



To:
Councillor Louise Gibbard
Cabinet Member for Care Services

Hayley Gwilliam
Cabinet Member for Community Support

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Date 02 January 2024
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BY EMAIL

cc Cabinet Members

Summary: This is a letter from the Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel to the relevant Cabinet Members following the meeting of the Panel on 12 December 2023. It covers Performance Monitoring and Dementia. A formal response is required.

Dear Cllr Gibbard and Cllr Gwilliam

The Panel met on 12 December 2023 to discuss the Performance Monitoring Report for October 2023 and receive a briefing on Dementia Care including case studies.

We would like to thank you both, David Howes, Amy Hawkins and Helen St John for attending to present the items and answer the Panel's questions. We appreciate your engagement and input.

We are writing to you to reflect on what we learned from the discussion, share the views of the Panel, and, where necessary, raise any issues or recommendations for your consideration and response.

Performance Monitoring

We heard the Highlight Report for October 2023 shows a mixed picture.

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We heard there was an increase in the number of safeguarding consultations again in October. We noted the number of professional concerns and from which sector is now included in the report, as we requested.

We praised Bonymaen House and feel it is working very well and asked that this be passed on to the staff.

We discussed how the Court of Protection work seems very complex and queried how social workers are managing to do this work on top of their already onerous jobs. Officers agreed it is very complex work, but staff are being supported with it and it is part of their role. We heard part of what is driving the Early Help Model is to try and make sure the Service is making best use of its workforce. Court work needs social workers to do it so you are trying to take other work away to free up social workers to do what only they can do. The Director added that generally more and more burden is being loaded onto a system that is not resourced sufficiently, which is a real challenge, and the Panel's role is to monitor what the Service is doing to try and mitigate this.

Legal Services was considered at the previous meeting in terms of increasing legal support capacity either in-house or regionally. We queried if any more thought had been given to ways this could be done given the level of legal work is going to increase in terms of volume and capacity. We were informed that the preferred model currently for legal support is an in-house model. We heard as part of budget planning, Cabinet is currently considering the right balance of legal resource within the Council, with advice from the Monitoring Officer, responsible managers for the legal team and Heads of Service / Director regarding likely implications for Social Services.

We asked if it is likely the Council will join forces with other Authorities to do in-house work or if it is a Swansea stand-alone arrangement. We were informed there is a regional arrangement for some legal work around the Regional Partnership Board, there may be some work around regional models of care which require legal input where it would make sense, and some bits of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) are regional for the legal aspect. However, there are reservations about going back to a fully regional arrangement.

We queried if discharge arrangements from hospital match or better the performance of other Authorities with regards their hospital capacity. We heard Swansea is pretty high up in the table for comparable Authorities and in terms of arrangements in place, the integrated model in Swansea within the Council and Health Board works really well, the arrangements are quite robust and there is good flow.

Dementia Care

We were briefed on dementia care including regional priorities, social work support, examples of commissioned and internal dementia services and also some case studies, as requested by the Panel. We heard that in addition a lot of work is being done by partners, particularly in the Third Sector. We feel the Service has come a long way towards supporting people with dementia.

In terms of Preventative Strategies, we asked for feedback on how these strategies are doing. We heard that prevention and early intervention is a method of delivering the regional Dementia priorities through projects under the Regional Partnership. It was

agreed further information be provided to the Panel on local work around Dementia Early Help and Prevention and regional work.

We queried if Marie Curie has broadened its scope to help with this aspect of illness and were informed in terms of particular projects, the Marie Curie Project is a respite project funded via the Regional Partnership under the Dementia Fund. You agreed to provide further information on this to the Panel.

We asked if the job description for the Dementia Connector role could be shared with the Panel. We heard this role is linked in with the Dementia Hub and it is a Third Sector run project. We were informed in terms of the job description, it is something they are doing as an organisation, and the Council does not have any influence directly on it.

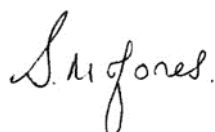
We asked about the increase in Direct Payments being provided to people with dementia and the impact on the Council's spending. We heard there is an increase in Direct Payments expenditure across the board aligned with the Council's expenditure. We also heard the particular care needs of this cohort of people is quite individual and there is some recourse to direct payments to get more bespoke arrangements.

Your Response

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised, however in this instance, a formal written response is required by 23 January 2024 to the following:

- Further information on Dementia Early Help and Prevention and regional work.
- Further information on Marie Curie Project.

Yours sincerely



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