population is declining, there continues to be a need for specialist residential provision for a small cohort of children.

Residential Placement Accessibility and Gaps

There is technically far more local provision than needed (approximately double), however, in practice, local provision has proven incapable of effectively meeting demand and placements often occur out-of-area. Occasionally it can be a positive decision to place a child further afield – e.g., because of child protection concerns – but more frequently it reflects a lack of appropriate local options. There are multiple factors contributing to this issue, for example:

- local providers are not always capable of supporting children with the most complex needs
- placements locally may be occupied by children placed by other authorities; or
- even where there is a vacancy available locally that might be suitable, the child needing a placement may not be a good match with those already in the home

Occupancy data relating to residential settings located within the region informs us that most placements made with residential care services in this region are from other local authorities in South Wales but there are often placements made by English authorities.

Difficulties achieving market sufficiency has been reported as an ongoing concern across Wales. This area of concern is anticipated to continue affecting the sufficiency of the residential care market which, due to the number of out of county placements, can only find resolution when the sufficiency balance is achieved across Wales.

Residential Placement Location

Placements are chosen based on an assessment of their ability to meet the needs of the individual child. Placements made locally offer opportunities to promote the child's identity, promote contact with family and friends, and ensure continuity of access to their local communities, education, and health services. Preference is therefore given to placements in-area. However, the local placement also must be able to suitably meet the child's other needs. There can be times that local placements are not able to meet the child's holistic needs and we therefore must place further away.

Placement Stability and Suitability

The level of placement stability is shaped by many contributing factors and changes of placement for a child can occasionally be for a positive reason, e.g., to be closer to their family or to move to a less supportive environment as part of a transition to independence. All placement decisions are based on the assessed need of the child.

Quality and Outcomes

Care and support plans continue to be co-produced with the child and their progression and achievement of personal outcomes are regularly reviewed and evaluated.

The COVID-19 pandemic had disrupted inspection and monitoring cycles adopted by CIW and the 4C's. Based on the best available data, identified areas of poor service performance across the regions residential care market and commissioned out of county providers have been isolated to specific providers or have been isolated incidents.

Across the regional residential care market and commissioned out of county providers, the most common area of service improvement identified by CIW 4C's and the Local Authorities is linked to the leadership and management of residential care settings.

Current Level of Market Sufficiency

The regional residential care market currently faces key challenges to achieve market sufficiency.

Whilst the region has an 'over-supply' area of residential care provision, the market is not providing the sufficient placement availability, with a key gap in provision relating to placements for children who present complex support needs. Based on numerical placement numbers, there are more residential care placements than is

required, but only a very low percentage of residential care placements are occupied by children of this region. The remaining high percentage are either unavailable or are occupied by children placed by other local authorities (primarily from across South Wales and outside West Glamorgan Region).

Discussions with providers interested in opening new residential provision within the footprint demonstrates that they are happy to operate services that meet the demand of other local authorities rather than focusing on developing models that meet our demands in this region. This is a concern and can be attributed to wider market sufficiency issues. Whilst commissioning and strategic plans are being reviewed, which will explore potential solutions to address gaps in the residential care market, the challenge of achieving local market sufficiency will not be fully resolved until market sufficiency is addressed and improved across Wales and England. Alongside the review of its strategic plans, partners will also work closely both regionally and nationally to support market wide sufficiency developments.

Likely Issues to Affect Market Sufficiency Over Next 5 Years

Population Based Demand

A decreasing child population may result in reduced demand for the residential care market, but there will always be some children for whom residential care is the right option.

Impact from Wales Wide Sufficiency Issues

The sufficiency of the residential care market across Wales is a concern. As local authorities across Wales seek residential care placements in other local authority areas to meet their placement needs, it detracts our capability to influence the shape of the local market to focus on providing placements for our children. Until market sufficiency is improved across Wales, any increased placement demand presented by other local authorities is likely to result in further limitations on local residential care placement availability.

Potential Extension of 'When I'm Ready' Placements to Residential Care

The work of the Children's Residential Care Task and Finish Group (a sub-group of the Improving Outcomes for Children Ministerial Advisory Group) will be closely followed to identify any potential changes in service delivery.

Welsh Government has instigated work exploring the potential of creating an extension of 'When I'm Ready' type placements to children in residential care. This could have a significant impact upon the residential care market, and therefore strategic and operational children's services plans will be reviewed and assessed should the market require delivery of such service models.

Section B - Market Stability

An analysis of the regional residential care market identified several instability characteristics which requires further development.

Balance of Demand and Supply

The sufficiency assessment above identified that demand and supply within the region's residential care market is imbalanced. The market requires further development to meet the future needs of the local population. However, addressing this area of market instability is a challenge on a regional and national scale.

Local Authorities are currently reviewing their commissioning and strategic plans to seek alternative solutions to improve local market sufficiency. Local Authorities will continue to work closely with regional partners and the 4C's to support regional and national market developments.

Local Provider Base Diversity

The residential care market for looked after children consists of several external service providers. Apart from the one home, the others are private, commercial organisations (none are charitable organisations/ from the 3rd sector). Most of the organisations are small to medium enterprises that operate a small number of homes each. There is one larger organisation operating in the area. Already a large provider in Wales supporting individuals with disabilities, in 2021 they acquired another local provider who work with children with social, emotional, and behavioural needs.

Market Wide Shocks

The Children's Social Care Market Study by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)'s concluded that the residential (and fostering) market is dysfunctional. This was largely based on an acknowledgment that their insufficient placements available for local authorities at the same time as excessive profits are being made by many providers. Another of the concerns they raised is that there are high levels of debt being carried by some of the largest private providers, which poses a risk of placement disruption for children, should there be a disorderly exit of organisations from the market. This needs to be monitored closely, especially considering further organisation expansion and acquisition.

The risk of market shocks and potential market collapse within the external residential care market could also be subject to shock should the Welsh Government plan to remove profit-making from the provision of care to looked-after children not be managed carefully.

Action due to Provider Failure

No action has been applicable by the region in pursuance of its duty under section 189(2) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

Children residing in residential care placements have outcomes-based care and support plans which are coproduced with the individual. All commissioned residential care providers regularly review progression and the achievement of personal outcomes.

Alongside CIW and the 4C's contract monitoring role, the quality and performance of commissioned residential care placements are monitored on a regular basis by the Local Authority Commissioning Team. The residential care market and commissioned out of county residential providers deliver reasonable quality care and support.

Where failure does occur, the most common cause is the lack of appropriate management and leadership oversight, and difficulties recruiting and retaining suitable staff.

Current and Projected Trends

The use of early intervention and prevention services aims to further decrease the looked after child population over the next 5 years. Other actions being taken as part of a developing multi-faceted plan to reduce the need to use independent residential care services:

- growth of regional fostering services; and
- expansion in the number of services functioning within the region

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

When it is necessary for a child to become looked after, the preference is to place the child with a suitable foster care placement, provided it meets their assessed needs. Sometimes a residential placement is needed to meet the child's assessed (complex) needs or for a small cohort of children where no suitable match is available with an approved foster carer. The use of residential care for those with the most complex needs has shaped local demand, but local provision is often unable to deliver the level and type of care and support these children need.

Residential placements are sourced and procured in the first instance through the 4C's All Wales Residential Framework, if a suitable framework placement is not found, the placement is alternatively sourced through non framework commissioning arrangements.

Use of the 4C's Framework provides the Local Authorities with support from a national commissioning approach and improves the limited buying power within the region. Whilst the use of the 4C's Framework provides the region with an opportunity to source residential care placements from a wide array of providers, this does not necessarily result in a suitable placement match. Local Authorities will continue to contribute to the commissioning development work led by the 4C's and

will work closely with the 4C's and other partners to support market developments both on a regional and national basis.

Sustainability of Provision

The residential care market contains several service providers, but one provider having a large proportion of the market. In terms of who we place with, there is no over reliance on any one external provider. However, there is a shortage of providers with capacity to care for those with the most complex needs.

Risks to Market Stability

One of the largest risks to market stability is borne from the policy intentions and future actions of the Welsh Government who have expressed an intention to remove profit-making from the provision of care to looked-after children. This will need to be implemented very sensitively to prevent considerable market stability.

Section D – Non Regulated Provision

Supported accommodation services can be an important and appropriate placement option for young people – e.g., to develop further life-skills as part of a planned transition to adulthood.

Section E – Other Considerations Affecting the Market

Resources

Planned reviews of commissioning and strategic plans will explore and consider areas of resource pressures and areas where resources require investment and levelling up.

Section F – Summary of the Market

The Children's Social Care Market Study by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)'s concluded that the residential (and fostering) market is challenging. This is an issue shared by many local authorities across Wales and England.

Partners will review its strategic and commissioning plans in 2022 and continue to work with regional and national partners to support market wide developments.

The independent residential care market is at risk from the potential implementation of Welsh Government policy commitments. This will need to be monitored closely.

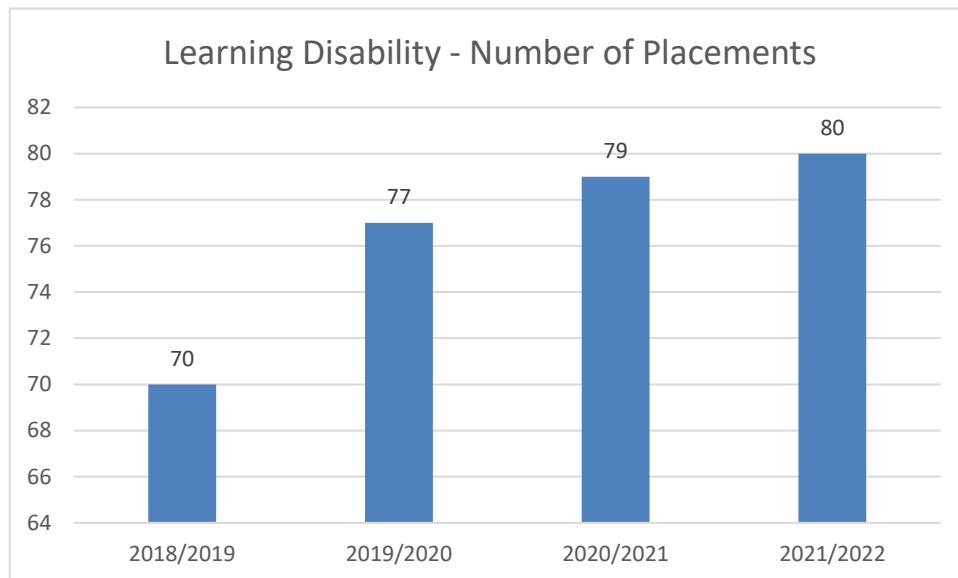
7.3 Care Home Services – Younger Adults

Section A – Market Sufficiency

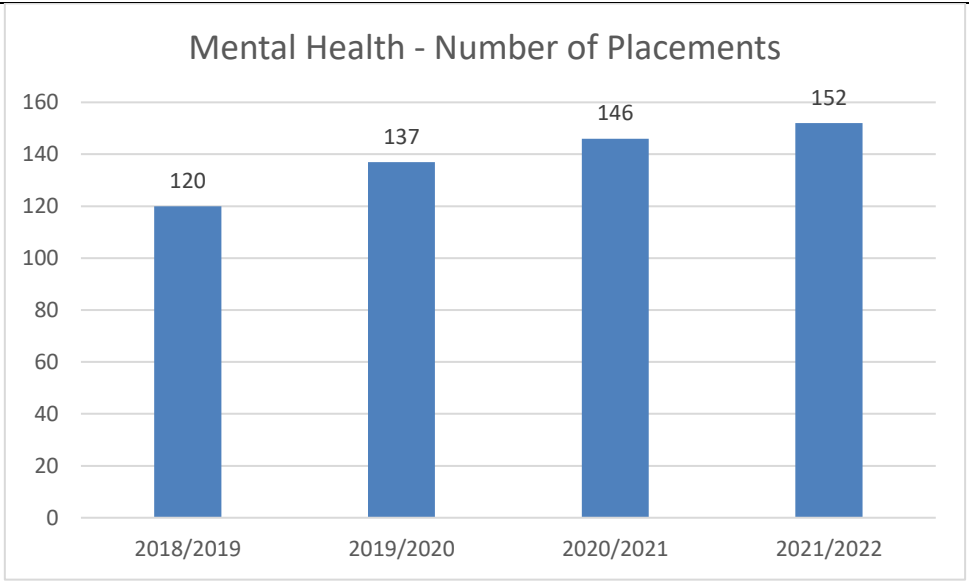
The following number of placements in specialist residential care homes are currently commissioned:

- 80 for Learning Disability placements
- 152 for Mental Health placements

Whilst the majority are placed across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot, due to lack of suitable availability a proportion are placed out of region to meet the needs. Over the previous 4 years demand for placements in residential care has increased.

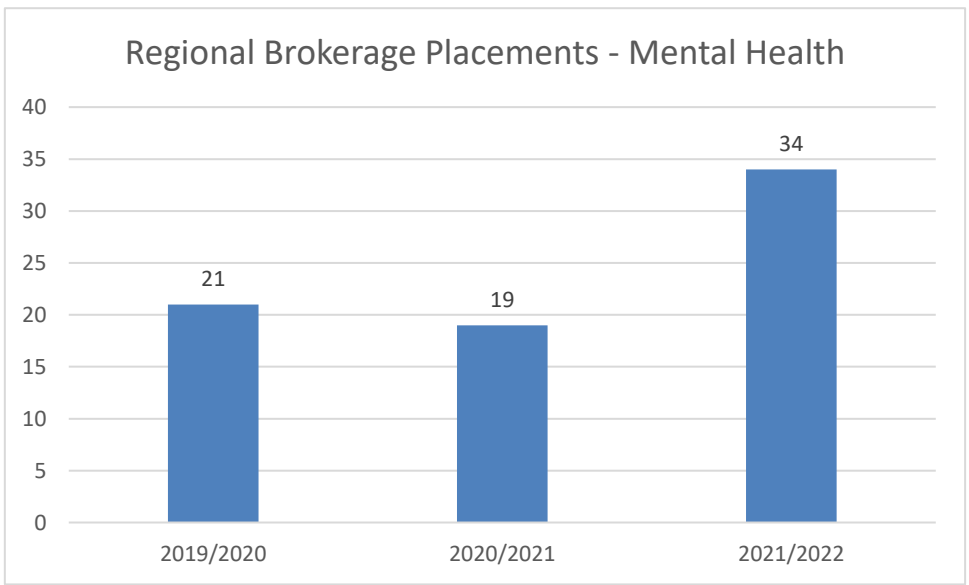


Comparing 2018 to 2021 there has been an increase in the number of placements by 14%. This is inconsistent with the strategic direction to reduce reliance on residential care in favour of options which promote more independent living.

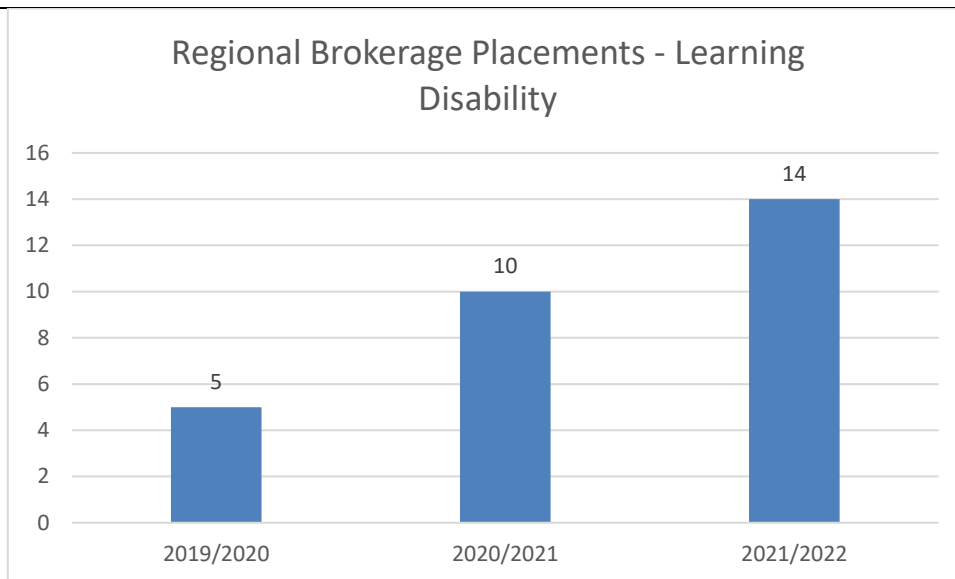


There has been an increase of 27% comparing 2018 and 2021.

The West Glamorgan Regional Brokerage shows an increase in the last 12 months on new residential care home placements made in Mental Health care homes. Regional brokerage source a suitable placement in the location requested by the care manager.



There is an increase year on year for new Learning Disability placements made



Over the past 12 months, demand for residential care in Learning Disabilities and Mental Health placements has increased, which has resulted in more placements going out of region to ensure appropriate placements are sourced that can meet the needs of the individuals. In 2021/22 there were two Learning Disability placements where it was not possible to source anything suitable due to the level of complex needs presented, which resulted in the individuals being admitted to specialist hospital placements, until a suitable placement became available.

Current level of Market Sufficiency

It is not possible to meet the current level of demand within the region. There is also a shortage of mental health nursing beds across the region.

Sufficiency over the next 5 years

The main issues that are likely to affect sufficiency in the next 5 years are:

- A regional shortage of mental health nursing beds
- A regional shortage of beds for complex needs and challenging behaviour
- Recruitment and retention of workforce
- Rising cost of care and limitations on partner resources

Other factors affecting sufficiency

Changing patterns of demand

Fewer people with learning disabilities wish to be placed in residential care and these services are now only commissioned when other options are insufficient to meet need.

Conversely, shortages of supply are leading to a growth in demand for specialist Mental Health nursing placements. Specialist provision for older people with functional mental health is particularly difficult to source. In the longer term this

demand is exacerbated by the projected increase in the number of older people with mental health care and support needs.

Welsh Government policy of not keeping people in a long term hospital placement has also demonstrated a lack of suitable placements for individuals with complex needs and challenging behaviour.

Challenges, risks and opportunities

The current system of purchasing placements for people with complex needs via national procurement frameworks can lead to costs escalation. These services are in short supply and local authorities have experienced of being outbid for services by other commissioning organisations.

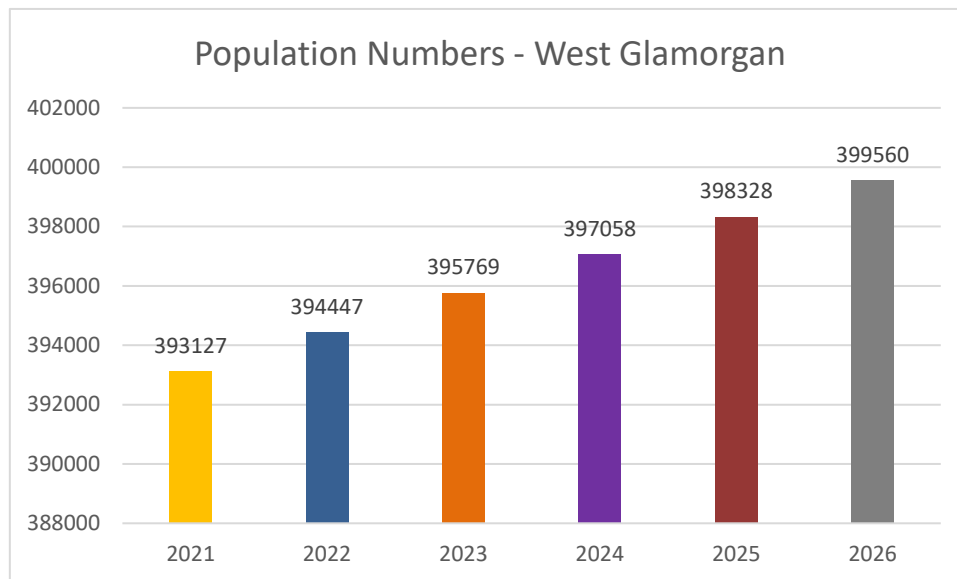
Gaps and areas of concern

There are areas that the region has agreed to look at in order to see if there are gaps and whether these gaps could be mitigated by a regional response. This includes specialist behaviour services, step down from medium secure services, older persons mental health nursing services and specialist physical disability services.

Impact of changing patterns of demand, changing expectations and new emerging trends upon the sufficiency of care and support

In the absence of more specialist provision older people with a mental health diagnosis requiring nursing care may need to be placed in standard older persons care homes. This may represent an opportunity for operators to adapt their services in response to changing market forces. In the alternative, demand which cannot be met locally may lead to increased hospital admissions and higher number of out of county placements.

Section B - Market Stability



The above graph illustrates, over the next 5 years projected population figures will see a consistent year on year increase.

Financial

Providers of specialist Learning Disabilities and Mental Health care home services set their own individual rates for care which take typically take into account the following:

- Hotel Costs
- Premises
- Supplies and services
- Administration and central costs
- Transport
- Staff costs
- Core Care costs
- Profit

The financial viability of homes is monitored and the commissioning teams work with providers to address any issues which suggest a risk to continuity or quality of services. This may involve supporting the service provider to remodel service where this is necessary to achieve financial viability.

Other characteristics which influence Market Stability

Diversity of provider base

Services are commissioned from a fairly diverse range of care home providers ranging from the small single service operators, to a number of large national

companies. Some placements are purchased from social value organisations as defined under s16 of the SSWBA. Residential and nursing care home Providers are able to access the market via the national procurement frameworks. Barriers for new entrants are believed to be low but rising costs and workforce pressures are factors.

Provision of information about the market in order to plan and make investments

Commissioners place importance on developing collaborative working relationships and regularly meet with providers to share information about local and regional commissioning needs. Local commissioning strategies have been developed which have required Provider contributions, and Providers have actively worked with the councils to develop responses needed to meet local needs. Longer term these strategies will form the basis of Market Position Statements which can be used by Providers to inform service planning and development.

Relationship between price and quality

Placement decisions are not based exclusively on price and frequently higher cost options are chosen where there are demonstrable quality benefits. Limitations on resources mean that price considerations are of course key but emphasis on quality is paramount.

Workforce issues

The social care sector is characterised by workforce pressures. Care homes offering specialist services have been impacted to a lesser extent than other service areas, but staffing shortages, skills gaps and difficulties with recruitment and retention are an ongoing problem. Some of these issues are linked to rates of pay and competition from other employment sectors. The larger problem relates to how social care workforce is recognised and valued and how the caring profession can be seen as an appealing option. Moves to implement Real Living Wage will help address concerns relating to rates of pay but this is perhaps only part of the solution.

Managed entry and exit of providers to and from the market

There are systems for commissioning and contracting with services which ensures that this generally occurs in an orderly and managed fashion. This enables necessary due diligence to occur and provides for appropriate evaluation of cost and quality considerations before placement. Occasionally emergency placements may be needed to quickly accommodate people in locations where contracts are not held. Where this happens systems can flex to enable rapid admission without disadvantaging people who need care and support.

Capacity to withstand shocks

The COVID pandemic has shown the market to be capable of withstanding significant disruption. With the support of commissioners, Welsh Government and partner organisations operators have demonstrated their capacity for effective contingency planning in response to significant threats to service continuity.

Commissioners have concerns about the capacity of Providers to withstand long term workforce pressures. This area will be closely monitored.

Whilst specialist care homes have not been as adversely affected by the pandemic as Older Persons Homes, the stability of the current specialist care homes market remains relatively fragile. Occupancy levels have not been significantly impacted, but Government subsidies have ended and workforce recruitment and retention continues to be a problem and competition for workforce from other employment sectors is growing. As are demands placed on carers and other social care workforce.

Action due to Provider Failure

Over the pandemic emergency teams of staff were created to respond quickly to the threats against continuity of service. This service has been used on a small number of occasions where COVID has depleted staffing levels and threatened safety of services. Regional commissioning groups have been established to plan failure responses and promote sector wide contingency planning.

The use of the Welsh Government Hardship Fund to manage financial sustainability risks has been pivotal in preventing sector wide service failure.

In the past 5 years, there have been four homes that have closed down across the region. Residents were supported to move to new suitable placements.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

Quality Considerations

Based on the assessment of the information available the majority of services are of sufficient quality to meet individual's needs. Where quality expectations are not achieved actions are taken to achieve timely improvements.

Contract Monitoring

Contract monitoring is essential to ensure that commissioners can be confident that services are fit for purpose and that residents receive satisfactory care. Local Commissioning teams have developed positive working relationships with providers and work collaboratively with the sector to develop and improve services. Where services are purchased via the NHS Wales Collaborative National Framework for Younger Adults MH and LD Care Homes, some of the quality assurance responsibilities are shared with other lead commissioners. This provides an additional layer of quality assurance monitoring

Current and Projected Trends

The market is seeing an increasing number of Providers expanding autism and other specialist Learning Disability services. Locally Commissioners have not signalled demand for expansion of services in this area but Providers are seeing

commercial opportunities and are adapting. Costs for these services are set by Providers not commissioners. Longer term shortages of mental health nursing services for older people are possible.

No negative impacts as a result these developments are forecast. Expansion of specialist services compliments existing provision and creates competition on price and quality. Availability of nursing care will be monitored so that requirements can be communicated to the market if service level changes are required.

Citizens and families are becoming less willing to consider long term residential care. Alternatives to residential care, such as supported living services, extra care schemes and specialist domiciliary care provision, are in greater demand.

Solutions which promote independence and avoid reliance on residential care are consistent with local commissioning objectives. These options do more to build on the strengths of people who need care and support and are more likely to achieve the type of outcomes that individuals tell us are important.

Forecasting suggests a future decline in demand for residential services for people with learning disabilities but a possible increase in mental health nursing services to keep pace with an aging population, and an increase for people with challenging behaviour and complex needs.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

Welsh Government – Statutory Guidance

The Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017 as amended, came into force in April 2018 and was fully implemented and operational by April 2019. The key change facing providers was the requirement to re-register with CIW to provide a care home service with a 'statement of purpose' providing a full description of the services that could be delivered. The new legislation replaced the 'National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Younger Adults with a new set of regulations and associated statutory guidance.

Robust monitoring processes means that we have been successful in working with providers to maintain good levels of service quality and to support providers when issues are identified. The close partnership working with providers has helped support care homes face the challenges that arose from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the last 10 years the focus has been on supporting people to remain independent within their own homes. Generally placements will only be made in specialist residential care homes when it is not possible to meet a persons assessed needs in the available community accommodation based services.

The trend towards purchasing from national frameworks is having mixed results. Where demand for certain specialist services is high use of frameworks has led to increased costs. Arrangements which allow for local negotiation with local providers tend to achieve better value for money outcomes. The principle that

national frameworks promote access to a wider more diverse market which allows for greater competition on price and quality is not clearly demonstrated in all areas.

Regional approaches to review high cost placements have led to a more informed understanding of cost and quality. Further work is needed to enable these approaches to achieve a more informed shared understanding of outcomes for people, and other shared regional commissioning objectives. Further work to achieve this is underway.

Sustainability of Provision

There are 79 care homes operating across the region, all of which are either privately run or part of larger national organisations. There are no third sector operators of specialist care homes in the region. Confidence in sustainability in the sector is high, however continued development of community accommodation models means that there will be less demand going forward.

Risks to Market Stability

Care Need

Changes to patterns of demand are a risk in the longer term. In the shorter term, demand for existing services is likely to remain fairly consistent. Care homes may have to adapt their models in response to changing demand, and the expectation is that demand will reduce as new care models are developed. Reliance on out county placements is sub-optimal for residents, families and commissioners.

Occupancy

Occupancy levels have not been seriously impacted by COVID. Most specialist care homes have low vacancy levels making it more difficult to find suitable placements for people who need these services. Current patterns relating to occupancy do not present a risk to market stability. Providers are also open to commissioners outside the region.

Financial

Specialist services are able to set their own prices. Where services are purchased via frameworks costs are less transparent. Financial monitoring is undertaken and failure or service disruption linked to financial viability is rare. Increasing costs are an issue for all service types. This is linked to rising staff costs which are necessary to recruit and retain staff and other rapidly increasing inflationary pressures. These pressures are expected to lead to continued costs escalation.

Staff

Workforce recruitment and retention is possibly the biggest risk to sector stability. Pressures have been exacerbated by the COVID pandemic. Workforce migration to other employment sectors is increasing. Pressure on existing workforce has increased. Rates of pay are an issue but other factors such as job satisfaction and recognition for a workforce that can sometimes feel undervalued are also relevant.

These are issues which commissioners and policy makers must grapple with which are not quickly or easily solvable.

Section D – Other Considerations Affecting the Market

Resources

Fee setting takes into account the legitimate current and future costs faced by providers as well as the factors that affect those costs, and the potential for improved performance and more cost-effective ways of working. These processes ensure that, in so far as possible, fees set are adequate to enable providers to meet the specifications set by commissioners and regulators.

Direct Payments

There are facilities in place for people to receive a direct payment to purchase care home services. There are no individuals currently using direct payments to purchase long term care from care homes although direct payments are used to purchase respite care.

Workforce

The sector is finding it increasingly difficult to recruit care staff. Care staff are leaving the sector to work in other areas that are considered less demanding. Commissioners are considering ways to support providers with their workforce issues with the emphasis on pay.

Section E – Summary of the Market

The specialist care homes market across the region is considered to be stable, however there is a lack of providers that can support individuals with challenging behaviour and complex needs, which is resulting in placements being made out of region, or being placed on waiting lists with providers that do specialise in this type of support. There is also a severe lack of Mental Health nursing provision across the region.

Services are generally of a satisfactory quality with low incidence of formal contract compliance or breaches in regulatory standards. Instances of service failure have been low. Services have been financially viable. Operators have been keen to invest in developing new services.

COVID-19 has not significantly impacted the shape or the stability of the market. Occupancy levels have not been significantly affected. Operating costs however have, anecdotally at least, risen significantly. Workforce pressures are greater than ever. These factors will continue to present challenges.

The work being undertaken by commissioners within each Local Authority to redevelop the market so that it better reflects the preferred wishes of individuals will directly impact on specialist care home provision.

7.4 Secure Accommodation – Children

Section A – Market Sufficiency

Market Capacity

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council own and operate Hillside Secure Children's Home. Hillside is the only secure children's home in Wales, which puts Neath Port Talbot CBC in a unique position within Wales of being able to access secure residential placements within its own county boundary.

Hillside accepts children and young people from anywhere in the United Kingdom but is focused on providing placements for Welsh children in line with placement availability and the child's assessed support needs.

Since the 2017 Western Bay Population Assessment was published, Hillside's service model was reviewed and amended, the outcome of which resulted in a reduction of Hillside's overall placement capacity, but this has not negatively impacted upon the council's access to secure residential placements.

Since 2017, the key changes to Hillside's placement capacity are summarised as follows:

	2017	2021	Movement Direction
Total Bed Capacity	22	18	↓ 4 (18%)
Of which, number of beds commissioned by Youth Custody Service	10	6	↓ 4 (40%)
Of which, number of beds commissioned by placing Local Authorities	12	12	—
Age Range Criteria	12-17	10-18	↔

Table 1: Comparison/Bed Capacity/Commissioned YC/LA/Years/Nos

Population Based Demand

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
England Admissions	52%	54%	50%	29%	33%
Wales Admissions	48%	46%	50%	71%	67%

Since 2017, the Hillside admissions data (above) demonstrates a trend in which Hillside placements were increasingly being occupied by children from across Wales (with a notable decreasing trend of placements made from England).

Quality and Outcomes

Hillside co-produce care and support plans with the child and their progression and achievement of personal outcomes are regularly reviewed and evaluated.

Hillside closely collaborates with children residing in Hillside to ensure their voice is heard and various mechanisms are in place which enables children to residing in Hillside to inform service delivery and developments.

Current Level of Market Sufficiency

Hillside is currently reviewing its service model and is exploring future service models which will 'future proof' its service to ensure it is able to accommodate the future demands of the provision as well as being financially sustainable.

Looking ahead, Neath Port Talbot Council and Hillside will work collaboratively with regional partners and Welsh Government to take forward identified outcomes of its service review.

Likely Issues to Affect Market Sufficiency Over Next 5 Years

Accessible Support Services to Meet Future Population Needs

Over the previous 4 years, the cohort of children referred to Hillside has increasingly presented with complex support needs. With this trend predicted to continue over the next 5 years, Hillside requires the input from a range of specialist support services to ensure children residing in Hillside receive the appropriate support based on their assessed needs.

Various specialist support services are commissioned by Hillside, but the availability and funding required to provide such specialist services has been a challenge, which was especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic resulted in service disruption to specialist support services, which resulted in limited availability of these services to children residing in Hillside.

Hillside is currently reviewing its service model and scope of specialist commissioned to ensure children residing in Hillside access the right services based on their assessed needs.

Depending on the outcome (and subsequent service model reviews/ evaluations over the next 5 years), it is likely that Hillside will require input from a range of specialist health-based services, which will require ongoing resource investment in order to enable Hillside to access to these services.

Section B - Market Stability

Financial Sustainability

Whilst Neath Port Talbot Council own and operate Hillside Secure Children's Home, Hillside is modelled to operate on a zero-base budget, meaning the provision is designed to be financed through income generation such as placement fees. Placement fees have increased over the previous 4 years in line with increasing operating costs. Placement fees are currently subject to review and will align to any developments to the future Hillside service model.

Wales Wide Market Sufficiency

Due to Hillside operating as the only secure children's home in Wales, Neath Port Talbot CBC has a stable access route to securing placements in Hillside. Neath Port Talbot CBC is aware of the difficulties which other placing local authorities experience when sourcing a secure placement. This market awareness has been borne from observing the pressure and high demand placed on the secure estate. In future, should further secure estate provision be developed within Wales, a full assessment will be undertaken to establish the impact such provision would present to the Hillside service model.

Action due to Provider Failure

No action has been applicable by the council in pursuance of its duty under section 189(2) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

Children residing in Hillside have outcomes-based care and support plans which are coproduced with the individual and are regularly reviewed and evaluated with regards to the achievement of personal outcomes.

Hillside is inspected and monitored by CIW, Estyn and commissioners such as the Youth Custody Service. Over the previous 4 years, inspection and monitoring reports identified areas for improvement in which have been fully implemented. The largest risk to the achievement of personal outcomes relates to access to

support services commissioned by Hillside. The COVID-19 pandemic led to severe disruptions to the delivery of Hillside's commissioned support services. As part of Hillside's service model review, Hillside's commissioned support services are being analysed and reviewed to ensure they meet current support needs as well as 'future proofing' commissioning arrangements to meet the future support needs of children and young people.

Current and Projected Trends

Changing Support Need Led Demand

Over the previous 4 years, the cohort of children and young people residing in Hillside are presenting more complex based support needs. Whilst Hillside provide trauma informed care and support, children and young people are more frequently requiring specialist health-based support.

This trend is likely to continue. To ensure Hillside and its commissioned specialist support services meet future needs presented by children and young people, the Hillside commissioning plan will be evaluated and updated to ensure appropriate commissioning arrangements are providing the right services in a sustainable way.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

Over the previous 4 years, children located from the region occupied a small number of placements within Hillside.

Currently, 33% of Hillside bed capacity is commissioned by the Youth Custody Service and 66% is available for Local Authority commissioned placements. Hillside works closely with commissioning organisations to ensure the usage of the bed capacity reflects the demand presented.

Sustainability of Provision

The key challenge faced by Hillside is ensuring the provision achieves and maintains financial sustainability. Over the previous 4 years, increasing operating costs (net of efficiency savings) has resulted in increased placement fees. Dependent on the outcome of the service model review, placement fees will also be reviewed to ensure the Hillside business model is financially sustainable. Should further secure estate provision be developed within Wales, a full assessment will be undertaken to establish the impact such provision would present to the sustainability of the Hillside provision.

Risks to Market Stability

Hillside is a non-profit making organisation, therefore and is a stable provision.

Section D – Non Regulated Provision

Continued investment in specialist support services is required to support step down more effectively from Hillside secure placements. Hillside submitted a funding bid to enhance the range of specialist support services delivered within Hillside but unfortunately this funding bid was unsuccessful.

Section E – Other Considerations Affecting the Market

Resources

The Hillside service model review will explore and consider areas of resource pressure and areas where further areas of resource investment is needed.

Section F – Summary of the Market

The secure estate market is both sufficient and stable. Moving forward, the Hillside service model review will seek to ‘future proof’ the service to ensure it is able to accommodate the future demands of the provision as well as being financially sustainable in the long term.

7.5 Fostering

Section A – Market Sufficiency

In 2021 all local authority fostering services in Wales joined forces to become 'Foster Wales' as part of a national work programme. The aim of this work is to improve the outcomes for looked after children by strengthening fostering services and improving their capacity to meet local placement needs. It is estimated that between the 22 local authorities in Wales we need to recruit an estimated 550 new foster carers and families. This is to keep up with the numbers of children who need care and support, as well as replacing foster carers who retire or are no longer able to provide a permanent home to children.

In this region, like other authorities, the aim is to improve the capacity to meet the demands for foster placements in-house via Foster Wales. Where we cannot provide a good placement internally then we rely on third sector and commercial independent fostering agencies (collectively referred to as IFAs herein).

Having carers with an available space is not the end of the equation. Children need placements which are well matched to meet their needs. The necessity of ensuring that children receive accommodation and care as and when the need arises also places severe constraints. Time pressure can be immense as children may require placements urgently, often in response to a crisis. The requirements can vary considerably from case to case, due to the needs and circumstances of the child, but the Council is often challenged by having to identify the right placement in an emergency.

However, while LAC numbers are falling and Foster Wales is a large provider with a good proportion of the local market, it does not have sufficient capacity to meet local demand. Vacancy rates (the number of placements potentially available with foster Wales carers in this region) is consistently low in recent years and often near to zero for certain groups, e.g. teenagers.

Locally Foster Wales is experiencing difficulties with finding appropriate foster care placements for:

- Children aged over 11
- Children with complex support needs
- Children with disabilities and/ or behaviours which challenge
- Parent and child placements

Most foster carers registered with the Foster Wales are located within this boundary. However, there are limited placement capacity with IFA; the provider with the largest number of placements is a specialist agency offering placements to children with a disability. Having access to these sorts of placements is very important but highlights the shortage of IFA options locally. This means we sometimes must consider placements further away than we like, but even if we

cannot find an IFA placement in the region, we still try to keep children as close to home as possible:

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact in terms of placement sufficiency:

- The restrictions have impacted our foster carer recruitment activity meaning we have not registered as many new carers as we need or planned.
- Concerns about the risk of transmitting the virus and the impact of lockdowns and closures of key services such as schools has impacted carer retention levels and meant some carers have been reluctant to consider new placements.
- Access to IFA carers and placements has markedly reduced during the pandemic. In recent months there is some evidence that this issue is potentially starting to abate.

In line with the individual child's assessed needs, foster care placements are initially sought locally when it is safe to do so. Placements made locally provide them with continuity of contact with family and friends and continuity of access to their local communities, education and health providers.

The use of IFA placements has been reasonably consistent over the previous 4 years. Third sector providers account for approximately 12% of all IFA placements.

Section B - Market Stability

Balance of Demand and Supply

The sufficiency assessment above identified that demand and supply within the region's foster care market is not balanced. The market requires further development to meet the future needs of the local population. However, addressing this area of market instability is a challenge on a local, regional, and national scale.

The shortfall in service sufficiency, which is especially acute for certain cohorts of children and young people, is presenting limited choice and availability of foster care placements.

Access to Local Market Information

In 2022, the region plans to publish a localised market position statement and will work collaboratively to publish a regional market position statement, both are aimed to provide reliable market-based information to external service providers, to help them plan and to effectively meet local market demand. Partners plan to work closely with organisations to undertake market engagement and market shaping activities from 2022 to support local market development.

Price/ Quality Equilibrium

The equilibrium between price and quality is not balanced within the local foster care market. IFAs charge considerably higher average weekly placement rates as compared to comparable placement types delivered in-house but there is no evidence to suggest any increased service quality in relation to the price paid.

Market Wide Shocks

The risk of market shocks and potential market collapse within the external foster care provider market is being closely monitored, especially with regards to the Welsh Government having expressed an intention to remove profit-making from the provision of care to looked-after children. The risk to market instability is high should this policy be poorly implemented.

Action due to Provider Failure

No action has been applicable by the region in pursuance of its duty under section 189(2) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

The quality of foster placements is good. Most of our children enjoy safe, stable placements in which they can achieve good outcomes with all providers. There are no systematic concerns about any providers, and the feedback from stakeholders (the Care Inspectorate Wales, commissioners, and social workers) is generally positive.

There are occasional issues and concerns with the quality of individual placements, but no evidence to suggest there is a pattern that they are prevalent in the public or independent sector, or with certain providers. There is some anecdotal information that, amongst IFAs, placements with third sector providers are more resilient and less likely to breakdown, but the third sector has a very small presence locally and the evidence for such claims is therefore limited.

What is potentially more problematic is the increasing average age of the foster carer population in the region. This carries the risk that many are approaching a stage where they may consider 'retiring'. Rates leaving have always been fairly stable but there are concerns that this may grow. As well as retirement, another reason for people leaving the service is because they choose to continue caring for the child on a Special Guardianship basis. This is an excellent outcome for the child(ren) concerned, but it does sometimes reduce the capacity of the service.

Current and Projected Trends

The region continues to have a strategic focus on the reduction of the looked after population over the next five years. It is important to acknowledge that our ability to achieve this goal will be subject to wider societal issues. This is an incredibly

volatile time to make predictions as vulnerable families face a very uncertain time ahead – e.g., what are medium- to long-term implications for our families of the pandemic on mental health and educational attainment, and how will we collectively manage rapidly rising living costs.

At the same time as reducing the looked after population, the Local Authorities are looking to recruit more foster carers to Foster Wales to meet our demand and reduce the reliance on IFA's. Apart from new Foster Carers, we will require more carers to replace those that are leaving. Our foster carer population is, on average, an older group of individuals and we must recruit a sizable number each year just to replace those leaving the service.

Fostering services in the region now have a dedicated website (this went live July 2021) to support the recruitment of foster carers. Ongoing work is being undertaken locally as well as nationally to ensure these websites are highly ranked on internet searches. Fostering services continue to work to ensure high quality content is contained on the website to allow the public to have a clear understanding of the support that is provided.

We have increased our investment in marketing activities in 2021/22 and plan to continue to do the same going forwards.

The region is also looking at how we can improve the core offer of support to foster carers. It is anticipated that improved support will help with placement stability, hoped that this to promote in recruitment campaigns.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

When it is considered necessary for a child to become looked after, the first consideration will be to place the child with a connected person or in-house foster carer located in or around the region. Sometimes an IFA placement is needed because there is not a suitable one available in-house. This may be due to the child's needs, the needs of other young people already in the foster placement, the skills of the foster carers or the need to keep a sibling group together. IFA vacancies are in short supply are they can fill vacant placements from a wide range of Local Authorities due to widespread insufficient placement availability.

The use of IFA placements is procured through the 4C's All Wales Fostering Framework. Use of the Framework provides the region with the support from a national commissioning approach and improves the limited buying power of the region. Whilst the use of the 4C's All Wales Fostering Framework provides the region with an opportunity to source fostering placements from a wide array of providers, this does not necessarily result in a suitable match due to the lack of available and suitable placements to meet demand.

Providers on the All Wales Fostering Framework have been pre-accredited as part of their application process to join the Framework. Whilst this provides assurance on pre-quality checks, there is no evidence to indicate that placements provided by IFA's are of a better quality than those provided through Foster Wales in the region

The region will continue to contribute to the commissioning development work led by the 4C's and will work closely with the 4C's and other Local Authorities to support market developments both on a regional and national basis.

Sustainability of Provision

The local foster care market contains several service providers, with no over reliance upon one external provider.

Whilst the foster care market has a diversity in terms of the mix of providers (public, private and third sector organisations form part of the local foster care market), all providers have been unable to collectively address the shortfall in service sufficiency.

Risks to Market Stability

Perhaps the largest identified risk to market sustainability relates to the policy intentions and future actions of the Welsh Government who have expressed an intention to remove profit-making from the provision of care to looked-after children. However, the risks associated with this policy are potentially easier to manage for fostering services than they are for residential.

Section D – Non Regulated Provision

The continued investment into effective early intervention and prevention services, family support services and edge of care services is likely to further decrease the number of children becoming looked after, which is likely to reduce the overall demand placed upon the region's foster care market.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of such support services provided to families at an earlier stage may also reduce the number of looked after children who present complex support needs in the future. This may reduce the gap in service sufficiency for this cohort of children.

The impact of moving on arrangements such as 'When I'm Ready' placements is currently unknown at present. The rate of uptake for this type of placement will determine how service sufficiency is affected going forward. A high uptake of these placements will result in reduced availability of foster care placements, which is a risk to the foster care market achieving service sufficiency over the next 5 years.

Section E – Other Considerations Affecting the Market

Resources

The level of funding and investment available to the in-house Fostering Service is constrained by budgetary challenges faced by each Local Authority. They have joined the Foster Wales brand to attempt to level up the marketing approach to support foster care recruitment.

Planned reviews of fostering plans will explore and consider further opportunities to 'level up' resources in line with the IFA market where possible. This work will aim to improve the competitive position of the Council service in relation to its IFA competitors, the likely impact of which will be to increase foster care recruitment and retention within this service.

Section F – Summary of the Market

The foster care market will continue to face challenges to meet market sufficiency, which is an issue shared across Wales. The Local Authorities will review its fostering plans in 2022 and will continue to work with regional and national partners to support market wide developments. Market stability risks presented by potential Welsh Government policy changes will be monitored closely.

7.6 Adult Placements – Shared Lives

Section A – Market Sufficiency

The latest data for 2020/21 for adult placements and shared lives services shows that in the Region there were 98 carers supported with 33 in NPT and 65 in Swansea.

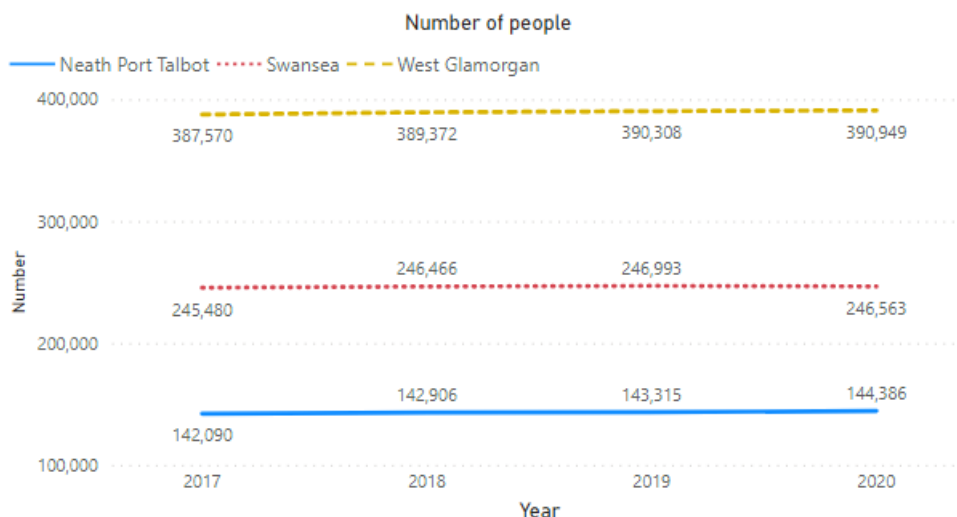
The number of placements in the region total 196 with 72 in NPT and the remainder of 124 in Swansea which includes long term provision and short term/respite care.

Demand for placements between 2018/19 and 2020/21 is slightly different with NPT showing an increase of more than double with a similar increase in the number of carers to cater for the increase in demand. Swansea has remained fairly static over the same period. However, for 202/21, the ratio of placements to carer is 2.18 in NPT whereas it is 1.90 in Swansea.

There are differences in the population served in that NPT support young people with a learning disability mainly from transitioning to adulthood whilst Swansea supports people with a learning disability plus older people with mental health needs.

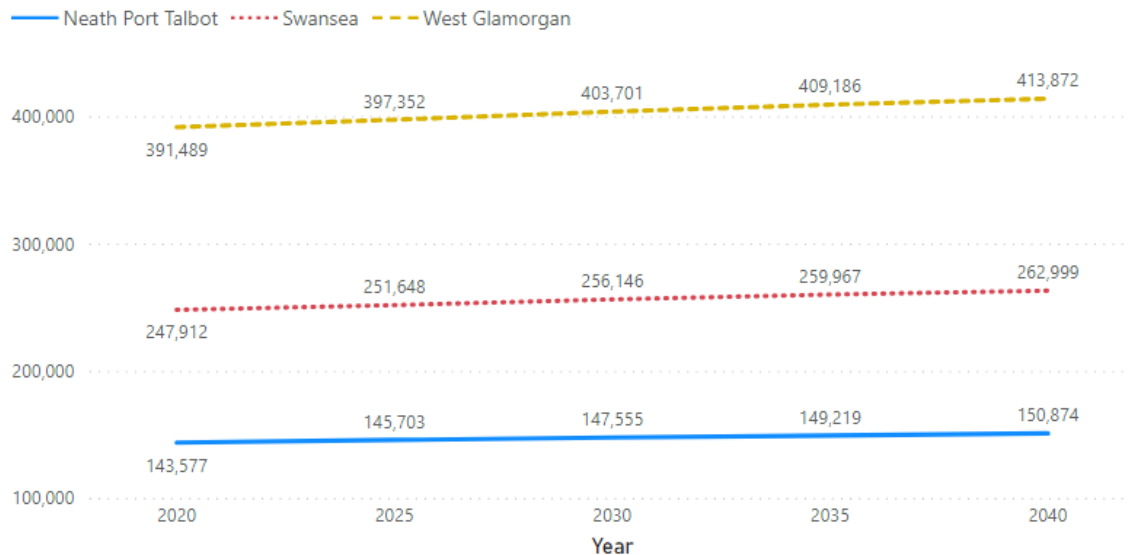
Population

The latest data for the population of West Glamorgan is currently estimated at 390,949. This is made up of 144,386 in Neath Port Talbot and 246,563 in Swansea.



The predicted growth for the region is by 2040 the population will rise to 150,874 in NPT and 262,999 in Swansea. This equates to a 4.8% and 5.7% increase in each.

The number of people predicted to live in West Glamorgan by 2040



It is anticipated that the demand for Shared Lives services across the Region will at the very least grow in line with population growth. The growth in demand will also be predicated on the changing behaviours of the population in terms of changing from more traditional methods of support to the newer model as promotion of the Shared lives services takes hold and is more widely accessible.

Across the region, the intent is to widen access to different population groups, and to support other cohorts of people. It is expected that demand for Shared Lives service will increase so resources will have to increase in line with demand.

Section B - Market Stability

There are differences in both LA areas where there has been some capacity in existing number of carers in Swansea, yet there has been the opposite in Neath Port Talbot.

Work is undergoing in both areas to establish a plan of what is required to clearly communicate the needs of the service to encourage additional providers to enter the market and thereby increase the number of carers available to support any increase in demand.

Services are working diligently to establish comparisons with the rest of Wales to ensure a level playing field in terms of price and rates.

Action due to Provider Failure

Both LA's have a support mechanism in place if any placement fails via multi-disciplinary teams using a lesson learned approach where breakdowns occur to feed into future improvements.

To support the failure of placements Neath Port Talbot, provide an emergency respite care service at Trem y Mor whilst Swansea use other means such as finding alternative solutions from another care service.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

To assess the service quality that users experience, both LA's conduct regular reviews of the placements via various processes for example regular meetings with service users, providers, and carers.

Reports would be prepared on a need's basis but also an annual review would also take place to ensure learning from the reviews is used to inform improvements.

Current and Projected Trends

There are opportunities for both LA's to expand the Shared Lives service into other areas such as older people with dementia and those people who have mental health needs.

By promoting the service to other cohorts, this may mean possible spikes in demand whilst the service becomes more familiar.

There is no evidence to support this anticipated initial increase but with the current market able to cope with the number of placements supported at the moment, both services are confident that the increase will be managed in line with normal expected growth of the population.

Sustainability of Provision

Both Neath Port Talbot and Swansea state there is a low number of providers currently offering a shared lives service. This is a risk that needs to be managed and mitigations brought forward into commissioning strategies. Demand will need to be encouraged to provide this alternative method of care to ensure sustainability.

Broadening the appeal of the Shared lives service to other cohorts will help increase demand.

Risks to Market Stability

The main risk to the Shared Lives services provided is that LA's do not expand the offer to other cohorts of the population.

Demand in both LA's is fairly consistent, but the intelligence gathered shows that more people want to live independently in their communities. By increasing the opportunity for people to be supported by the Shared lives service, this will ease the demand on other services currently offered.

Other risks are that providers will not come into the market and thereby we will not have the capacity to offer to the cohorts who wish to use a shared lives service.

Another risk is that if there is capacity created by encouraging more providers and opportunities and the demand is not there from users, then this may dissuade providers from continuing offering services.

Finally other risks to the Shared Lives services are financial pressures outside the control of the providers and local authority. Keen financial management will help sustain any provision

Section D – Summary of the Market

In Summary, both Neath Port Talbot and Swansea are saying that the respective Shared Lives service are stable, and both are working towards increasing the capacity by encouraging more providers into the market and making the services more accessible to other cohorts of the population that are in need of support to ensure their desire of independent living is being addressed.

There is a need to monitor the quality and need via assessments and regular reviews and to ensure the Shared Lives services are fit for purpose.

There are risks that need to be managed especially in terms of the range of providers available for the Shared Lives service and measures need to be in place to support both carers, users and providers to ensure sustainability.

7.7 Advocacy - Adults

Section A – Market Sufficiency

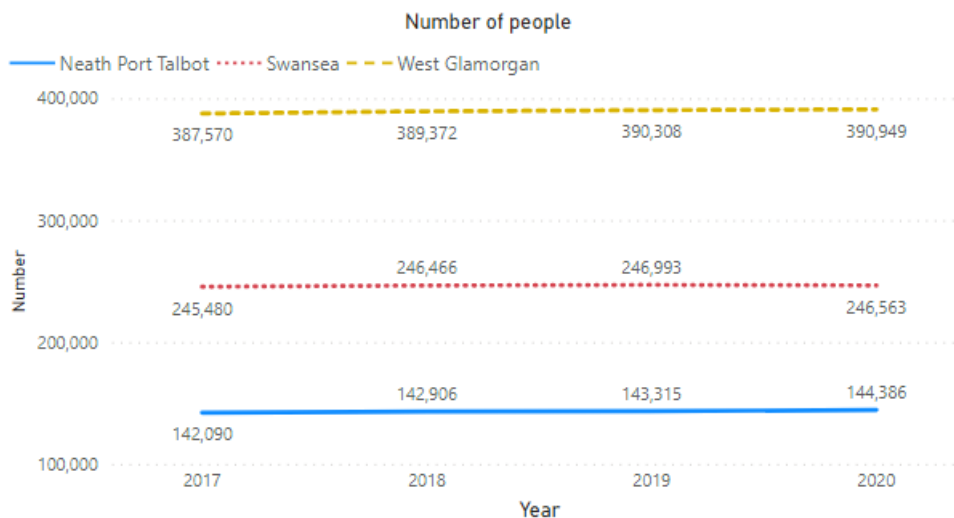
Both Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Councils undertook a tendering process for the Independent Professional Advocacy service that was a legislative requirement of the Social Care and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

Neath Port Talbot commenced their service provision in May 2020 whilst Swansea commenced in October 2020.

The data captured and used in their own individual market stability reports reflects these differences in data being used and therefore it is difficult to aggregate the information to provide a West Glamorgan Regionally picture.

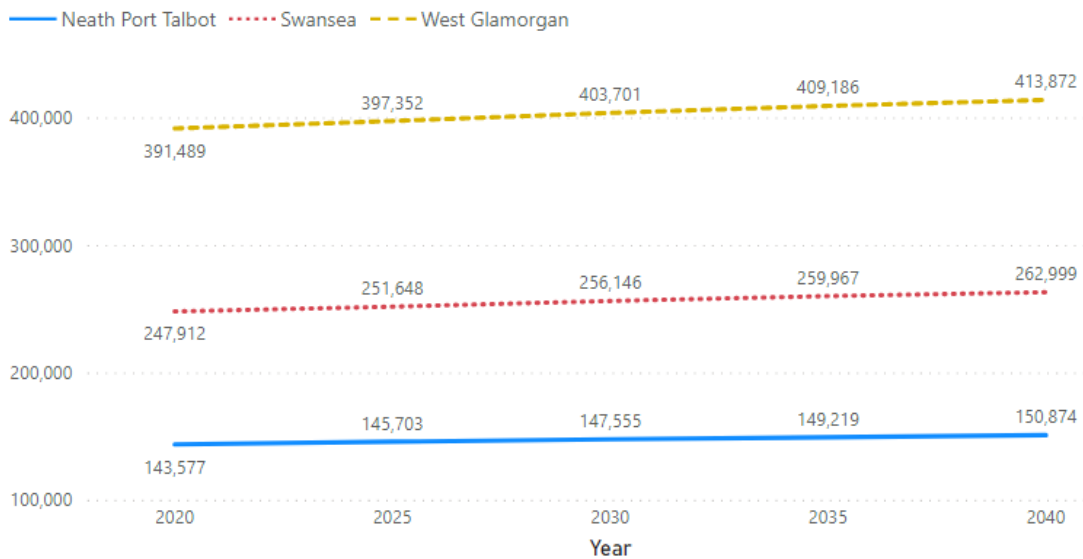
Population based demand

The latest data for the population of West Glamorgan is currently estimated at 390,949. This is made up of 144,386 in Neath Port Talbot and 246,563 in Swansea.



The predicted growth for the region is by 2040 the population will rise to 150,874 in NPT and 262,999 in Swansea. This equates to a 4.8% and 5.7% increase in each.

The number of people predicted to live in West Glamorgan by 2040



Current position for IPA

The number of individuals supported as of March 2021 in Neath Port Talbot is 1,953 across the range of services offered by NPT social services. As of the time of the report being written Swansea currently care manage 5,283 individuals in adult services

The number of referrals experienced at the time of writing each respective reports, given that the timeframes were not the same, the main reason for a person needing advocacy was due to child protection issues.

Demand

There has been a perceived lack of demand from cohorts of the population where it was previously anticipated some demand would arise. There are differences in this anticipated demand but general there wasn't the levels of referrals from older People, physical disability, and sensory impairment.

Reasons for this is largely unknown but there is a consensus from both Local Authorities that the new tenders were administered throughout the COVID pandemic, and this may have played a part in the numbers being lower than expected from those cohorts previously mentioned.

A summary of the position is relayed in both local responses but can be summarised

- Further work on data collection to understand the demand and the effect on supply of IPA contracted hours.
- Promotion of IPA services to increase awareness in lower uptake cohorts of the population

- Consideration of identifying other cohorts such as harder to reach groups and minority groups.

Section B - Market Stability

Supply and Demand

A summary analysis of the tables below indicates to a stable flow of people supported with IPA.

Total numbers of unique individuals supported through IPA Service from May 2020 to March 2021

Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual
NPT	17	32	36	43	128
Swansea	26	31	35	54	146
Regional	43	63	71	97	274

Total numbers of issues supported through IPA Service from May 2020 to March 2021

Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual
NPT	23	46	66	56	191
Swansea	40	39	46	97	222
Regional	63	85	112	153	413

Total numbers of issues closed

Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual
NPT	0	20	32	31	83
Swansea	5	7	16	37	65
Regional	5	27	48	68	148

Total numbers of clients closed					
Area	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual
NPT	0	3	9	10	22
Swansea	2	9	11	5	27
Regional	2	12	20	15	49

In each Local Authority, one provider is commissioned to provide the service and future sustainability needs to include a risk assessment to provide actions if that provider fails.

There is a desire to increase the demand of IPA through increased promotion of its availability to population cohorts such as older people and physically disabled and sensory impairment.

Current predictions in Neath Port Talbot suggest that any increases in demand in line with population growth will be absorbed due to the flexible arrangements in place. However, Swansea suggests that any increase in demand outside its flexible arrangements, may mean changes to contractual arrangements to cater for any increase over what is currently administered.

Whilst there is only one provider in each geographical area providing IPA, the providers also connect to a network of other smaller independent providers across Neath Port Talbot and Swansea. The current providers also offer other services in their areas such as Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) services.

Factors that could influence the market stability of IPA are changes to statutory legislation and regulations whereby any significant changes will bring its own challenges and may reduce access to services. Another factor is the ongoing impact of COVID on being able to provide services, for example, on a face-to-face offering, where restrictions may hamper the resources being available.

Both local authorities adopted a clear criterion that promoted quality over price in the award of its service contact for IPA. This shows a clear commitment to quality of outcomes for the individuals to provide the right service they need.

Action due to Provider Failure

There are mitigations in place should the one provider in each LA fail. However close monitoring of the provider also gives confidence that the risk of provider failure is low.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

In Neath Port Talbot, the provider is subject to regular quality meetings and an annual review to discuss how the service is meeting the needs of its population, backed up by a robust service specification and contract.

In Swansea, the provider is subject to a quality assurance standard known as the Quality Performance Mark (QPM) which assesses the services against a framework of good practice.

Through COVID there has been no complaints about service provision and its fair to say that feedback is positive about the quality of services provided.

Further reviews are taking place during 2022/23 to establish any improvements that can be made to service delivery which will then be used to inform future specifications and working arrangements.

Current and Projected Trends

Due to changes in the wider market such as domiciliary care, residential and transition from children to adult services, it is recognised that there will be an effect on the market for regulatory support.

There is a trend to increase the independence of people via new models of care which will in turn increase the demand for IPA services especially as services will be giving more choice and control over the services being offered.

It is anticipated that the future demand will be absorbed by the NPT arrangements currently in place, however Swansea anticipate that in certain areas demand will grow further than expected due to Child protection arrangements necessitating both parents having their own advocates.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

Neath will undertake a review of its commissioning practices to inform new contact arrangements post 2024.

Swansea have already identified potential practices which may shape the future provision of IPA and will incorporate findings into their contractual arrangements.

Sustainability of Provision

It appears that both Neath Port Talbot and Swansea both procure the same provider as it's the only council approved provider in the local market.

Whilst the service provision remains stable due to the quality of services and stability of the providers workforce not impacted by COVID, commissioners understand there is a need to have plans in place should the provider fail.

Risks to Market Stability

In the short term the failure of the provider could be absorbed locally but there needs to be a risk assessment of how this will have an impact on finances in the

Local Authorities plus the longer-term disruption this may cause to users of the service.

Legislative changes will impact service models and give rise to future increased demand.

COVID and technology may also continue to disrupt services or deliver services that are not compatible for the population cohort to participate. During COVID using technology helped maintain service provision however from the evidence it suggests that numbers were not as expected if circumstances were normal.

Changes to models of care and the increase of people choosing independence may increase uptake of IPA and therefore improved data intelligence will help predict future trends.

Section D – Non-Regulated Provision

There are additional advocacy services provided in both Neath Port Talbot and Swansea by other bodies. The types of advocacies offered are summarised as

- Peer Advocacy – short term support from someone in similar circumstances
- Self-advocacy – possibly from family, friends, own research
- Citizen advocacy – special interest support provided by representative group
- Independent professional advocacy – paid and trained independent advocates where significant barriers exist to the person engaging with a care service

Section E – Summary of the Market

Neath Port Talbot and Swansea have stated the market is currently stable due to the quality of the provider and the contracts each authority have with the same provider. Both have stated the need to promote the service to the harder to reach populations and those with protected characteristics.

As there is only one provider in the Region the impact of the provider failing in its duty to provide IPA is high whilst its probability is low.

Further work, perhaps collaboratively to encourage other providers into the market, may need to be done to sustain the IPA to those cohorts in need of advocacy.

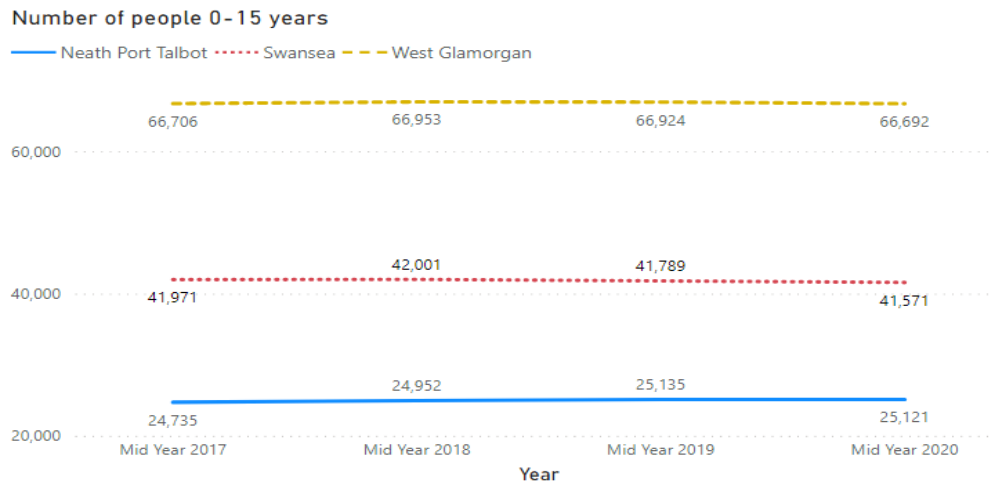
Increased demand will increase the need for IPA services, but this is not quantifiable due to the COVID pandemic disrupting access to services and also data is only available for 1 year. Improved forecasting could be undertaken once data is made available for additional years.

7.8 Advocacy – Children

Section A – Market Sufficiency

Population Based Demand

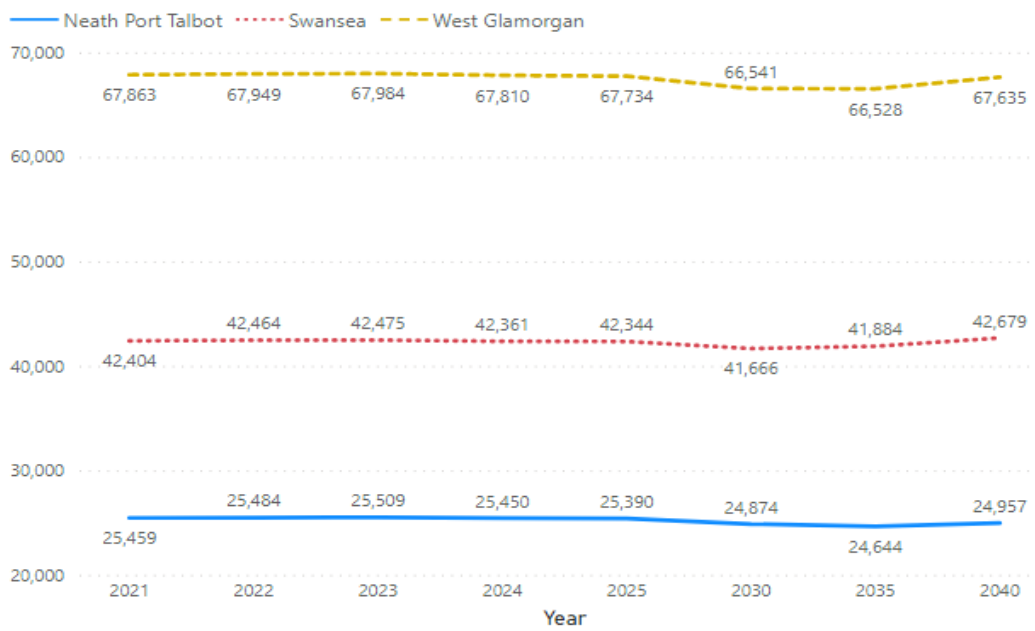
The latest data for the population of West Glamorgan for children aged 0-15 years is currently estimated at 66,692. This is made up of 25,141 in Neath Port Talbot and 41,571 in Swansea.



The predicted growth for children for the region by 2040 the population will rise to 24,957 in NPT and 42,679 in Swansea. This equates to a reduction of 2% in NPT and 0.64% increase in Swansea.

Over the next 5 years to 2025, there is gradual decrease in the numbers of children aged 0-15 years in each local authority area.

Projected population aged 0-15 years



This reduction in the next 5 years may have an impact on the numbers of children needing IPA.

Neath Port Talbot and Swansea have experienced a steady reduction in the numbers of children receiving IPA due to the numbers of children in receipt of care reducing over the previous years.

It is noted to remember in the analysis which is currently not in either population cohorts is that of care leavers.

Active Offer

There is a consensus in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea where the offer of IPA is child/young person led. There are possible areas of difference in approach but this is not made clear apart from both NPT and Swansea state it's a multi-factorial approach to take up of an offer of IPA. For example, In Swansea, children accessing independent professional advocacy services are supported on a time-limited basis to support them with one or more specific issues. The service is not intended or designed to provide ongoing and long-term support – albeit some children will be the subject of several referrals as they seek support to address a series of different issues. There was no further explanation for NPT

While much depends on regular promotional activity to raise awareness of the service, it is important to note that children must consent to the service

Issue Based Advocacy

Whilst the uptake of the issue-based advocacy is multi-factorial and is consent led by the child/young person, in NPT in 2020-2021, it was estimated that 7% of the eligible population of children/young people were referred to the IPA service for

issue-based advocacy. Of those, 63% accepted an issue-based advocacy service. Overall, only 4% of the total eligible population in NPT proceeded to access issue-based advocacy through the IPA service.

In Swansea for (2016/17) there were 53 children referred for advocacy across the entire year. This gradually started to increase following the launch of the national approach (in August 2017), and by 2019/20 Swansea were seeing 60-90 children being referred each quarter.

In general, the COVID 19 pandemic has had an impact on the numbers of children/young people accessing and being offered the IPA service and work needs to be done to resume adequate service levels .

Service Supply

Since 2017, the region's IPA services have maintained sufficient levels of resources to comfortably meet local demand. Commissioning arrangements and allocated budgets for IPA services have consistently included contingency plans for the implementation of additional resources in order to meet any increase in demand above budget envelopes.

Service Quality

In NPT and Swansea, the IPA services' performance and service quality have been analysed on a quarterly basis. Service performance data demonstrated children/young people receive a prompt, accessible and professional standard of service from suitably qualified and experienced service providers.

The local authorities have developed mechanisms such as undertaking lessons learnt and quality checking the providers regularly throughout the current contract which has been awarded via a competitive tendering process, to monitor the quality and to ensure the children's outcomes are met.

IPA services in both areas have implemented a hybrid method of working to meet all children/young people's preferred communications methods. Current IPA service providers utilise a range of feedback mechanisms and have an active Young Person's Advisory Group (YPAG) who advise on service development in a co-produced way. Service providers are currently encouraging young people from the region to participate in this group.

Furthermore, throughout the lifetime of the current contract, the commissioning authorities in both areas will conduct annual contract monitoring visits to evidence compliance with contractual requirements and to analyse the quality of key service delivery areas.

Neath Port Talbot and Swansea utilise current commissioning arrangements for the IPA Service that are informed by the Welsh Government's 'Range and Level Assessment mechanism'. The tool was developed in 2015 and relied on a number of predictions and assumptions. The region is presently working with Welsh

Government and other stakeholders to re-examine the tool and decide whether there are any adjustments needed.

Current Level of Market Sufficiency

From the perspective of the West Glamorgan region, there is presently sufficient capacity in the market to meet demand. Demand and usage of the IPA service has consistently been less than what the Welsh Government's 'Range and Level Assessment mechanism' had anticipated.

However, following a low uptake of the IPA service during COVID-19, Swansea is committed to undertake further work to promote advocacy locally to ensure children and young people are aware of their rights and benefits of this service. A task and finish group is presently looking at arrangements in Swansea to help increase the percentage of children accessing the active offer.

In NPT, demand and usage of the IPA service has consistently been less than what the Welsh Government's 'Range and Level Assessment mechanism' had anticipated for the local area. During 2020/2021, the NPT reviewed the usage of the child and young persons' IPA Service, which has resulted in a commitment to greater embedding advocacy services for children and young people in the council to ensure children and young people are aware of their rights and benefits of this service.

Across the region, current commissioning arrangements can sufficiently cover the increased demand based on the current population needs assessment and the projected outcomes of the promotional activity each local authority is doing. Should demand exceed expectations over the next five years, commissioning contingency plans are in place to ensure the IPA service can meet such demand.

Likely Issues to Affect Market Sufficiency Over Next 5 Years

Population Based Demand

Generally there is a difference in the population demand for each area.

Neath Port Talbot suggest that due to increased awareness the service will experience increased demand on use of advocacy.

Swansea with the use of early intervention and prevention services, family support services and improvements in quality of practice the aim is to further reduce the number of children and young people becoming looked after and subject to child protection processes in the council. A decreasing CLA and child protection population is likely to decrease the overall demand placed upon the IPA service.

However, at the same time, it is anticipated that greater numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) will need to be cared for by Swansea council. This will bring additional challenges for providers as these children may have additional communication needs (e.g., translation support) and other issues that may require the support of an advocate. Based on current

projections, the current IPA service provider has the resources to meet these particular changes in demand.

Impact from New/ Developing Services

The impact from the future development of new or enhanced services delivered or commissioned by both councils within the region may result in an increase or decrease in referrals and usage of the IPA service.

It is too early to predict the impact of new/developing services as in NPT the new approaches need time to gather data and evidence while in Swansea services are yet to be brought in house.

When designing and developing new services, both councils will continue to undertake commissioning impact assessments to identify, plan and address any resultant impacts these services may have upon commissioned services such as the IPA service.

Wider Market Sufficiency Issues

Where market sufficiency difficulties are experienced from the wider services market, this is likely to increase demand placed upon the IPA service. For example, market sufficiency difficulties experienced within the foster care market, children's residential care market and other service areas may give rise to children and young people seeking issue-based advocacy support from the IPA service.

Market sufficiency issues and their resultant impact on services such as the IPA service will continue to be monitored closely.

Section B - Market Stability

The regional children and young persons' advocacy market has been analysed as a stable market. Commissioners are confident that the IPA service provider is financially stable and there are robust financial and business continuity checks built in the contract review and evaluation process. Through the competitive tendering process completed in April 2021, the market demonstrated itself as competitive with high quality advocacy organisations able to operate locally.

The current commissioning arrangements allow for fluctuations in demand and commissioners are confident the current IPA service provider has a flexible staff base which can meet current and anticipated demand. Therefore, the increased anticipated demand for the children and young persons' IPA service, as identified through the market sufficiency assessment is not predicted to create any instability within this market.

Advocacy services are procured services which are planned and involve market testing events to engage potential providers in the service development process. This planned and coordinated approach minimises service disruption to children and young people accessing advocacy services.

It must be noted that there is only 2 providers for children’s IPA services, which is a risk to the stability of the market and contingency plans are needed.

Action due to Provider Failure

Not applicable – no action has been taken in this area.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

The current contract for the children’s and young person’s IPA service was awarded through a competitive tendering process which concluded in April 2021. Service performance data has demonstrated the IPA service provider is a delivering a high-quality service and meets relevant advocacy outcomes frameworks and regulatory standards.

Feedback received from children and young people has been positive relating to the quality of the IPA service and impact the service has had on their achievement of personal advocacy outcomes. Over the lifetime of the agreement, both councils will undertake a series of quality assurance checks which will consist of quarterly performance management meetings, annual service reviews, annual service evaluations, and annual contract monitoring visits to the service.

Current and Projected Trends

Changing Population Based Demand

In line with both councils’ Children’s Services strategic plans, the use of early intervention and prevention services alongside edge of care and family support services aims to prevent children/young people from becoming looked after and prevent children from entering the child protection arena over the next 5 years. The likely impact of these decreasing population cohorts is an overall decrease of demand placed upon the IPA service.

However, the effectiveness of the councils further embedding advocacy into practice will increase referrals and usage of the IPA service.

Current commissioning arrangements will sufficiently cover the projected increased demand from the ‘embedding advocacy’ approach and will be closely monitored should projections prove to be inaccurate.

More in-depth analysis of what children and young people want from advocacy services will mature as the current IPA service is in its infancy of service delivery and will be explored in detail from 2022 to identify potential trends and required service/ commissioning changes when improved data is available.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

The Children and Young Persons' IPA service is jointly commissioned by Swansea and NPT Councils. There is an inter-agency agreement in place which supports the joint commissioning arrangement. This regional approach has provided many benefits to contracted parties, including better value for money, reduced contract mobilisation resources and shared resources within service delivery.

Sustainability of Provision

An assessment of the advocacy market has demonstrated IPA service-based organisations who can operate locally are all based in the third sector. They appear to be a mix of small, medium-sized, and large organisations. There appears to be no shortage of providers who can operate advocacy services locally. However all but 2 of the providers do not deliver the national model.

Risks to Market Stability

The market assessment identified no significant challenges to the current or future sufficiency, quality, and stability of the provision of IPA services to children and young people within the West Glamorgan region. The IPA service provider utilises a mixed staff base and has reported no difficulties regarding staff recruitment and staff retention. Due to issues presented in other areas of the social care market relating to staff recruitment and staff retention, this will be closely monitored going forward.

Additionally, the risk of the provider procured in the region failing will add funding and financial risks in providing a regional IPA.

Section D – Non-Regulated Provision

Alternative Advocacy Models

Some children are happy and capable of advocating on their own behalf. For others, they can properly use their family members or professionals they are familiar with (e.g., their teacher) to advocate their views.

Alternative forms of formal and informal forms of advocacy support may be a preferred or a more suitable option for children and young people to meet their individual advocacy needs and outcomes. Close monitoring will be needed to analyse effects of this.

Use of Non-Regulated Provision/ Service Changes

Greater levels of in-house residential provision will produce demands on the advocacy service, as will the promotion of the service, but commissioners are reasonably confident that this demand is sufficiently covered within the current contract.

Section E – Other Considerations Affecting the Market

Resources

The current IPA service was awarded following a competitive tendering process. Throughout the lifetime of the contract, demand and usage of the IPA service will be closely monitored to ensure, if the maximum budget envelope was neared or reached, then contingency plans will be implemented to ensure any disruption to service availability and service continuity is prevented.

Workforce

The current advocacy workforce utilises a mix of employed and self-employed staff to meet any fluctuations in demand. There is no reported shortfall in staff in this service area.

All staff working within the IPA service have achieved or are working towards the relevant regulatory required advocacy qualification. The requirement to achieve recognised advocacy qualifications has not presented itself as a barrier to recruitment within the advocacy workforce.

Section F – Summary of the Market

Moving forward, both NPT and Swansea will continue to greater embed advocacy within the locality through increased awareness and understanding of advocacy among children, young people and professionals. The current contract is meeting the current needs but further analysis will be required when changes to demand occur above the anticipated demand.

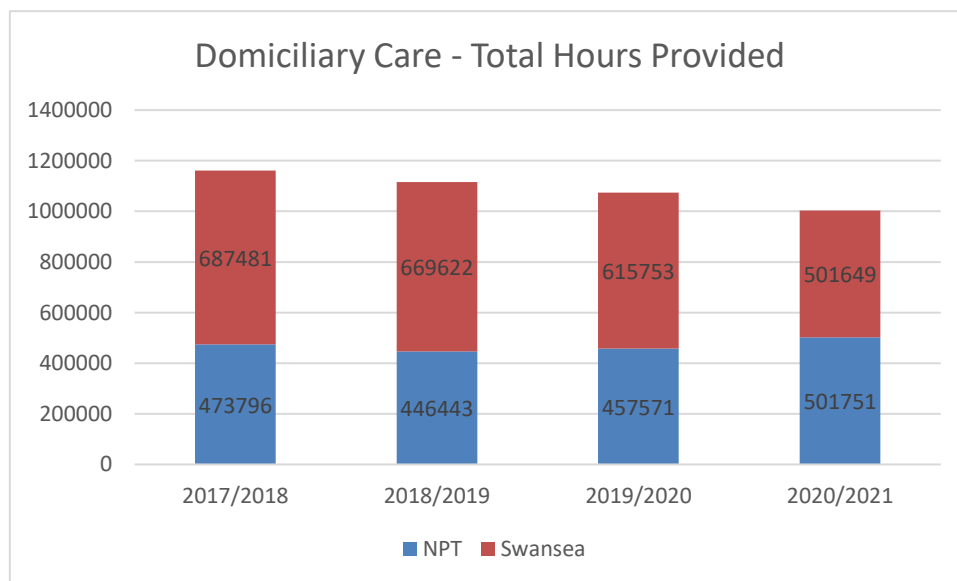
7.9 Domiciliary Care – Older Adults

Section A – Market Sufficiency

Both Local Authorities provide an internally Domiciliary Care Regulated Service to individuals in the community. There is also a total of 29 external domiciliary care companies commissioned across the region – 20 providers are commissioned by Swansea, and 18 by NPT. 7 of these providers work across the region for both Local Authorities. The providers range from small local organisations to large national ones.

Over an average week, approximately 24,000 hours of domiciliary care is delivered across the region to 1,700 individuals. At the time of writing (May 2022), there were 272 individuals on the brokerage lists across the region waiting for care, 39 of which were in hospital awaiting discharge.

The average number of people on the waiting list for 2021/22 across the region was 150. As COVID pressures have eased, demand has grown by 20% since the beginning of 2021. Population needs assessment figures would indicate that this demand is expected to increase further.



Whilst the above graph shows that the overall number of commissioned hours has decreased since 2017/18 by 16% across the region, the picture is different between NPT and Swansea. NPT has increased hours by 17% in comparison to 2017/18 to 2020/21, whilst Swansea has decreased hours by 37% over the same period.

Sufficiency

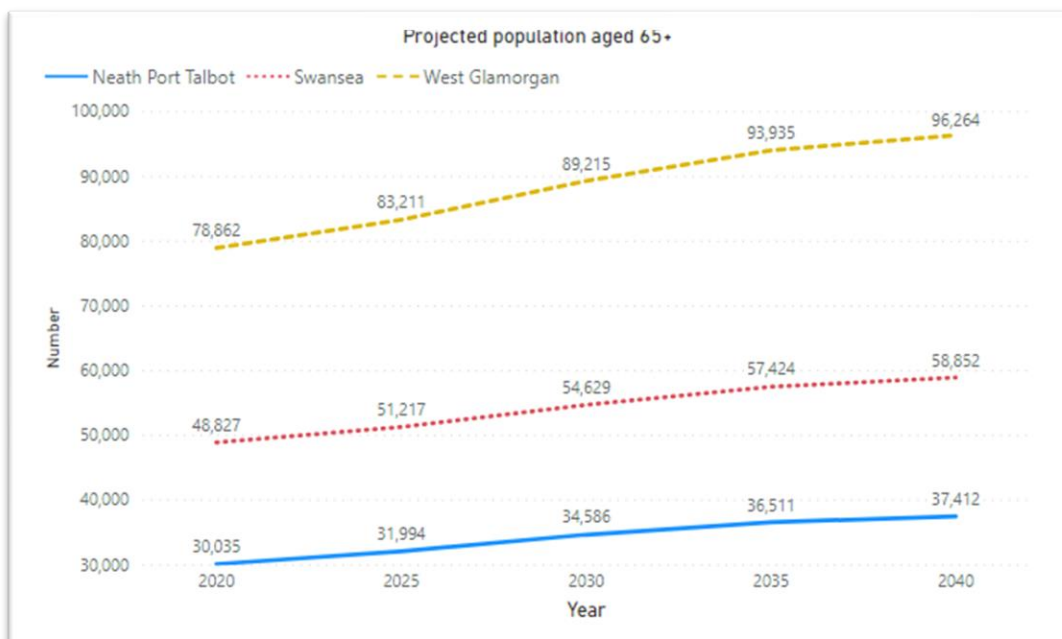
The externally commissioned domiciliary care sector currently has insufficient capacity to meet current demand. The increase in demand alongside the reduction in workforce is a challenge the partners within the region are currently

addressing. Use of internal homecare service has occurred where it has not been possible to meet needs via externally commissioned services. Creation of more informal, local community based care and support options as an alternative to traditional homecare services is also being explored.

Section B - Market Stability

Population

Across the Swansea Bay area, the 65+ age group accounts for a fifth of the overall population. This age group is expected to increase by approximately 20% by 2040. The 85+ age group (2.5% of the population in 2016) is expected to change by 80% by 2040.



Our working assumption is that demand for services will continue to increase along with population growth. The current homecare market is fragile and COVID has created a greater level of instability. Since March 2021, 7 providers have been temporarily unable to sustain services resulting in people being referred back to the commissioners to make alternative arrangements for ongoing care. The cause of a number of these were due to staffing issues impacting on their ability to deliver safe care, a number of packages were also handed back with less than 48 hours' notice.

Much of the instability arises from staff retention and recruitment difficulties. Significant financial uplifts have been awarded to framework approved providers to alleviate this issue, and further support to address workforce issues is currently being considered.

The overall trend is care staff leaving the sector. Anecdotally this is for a variety of reasons such as "burn out" or levels of pay and working conditions. Migration to

other employment sectors which have re-opened following COVID isolation has offered opportunities for carers to find employment in areas such as retail and hospitality often at higher rates of pay.

Whilst some providers report difficulties relating to levels of funding, and the impact this has on stability and sustainability, the greatest risk to continuity of care is staff leaving the sector.

Financial

There has been year on year increases in the hourly rate generally consistent at 3% - 4% within 2017 to 2020. In the 2021/22 the rate increased by 10%.

Action due to Provider Failure

Where a provider is unable to carry on providing care due to business failure, procedures have been established at a local level to secure alternative care provision, transferring to other operators to ensure continuity of care. Placements at residential care homes may occur as a last resort to ensure care needs can continue to be met.

2021 has seen unprecedented challenges to the market. 263 packages of care were handed back to commissioners in 2021/22, many at short notice. Reasons that have been provided is the inability to recruit staff and also staff not fulfilling their notice term when leaving employment. Alternative provision was put in place to support the people affected. In a small number of cases there was a need to move someone into a care home as a temporary measure whilst a new provider was commissioned

In August 2021, Swansea Local Authority were faced with the unique situation when one of the services were ordered to cease trading. This followed an injunction obtained by the operator's parent company due to a contract dispute between parties. The local authority had some forwarding that this could occur and had developed appropriate contingency arrangements which relied on the cooperation of the provider to implement.

At the moment the injunction was granted however the provider withdrew support for the plan and alternative arrangements were required at extremely short notice. Fortunately the authority was able to rely on support from the external sector to accommodate the care needs of all those impacted by the sudden disruption to services. This was an extremely unique situation and not something Swansea authority expects to experience again.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

Partners implement their own local contract monitoring processes which are in place to improve the quality of commissioned services.

Current and Projected Trends

At this current time, demand for homecare services exceeds supply in the external market. Continued workforce pressures, difficulty recruiting and retaining staff and competition from other employment sectors, mean that further service disruptions are likely.

Emerging patterns are showing individuals with higher levels of need, wish to stay at home and no longer want to go into care homes, especially with the pandemic impact.

Population increase will also continue to create demand for homecare services. A COVID related reduction in demand for care home services is also likely to result in increases in demand for homecare. This may or may not be a short term effect.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

Competitive tendering has brought new entrants to the market and this has seen the number of approved Providers appointed to the locality contract frameworks increase.

Ideas on how to improve the current situation are being considered on a regional basis to avoid negative cross borders or partnership impacts that unilateral decision making may cause.

Provision of services in the Welsh Language

Partners have a duty under Welsh Language Act to provide services in English and Welsh. The requirement to meet the obligations of the Welsh Language offer is specified within our contracts for services.

Sustainability of Provision

Contracted providers are all struggling with recruitment and retention regardless of the size of the organisation, they have described continued financial pressure including ensuring rates of pay for staff are competitive and increasing fuel costs. Providers have reported that retaining staff can be difficult due to staff being attracted to higher rates of pay in other sectors e.g. retail and hospitality, not forgetting that the pandemic has also created more pressures on staff for other reasons e.g. working long hours to cover sickness.

Throughout 2021, a significant number of packages were handed back by providers with very little notice, in the majority of cases with less than 48 hours' notice. This position has now stabilised however it is accepted that the sector is still very fragile and Brokerage waiting lists are still higher than before COVID-19 due to market saturation.

The sustainability risks arising from resourcing, workforce pressures and population growth have been described elsewhere in the report.

Risks to Market Stability

The challenge will be to sustain and if possible to grow the external sector in the context of recovery from COVID, and in the face of competition for workforce from other sectors which may be present as a more appealing and less onerous option.

Workforce availability and costs escalation linked to workforce and other inflationary pressures may continue to create sustainability risks.

Providers are becoming increasingly aware of the demand for their services and some appear to be demonstrating a willingness to end contractual relationships in favour of selling their services to commissioners willing to pay more elsewhere.

Section D – Other Considerations Affecting the Market

Resources

Funding received from Welsh Government to meet Real Living Wage costs are welcomed but may not be sufficient to resource the sector to recruit and retain staff to meet demand for services. The gap between levels of funding received and the cost of providing sustainable care markets will continue to present sustainability risks and limitations on resources may impact the extent to which the local authority can truly attain sufficient market capacity.

The pandemic has highlighted the fragility of the social care market and has accelerated impetus for change. The support provided by Welsh Government to Local Authorities has significantly helped to address immediate pressures but ongoing financial support will be needed to sustain capacity building and provide for a more stable market.

Workforce

Data gathering exercises on staff vacancy numbers have been undertaken across the region, but due to the inconsistency in responses, it is not possible to give clear indications of staff vacancies. According to weekly data staffing numbers appear to fluctuate significantly from week to week. It is not clear whether this is an accurate reflection of volatility across the workforce or inaccurate reporting. Providers continue to describe difficulty recruiting and retaining and this is reflected in the number of service disruptions and failures referred to elsewhere in the report.

Section E – Summary of the Market

Demand for domiciliary care continues to exceed supply. An approximate 20% additional capacity is required to address current pressures on services.

Future demand projection is difficult since COVID pressures have altered patterns of demand across all services. Population increases over the next 5 years would suggest a likely corresponding increase in demand.

Dementia care and services which cover rural locations are likely areas for further development.

The homecare market has historically been relatively fragile and current pressures have exacerbated these weaknesses. Difficulties recruiting and retaining staff are causing service disruptions. The objective over the next 5 years will be to create more resilient and stable services.

Resourcing will play a significant part in determining future sector stability. Rates of pay which are sufficient to attract and retain staff are critical in a service area where workforce migration to better paid and less onerous jobs in other sectors are significant pull factors.

Alternatives to traditional domiciliary care will likely play an important role in meeting the needs of the population. More creative use of Direct Payment options and creation of more informal community led solutions and social value enterprises may maximise voice, choice and control for citizens and reduce pressure on limited commissioned resources.

The share of the market occupied by the local authority's internal homecare services may need to increase over the next 5 years to meet the external capacity shortfalls.

7.10 Domiciliary Care – Children

Section A – Market Sufficiency

Population Based Demand

Since 2017, the child population receiving care and support has fluctuated but the overall population size has decreased across the region.

In NPT, the cohort of disabled children who receive care and support has been increasing since 2017, and so the population-based demand for children’s domiciliary care provision has increased.

For the same period in Swansea, the number has been much more stable: circa. 270. It is amongst this group that demand for domiciliary care is greatest.

Domiciliary Care Usage

In line with the individual child’s assessed needs, domiciliary care packages are designed in a personalised way within the region. The number of hours and frequency of domiciliary care support differs between children and frequently changes throughout the lifetime of the support package to meet the changing support needs of the child and their family.

In NPT since 2017, the number of children accessing domiciliary care provision within the area has increased, with a sizeable increase noted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reason for this increased demand is multi-factorial, but can largely be attributable to two key factors:

- The extended use of domiciliary care provision to deliver support-based packages due to the limited availability of such provision within the local social care market.
- The increased use of domiciliary care provision to provide short breaks to children and their families (which provide parent carers with short breaks from their caring responsibilities whilst providing the child/children with enjoyable experiences within the home or community).

In Swansea, the use of domiciliary care for children is very small compared with adult services where it is often the preferred option to meet social care needs. Unlike many adults, children typically have parents and carers to undertake their basic care tasks. While parents and carers may need support to take a break from their caring responsibilities, there are a range of services available that can meet this need, including those short breaks services commissioned by the Council from the third sector. As well as the universal (e.g., school) and targeted services (e.g. residential short breaks) available for children with a disability, there are a variety of non-regulated family support services operating within the area. The size and shape of those support services can influence the level of demand for domiciliary care services. Similarly, many families in need opt to arrange their own package of care via Personal Assistants paid for via the use of Direct Payments. In recent

years there has been a significant increase in the popularity of Direct Payments by families. This growth suppresses the need for the Swansea Council to commission traditional domiciliary care services.

The numbers of children being provided with a traditional domiciliary care package by Swansea Council has been consistent and low: a handful at any one time. However, it is important to remember that the level of support via Direct Payments has risen considerably, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reasons for this increased demand are varied, but key factors include:

- The entry of a new provider in the marketplace that supports families in receipt of Direct Payments.
- The use of Direct Payments to provide highly tailored short breaks to children and their families.

Domiciliary Care Supply

In NPT, local domiciliary care providers provide care and support to a wide cohort of children who present with various care and support needs. There is no cohort of children to which local providers have reported difficulties in delivering their service to. Over the past 4 years, domiciliary care providers have demonstrated flexibility in their service models to adapt their service offering to meet various support needs. This flexibility and commitment to meeting local need has helped achieve service sufficiency with no key service gaps.

From 2020, the Local Domiciliary Care Market responded to increased demand by increasing their service capacity. However, at times, demand still outstripped supply with local providers reporting they were operating at service capacity. This presented challenges to achieving sufficient levels of service availability. This high level of demand is predicted to correlate with the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Swansea, the marketplace for domiciliary care services for children is very small and all providers include domiciliary care as part of a wider spectrum of family support services. Swansea Council has one such service. It offers a range of support services and currently provides domiciliary care packages to four families. The service typically focuses on short-term, crisis interventions for children and their families at times of urgent need or stress, however, the lack of capacity in the private market and changes in the service model operated by partners in the Health Board mean the team is supporting some families on a long-term basis. Aside from the in-house service, there is a very limited supply amongst a small number of private providers. The ability of these private providers to deliver domiciliary care services is often impacted by the numbers of families they are supporting in other ways.

Quality and Outcomes

Care and support plans continue to be co-produced with the child and their progression and achievement of personal outcomes are regularly reviewed and

evaluated. Overall, the region's domiciliary care market sufficiently met required service quality standards and effectively supported children to achieve their personal wellbeing outcomes.

Based on the best available data, identified areas of poor performance across the domiciliary care market had been isolated incidents and were not indicative of market wide quality issues.

Current Level of Market Sufficiency

The children's domiciliary care market is operating at close to capacity levels and is facing market-based pressures to sustain capacity. Current issues include service disruption based on staff sickness (largely associated with the COVID-19 pandemic) and challenges in attracting new staff to enter the market, which is an issue across the social care workforce.

In NPT, domiciliary care provision is largely commissioned from one provider. Whilst this provision provides a good quality service, this is a high-risk commissioning approach due to the potential risks presented relating to future service stability and sufficiency. Several domiciliary providers have demonstrated an interest to become part of the council's commissioned service over recent years, but they have sighted barriers to enter the market, including the small number of support packages The council needs to commission the need for a very flexible workforce to sustain flexible packages of support.

To further develop the domiciliary care market, NPT council is reviewing and revising the strategic Children's Services plans and commissioning plans, which includes a focus on domiciliary and short breaks demand profiling.

In Swansea, the children's domiciliary market is operating at, or very close to, maximum capacity levels and is facing market-based pressures to sustain capacity. Current issues include service disruption based on staff sickness (largely associated with the COVID-19 pandemic) and challenges in attracting new staff to enter the market, which is an issue across the social care workforce.

Demand for domiciliary care provision is interdependent on the ability of other family support services (short breaks projects and Direct Payments) to meet the needs of families. This effectiveness of these services depends to a large degree on a small number of providers and the sufficiency of the services they provide is under strain. Whilst the provision provides a good quality service, this is a high-risk commissioning approach due to the potential risks presented relating to future service stability and sufficiency. We would benefit from a growth in the capacity of these services and in the capacity to commission domiciliary care packages when this is the right option.

Several domiciliary providers have expressed an interest to become a Swansea commissioned service over recent years, but they have cited barriers to enter the market, including the small number of support packages commissioned and the need for a very flexible workforce to sustain flexible packages of support.

To further develop the Swansea domiciliary care market, Swansea is reviewing and revising its strategic plans to determine the shape needed from its own in-house service (and wider family support services) and those delivered from independent providers.

Likely Issues to Affect Market Sufficiency Over Next 5 Years

COVID-19 Pandemic Impact

Since 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought much disruption to the lives of children and their families. School and support service closures/ disruptions contributed to increased demand for care and support services.

Over the next 5 years, the continuing COVID-19 pandemic will be closely monitored as it is most likely to continue to affect market sufficiency in the short term.

Population Based Demand

In line with Welsh Government population projections, the population of children who live with a disability is projected to remain stable over the next 5-10 years, therefore there is no correlation between the projected population size and demand placed upon domiciliary care provision.

Accessible Suite of Support Services

Domiciliary care provision is one of many support services children and families may access, which can also include support services from other organisations.

Many of these other support services are currently overwhelmed and are providing limited-service availability. The knock-on effect frequently results in an increased demand on community services.

The councils are working closely with commissioned services and partner organisations to highlight and support service sufficiency developments which present this knock-on effect upon the area's domiciliary care market. Without effective developments in this area, it is likely that demand placed on domiciliary care provision will continue to increase.

Impact from Wales Wide Workforce Sufficiency Issues

The sufficiency of the social care workforce across Wales is a concern. The sufficiency and quality of the region's children's domiciliary care market relies on providers achieving suitable levels of staff recruitment and retention.

This area will be closely monitored as workforce sufficiency issues present a key risk to achieving market sufficiency over the next five years.

Section B - Market Stability

Balance of Demand and Supply

The sufficiency assessment identified that in NPT, demand and supply within the council's domiciliary care market has increased since 2020. The market has successfully grown to meet levels of demand but as COVID-19 related impacts decrease, any significant drop in domiciliary care demand may destabilise the local market and its workforce. The council will work closely with commissioned providers to monitor service stability on an ongoing basis.

In Swansea, the sufficiency assessment identified that potential demand for domiciliary care has been offset by a growth in the use of Direct Payments.

Provider Base Diversity

In NPT, the composition of the local children's domiciliary care market has changed quite considerably since 2017, with a decreasing number of domiciliary care providers commissioned by the council. The reasons for this decrease are multi factorial but have been attributed to providers moving away from this market, providers operating limited local availability or experience of poor service quality. The way in which the council select, and commission domiciliary care provision has impacted upon the distribution of market share associated with the council commissioned support packages.

The market leader during 2017/18 and 2018/19 had a declining market share, which was absorbed by a growing local based provider since 2019 which emerged as a new local market leader since 2019.

Whilst the current market leader provides a good quality service, the council's reliance on this provider for 99% of local domiciliary care provision is a high-risk approach due to the potential risks this arrangement presents upon future service stability and sufficiency. Domiciliary providers have expressed an interest in growing or diversifying their business models to enter the council's Children's Domiciliary Care Market. However, such providers sighted barriers to enter the market including the small number of support packages the council commission and the need for a very flexible workforce to sustain flexible packages of support.

The composition of the Swansea children's domiciliary care market has changed since 2017 but remains very small. Whilst the current providers deliver a good quality service, our reliance on such a small number of providers is a high-risk approach due to the potential risks this arrangement presents upon future service stability and sufficiency. Adult domiciliary providers have expressed an interest in growing or diversifying their business models to enter the children's domiciliary care market, however, such providers sighted barriers to enter the market including the small number of support packages Swansea commission and the need for a very flexible workforce to sustain highly individualised packages of support.

Both councils are currently reviewing their strategic and commissioning plans, which will include a review of commissioning arrangements and market development work relating to the children's domiciliary care market.

Access to Local Market Information

In 2022, both NPT and Swansea plan to publish a localised market position statement and will work collaboratively to publish a regional market position statement, both are aimed to provide reliable market-based information to external service providers, in order to help them plan for the future and to effectively meet local market demand. The plan is to work closely with partner organisations to undertake market engagement and market shaping activities from 2022 to support local market development.

Financial Viability

NPT council accredits domiciliary care providers before commissioning activity takes place. Accreditation and annual service reviews have not identified risks to the financial viability of commissioned domiciliary care providers.

There are no known risks to the financial viability of commissioned domiciliary care providers in Swansea.

Price/Quality Equilibrium

The equilibrium between price and quality is not balanced within the NPT domiciliary care market. Prices charged by domiciliary care providers vary quite considerably with a price difference of up to 30% between providers, but there is no evidence to suggest any increased service quality in relation to the price paid.

Over the previous 4 years, some providers have expressed a requirement to only provide support packages of a minimum number of hours, which has presented issues relating to delivering personalised support packages and achieving value for money. The planned market engagement activities in 2022 will signal and clarify the position on how it commissions support packages to enable providers to understand the council's commissioning approach.

There are no known risks to the financial viability of commissioned domiciliary care providers in Swansea.

Market Wide Shocks

The risk of market shocks within the region's Children's Domiciliary Care Market is being closely monitored.

Action due to Provider Failure

No action has been applicable in pursuance of the duty under section 189(2) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

Children and young people accessing domiciliary care provision have outcome-based care and support plans, which are coproduced with the individual. Commissioned domiciliary care providers regularly review progression and the achievement of personal outcomes. All commissioned domiciliary care providers deliver a package of training and support to their workforce in line with regulatory requirements.

Alongside CIW, the quality and performance of commissioned domiciliary care providers are monitored by each council. From analysing the quality of care and support provided, overall, the domiciliary care market delivers good quality care and support provision. Incidents of poor performance have been largely isolated incidents and are not indicative of market wide quality issues.

Current and Projected Trends

COVID-19 Impact

The level of demand has outstripped supply during Covid-19 because of disruptions such as school closures which have placed additional pressures on families. As the impact of the pandemic gradually declines, it is anticipated that demand and supply will become more aligned.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

In NPT, the council have several spot purchasing contracts with Domiciliary Care Providers. Providers are selected by care managers and this decision-making process is not currently underpinned by any formal commissioning arrangement. Decisions are largely based on experience of service quality and availability of service. This decision-making process has led to an informal 'preferred provider' approach which has resulted in a reliance upon one domiciliary care provider. This has created a situation where the local domiciliary care market is not providing a diverse provider base from which to commission.

The current commissioning arrangements will be reviewed as part of NPT council's commissioning plan review, which will conclude in 2022. The use of formal commissioning arrangements such as framework agreements will be considered as part of this review.

In Swansea, most packages delivered by the private sector are funded via Direct Payments, with the council facilitating the arrangements between the family and the provider. Where the council commissions the provider directly, then it is on a spot purchase basis. As with NPT, the local domiciliary care market is not providing a diverse provider base.

Current commissioning arrangements will also be reviewed in 2022/23 alongside a review of internal domiciliary care and wider family support services. The use of formal commissioning arrangements will be considered as part of this review.

Sustainability of Provision

The largest identified risk to future market sustainability relates to the future stability of the local market leader.

Risks to Market Stability

In NPT, the largest identified risk to market stability relates to how demand for future domiciliary care will be managed once the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic has been reduced or resolved. Any significant decrease in future demand for domiciliary care may destabilise the market.

Swansea states that there are risks relating to the sustainability of the domiciliary care workforce. This risk is not a provider specific risk, rather, it is associated with the overall challenges experienced across the wider social care workforce.

Section D – Non-Regulated Provision

In NPT, the council's Domiciliary Care Market delivers packages of support which includes both care and support, as well as support only packages. Non-regulated support services operate within the area, which have been used over the previous four years.

Should the capacity of the non-regulated support sector grow locally, this may decrease demand placed upon local domiciliary providers for support only packages. As part of the council's market development activities planned for 2022, engagement will take place with the non-regulated support sector to further understand this sector and their local operating service models in more detail.

The Swansea domiciliary care market delivers some packages which include both care and support, as well as others which are support only. As well as local domiciliary care services, there are several other non-regulated family support services operating within the area. The size and shape of those support services can influence the level of demand for domiciliary care services. As is the case with NPT, should the capacity of the non-regulated support sector grow locally, this may decrease demand placed upon local domiciliary providers for support only packages.

As part of Swansea's strategic plans for 2022, decisions will be taken regarding how community family care and support services need to look.

Section E – Other Considerations Affecting the Market

Resources

Planned reviews of commissioning and strategic plans will explore and consider areas of resource pressures, and areas where resources require investment and levelling up.

Direct Payments

Many families choose to use a direct payment for the delivery of personal care and support, however, many reported difficulties in recruiting and retaining personal assistants. The impact of which has led to some families accessing commissioned domiciliary care providers, rather than utilising a direct payment.

Unfortunately, the recruitment and retention of personal assistants is a sector wide concern and is not unique to the region.

Self-funders

Little information is held on those who choose to self-fund services in addition to what is provided through care and support assessments. This is a gap in the council's data sets, which will be considered for future review.

Section F – Summary of the Market

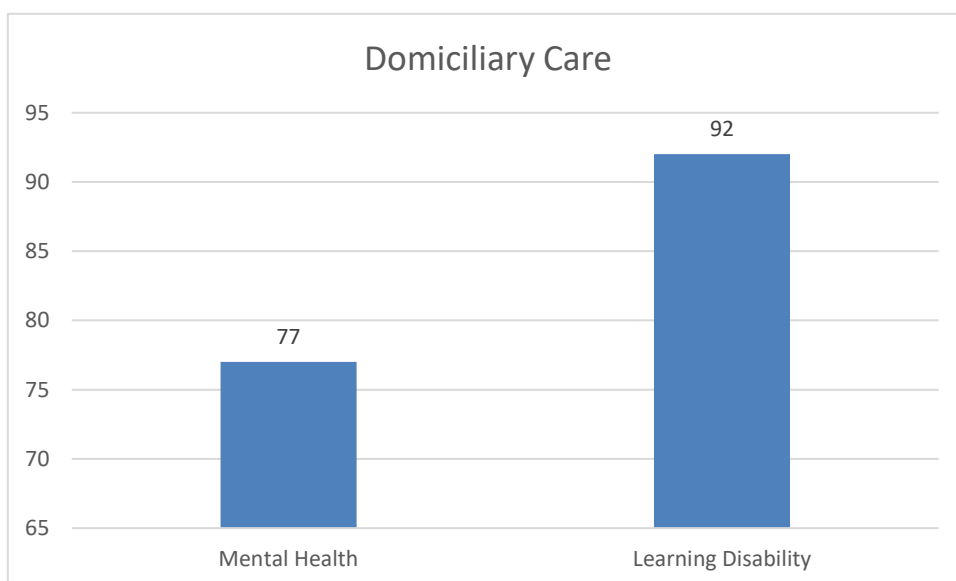
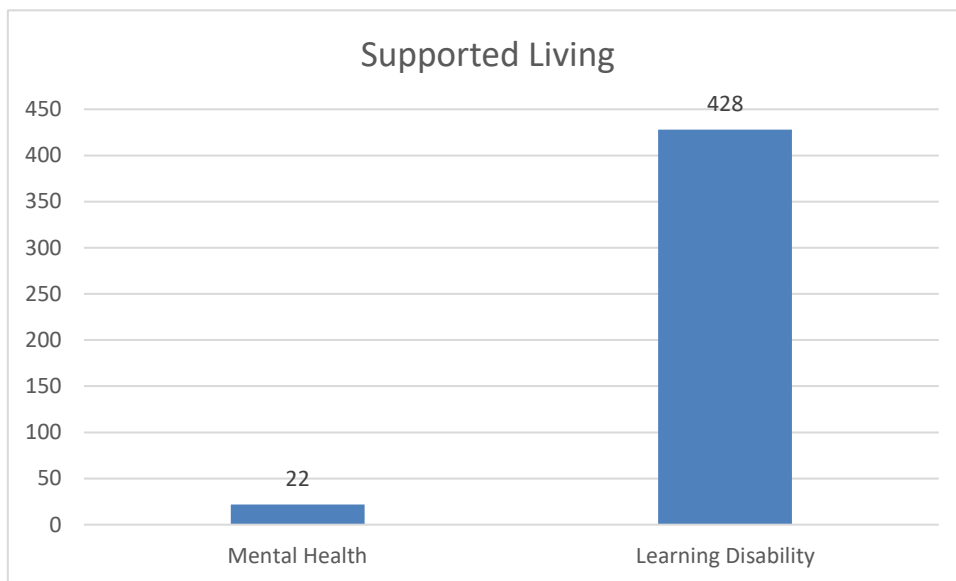
The Domiciliary Care Market has faced considerable pressure during the COVID-19 pandemic, and responded with market growth and flexibility. Moving forward, commissioning arrangements will be reviewed, and decisions will be made regarding how future needs can be met.

7.11 Domiciliary Care - Younger Adults

Section A – Market Sufficiency

Domiciliary care for younger adults is provided in two ways; 1 within supported accommodation setting whereby individuals have their own tenancies with 24 hour support and 2, spot purchasing of individual packages of support delivered within a person's home

The breakdown of numbers of individuals receiving support can be seen in the graphs below:



There have been a number of successful new Learning Disability supported living schemes developed over the past 5 years across the region. These are done in

conjunction with RSL's (Registered Social Landlords) with frameworks in place with each partner to ensure the appropriate care is provided. There are also clear and consistent methods with partners on agreement of placements for individuals who require supported living.

Compared to Learning Disabilities, there are far fewer individuals with a Mental Health illness living in supported living across the region. Neath Port Talbot have recently developed a new supported living scheme for Mental Health, with plans in place for a scheme for those with Mental Ill Health who are at risk of repeat homelessness. This is an area which is being developed further across the region.

The number of people receiving floating domiciliary care in their own home is comparatively low. The complex needs domiciliary care market has been operating close to capacity levels. Issues have included service disruption due to workforce pressures in recruiting and retaining staff. Work is being undertaken to review how to increase market sufficiency in this area as it is a growing demand.

Changing patterns of demand shows that there is a greater need for supported living services for younger adults. This is due to changing expectations of individuals who prefer options that optimise capacity to live independently. The model promotes greater independence compared to residential models of care.

There has been an increase in the number of individuals with complex needs and challenging behaviour accessing supported living, which is resulting in a requirement to ensure there is suitable housing available to support appropriately. It can however take up to two years for a new supported living property to be completed, future planning is an essential component in ensuring the needs of those that require accommodation in the future is undertaken three to four years in advance, especially for young people coming through transition.

Section B - Market Stability

Workforce

The market is fairly stable, however the sector has been impacted by workforce pressures, with particular pressures in domiciliary care provided at home. Difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff has impacted services, with high staff turnover leading to a reduction in skills and quality of support. Rising costs and competition from other employment. Workforce pressures is also resulting in not all services operating at full capacity. This has not seriously threatened stability of services but staffing shortages do compromise performance and may have an impact on availability of some services.

Through the pandemic, providers supported each other to address capacity issues to ensure the individuals they supported were safe. Contingency plans were put in place by commissioners, with staff ready to deploy if necessary.

Financial

Providers have seen increased cost pressures since the pandemic, mainly relating to the workforce. Partners have provided increased uplifts in October 2021, and further uplift in April 2022 to support the sector.

Commissioners are in regular contact with providers ensuring due diligence is undertaken to support providers should issues arise.

Action due to Provider Failure

There are comprehensive procedures in place to support provider failure. There has been no provider failure over the last three years. However, restoring staffing to pre-covid levels will be a challenge. Joint working with other commissioners along with local and regional information sharing has been key in monitoring risks and coordinating responses. Ensuring that Providers are equal partners in terms of identifying risks and planning responses is key. Systems which enable early warning and timely response are essential.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

Robust contract monitoring is in place with partners to help improve the quality of the commissioned services. This is ensured via contract monitoring visits, service user consultation, regular provider forums, unplanned visits and staff consultation.

Due to COVID, on-site monitoring was not possible, and was therefore changed to desktop monitoring and required the inclusion of new areas including compliance with the latest COVID guidance, use of PPE, testing, vaccination, staffing levels, safety and recruitment retention. Support to manage financial concerns has also featured more strongly.

Regional and national learning has commenced to share good practice and develop a homecare quality assurance programme. A range of inter-agency working will continue to be undertaken to ensure that services are fit for purpose.

Current and Projected Trends

The market is evolving and current evidence is demonstrating a required increase in:

- Specialist services for higher level health needs
- Challenging behaviour services
- Step down for people moving from residential care
- Step down for people moving from shared support to independent living
- Floating domiciliary care delivered in a person's home
- Better planning for young people coming through transition to support with their accommodation needs

Demand for services which promotes independence and reduce reliance on residential and institutional forms of care is expected to grow. Cost increases and workforce pressures are expected to remain challenging. These factors may impact capacity to expand the market to meet changing patterns of demand.

Use of direct payments to enable citizens to take charge of procuring their own independent living services is an area that is also expected to grow.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

Competitive tendering has brought new entrants to the market and has led to a more even distribution of learning disability services. A more equal distribution of market share has reduced risks associated with individual provider failure.

Regional programmes have been created to help shape and influence the market. Brokerage process for facilitating access to high cost services and regional rightsizing programmes have been created to ensure high cost services are fit for purpose. These arrangements have led to a more informed understanding of cost and quality. Further work is needed to enable these approaches to achieve a more informed shared understanding of outcomes for people, and other shared regional commissioning objectives. Further work to achieve this is underway.

Sustainability of Provision

Contracted providers are all struggling with recruitment and retention regardless of the size of the organisation. Providers have described continued financial pressure including ensuring rates of pay for staff are competitive and increasing fuel costs. Providers have reported that retaining staff can be difficult due to staff being attracted to higher rates of pay in other sectors e.g. retail and hospitality, not forgetting that the pandemic has also created more pressures on staff for other reasons e.g. working long hours to cover sickness. In addition there has been a higher than normal use of agency staff, which also negatively impacts on a providers financial position.

The overreliance on a small number of providers to deliver floating domiciliary care in a person's home is a potential risk if one of those providers left the market.

As mentioned, there are robust processes in place to assess the potential risk and manage provider failure.

Risks to Market Stability

The challenge will be to sustain and if possible to grow the external sector in the context of recovery from COVID, and in the face of competition for workforce from other sectors which may be present as a more appealing and less onerous option.

Workforce availability and costs escalation linked to workforce and other inflationary pressures may continue to create sustainability risks.

Section D – Summary of the Market

Services are of generally satisfactory quality with low incidence of formal contract compliance or breaches in regulatory standards.

Since the pandemic, staffing has now become one of the key risks to market to market stability and sufficiency.

Increased future demand for specialist services and care at home is anticipated and more accurate demand forecasting is needed. Some services may have to adapt or remodel to remain sustainable.

7.12 Adoption

Section A – Market Sufficiency

Western Bay Adoption Service (WBAS) co-located in February 2015 and formally began operating as a regional service in April 2015. With Swansea as the host local authority, and based in a venue provided by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, the service continues to develop and establish itself within the wider National Adoption Service Community.

The service is divided into a 'functional' model with three distinct operational teams, and one Business Support team namely:

- (1) Recruitment and Assessment
- (2) Twin Tracking and Family Finding
- (3) Adoption Support
- (4) Business Support Team

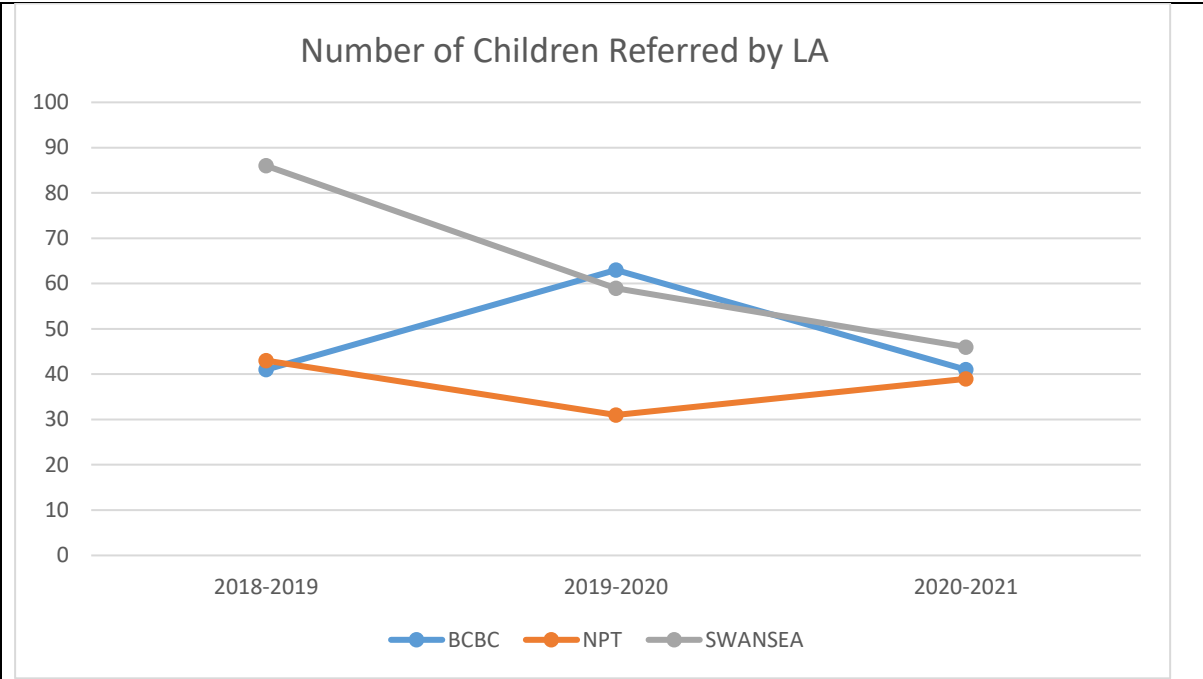
The teams within the model are made up of workers from each of the three local authorities: Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend.

Population Based Demand

There is, overall, a reduction in the numbers of children being considered by the adoption service. However, this trend is not universal to all authorities, and is primarily based by a significant change (reduction) in the numbers coming from Swansea.

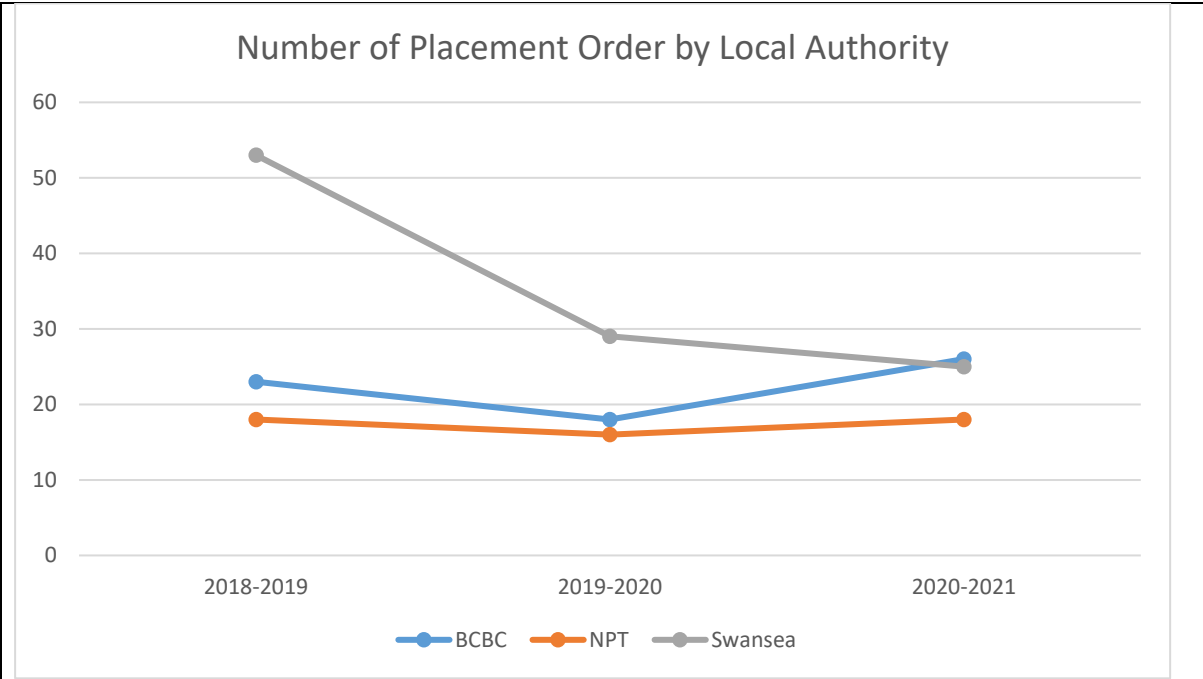
Twin tracking is a process where plans for possible adoption are progressed at the same time as other options for permanence. This approach to care planning aims to reduce harmful delays for the child. The table below demonstrates the falling number of children being twin tracked in the region in recent years whereas the chart illustrates the authority making the referral.

Number of children referred to adoption for twin tracking	Regional Total
2020/2021	129
2019/2020	153
2018/2019	170

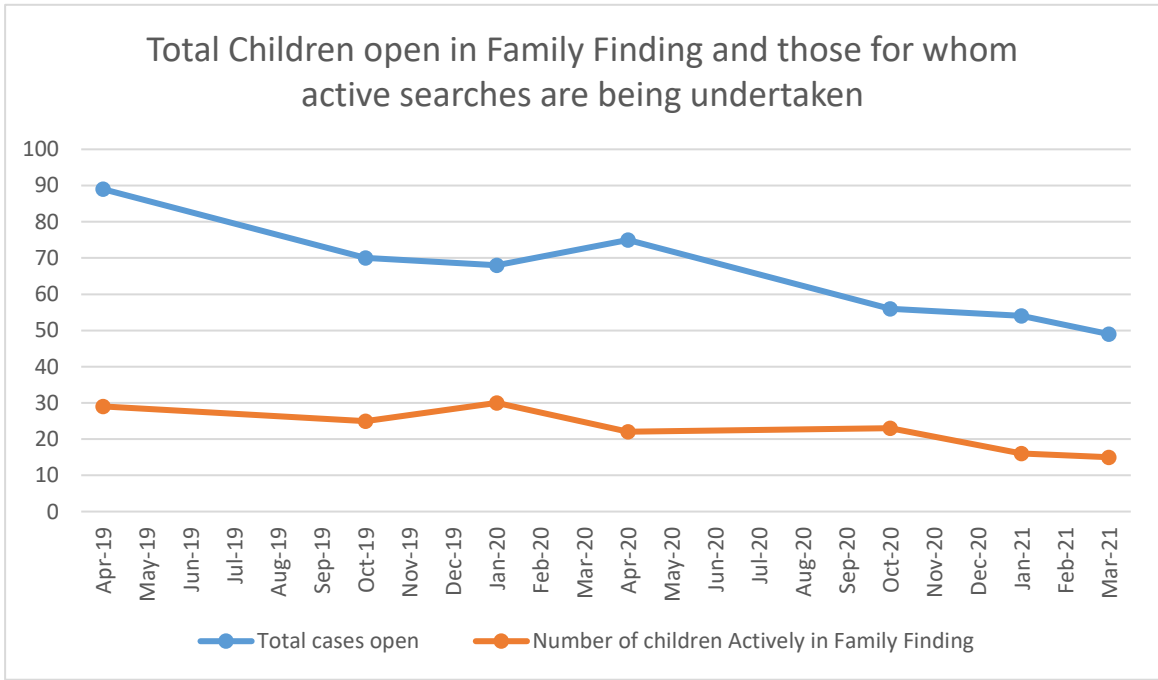


Another illustration of the changing demand is the number of Court Orders granted to allow the Council to search for an adoptive family (Placement Orders). Again, the table demonstrates the total numbers and the chart provides the breakdown by authority.

Number of children made subject to a Placement order	Regional Total
2020/2021	69
2019/2020	63
2018/2019	94



The number of children open to family finding has also reduced considerably over the last two years:



Falling numbers of children being considered for adoption is thought to reflect positively on the wider services, and greater success at ensuring children remain with their birth families where safe and appropriate.

Furthermore, while the numbers in the above charts demonstrate falling numbers going through the service overall, the number of children actually matched with adoptive families has been much more stable, even in Swansea. This potentially

indicates that the service is more consistently being asked to work with the children for whom adoption is the right route to achieve permanence.

Number of children placed for adoption	BCBC	NPT	Swansea	Regional Total
2020/2021	23	19	37	79
2019/2020	22	22	36	80
2018/2019	26	13	31	71

Similarly, the number of Adoption Order's granted has also been reasonably consistent.

Number of AOG	BCBC	NPT	Swansea	Regional Total
2020/2021	20	14	29	63
2019/2020	17	14	31	62
2018/2019	24	18	30	72

Current Level of Market Sufficiency

The recruitment and assessment side of the Service has seen the numbers of potential adopters making enquiries increase significantly in recent years, and this has translated into more approvals and placements being generated.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Number of adopter enquiries	134	166	257
Number of adopter approvals	42	54	53
Number of Placements Generated	44	62	64

An analysis of the 53 approved adopters has been undertaken and nearly half come from Swansea:-

Locality	Total Number of Adopters
Bridgend	9
Swansea	25
Neath Port Talbot	8
Cardiff and Valley areas	7
Carmarthenshire and Tenby	3
England (adopters originally from Wales)	1

In addition to those adopters recruited and assessed by the regional service, the service can also access potential adopters recruited by other regions / local authority adoption services or from the small number of Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAA) run by third sector organisations.

There are a couple of VAA operating in the market place in Wales. They bring additional capacity to the market and work closely with regional adoption services to align their business model. For example, they are supported to run a dedicated scheme for the recruitment of carers for harder to place children with more complex needs.

Falling numbers of children potentially needing to be considered for adoption coupled with healthy recruitment levels mean the market is presently providing sufficient capacity overall.

Likely Issues To Affect Market Sufficiency Over Next 5 Years

The local authorities in the region are committed to the investment in early intervention and prevention services, as well as social work practice improvements, and family support services for those children on the edge of care. If these strategic priorities continue to achieve their goals then we can expect the size of the CLA population to fall over the next 5 years and, therefore, a corresponding reduction in the number of children needing a plan of adoption.

The Western Bay Adoption Service (WBAS) recently took part in a workshop with the National Adoption Team to decide the likely needs of the service and how to respond to those needs. The table below indicates what was discussed.

What can we project by 2025?



Service need

- Fewer PO's / More complex children
- Increased expectations / demand (quicker matching, placement & support)
- ? some reduction in long term demand for due to better early support
- ?potential for ongoing higher level support demands due to residual legacy of historical resourcing & practice
- Greater demand for Access to Records & services to adopted adults
- Things that deter applicants –modernising (contact) & search for certainty (genetics)
- Still experiencing the legacy of Covid.....

Service supply

- Workforce issues but limits to adoption tasks that can be done by other staff
- Pressures on existing funding – fewer PO's / reluctance to fund support
- Early stages of managed mixed economy of LA & Welsh VAA's for adopter recruitment (current pilot rolled out)
- Still have too narrow a range of support services / approaches to meet need
- Ongoing challenges to influence development of, or access to, services being planned on a regional or LA basis e.g emotional wellbeing

Whether the Region will continue to fewer children conclude with a plan of adoption in the long-term is hard to predict but certainly the intention of the local authorities. Those children we do have come through have increasingly complex needs, e.g. exposure to significant drug and alcohol use during pregnancy, genetic conditions and sadly disability issues as a result of non-accidental injury. These children are likely to have ongoing adoption support needs which when identified early in placement are likely to reduce the need for long term crisis type support services and long term therapy. Narrowing the gap between the children we have coming through and the matches that adopters hope to achieve will ensure that the service can place more of these complex children and continue to offer regional adoption support to them until they reach adulthood.

Section B - Market Stability

It is difficult to equate the adoption of children to the machinations of normal market forces. Aside from the small (but not insignificant) contribution made by a couple of VAAs, it is local authorities that have oversight of both supply and demand. It is a highly regulated and protected market that is, to a large degree, protected from the risks of competition and provider instability.

While the market forces are limited, the adoption system process is working effectively. Falling levels of demand has meant that the balance of demand and supply is now in a healthy position. This equilibrium will be closely monitored to ensure this remains the case.

Action due to Failure

No action has been applicable by Swansea in pursuance of its duty under section 189(2) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Section C – Other Market Stability Factors

Consideration of Market Quality

The CIW (Care Inspectorate Wales) are the independent regulator of social care and childcare in Wales. They register, inspect and take action to improve the quality and safety of services for the well-being of the people of Wales. Their core values ensure people are at the heart of everything they do.

Working regionally has supported service resilience and quality. A regional service makes it easier to “tap in” to a wealth of skills and experience from the wider social services departments in 3 local authorities. A larger team enables a more flexible approach that support the movement of the very skilled and experienced staff and resources to whichever team or function needs resources at a given time. This in turn enables staff to maintain their skills across all aspects of adoption or can enable the development of skills for members who are less confident in some areas. This flexible and proactive approach can be used for either short or longer term solutions to workload pressures.

The quality of the Adoption Team provision is monitored in 3 ways: locally, regionally and nationally.

There will be input at all these levels to maintain robust quality systems, with Team Meetings, Quarterly quality meetings regionally and National workshops providing learning and support with both issues and new best practice / legislation.

2020 saw significant changes to the adoption support function with considerable efforts to design, develop and implement a strong adoption support provision. Supporting adopters to access the support at key points of need in their child’s life rather than creating long term dependency is crucial to a functioning adoption support team.

We have good practice guides launched in respect of post adoption contact, working with birth parents, transitioning children to adoption, and adoption support and we will need to fully embed these over the next few years.

The agenda is to modernise post adoption contact with use of video messaging, and direct contact between adopted children and their birth families.

Current and Projected Trends

Aside from changes in levels of demand and greater numbers of more complex children which are trends discussed above, it should be noted that we are seeing greater resources being required to support adult adoptees to access information from their file.

It is anticipated that as practice has changed in more recent years, in terms of the life journey work done with adopted children, and they now receive far greater amounts of information, we will, in theory, see these requests for information decline.

Impact of Commissioning Practices on the Market

Children placed with adoptive parents recruited by other agencies (inter-agency placements) are traditionally done on a spot purchase basis via a standard national contract and fee framework. This generally works smoothly. However, in 2021/22, the Region entered a contract with the VAAs in Wales to block purchase in advance a certain number of adoptive placements.

One of the primary goals of this approach being to promote the financial sustainability of VAAs who would have greater confidence of their financial resources. This pilot contract has continued into 2022/23. The merits of continuing to commission in this way will be reviewed later in the year and other stakeholders (the National Adoption Service and other regions) are keen to understand the lessons learnt.

Sustainability of Provision

Local authorities have a legal duty to deliver an adoption agency. This is an important responsibility that means services must exist and be resourced appropriately. While it is possible to assert that there are contingent risks regarding a sudden drop off in numbers of putative adopters, this is not a significant risk based on the history of adoption.

Risks to Market Stability

As the Adoption process as previously outlined, is not subject to market pressures and that adoption is a socially responsible and benevolent service, it should carry on into perpetuity.

Adoption, as a legal entity came in to being in 1926, reformed in 1975 and these reforms gradually enacted up to 1988. During this time, there has been no problems associated with risk of the global process, only those that effect any organisation that delivers a public service funding or change of government for instance

Section D – Other Considerations Affecting the Market

Resources

The financial resources required for the WBAS are provided by the partner local authorities. They are overseen by a management board with senior officers from each authority. It is submitted that the performance of the service (as demonstrated above) indicates they are appropriately supported.

Some of the funding of the service has been provided by discrete Welsh Government grants. Changes to the levels of Welsh Government support for the service will need to be monitored to avoid any negative implications.

The service is able to access specialist support e.g. I.T. and commissioning from the one of the constituent local authorities.

Section E – Summary of the Market

Entry to the market is highly regulated but the arrangements are working well, and the Councils are increasingly able to source local placements for children needing an adoptive family to realise permanence.

8. Conclusion

The sector across the region is currently under severe pressure. The lack of available staffing is at crisis point across both health and social care. This coupled with the cost of living crisis is compounding the situation for external providers. Health and Social Care have historically worked in isolation, however now more than ever, a joint response and closer working together is required.

Throughout the COVID19 pandemic, partners within the West Glamorgan Region demonstrated that when working together with the same goals, it was possible to overcome the challenges presented. New models of care now need to be considered to support individuals and communities, and working as a region will enable this challenge to be met, avoiding the impact of working in isolation making unilateral decisions can unwittingly impact on the other partners.

Under the West Glamorgan Region, there are programmes of work that can take responsibility for their areas of work to look at where having a regional response would be beneficial. This work will be started as a matter of urgency, with the aim of establishing a sufficient and stable market that promotes outcomes for individuals and communities.

Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

Which service area and directorate are you from?

Service Area: West Glamorgan

Directorate: Social Services

Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:

To approve the regional market stability report, which are a tool to assist RPB's in planning and commissioning quality care and support for their populations.

Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

- Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement**

The next phase of this work is consideration of new models of care required to support individuals and communities and this will involve consultation with individuals. Under the West Glamorgan Region, there are nine programmes of work that can take responsibility for their areas of work to look at where having a regional response would be beneficial. This work will be started as a matter of urgency, with the aim of establishing a sufficient and stable market that promotes outcomes for individuals and communities.

- Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:**

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?
Yes No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?
Yes No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?
Yes No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?
Yes No

-
- Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)**

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

-
- Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?**
 Yes No If yes, please provide details below

-
- Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?**
(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)

No impact as this report includes the data which will inform the subsequent plan for plugging any gaps in relation to accommodation in order to ensure sufficient and stable market that promotes outcomes for individuals and communities.

Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Outcome of Screening

Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:

- **Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)**

Until further work has been undertaken to address any data gaps and further detailed planning, which includes consultation, has been completed, we will only then be able to confirm what plans need to be put in place for individuals and communities, after which we can then consider any impact and mitigation required.

- **Summary of involvement (Q3)**

The next phase of this work is consideration of new models of care required to support individuals and communities and this will involve consultation with individuals. Under the West Glamorgan Region, there are nine programmes of work that can take responsibility for their areas of work to look at where having a regional response would be beneficial. This work will be started as a matter of urgency, with the aim of establishing a sufficient and stable market that promotes outcomes for individuals and communities.

- **WFG considerations (Q4)**

The market stability report covers the long term implications, in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as outlined below:

- Long term: Development of long term commissioning strategies to support local communities with their accommodation needs
- Integration: Development of care and support that is fit for the future of our local communities
- Involvement: Commissioning strategies will have involvement from individuals that require care and support at the moment and in the future, along with providers currently delivering services
- Collaboration: This is a regional piece of work, developed in collaboration with other RPB partners
- Prevention: Developing care and support to have the least restrictive option available when required, preventing the escalation into higher levels of support

- **Any risks identified (Q5)**

Further work around detailed planning and consultation will identify the risks that will need to be managed through this programme of work.

- **Cumulative impact (Q7)**

No impact as this report includes the data which will inform the subsequent plan for plugging any gaps in relation to accommodation in order to ensure sufficient and stable market that promotes outcomes for individuals and communities.

There are no Integrated Assessments Implications associated with this report

Appendix B - Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

- Full IIA to be completed
- Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

Screening completed by:
Name: Nicola Trotman
Job title: West Glamorgan Regional Deputy Director of Transformation
Date: 22/08/22
Approval by Head of Service:
Name: Kelly Gillings
Position: West Glamorgan Regional Director of Transformation
Date: 22/08/22

Please return the completed form to accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk

Agenda Item 13.



Joint Report of the Head of Democratic Services & Head of Digital & Customer Services

Council – 6 October 2022

Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond

Purpose:	<p>The Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond was adopted by Council on 27 January 2022 and amended by Council on 7 July 2022.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Policy be amended further to better align the ICT payment to the Statutory Co-opted Members to enable them to carry out their duties. It is proposed to pay them 50% of what a Councillor receives. The Data & Telephone Allowance to remain unchanged at 20%.</p>
Policy Framework:	<p>Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report. Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.</p>
Consultation:	<p>Access to Services, Finance, Legal.</p>
Recommendation(s):	<p>It is recommended that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The amendments to Paragraphs 3.2 & 4.3 and the consequential changes to Paragraph 6.8 and Appendix 1 of the Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond together with any other consequential changes be approved.2) The amended version be published on the Council's website and shared with all Councillors & Statutory Co-opted Members.
Report Authors:	<p>Huw Evans & Sarah Lackenby</p>
Finance Officer:	<p>Ben Smith</p>
Legal Officer:	<p>Tracey Meredith</p>
Access to Services Officer:	<p>Rhian Millar</p>

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Council adopted the Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond on 27 January 2022. It was further amended by Council on 7 July 2022. The Policy is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 1.2 The Policy has been reviewed by the Head of Democratic Services since then, to better align the ICT payment to the Statutory Co-opted Members to enable them to carry out their duties. It is proposed to pay them 50% of what a Councillor receives. They currently only receive 20%.

2. Review of Level of Allowance Paid to Statutory Co-opted Members

- 2.1 The existing Policy allows a Statutory Co-opted Member to claim 20% of the amount that a Councillor can claim in relation to:
 - a) Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance.
 - b) Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance.
- 2.2 This level needs to be revised to ensure that Statutory Co-opted Members are adequately remunerated enabling them to carry out their duties with the Council. The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 introduced Multi-Location Meetings allowing Committee Members to participate without physically attending. The Act also removed the need for hard copies of agendas to be provided. These changes require greater use of ICT and the allowance needs to be raised to reflect this fact.

3. Councillors' & Co-opted Members ICT Allowances

- 3.1 Paragraph 3.2 of the Policy currently states:

“As Statutory Co-opted Members do not have the same time commitment of a Councillor, the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance and the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance element for Co-opted Members has been set at 20% of that of a Councillor.”

- 3.2 It is proposed that Paragraph 3.2 of the Councillors ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond be amended to read:

“3.2 Statutory Co-opted Members do not have the same time commitment of a Councillor. Statutory Co-opted Members shall receive the following percentages of that of a Councillor:

- i) Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance for Statutory Co-opted Members shall be **20%** of a Councillors Allowance.*
- ii) Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance element for Statutory Co-opted Members shall be **50%** of that of a Councillor.”*

4. Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance

4.1 Paragraph 4.3 of the Policy currently states:

“4.3 As Statutory Co-opted Members do not have the same time commitment of a Councillor; the ICT Allowance and Data & Telephone Allowance for a Co-opted Member be set at 20% of that of a Councillor.”

4.2 It is proposed that Paragraph 4.3 of the Councillors ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond be amended to read:

*“4.3 Statutory Co-opted Members do not have the same time commitment of a Councillor. The level payable to a Statutory Co-opted Members of the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance, Statutory Co-opted Members shall be **20%** of a Councillors Allowance.”*

5. Consequential Changes as a Result of Changes to Paragraphs 3.2 & 4.3 of the Policy

5.1 Paragraph 6.8 and Appendix 1 of the Policy will also need to be amended to reflect the actual monetary value that a Statutory Co-opted Member can claim over the 5-year term and per annum. Those amounts should be amended to reflect the new proposed levels i.e., £1,000 (over the 5-year term) and £200 per annum.

6. Integrated Assessment Implications

6.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

6.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

6.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

6.4 An IIA Screening Form has been completed and no adverse implications have been noted.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The amendment may lead to a slight rise in payments; however, it will be managed within existing budget.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 The proposals identified are in accordance with relevant legislation.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix A Councillors' ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond.

Councillors' ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Data (Broadband), ICT and Voice Communications equipment and systems are essential to enable Councillors and Co-opted Members to carry out their responsibilities effectively and securely.
- 1.2 This Policy is regularly reviewed by the Head of Democratic Services and Democratic Services Committee to allow for new technologies to be made available and to align Councillors and Co-opted Members to the Digital strategy of the Authority. Councillors are part of the Authority's rollout of a Digital culture ambition aiming to make Swansea a lead Authority in the UK.
- 1.3 This Policy links with the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) by which the Authority is bound. Details of the latest IRPW Annual Report and other information may be viewed on their website. <https://gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales>
- 1.4 In addition to the Councillors' ICT Allowances, the Authority also provides Office 365 for Councillors to use and the Authority's main buildings are covered by WiFi. Each Political Group Room is fitted out with PC's and Telephones.

2. Supporting the Work of Local Authority Members - IRPW Determinations

- 2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales set out determinations each year in their Annual Report. A number of these determinations relate to how an Authority should support the work of Councillors and Co-opted Members.
- 2.2 The determinations set out rules to ensure that the Authority provides as much support as is necessary to enable Councillors / Co-opted Members to fulfil their duties effectively by provided them with adequate telephone and email facilities and electronic access to appropriate information. Deductions must not be made from members' salaries by the respective Authority as a contribution towards cost of support.
- 2.3 These determinations apply to Councillors and the Statutory Co-opted Members. The IRPW have also determined that the Community / Town Council Representative on the Standards Committee is to be treated as a Co-opted Member for this purpose.
- 2.4 The Authority has **14** Statutory Co-opted Members and **1** Community / Town Council Representative:
 - Chair of Governance & Audit Committee **x 1**.
 - Ordinary Member of the Governance & Audit Committee **x 4**.
 - Chair of Standards Committee **x 1**.
 - Ordinary Members of the Standards Committee **x 4**.

- Ordinary Members of Scrutiny Programme Committee x 4.
- Community / Town Councillor Representative of the Standards Committee x 1.

3. Councillors' & Co-opted Members ICT Allowances

3.1 There are 3 types of ICT Allowances available to Councillors / Co-opted Members. They are defined in their relevant sections within this Policy:

- a) Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance.
- b) Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance.
- c) Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance.

3.2 As Statutory Co-opted Members do not have the same time commitment of a Councillor, the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance and the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance element for Co-opted Members has been set at 20% of that of a Councillor.

4. Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance

4.1 The digital era has led to people including Councillors / Co-opted Members working in different ways to address their various connectivity requirements. Some people choose to have a broadband connection at home, others choose to have access to the internet on their mobile device or utilise a data dongle.

4.2 The Authority pays a monthly Data & Telephone Allowance to all Councillors / Co-opted Members providing:

- a) They produce proof twice in their 5-year term of Office of their Data and Telephone connection at their home in line with the instructions of the Head of Democratic Services.
- b) They are not in receipt of a payment for Data and Telephone at their home from a third party due to their employment or via an election.
- c) They allow for their telephone number to be published on the Authority's website and promoted as necessary save in exceptional circumstances.

4.3 As Statutory Co-opted Members do not have the same time commitment of a Councillor, the ICT Allowance and Data & Telephone Allowance for a Co-opted Member be set at 20% of that of a Councillor.

4.4 The Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance is set out below:

	Data	Telephone
Councillor	£17.50	£10.00
Co-opted Member	£3.50	£2.00

- 4.5 The **Data element** of the Councillors / Co-opted Member's Data & Telephone Allowance shall be paid for either one broadband or one mobile data contract per Councillor /Co-opted Member. This will be limited to one static broadband contract per household; however more than one Mobile Data Contract per household is permissible.
- 4.6 Under HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) rules, the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance shall be subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions.
- 4.7 Should a Councillor / Co-opted Member cease to remain a Councillor / Co-opted Member the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance shall cease and any Data / Telephone contract taken out by the Councillor / Co-opted Member shall remain their sole responsibility as will any repayments. Please also refer to the section relating to **“What happens if a Councillor / Co-opted Member ceases to hold Office?”**

5. Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance

- 5.1 The Authority currently pays a monthly Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance to qualifying Councillors to supplement their mobile phone bills due their increased use for Council business providing:
- a) Councillors produce proof twice in their 5-year term of Office of their Mobile Phone contract in line with the instructions of the Head of Democratic Services
 - b) Councillors in receipt of the Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance must allow their mobile telephone number to be published on the Authority's website and promoted as necessary save in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.2 Under HM Revenue and Customs rules, the Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance shall be subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions.
- 5.3 Qualifying Councillors *are*: Cabinet Members, Presiding Member, and the Leader of the Largest Opposition Group. The Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance is currently set at £25 per Qualifying Councillor per month. **Note:** *Job Share Cabinet Members will receive this payment in full and not pro-rata.*
- 5.4 The Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance is payable from the date when the Councillor is appointed by Council / Leader of the Council to a Qualifying Councillor position.
- 5.5 Should a Councillor cease to remain a Qualifying Councillor (as defined above) the Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance shall cease and any Mobile Phone contract taken out by the Councillor shall remain their sole responsibility as will any repayments.

5.6 Should a Councillor cease to remain a Councillor the Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance shall cease and any Mobile Phone contract taken out by the Councillor shall remain their sole responsibility as will any repayments. Please also refer to the section relating to **“What happens if a Councillor / Co-opted Member ceases to hold Office?”**

6. Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance

6.1 The Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance allows Councillors / Co-opted Members to purchase their own ICT equipment such as desktop or laptop PC, Tablet Computer, Printer and Software, ICT Peripherals such as storage, backup facilities, printer paper and ink and ICT Support.

6.2 The Authority recommends that an element of this allowance be used to purchase an ICT support service. **ICT Support is defined as:** Either an ad-hoc or fixed contract with a third party (Not the Authority) aimed at providing ICT support should any element of your ICT equipment fail.

6.3 The Authority will only provide ICT Support for issues directly linked to the Authorities systems, such as Password Reset, Access to Office 365 and Oracle. The Authority will also provide general guidelines should the issue relate to an issue with the Councillors device, to aid them when having to contact an external ICT Support supplier.

6.4 The Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance system is effectively a “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) arrangement. Councillors / Co-opted Members can purchase whichever device they find beneficial for their work; however, they should be mindful that it is highly recommended that their device is compatible with **Microsoft Office**.

6.5 Should a device not be compatible with Microsoft Office, Councillors / Co-opted Members may not be able to open documents sent to them by the Authority and in turn the Authority may not be able to open documents which the Councillor / Co-Opted Member sends them.

6.6 The Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance is paid to all Councillors / Co-opted Members on request providing:

- a) They produce a receipt proving their purchase of relevant ICT items.
- b) They submit their claim on the Councillors' and Co-opted Members ICT Allowance Claim Form which is outlined at **Appendix 1** and / or by providing the bill as proof.

6.7 Under HM Revenue and Customs rules, the Councillors' and Co-opted Members ICT Allowance shall be subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions.

- 6.8 The following table sets out the total amounts that can be claimed under the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance:

Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance Amounts	Councillor	Co-opted Member
The figure sets out the amount permitted to be sent over the 5-year terms of Office. It equates to £400 per annum for Councillors & £80 per annum for Co-opted Members. Note: The Authority will not pay any additional monies until the following Local Government Election.	£2,000	£400

7. What happens if a Councillor / Co-opted Member ceases to hold Office?

- 7.1 If a Councillor / Co-opted Member ceases to hold Office for whatever reason during their Term of Office, the Authority will immediately cease payment of any Allowance that they had previously been entitled to.
- 7.2 Any contract taken out by the Councillor / Co-opted Member during their period of Office will be their sole responsibility. The Authority will not make any payments towards the remaining period of the contract(s).
- 7.3 Any ICT equipment and ICT support purchased during a Councillors / Co-opted Members Term of Office shall automatically become their property. The Authority shall have no legal claim to it.
- 7.4 Should the Councillor / Co-opted Member cease to hold Office within the first 12 months of being elected / appointed they must repay any ICT Allowance which they received on a complete month pro rata basis. This paragraph is waived should a Councillor / Co-opted Member die during their Term of Office.

8. Data Protection Act / Security Advice (Anti-Virus, Anti-Spam, Firewall and Encryption)

- 8.1 Councillors are likely to handle personal information about individuals; as such they have several legal obligations to protect that information under the Data Protection Act 2018. Should a Councillor fail to comply with this Act then they would be liable to a fine of up to £5,000.
- 8.2 The Authority strongly advises that Councillors / Co-Opted Members install Anti-Virus, Anti-Spam and Encryption software and use password protection on any PC, Laptop, Tablet, Mobile Phone etc. used for Councillor Business. The use of a personal Firewall should also be considered. For advice in this area, Councillors should take appropriate security advice from their external ICT Support provider.

9. Claiming of Allowances and Providing Receipts / Proof of Purchase

- 9.1 Councillors / Co-opted Members must produce proof of Data, Telephone connection at their home, Mobile Phone (for relevant Councillors) twice in their 5-year term of Office in line with the instructions of the Head of Democratic Services to receive this monthly allowance. Proof shall be required during May / June each year and should be given to the Cabinet Office / Democratic Services Team as appropriate.
- 9.2 Failure to provide proof of a Data / Telephone / Mobile Phone contract during May / June each year will result in payments being stopped until proof is provided. The Authority shall not backdate any payments beyond 3 months.
- 9.3 **Claiming the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance.** Councillors / Co-opted Members should purchase the ICT equipment they require and complete the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance Claim Form as shown in **Appendix 1**. The Claim Form should be returned to the Cabinet Office / Democratic Services Team as appropriate.

10. Councillors Self Service

- 10.1 Councillor Self Service allows Councillors to view, amend and apply for things via relevant software including:
- Payslips, P60's and P11d's;
 - Changes to personal details (address, bank etc.);
 - Car Parking Permits;
 - Mileage and Expenses Claims.
- 10.3 Self Service, will reduce printing costs, save administration time and costs and allow Councillors to update their information in real time.
- 10.4 User Guides are available on the Authority's StaffNet site <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/mileageandexpenses>
- 10.5 Modern.gov is the Authority's software solution for meeting management including placing agendas, reports, and minutes online. It is an integrated package which aims to simplify websites for Councillors, Officers, and the public.

Appendices:

Appendix 1	Councillors / Co-opted Members ICT Allowance Claim Form.
-------------------	--

Councillor / Co-opted Members Name:	
--	--

Provide details of ICT items or support purchased. In accordance with the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Councillors' ICT Allowance payments will only be made to Councillors following the completion of this form **together with the relevant receipt(s)**.

Date Purchased (DD/MM/YEAR)	Cost
Total Amount Claimed	£

Note:

- i) *I have incurred these costs to enable me to fulfil my duties as a Councillor in accordance with the IRPW.*
- ii) *Councillors' ICT Allowance. **Councillors:** £2,000 (over 5-years i.e. £400 p.a.). **Co-opted Members:** £400 (over 5-years i.e. £80 p.a.). The sums may be taken as a lump sum providing a receipt is provided. The Authority will not pay any additional monies until the following Local Government Election.*

For Office Use	Checked By:	Month Paid:	
-----------------------	--------------------	--------------------	--

Not for Publication

Councillor Signature:	Date:	
------------------------------	--------------	--

Address:	
-----------------	--

Post Code:	Payroll No.
-------------------	--------------------

Item(s) / Service(s) Purchased	

Agenda Item 14.



Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Council – 6 October 2022

Recruitment of a Community / Town Councillor to the Standards Committee

Purpose:	To consider the recommendation of the Standards Committee and if appropriate appoint a Community / Town Councillor to the Standards Committee.
Policy Framework:	Council Constitution.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The recommendation of the Standards Committee be approved.
Report Author:	Huw Evans
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Standards Committee must include a Community / Town Councillor representative. Community Councillor Phil Crayford of Llangyfelach Community Council was the representative for the past 10 years; however, his term of Office ended at the Local Government Election in May 2022

2. Recruitment of a Community / Town Councillor

- 2.1 The Annual Meeting of Council on 24 May 2022 instructed the Head of Democratic Services to contact each of the 24 Community / Town Councils within Swansea seeking applications. Council also authorised the Standards Committee to shortlist and interview Community / Town Councillors that have applied to sit on the merged Standards Committee and to make a recommendation to Council as to an appointment.

2.2 Council itself will make the appointment based on the recommendation of the interviewing body (Standards Committee).

2.3 One application was received, and that applicant will be interviewed by Standards Committee on 5 October 2022.

3. Integrated Assessment Implications

3.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

3.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

3.4 An IIA screening has been undertaken and no adverse implications have been noted.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 All financial impacts of this report are contained within existing budgets.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 All legal implications of this report are contained within it.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

Agenda Item 15.



Report of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Service & Performance

Council – 6 October 2022

Membership of Committees

Purpose:	Council approves the nominations/amendments to the Council Bodies.
Policy Framework:	None.
Consultation:	Political Groups.
Recommendation:	It is recommended that: 1) The amendments to the Council Bodies listed in paragraph 2 be approved and the changes made to Outside Body in paragraph 3 be noted.
Report Author:	Gareth Borsden
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Finance Officer:	N/A
Access to Services Officer:	N/A

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Meetings of Council regularly agree and amend the membership of the various Committees/Council Bodies as reflected in the lists submitted by the Political Groups.

2. Changes to Council Body Membership

- 2.1 The political groups have indicated that they have changes to the following Council Bodies:

Corporate Parenting Board

Remove Councillor Wendy Lewis
Add Councillor Hayley Gwilliam

General/Statutory Licensing Committees & Sub Committees

Remove Councillor Sam Bennet
Add Councillor Michael Locke

3. Outside Bodies

- 3.1 The Leader has made the following amendment to the outside body below:

Poverty Truth Commission

Added Councillors Andrea Lewis & Alyson Pugh

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

Agenda Item 16.



Council – 6 October 2022

Councillors' Questions

Part A – Supplementaries

1	<p>Councillors Lyndon Jones, Francesca O'Brien & Will Thomas</p> <p>We have received complaints that the automatic telephone system on the main switchboard at the Council does not function properly. Are there plans to improve this.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation</p> <p>Performance of the automatic telephone system is continually reviewed and monitored. Discussions with the supplier indicate performance is close to what would be expected, and is close to that of other Councils that have implemented the same system. In addition, work is ongoing to review each call to ensure the automated system recognises the full range of phonetics and dialects, i.e. how each word sounds. A separate exercise is also being undertaken around the routing of calls across the Council's main call centres.</p>
2	<p>Councillors Mike Lewis, Wendy Lewis Fiona Gordon, Lesley Walton & Andrew Williams</p> <p>In view of the extremely positive outcome of the recent Estyn inspection, can the Cabinet member outline what will be done to highlight and share the good practice identified both in the report itself and in other evidence of the effective work being done in Swansea's schools.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Education & Learning</p> <p>A report on the local authority's recent inspection report will be shared at Cabinet on 20 October 2022 and at Council on 3 November 2022. Good practice case studies will be published on Estyn's website during the next few months. The report has been circulated to schools and governors via a newsletter. Following publication of the report on 1 September 2022, other local authorities have made contact seeking to learn from good practice. The scrutiny panel has programmed time to consider the highlights and recommendations of the report. Officers plan to share good practice through networks of professional practice, via headteacher meetings and through the work of school improvement advisers.</p>
3	<p>Councillors Mary Jones Lynda James & Chris Holley</p> <p>Can the Leader/Cabinet Member inform Council what arrangements are being made to assist staff that are working from home with their heating bills.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance</p>

	<p>Since March 2020 the Council has advised staff to work from home where possible to support the aim of keeping safe and well whilst transmission of Covid was prevalent. As we emerge from the pandemic and consider long term workforce operating models, staff who can work from home have been able to continue to choose this where service requirements support it but have also been able to choose to attend a workplace if this is their preference. We will continue to support employee choice balanced against business need and if employees wish to return to a workplace due to the energy situation then they will be able to do this. There is no plan to provide financial reimbursement for energy bills given that the choice will remain for staff to work from home or a Council workplace over the coming months.</p>
4	<p>Councillors Lyndon Jones & Brigitte Rowlands</p> <p>It is vital that we encourage recycling, so that we can reduce landfill which is vital for our environment, so what is the position of recycling from businesses across Swansea and what percentage of their waste is recycled.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Community (Services)</p> <p>The Council collects waste for around 1500 customers and there is a contractual requirement for the customer to separate their paper/card, cardboard, cans, glass, and food waste for recycling. Together these customers are recycling around 52% of their waste.</p> <p>New legislation is expected next year which will make it a legal requirement, for businesses producing waste, to separate even more waste streams for recycling.</p> <p>Businesses can also bring a large number of different waste streams to the Baling Plant for recycling.</p>
5	<p>Councillors Sam Bennett, Cheryl Philpott & Kevin Griffiths</p> <p>What measures have or are the Council putting in place to support families and young people at School with the Cost of Living.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Education & Learning</p> <p>The council has implemented the universal free school meal offer for all Reception pupils from the start of term in September 2022 and will roll this out to other primary year groups as soon as is practically possible. At present our rollout programme is ahead of other city councils.</p> <p>Messages have been shared with parents and carers on the importance of continuing to claim for free school meal eligibility, as this will enable parents to claim for school uniform grant (Pupil Development Grant Access). This message has been included in application packs for new starters. Parents and carers are also reminded that free school meal eligibility entitles the child to other school benefits, such as reduced school trip costs.</p> <p>For those that are not entitled to free school meals, we promote the charity GROW that provides good quality recycled uniform from their city centre shop at low cost (usually £1 an item).</p>

	<p>We have had a number of items on the poverty agenda at our meetings with headteachers, including the importance of having an accessible school uniform policy.</p> <p>All secondary schools in Swansea have been supported to take part in the Welsh Government's Year 7 free breakfast pilot from September 2022. All primary schools in Swansea offer free breakfast club provision.</p>
6	<p>Councillors Wendy Lewis, Fiona Gordon, Lesley Walton, Andrew Williams & Mike Lewis</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation provide an update as to how many people have been supported during the pandemic in relation to homelessness.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation</p> <p>Since the commencement of the pandemic on 23rd March 2020 there has been huge pressures within homelessness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 23rd March 2020 – 31st August 2022 a total of 8,998 homeless presentations were received. This represents an increase of approximately 16% from the 2 years prior to the pandemic. • Between 23rd March 2020 – 31st August 2022 1, 948 households were placed into temporary accommodation. • Between 23rd March 2020 – 31st August 2022 on 1,043 households were successfully moved on from temporary accommodation. <p>There are still high levels of people presenting as homeless and with issues such the Ukrainian crisis and cost of living crisis it is anticipated that these pressures will continue to grow over the next 12 months and beyond. Currently 178 households are in temporary accommodation, many of whom are being supported by the rapid rehousing support workers.</p>
7	<p>Councillors Wendy Fitzgerald, Peter Black & Mark Tribe</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member inform Council what plans there are to install solar panels on the roofs of older Council properties.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Members for Service Transformation</p> <p>The Housing Service is planning to integrate the installation of PV solar panels and batteries to store generated energy into its HRA Capital Programme over the next decade to its 13,600 council owned properties.</p> <p>The HRA Capital Programme approved by Council in March 22 includes expenditure of £26m for a variety of renewable schemes over the next 4 years. In this current year's HRA programme, there are 12 pilot schemes where PV and battery are to be programmed as part of wider measures to improve the thermal performance of properties when renewing the external finishes of homes as part of annual planned maintenance programmes.</p> <p>It is anticipated that work to install PV and battery storage will start from about April 2023 to the 12 sites spread across the city.</p>

8	<p>Councillors Chris Holley, Jeff Jones & Lynda James</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member or Leader give Council a list of sites which have been transferred through asset management to community groups.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Performance</p> <p>In total we have transferred 68 assets to community groups by way of either lease or licence which includes playing fields, bowling greens, allotments and the existing community buildings. This is an ongoing process so the number of live Community Asset Transfers applications and transactions is constantly being updated. A full list of all sites and buildings will be provided separately.</p>
	<p>Part B – No Supplementaries</p>
9	<p>Councillors Sam Bennett, Susan Jones & Matthew Bailey</p> <p>When do the Council aim to open the Tunnel between Oystermouth Road and Paxton Drive.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>Works at Paxton Street tunnel are currently ongoing but nearing completion and we anticipate it opening in 3-4 weeks' time.</p>
10	<p>Councillors Michael Locke, Nicola Furlong & James McGettrick</p> <p>In early January 2022, the South Wales Evening Post reported that the missing or severely corroded railings fronting the Council's playing fields on Mumbles Road would be replaced during 2022. Can the Cabinet Member update the Council on the progress of the work.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>The article advises that the Council was to undertake a survey to establish what work needs to be done on sections the Council is responsible for.</p> <p>The railings forming a boundary between Mumbles Road and King George V Playing Fields could be affected by improvements into Swansea bay sports park in the area, so it is not considered appropriate to undertake major works on them at present.</p> <p>The railings forming a boundary between Mumbles Road and Singleton Park, immediately east of Sketty Lane are to be considered for refurbishment should funding become available during 23/24, with the railings immediately west of Brynmill Lane requiring further replacement options to be considered.</p> <p>The University have been approached for an update regarding the railing fronting their land and have advised us that monies are allocated for works in this financial year and for each of the following 3 years.</p>



Council – 6 October 2022

Notice of Motion – Nuclear Free Wales

Notice of Motion from Councillors Louise Gibbard, Rob Stewart, David Hopkins, Andrea Lewis, Alyson Pugh, Robert Smith, Elliott King, Robert Francis-Davies, Andrew Stevens, Cyril Anderson & Hayley Gwilliam

Swansea Council notes 2022 marks 40 years since Wales was declared “nuclear free” when all the then County Councils, including West Glamorgan, passed resolutions declaring themselves “nuclear free zones”

Swansea Council declares its support for the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), a historic treaty which prohibits its signatories from developing, testing and using nuclear weapons.

Swansea Council recognises the necessity of creating a nuclear weapons-free world and as such denounces the United Kingdom government’s refusal to sign or ratify this landmark treaty.

Swansea Council calls on the United Kingdom government to work for global denuclearisation by:

- Signing and ratifying the TPNW, thereby joining the global majority of countries opposed to nuclear weapons, and
- Utilising all diplomatic avenues possible to work towards a nuclear-free world.