



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Adult Services**

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

Monday, 7 August 2023 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor S M Jones (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

M S Tribe
A J Jeffery

Councillor(s)

C A Holley
J W Jones

Councillor(s)

P R Hood-Williams

Co-opted Member(s)

T Beddow

Other Attendees

Hayley Gwilliam
Alyson Pugh

Cabinet Member for Community (Support)
Cabinet Member for Wellbeing

Officer(s)

Lee Cambule
Richard Davies
Amy Hawkins
Liz Jordan
Anthony Richards

Tackling Poverty Service Manager
Strategic Manager Direct Payments Team
Head of Adult Services & Tackling Poverty
Scrutiny Officer
Poverty and Prevention Strategy and Development
Manager

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): E T Kirchner
Other Attendees: L S Gibbard

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 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

Panel agreed the Minutes of the meeting on 28 June 2023 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Public Question Time

No questions were received.

5 Wales Audit Office Report 'Together we Can' - Community Resilience and Self-reliance

Cabinet Member for Community Support, Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Tackling Poverty Services Manager attended to brief the Panel.

Discussion Points:

- Panel asked how poverty is defined and measured and queried how it is going to work in terms of identifying people to take on some of the work the Authority carried out in the past. Definition Authority currently uses is from the 2017 Tackling Poverty Strategy. Strategy is currently being refreshed to ensure have right definitions and measures in place.
- Panel queried why an audit committee is trying to re-engineer the way communities operate, and if any social scientists or experts in network theory sit on it. Informed role of the Governance and Audit Committee is to make sure the organisation is taking forward Wales Audit Office recommendations and is following the right protocols. It is not assessing the detail of what the Authority is proposing.
- Panel concerned how people who are empowered to take on these roles in the community will be controlled and how community self-reliance is going to be driven forward. Informed it is about tapping into rather than controlling it.
- Panel queried when an audit of what is already happening in each of the wards is going to be undertaken. Informed the refreshed Strategy, done in collaboration, will give the priorities and themes to take forward.
- Panel asked how 'a community' will be defined and how officers would go about working with the leaders of that community. Heard this is part of the definition work that needs to be done very carefully and in a co-ordinated way with communities.
- Panel asked how long it is going to take and heard it is being tied in with the publication of the refreshed Tackling Poverty Strategy. Current timescale for this is to go out to public consultation with a draft towards the end of this calendar year.

6 Tackling Poverty Service Grants 2022-23: Impact Report

Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and the Poverty and Prevention Strategy and Development Manager attended to give an overview of the impact of Tackling Poverty Service Grants in 2022/23 and answer questions.

Discussion Points:

- Tackling Poverty Team handle a number of grants annually. 2022-23 saw a significant increase in number of grants and amount of grant funding (over £500,000) given to tackle poverty.

- Members urged to read the annual report to see the difference made in the words of the organisations themselves.
- Panel asked about the female equivalent of 'Men's Sheds' and heard that women can also use them and that there are now also 'Women's Sheds'.

7 Additional Direct Payments Information

Amy Hawkins, Head of Adult Services and Tackling Poverty and Richard Davies, Strategic Manager Direct Payments Team attended to answer the Panel's questions on additional direct payments information provided in the form of case studies.

Discussion Points:

- Panel asked about the budget for direct payments in the current financial year. Informed the spend currently is between £5.8 and £6 million a year and the bulk of this goes towards personal assistants and specialised provision.
- Panel asked for a breakdown of monies that comes back to the Authority through its services as opposed to going outside the Authority. Informed if someone is using direct payments it will all be for external services. Overall budget for Adult Services is over £100 million and direct payments is approximately £5.6 million of this.
- Panel queried how the Authority monitors or stops direct payments being used for the wrong purpose. Heard in terms of monitoring, every spend is closely monitored, either have managed accounts or pay cards, so there is oversight.
- Panel asked if someone who uses a day service for two days and wants to go for an extra day can use a direct payment for it. Informed it depends on the assessed need.

8 Work Plan 2023-24

Panel considered the work plan and added the following item:

- Briefing on Llais to be added to the meeting on 31 October.

The meeting ended at 5.15pm.