



**To/  
Councillor Clive Lloyd  
Chair of Public Services Board**

**BY EMAIL**

cc Roger Thomas, Vice-Chair of Public  
Services Board  
Swansea Council Cabinet Members

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PSB/2019-20/2

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Summary: This is a letter from the Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Chair of the Public Services Board following the meeting of the Panel on 5 February 2020. It is regarding the PSB well-being objectives on Early Years and Live Well, Age Well.

Dear Councillor Lloyd,

**Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel – 5 February**

Thank you for attending the Scrutiny Performance Panel meeting on 5 February 2020 in which we discussed progress on two of the PSB's four well-being objectives: Early Years (lead partner: Swansea Bay University Health Board) and Live Well, Age Well (lead partner: Swansea Council).

We appreciated the attendance of a number of representatives from the Health Board and Public Health Wales in support of the work on Early Years, and Councillors and Council officers attending in support of the work on Live Well, Age Well. We thank all for answering questions about the impact and difference made.

We are writing to you, as Chair of the Public Services Board, in order to share with you our views (and any concerns / recommendations) about progress with the delivery of actions in respect of each objective, and outcomes.

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## **Early Years – Giving Every Child the Best Start in Life**

The Panel heard from a range of people including Dr. Keith Reid, Executive Director of Public Health at Swansea Bay University Health Board, who is the new strategic lead for this well-being objective. We also had contributions from Siân Harrop-Griffiths (Executive Director of Strategy, Swansea Bay University Health Board), Nina Williams (Public Health Wales NHS Trust), Claire Fauvel (Public Health Wales NHS Trust) and Gary Mahoney (Early Years Progression Officer, Swansea Council).

The Panel appreciated their written report, which gave an overview of activities and progress against a number of key 'steps' to deliver improvement:

- To promote Swansea's First 1,000 Day Programme.
- To make sure parents are supported for birth and early childhood.
- To work towards effectively integrating local early years services.
- To make sure the right interventions are made earlier in life.

It was acknowledged that because of the leadership changes operational officers maintained activity under the 2018/19 action plan but have undertaken a review with a view to refreshing the work plan for 2020/21.

We also noted that Swansea PSB is now collaborating with Neath Port Talbot PSB as part of the Welsh Government sponsored Early Years Pathfinder Programme that seeks to create a streamlined, seamless and agile local early years system across the region.

We appreciated sight of detailed action plan against each of the 'steps' and progress to date, which also highlighted actions that will continue into 2020/21.

Things that were highlighted to the Panel:

- Significant progress has been made on all 'steps'.
- An evaluation of a Primary Care Early Years pilot in Penderi Cluster, focussing on reducing the gap in readiness for school, has demonstrated a more cost effective approach, compared to usual primary care patient pathways, and improved outcomes. A funding proposal to scale up the Primary Care Child and Family Service across all GP cluster areas in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea has been endorsed by the Children and Young People's Transformation Board (a sub-group of the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board (RPB)). A decision is anticipated to request release of funding from the Welsh Government to support the continuation and roll out of the programme.
- An evaluation of the Jig-So Project Journey has demonstrated significant cost avoidance and improved outcomes for children and vulnerable families.

- Work is being done to scope and map the early years system so that there is a better understanding of what services are out there and improve co-ordination and integration – so that there is a whole system / holistic approach across all organisations and service providers, not silo working, rather than a patchwork of services that families have to negotiate,. This has been shown to work in other areas, e.g. Leeds and Brighton, with impact on the readiness for school.
- Examples of the work involved and impact made by the Flying Start Programme, Jig-So Project, and Primary Years Pilot, around improving health, habits, relationships, and development of skills and resilience.
- Work done to improve awareness and understanding of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (a risk factor that may cause problems into adulthood) with professionals that work routinely with children and families, that enables front line staff to explore behaviours, tailor support for individuals and evaluate the appropriateness of services that are being delivered to vulnerable families.
- Planned improvements in perinatal mental health care, including Swansea Bay UHB hosting the in-patient service for the population of South, Mid and West Wales.
- The Public Services Board provides a good place for public service leaders to challenge each other, share information, and work together to contribute to and achieve the desired improvements. There is ongoing debate around finances, and whether pooled budgets would be a more effective way forward, in tackling shared well-being objectives.

Main points arising from our discussion:

- The clear leadership on this objective and work streams by the Health Board and Public Health Wales was evident and welcomed.
- The work of officers on the ground, working on a day-to-day basis in efforts to give every child the best start in life, is to be congratulated.
- The Panel recognised the focus on and benefits to a small number of children and families or specific areas in Swansea, but hoped to see a rollout / scaling up of approaches across Swansea given demonstrated cost savings and benefits – subject to funding. Given the scale of the problem the gap in resources to make a bigger difference is concerning. Limited resources of course have to be directed at the greatest need, and spent in the right way.
- Some issues around Flying Start coverage given it is postcode based, rather than catchment area, meaning some children in the same school not benefitting from the Programme. Similarly, this means that it is not necessarily needs led. We noted that professionals have already made the case to the Welsh Government for system change.
- The importance of early intervention to help children and families with needs, and the vital role of midwifery as first contact to identify support and referral to appropriate services.

- Demonstrating the return on investment and achievements from early intervention projects and initiatives can be challenging in the short term – but changes and the difference made over the long-term need to be clearer, to know whether we have really moved forward e.g. over the last 20 years, to break the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage.

### **Live Well, Age Well – To Make Swansea a Great Place to Live and Age Well**

The Panel heard from you, Councillor Mark Child, Cabinet Member for Care, Health & Ageing Well, and Adam Hill, Strategic Lead Officer, and operational lead officers, Jane Whitmore and Julie Gosney. The report provided to the Panel enabled us to understand progress to date with the Live Well, Age Well objective, as well as the developing future priorities.

We noted the following ‘steps’ key to this objective, and progress on these:

- Cultural change – starting a debate across generations about what it means to live and age well and develop a campaign based on the feedback.
- Innovative approaches to health and social care – supporting dementia friendly communities.
- Community based approaches – maximizing existing approaches and exploring evidence-based approaches to end of life care.
- Innovative housing and technology – exploring a range of initiatives to tackle social isolation and build personal resilience across the PSB and the voluntary sector.
- Making every contact count – developing and sharing of joint messages and resources that support people to remain safe and independent in their homes.

We heard that:

- During 2019/20 the focus has been to revisit existing steps in the Well-being Plan to establish what is business as usual and what actions would benefit from a collaborative partnership approach that will make a difference.
- There has been a lot of work on citizen engagement and participation through mechanisms such as the Big Conversation, Live Well, Age Well Forum (updated version of the 50+ Forum), and other intergenerational opportunities. Understanding what matters to people across age ranges and what it means to live and age well, to guide actions.
- Digital Friendly Generations is an ongoing digital storytelling project that has been successful in bringing together the young and older people of Swansea, to create an understanding of dementia and explore issues, and help people with dementia to improve their sense of well-being, and have a stronger sense of control and a voice in sharing their life experiences with the younger generation.

- The Local Area Co-ordinators approach continues to work in our communities to help anyone build relationships within their community and access support. Local Area Coordination will be expanding in 2020 with five new officers joining the team, making 16 in total.
- Moving forward three key thematic priorities (encompassing all elements of the above 'steps'), with SMART targets, have been identified to deliver on the well-being objective and ensure partnership buy in, with actions planned for the coming year. The three priorities, would each have a specific working group with a nominated lead and action plan with expected outcomes and timelines:
  - A City for All – mapping existing commitments and initiatives, e.g. City of Sanctuary, Human Rights; and identifying opportunities, overlaps and commonalities.
  - Active Travel – improving ability of people to routinely walk or cycle, identifying barriers to overcome to help achieve this, be more active and live well (noted this is not the same thing as accessible travel / transport)
  - Healthy Literacy / Healthy Ageing – encouraging people to live healthier lifestyles, which can reduce a person's risk of getting early onset dementia.

Main points arising from our discussion:

- Not every area across Swansea has the service of a specialist Local Area Coordinator, and the Panel supports expansion of this approach. Additionally, there may be an opportunity for community councils, if present, to step into the void. Perhaps the Public Services Board could improve its links with Community Councillors to assist with and support ageing well initiatives in the community, and develop community contact.
- The role of other community-based groups, including churches, was also recognised as playing a very important part in efforts and the wider network to engage with people. We noted that there is a lot of work going on in the Third Sector, with SCVS as the umbrella body, which are saving costs for statutory partners.
- There is concern about the impact of air pollution on our ability to live well and age well. Recent findings published by the Centre for Cities called 'Holding our Breath' make bad reading for Swansea. According to their research, on a per-capita basis, of the UK's 63 largest towns and cities Swansea has the highest particulate emissions per 10,000 inhabitants, and for NO<sub>2</sub>, Swansea is second worst in terms of having the highest emissions per 10,000 inhabitants.  
<https://www.centreforcities.org/reader/cities-outlook-2020/air-quality-cities/>.  
 This should be a priority for the Public Services Board to address.

## Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter useful and would welcome any comments, however we do not expect you to provide a formal response.

We look forward to a further review of progress against these objectives in due course.

Please note that our next Panel meeting will focus on the Stronger Communities and Working with Nature PSB Objectives, hearing from the lead PSB partners, however would welcome your input if you are able to attend.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Jones

**COUNCILLOR MARY JONES**

Convener, Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel

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