



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel - Joint Social Services**

**Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams**

**Monday, 12 February 2024 at 2.00 pm**

**Present:** Councillor P R Hood-Williams (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

W G Lewis  
V A Holland  
A J Jeffery

**Councillor(s)**

M W Locke  
C A Holley  
S M Jones

**Councillor(s)**

J W Jones  
Y V Jardine

**Co-opted Member(s)**

T Beddow

**Other Attendees**

Alyson Anthony  
Louise Gibbard  
Hayley Gwilliam

Cabinet Member - Wellbeing  
Cabinet Member – Care Services  
Cabinet Member – Community

**Officer(s)**

Julie Davies  
David Howes  
Liz Jordan  
Helen St John  
Jane Whitmore

Head of Child & Family Services  
Director of Social Services  
Scrutiny Officer  
Head of Integrated Services  
Strategic Lead Commissioner

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): A M Day, E T Kirchner, C L Philpott and M S Tribe  
Officers: A Hawkins

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**1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

Chris Holley declared a personal interest.

**2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips**

No declarations were made.

**3 Public Question Time**

No questions were received.

#### **4 Draft Budget Proposals**

Councillors Louise Gibbard, Alyson Anthony and Hayley Gwilliam along with relevant officers attended and went through the budget proposals in relation to Adult Services, Child and Family Services and Tackling Poverty, highlighting the main issues and answering questions.

The Panel agreed the following views and recommendations on the budget proposals in relation to Social Services it would like to make to Cabinet:

- Budget increase - Panel is pleased to see an increase in the budget for Social Services for 2024/25 from £157m to £171m, which is an increase of approximately 9%. This is very positive.
- Local Area Coordination – Panel has grave concerns about the reduction in LACs as they enable people to live independently for longer before coming into the Social Services system. It is important that this is maintained.
- Reduced support for people - Panel is concerned people are not getting the same level of help and support from Social Services as they used to, and individuals and their families have to do more and more for themselves.
- Increase in real living wage - Panel has concerns about the impact on the budget of an increase in the real living wage and use of contractors.
- Use of reserves – Panel was surprised to hear that previous underspends in certain areas of Social Services have been carried over as reserves, to be drawn upon when needed to cover overspends in other areas of Social Services.
- Gross budget – In future the Panel would very much like to see not just the revenue budget but gross budget, as it does not understand the level of dependency on grants etc.

The Convener of the Service Improvement, Regeneration and Finance Panel will attend Cabinet on 15 February to feed in the collective views of the scrutiny performance panels and write a letter to the Cabinet Member.

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm