



## Co-Production Strategy for Social Care in Swansea

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‘Working Together’

**“Co-production is an equal relationship where people with care and support needs and those responsible for services share power to plan and deliver support together, recognising that we all have a vital contribution to make in order to improve the quality of life for people and communities.”**

*Swansea Co-Production Network*

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## Swansea Social Services' Co-production Journey

This Co-production Strategy draws a line in the sand between where we are now and where we want to be.

It was co-produced with the Swansea Co-production Network and outlines our aspiration for the development of Co-production within Swansea Social Services.



*Members of Swansea Disability Forum, first meeting with Social Services to Co-produce our Disability Commissioning Strategy*

Co-production in Swansea Social Services has been championed by citizens and staff, using a bottom up approach, made possible by an early commitment by Social Services to Co-production. This journey has been experimental and we have learnt along the way. We can point to some good examples of Co-Productive practice, however, if we want to embed Co-production across Social Services we need to develop:

- An understanding of what Co-Production is and isn't
- A culture that adopts the principles of Co-Production
- Systems and processes that support Co-Productive practice
- Skills to deliver Co-Productive practice
- Relationships based on trust
- Networks to co-produce with so we don't depend on or overload the same people

This will not happen overnight and this strategy represents the next stage of our Co-production journey. We need to recognise and acknowledge that it will take time to successfully Co-produce across Social Services.

The strategy recognises that Co-production needs to be built from a foundation of good quality communication, engagement and consultation, based on the Wales National Principles for Public Engagement and human rights and equalities based practice. This way there will be a range of opportunities available so everyone can take part in a way that suits them best.

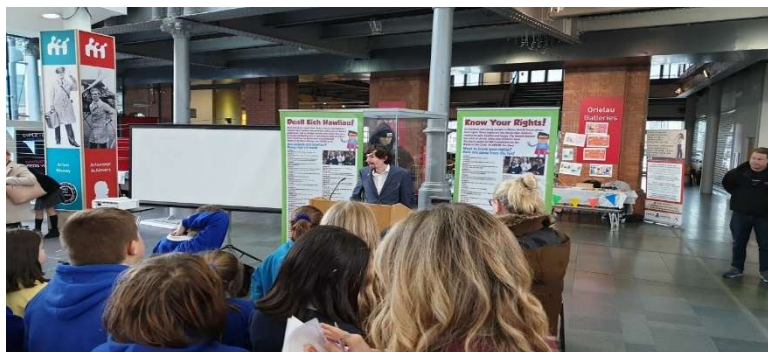
Swansea Council respects people's human rights, and takes listening to and working with people who have support needs seriously when making

decisions that affect them. We recognise that people will want to enjoy their right to take part in decisions that affect them at different times, and in different ways.

*Dave Howes, Director of Social Services*

## What we hope to achieve through this Co-Production Strategy

- To meet the requirements laid out in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and associated Codes of Practice in relation to Co-production
- To give children, young people and adults with care and support needs and their carers increased voice, choice and control



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*“Hoping for a more equal future”*  
*Adele Rose-Morgan*

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- To enable a common understanding of the term ‘Co-production’ amongst people with care and support needs, their unpaid carers and staff.



*Social Services staff and individual citizens working together to design the Co-production Strategy*

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*“Engaging in Co-Production creates healthier communities which make the world a better place”  
Your Voice Advocacy / Swansea People First*

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- To create a culture, structures and practices which enable Co-production to flourish
- To enable trusting relationships and open communication between those organising care and support and people with care and support needs and unpaid carers who need support



*Mike Ward, Karen Berrell, Adele Rose-Morgan and Hazel Maguire*

- To recognise that people with care and support needs choose how they would like to be involved and this will vary based on want, need and circumstance, and that this is ok.
- To provide clarity about consultation, engagement and Co-production and which approach will be used in what circumstances

- To deliver better services and improved outcomes

## Who is covered by this strategy?

Any child, young person, adult or carer, as defined within the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, in Swansea.



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*“This strategy builds on the solid foundation of participation and engagement that we have developed in Children’s Services over many years. It is an exciting challenge and one which fits well with the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child”.*

Elliot King, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services

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*Social Services staff and children and young people working together at the Big Non-Discrimination Conversation*

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*“This is an important document which builds on new ways of working within Adult Social Care and I am pleased to see that it was co-produced with citizens who will also be involved in the implementation of this strategy”.*

Clive Lloyd, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Community Health Services

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## What does the Law say about Co-production?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the following link from Co-production Network for Wales which summarises the key elements of Welsh legislation in relation to Co-production:

<https://info.copronet.wales/what-welsh-legislation-says/>

[The Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change. The 5 ways of working to achieve this sets out clear expectations for involvement and collaboration.

**The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014** sets a clear expectation within the Code of Practice to Part 2 that Local Authorities adhere to the principles of Co-production when planning, designing and delivering care and support. Co-production puts people who receive care and support on an equal footing with the people organising care ensuring voice, choice and control.

This says that Local Authorities must:

- Put in place transparent arrangements where people are equal partners in designing and operating services
- Ensure these arrangements comprise local and regional panels of commissioners, citizens and providers working together to shape services that meet the needs of people who need care and support
- Report on what they are doing to support Co-production in the Directors' Annual Report

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out duties in relation to well-being. Fundamental to the whole approach and system is that practitioners co-produce with children, young people, carers and families, and with adults, carers, families.

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*"I welcome the development of this strategy as prevention and Co-production are the building blocks of our approach in Adult Services to deliver better lives for people and communities in Swansea".*

Amy Hawkins, Interim Head of Adult Services

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Specifically in relation to children, partners in this process all have contributions to make and Local authorities **must** find an appropriate balance between involving a child in the design and delivery of a service through giving them the opportunity to express their views, wishes and feelings, whilst ensuring that the best interests of that child are met.

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*“Listening to and understanding what matters to children, young people and families is central to everything we do. This strategy will support us in our ambition to always ‘work with’ the people we support rather than ‘doing for’, and I am positive that we will rise to this challenge”.*

Julie Davies, Head of Child and Family Services

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## What is Swansea Council’s and West Glamorgan’s regional approach to Co-production?

Swansea Council has developed a Co-production Statement that is consistent with this Social Care Strategy.

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*“This strategy sets a solid foundation for the development of Co-production within Swansea and the wellbeing of individuals and communities will be greatly enhanced through this approach”.*

Alyson Pugh, Cabinet Member for Supporting Communities

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The West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board has developed a Strategic Co-production Framework and a Co-Production Charter which will be consistent with our approach. West Glamorgan have established a Regional Co-Production Group which is supported by Co-Production Officers employed by Council for Voluntary Service in Neath, Port Talbot and Swansea and arrangements are being established to increase Co-Production within West Glamorgan’s governance arrangements.

We will work closely with West Glamorgan to ensure a consistent approach between local and regional arrangements.

## What do we mean by Co-production?

Co-production is a *relationship* where citizens and professionals *share power to plan* and *deliver support together*, recognising that we all have a vital contribution to make in order to improve the quality of life for people and communities



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*“Co-production is a powerful tool as it combines true lived experiences, including barriers and stigmas that can only be broken down by having equality and diversity of people having a voice that’s heard. Change can only be made when it’s made clear what needs to be changed.”*

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*Jackie Whiteman, Kay Colman and Tony Roper working together on developing the co-production*

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*“Co-production is an exciting opportunity to bring people together as equals to share personal and professional power and expertise alongside the resources of the wider community. Based on genuine, trusting relationships we work not only to co-produce improved services and outcomes but we also co-produce new knowledge, learning and understanding to transform our culture of care and support for the people of Swansea”.*

Adrian Bailey, Co- production Development Officer (Adult Services) Swansea Council for Voluntary Service.

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*strategy*

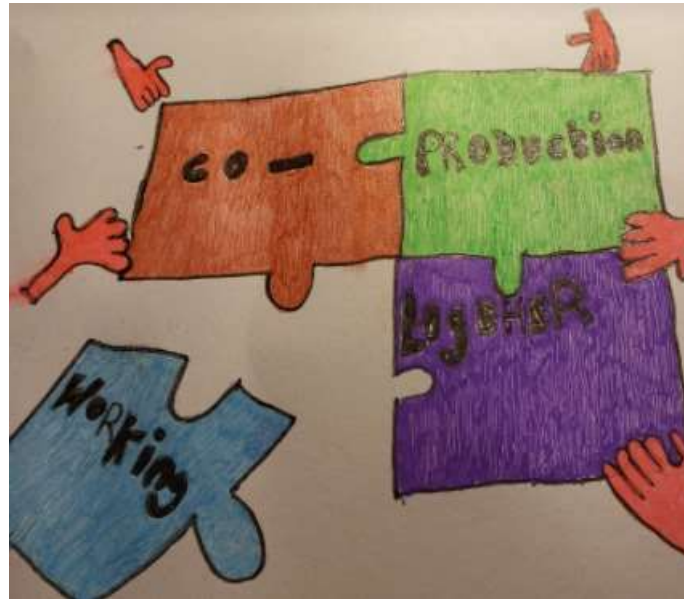
*For an audio explanation, please click on the following link:*

<https://info.copronet.wales/co-production-an-audio-introduction/>

This is underpinned by the following principles:

1. Value all participants, and build on their strengths.
2. Develop networks of mutual support.
3. Do what matters for all the people involved.
4. Build relationships of trust; share power and responsibility.
5. People can be change makers, and organizations enable this.

Co-production starts from the idea that no one group or person is more important than any other group or person. This means no 'them and us'; in Co-production we are all 'us'.



*Co-production Jigsaw designed by members of Your Voice Advocacy*

Co-production offers a different way of working and the Co-production Network for Wales has attempted to explain this in the following link:

<https://info.copronet.wales/public-service-operating-principles>

## Is Co-production just another word for engagement and consultation?

Co-production is **not** the same thing as engagement or consultation; it is about sharing power, 'doing with' rather than 'doing to' and seeing people who receive care and support as equals around the table.



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*"We are all equal and have different skills, co-production allows the voices to be heard so the people who can make change can do it right".*

Your Voice Advocacy / Swansea People First

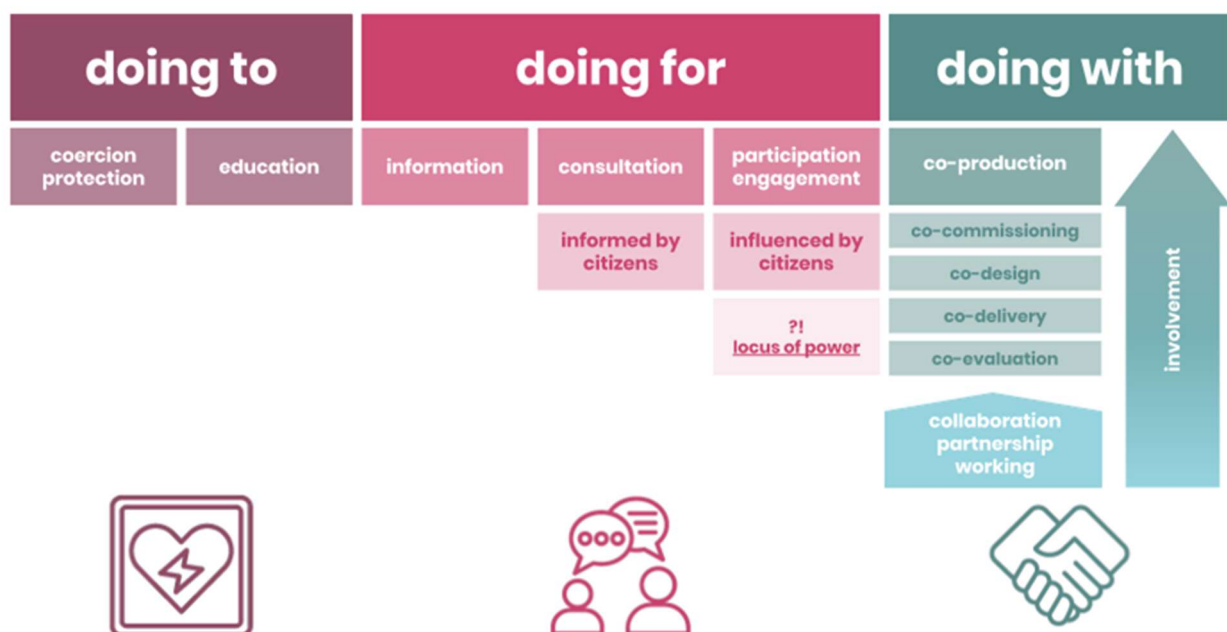
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However, Co-production should be built from good quality communication, engagement and consultation and we strive to achieve the principles within the [National Principles for Public Engagement](#) AND those for [Children and Young People](#).<sup>2</sup>

Swansea is currently updating its Engagement and Consultation Strategy and this Co-production Strategy for Social Services builds on the good practice standards outlined in this document.

Sometimes Co-production is referred to when we are engaging with external providers. This is not Co-production; it is stakeholder engagement or partnership working.

Something can only be described as Co-production if it occurs between people with care and support needs, unpaid carers with support needs and those who commission or deliver support.



<sup>2</sup> <https://participation.cymru/en/principles/>

<https://gov.wales/children-and-young-peoples-national-participation-standards>

## Where will Co-production occur?

The Code of Practice emphasises the importance of “**securing an approach based on co-production at an individual and at organisational and strategic levels**”.

It states that “**people must be involved in the design and delivery of services and in the production of a population assessment, and that a co-productive approach will bring a wide variety of experience, skills and knowledge to these processes.**”

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*“Co-production is about achieving health and wellbeing; through the people we support and professionals working together as equal partners”*

Helen StJohn, Interim Head of Integrated Community Services

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Co-Production in Swansea Social Services will occur within the following levels:

- **Individual Level (Assessment and Care and Support Plans):**

We will co-produce individual assessments and individual care and support plans, and for unpaid carers, support plans.

- **Service Level (Delivery of Services):**

We will ensure services are delivered co-productively. We will do this by setting expectations in contracts with our external providers and by supporting our internal providers to develop Co-Productive approaches to the delivery of services.

This involves **co-delivery of services**, including the role of volunteers, where appropriate, in providing the service and **co-evaluation** of services where people who use services and carers have an active role in the monitoring and evaluation of those services.

- **Strategic Level (Governance):**

Governance is how organisation's are managed at the highest level, and includes the systems for doing this.

Commissioning is about understanding which services or responses are required to support people to live good lives. It is also about arranging them and monitoring and reviewing them to ensure they are achieving the things we want them to achieve.

We will commission co-productively by opening up our governance and strategic commissioning arrangements to involve people who have care and support needs and carers as active, equal partners in the planning, design and commissioning of services.

This involves **co-decision making** in the allocation of resources and **co-design** when planning services and purchasing services.

The Code of Practice states that 'local authorities must "Ensure that providers from whom they commission or procure services encourage and enable the involvement of all people in designing the shape of services and how they will operate to deliver personal outcomes, and that providers involve people in evaluation and review."

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*“As a citizen being involved at the very beginning, being valued, having regular meetings to develop trust and set our own timescales enables us as a group of citizens and professionals to plan, develop and deliver collectively ways to understand what makes a good service, the foundation of the procurement process”*

Kelvin Jones

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Kelvin Jones and Lisa Banks presenting to a regional meeting about how we co-produced a new advocacy service in Swansea.

From senior managers to front line staff, co-production will become part of daily practice; not a one-off activity. This will mean ensuring changes to the organisation's:

**Culture** - the beliefs and values that define an organisation and the way that it works

**Structure** - the way the organisation is arranged and the systems it has set up to carry out its work; and

**Practice** - how the organisation and the people who work for it carry out their work

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*“Co-production requires everyone to work differently and embrace change; for professionals this is about letting go and working on solutions together, recognising that we all bring more to the table than the roles we typically play”*

Jane Whitmore, Strategic Lead  
Commissioner

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## Who is responsible for making Co-production happen?

We all are (Social Services, third and independent sector providers and citizens) However, for Co-production to become our way of working; strong leadership and support will be required to manage the cultural, structural and practice changes required.

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*“Co-production enables this through equal integration of all sectors”.* Liz Cairns

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Senior managers will therefore lead on the implementation of the strategy ensuring staff and people who have care and support needs and unpaid carers are supported to work in this way; ensuring Co-production is addressed in supervision and team meetings and in dealing with structural barriers to working co-productively.

A Co-production Strategy Implementation Group will be formed and this group will be responsible for ensuring the Strategy is implemented, monitored and reviewed; providing reports on a regular basis (to be agreed by the group) to senior managers detailing success and barriers to implementation.



This group will be made up of people with care and support needs, carers, third sector partners, commissioners, senior managers, practitioners and staff. The principles of Co-production will underpin this group.

The group will actively monitor and evaluate the impact of the Co-production Strategy utilising recognized tools.

## What is needed to make Co-production happen?

### **Strong Leadership and commitment from the top**

Our experience has shown us that Co-production is not something that happens easily; it requires a substantially different **relationship** between those organising and delivering care and support and those who use care and support, including unpaid carers. Achieving our aims will require strong leadership and support.

There will be barriers to working co-productively;

- Established ways of working
- Lack of **skills** and **knowledge** relating to Co-production,
- A belief that we 'do this already'
- Existing processes and methods
- Costs associated with working in this way
- Tension/lack of trust between staff and people with care and support needs
- Budget pressures
- Power imbalances: <https://inwithforward.com/2019/07/panacea-for-power/>

The Code of Practice acknowledges that: “Welsh Government public services policy is for greater diversity in the delivery of services through mutual, in-sourcing, joint commissioning and community ownership. It is about empowering people and communities. This reflects a more complex environment and requires strong leadership and a shift in culture and practice.”

Co-Production requires the opening up of our decision making processes at all levels and we will need to consider where Co-Production can be introduced into our governance arrangements.

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*“I am confident that Co-productive approaches will support both the Equalities and Human Rights agenda in Swansea and I am pleased to see this strategy references both”.*

Louise Gibbard, Cabinet Member for Communities

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## **Training, Guidance and Support**

It is essential that people with care and support needs, unpaid carers with support needs and those responsible for services undertake Co-production training alongside each other. It is also important to provide guidance in the form of handbooks or tools and provide positive support for people who are attempting Co-Production for first time.

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*“Co-production is not easy, and we need to be supported, but it is a much better way of working. I believe that decisions made alongside people; bringing their lives, experiences and skills to the table as valued equals, are always better decisions. A vital part of the equation is missing otherwise”.*

Lisa Banks, Planning Officer

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## **Positive Attitudes**

Working Co-productively means we all need to reflect on our **attitudes** and **behaviours**; this includes people who have care and support needs as well as Local Authority staff.

## **Motivation**

Motivation is critical when working Co-productively and we need to ensure that everyone understands why they are working co-productively, that we all genuinely understand Co-production and believe it is a positive way to work together. To avoid tokenism, we need to ensure everyone involved can have a positive experience when co-producing by developing our motivation and capacity to co-produce. The Co-production Implementation Group will need to consider how this is best managed.

## **An Understanding that Managing change is challenging**

Change can be challenging and stressful for everyone involved. We want to avoid people feeling overwhelmed and frustrated with the process of change. We will make sure we have the skills and systems and support in place to help people through the change process to avoid the risk of people becoming disengaged as a consequence.

## **Strong Networks: Inclusion and Diversity**

Swansea has its own Co-production Network with its own Facebook page and a growing number of members. This will be our primary way of reaching out and including the diverse range individuals who have care and/or support needs and third sector organisations who support them.

The Co-production Network is key to people with care and support needs and their unpaid carers being able to organise themselves in a way which will increasingly influence the agenda for change.

We need, therefore, to build activity which supports people to change and adopt new working practices; including training, toolkits, funds for supporting Co-production, ongoing advice and guidance and addressing organisational barriers.

## **Resources**

We will need to ensure that Co-Production is adequately resourced; making sure we can support the best conditions for Co-Production to flourish.

## **When won't we co-produce?**

We will co-produce unless there are compelling reasons not to. Realistically there will be occasions where Co-production is not possible. This may be because:

- we are still growing our capacity to co-produce
- we have to consult by law (it should still be possible consider Co-Productive approaches within the consultation process)
- we have to act in a certain way because the law tells us to

- in matters of safeguarding and keeping people safe where decisions need to be made in someone's best interest
- we are working to timeframes set by external partners which make a Co-Productive approach unlikely
- We have to make decisions in an emergency or crisis situation and we do not have the necessary arrangements in place to co-produce

We will have a process in place to make decisions about when Co-production will not occur. This will also require honesty about limitations and boundaries.

We also need to ensure that Co-Productive practice is built upon solid communication, engagement and participation practice so that we do not end up in a situation of all or nothing if a Co-Productive approach is not taken for one of the reasons above.

## How will we know if we are Co-producing?

We will know if we are Co-Producing when we see the following things:

- Children, young people and adults with care and support needs are included from the **start to the end** of projects that affects them
- Children, young people and adults with care and support needs and their unpaid carers are valued for their knowledge, experience and skills and their contribution is welcomed



*Working together to decide how we chose a new advocacy provider for Swansea*

- A **blurring of roles** between people who use services and their unpaid carers and practitioners; more 'we' and less 'them and us'.
- Children, young people and adults' existing **capabilities** are built upon within assessments, services and communities
- There are incentives for children, young people and adults to work with practitioners and each other to achieve **shared interests**, by this we mean providing out of pocket expenses, by people getting to develop positive relationships with people with similar interests and by giving people a genuine opportunity to influence
- Services become agents of change, rather than deliver services, by this we mean they become facilitators who co-produce to enable change within and with the community
- Friends and family support networks operate alongside professional networks in delivering outcomes
- Children, young people and adults with care and support needs and their unpaid carers having **equal, meaningful and more powerful role** in the planning, design, delivery and review of services. This includes being an equal partner in our governance arrangements.
- Transparent arrangements (having access to information) where people are equal partners in designing and operating services



*Farzana Ramhan ,Nonn Rice and Liz Rees, including Carers Voice in our work together*

- More open and honest relationship between people organising services and those in receipt of services
- Everyone has access to the same information when being involved in planning, design and delivery (unless confidential)
- Everyone feels working co-productively was time well spent, and this will be measured through evaluation following Co-production work



*Workshop Co-designing the new Parent Carer Forum*

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*“Co-production means everyone’s voices being heard and agreed action to follow”.* Cari Jones

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*“Co-production means working together to take action to ensure that everyone’s voices and wishes are heard”.* Sam Nicholson

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## How will we know Co-production is making a difference?

The newly established Co-Production Implementation Group will measure both the quality of Co-production in Swansea and its impact.

There are a number of resources that we can draw on to help us monitor and measure the impact of our Co-production Strategy.

Swansea Social Services Co-Production Implementation Group, together with the Swansea Co-production Network, will review this Co-Production Strategy in 2022 to see if it is achieving the intended outcomes.

## Glossary

**Citizen** – this term broadly refers to any member of the population of Swansea but in this document specifically refers to people who access social care services.

**Carer/Unpaid Carer** –this refers to carers who are looking after someone with care and support needs but who are not employed to do so. They will often represent the needs of the person they care for, as well as their own needs

**Commissioning** – Social Services can provide services to people directly or they can ‘commission’ them. This means we pay other organisations to deliver services on our behalf and we set out what we expect from them in the form of a contract.

**Contract** – a formal document that sets out the responsibilities of both the organisation who have been paid to deliver a service on behalf of Social Services and the commissioner of the service. It is accompanied by something called a service specification which sets out the detail of the service to be provided.

**Outcomes** – refer to what you want or expect to see as a consequence of doing something i.e. the impact.

**Third Sector** – ‘Third sector organisations’ is a term used to describe the range of organisations that are **neither public sector nor private sector**. It includes voluntary and community organisations (both registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups), social enterprises, mutuals and co-operatives.

**Governance** – the way that organisations are managed at the highest level, and the systems for doing this

**Professional** – people working in social care settings and organisations, usually referring to social workers.



## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the members of the Swansea Co-Production Network for their energy, enthusiasm and commitment in working together to produce this strategy.

We would also like to thank a range of staff working with across the Social Services Directorate for their contribution and commitment to the development of this strategy.