

Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching purpose of the Panel is to provide ongoing challenge to performance in Adult Social Services to ensure that as the Service is undergoing major change, performance is maintained and that further improvements are made across all areas of the Service.

2. Key Activities

The Panel is currently meeting on a six-weekly basis and since the beginning of this municipal year the Panel has looked at the following:

Meeting	Topic(s)
27 September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of the Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel • Overview of Adult Services in Swansea (including key priorities and challenges, and Performance Monitoring Report). • Draft Work Programme 2022-23
8 November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions following WAO Report (April 2022) – Direct Payments for Adult Social Care • Briefing on Recent CIW Inspection Reports • Director of Social Services Annual Report 2021/22
31 January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Monitoring • Update on Adult Services Transformation Programme • Options Appraisal for Assistive Technology and Community Alarms

3. Achievements / Impact

We have sent 3 letters to the Cabinet Member for Care Services since our first meeting of the Council term in September 2022, in order to give our views, raise concerns and make recommendations, for example:

Positives:

- Overview of Adult Services in Swansea - Four or five years ago the Council went through a major recommissioning process and at its meeting in September the Panel queried if it is going to go through another one. Also queried if there has been any analysis of those contracts to see if they were effective before going out to recommission again, and if any users were involved in the reviews. Officers confirmed that the Service reviews, on a cyclical basis, the projects and initiatives it funds in terms of performance and quality and confirmed there are a host of services the Service is looking at recommissioning at different timescales. They also confirmed that users are involved in the reviews and that co-production is a very important part of the Service.

- Overview of Adult Services in Swansea – Panel queried actions being taken to tackle sickness absence in Social Services and were informed there is a lot of work going on to support this, there is a work stream in terms of supporting the workforce, with a lot of work going on regarding recruitment, retention and wellbeing of teams. Panel heard that there is work going on with HR colleagues to support staff if they are off sick and measures in place to support staff back into the workplace, with a dedicated member of staff in HR for Social Services. Also heard that there are a lot of staff off with sickness linked to the backlog in the Health Service and that managers are being supported to ensure they are managing sickness properly and appropriately. Also, many staff are working in the front line so are exposed to respiratory conditions that are around currently and staff are being encouraged to get their flu and covid booster vaccination to protect themselves. Cabinet Member agreed to circulate a list to the Panel of what is being done by the Service regarding wellbeing and supporting staff.
- Response to WAO recommendations: Direct Payments for Adult Social Care – Panel was pleased to hear that of the 10 recommendations, the Council is meeting its requirements and exceeding in some areas.
- Recent CIW Inspection Reports – Panel was informed the report highlighted four unscheduled inspections and one scheduled inspection and that all inspections took place during Covid. Panel heard CIW found no non-compliance with regulations and no priority action notices were issued. 11 areas of improvement were identified across the different services and an action plan is in place to work towards the areas of improvement. Panel was pleased to hear this and felt that the issues raised by CIW in the report were minor compared to the overall care of the people looked at.

Issues / Concerns:

- Overview of Adult Services in Swansea – Panel heard that the Service had been successful in recruiting more social workers but queried if this was at the detriment of other authorities, or if new potentially qualified people were coming into the industry at this time. Panel was informed it is a bit of both, we have lost some social workers to neighbouring authorities and gained some, but the Council is also actively pursuing the number of students it supports through the social work qualification, so trying to nurture and grow its own. Panel heard that it is a national challenge, and something needs to be done at a Welsh Government level to attract people into the profession across the country.
- Response to WAO recommendations: Direct Payments for Adult Social Care - In relation to recommendation 2, Panel asked if the wider care team have up to date knowledge of direct payments and understand how they can be used. Panel was informed that Welsh Government is currently consulting regarding continuing health care and looking at direct payments being conjoined with continuing health care and whether it is a viable option. Panel heard that in relation to practitioners, the Direct Payments (DP) Team liaise regularly with information sessions etc. but it is a slow process. In terms of general understanding of direct payments in community services and primary care services, Panel heard it is much higher than it was but there is still some work to do around GP practices. Panel heard that the DP team is producing some quantitative data but is also hoping to increase its qualitative data ie telling

people's stories. Panel was pleased to hear this and is keen to see this qualitative data when it is available.

- Response to WAO recommendations: Direct Payments for Adult Social Care – Panel queried how the Service captures everything that direct payments are used for as it seems extremely flexible. For example, are they being used properly; are they being used for what they are intended; is the Authority capturing where money is actually being spent and are clients having a good deal out of it. Panel informed that this is where qualitative data ie personal stories can be used, as it would be really helpful for people to share what they used direct payments for. It was agreed that personal stories of how direct payments are used will be shared with the Panel when available.
- Recent CIW Inspection Reports – Panel expressed concern about the point raised by CIW with regards to medication and wanted clarification that it has been picked up and taken right across the board of all the establishments. Panel was reassured that robust processes and monitoring are in place on a weekly basis across all sites in terms of medication administration.

Action Recommended / Agreed:

- Panel raised a query in relation to the public question at the previous meeting on learning disabilities. Panel wanted to know how many people in Swansea are in the same situation as the person mentioned in the public question, and the types of accommodation people with these needs could go to. Officers confirmed there are 62 individuals in Swansea who are in the same situation. Regarding types of accommodation, Panel heard that it is a whole mix of housing options, whether it is individual units where people are supported or supported living. Panel heard that there are different approaches being applied, it is down to individual circumstances, and it changes over people's lifetimes. Panel felt it would be useful to know what the Authority has been able to do for these individuals and the range of need on an individual or collective basis. This action was agreed.
- Response to WAO recommendations: Direct Payments for Adult Social Care - In relation to recommendation 9, Panel asked if the service has a picture of the categories of users of Direct Payment services. Panel informed the Panel has high level information on this in the Performance Monitoring Report and this can be broken down further if the Panel wished. Panel confirmed it would be useful to have the information refined further so it can see the categories, as there may be other developing social and health issues for which direct payments may be better than the alternative currently being used.

4. Future Work Programme

The programme for the remainder of this municipal year is as follows:

Meeting date	Item to be discussed
13 February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft Budget Proposals for Adult Services / Child and Family Services
21 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update on West Glamorgan Transformation• Performance Monitoring• Briefing on Annual Review of Charges (Social Services) 2021/22• Local Area Coordination Update
2 May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult Services Complaints Annual Report 2021/22• Update on how Council's policy commitments translate to Adult Services• Commissioning Reviews Progress Update• End of Year Review

5. Action for the Scrutiny Programme Committee

None.