



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA
DINAS A SIR ABERTAWE

Councillor Uta Clay
Convenor
Transforming Adults Services Panel

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JH/CM
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Dear Councillor Clay

Transforming Adult Social Services Scrutiny Panel – 4 April 2016

The TASS Panel has drawn conclusions following their review in relation to the following areas:

1. Unit Costs
2. Swansea Integration – Network Hubs
3. Local Area Coordination
4. Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act
5. Risks
6. Commissioning Reviews – General comments
7. Commissioning Reviews – Residential
8. Data and population projections
9. In-house domiciliary care service
10. Prevention and Independent living
11. Reablement
12. Performance Management Frameworks
13. Finance
14. Budget
15. Respite

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JANE HARRIS**

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1. Unit Costs

Being clear about unit costs is a critical component of the second stage of the commissioning reviews to help inform what needs to be considered in terms of future delivery.

The moving of the Income and Finance team from Social Services to the Corporate Centre has had significant benefits in terms of the generation of 'windfall' income and the collection generally of income owed. Financial control remains with Social Services. The transactional functions with the customer have also moved to the Corporate Centre, but financial oversight and control has been maintained in Adult Services to ensure good governance and financial control going forward. As in your list of suggestions I confirm that the continuous refining of comparative cost information is necessary as part of the review process and at least yearly.

2. Swansea Integration – Network Hubs

The Cabinet responsibility for the Hubs sits under one Cabinet Member; the Cabinet Member for Adults and Vulnerable People.

Joint Performance Indicators have already been developed via the Western Bay Intermediate Tier programme and I understand this information was presented to the Panel on 9th December and continues to be developed. This information will need to be reported to scrutiny and continuously updated.

Arrangements for scrutiny, oversight and governance in relation to the integrated hubs are already in place. On an operational level, there is dual reporting into the Head of Adult Services and the Health Board Primary and Community Services Director of Nursing. These joint management arrangements are in the process of being strengthened as part of the Adult Services Senior Management restructure. A Joint Partnership Board is also in place to provide scrutiny, oversight and governance in relation to the commitments under the Section 33 agreement relating to the Western Bay intermediate tier project. The Board reports into the overall Western Bay Community Services Planning and Delivery Board.

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The MDT triage function has been piloted in Intake since January 2016. The pilot is in the process of being evaluated to determine the way forward, but initial indications show how the MDT triage is proving very effective and is critical to achieve Adult Services' strategy in relation to demand management.

The points in relation to the lack of the consultation on Hub location are acknowledged. However, at the time of setting up the Hubs the Health Board and the Local Authority were very limited in terms of available premises at a reasonable cost. The Central Hub has however recently relocated to the Civic Centre and this is proving to address many of the issues which were previously experienced in this Hub. The challenges remain with Gorseinon Hub, but the service continues to work with the Health Board and our colleagues in IT to try and find solutions going forward.

The performance indicators and governance arrangements will be two issues that require scrutiny if there is to be transparent and effective processes and actions.

3. Local Area Coordination

There is already good working between the Local Area Coordinators and the Hubs and the Communities Services Manager who is responsible for the Hubs sits on the LAC Leadership Group.

The performance information relating to Local Area Coordination is being developed and will in due course form part of the overall Adult Services Performance Framework.

It is relevant as part of this process to identify those vulnerable groups for which Local Area Coordination may be targeted.

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4. Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act

There is considerable work remaining to ensure that Social Services and Wellbeing Act is embedded. Innovation and diversification are part of the review but initial work is focusing on policies, procedures and the range of opportunities associated with direct payments.

5. Risks

I would agree with the risks identified in relation to the external care market. However, it should be highlighted that the risks are not just limited at achieving the minimum wage, but the obligations in terms of the national living wage.

The national living wage/minimum wage will not have an impact on the future costs of in-house service provision as Single Status/Job Evaluation already means that the Council pays above the minimum wage/national living wage.

The Local Authority does not take lightly decisions to terminate contracts with providers; however the Local Authority cannot continue to contract with a provider where minimum quality standards are not maintained and in particular where the safeguarding of vulnerable adults are compromised. In situations such as this, exit strategies are carefully managed to allow for successful transition of service users to alternative providers to minimise disruption to service users and maintain continuity of service. This work is carried out with significant consultation and sensitivity,

6. Commissioning Reviews – General comments

We welcome the comments that the Panel raised in relation to the Commissioning Reviews and will factor in these issues as part of development. Involvement of Members during development is important and increasingly looked for.

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Whilst I am in full agreement that the potential for charging for day services should be addressed experience elsewhere has shown that the potential to generate income needs to be handled creatively.

The issues of mental health, learning disability and physical disability is important and review developments are ongoing.

7. Commissioning Reviews – Residential

I welcome the comments in relation to this Review and all issues are being addressed including capacity, assessment for reablement and extra care.

8. Data and population projections

This intelligence is in the process of being gathered to inform the option development of the Commissioning Reviews.

In addition, under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act there is a requirement for each Local Authority area to produce a population assessment by 2017. This is currently in development.

9. In-house domiciliary care service

I welcome the comments and these issues will be reviewed as part of the commissioning review particularly with relevant to social contact and loneliness.

10. Prevention and Independent living

I would agree with this view and under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act having a clear approach to prevention and early intervention is critical. It is therefore imperative that Adult Services works closely with the Poverty and Prevention department to be a critical player in the development and delivery of the Prevention Strategy. It is also important other Adult Services work closely with the Adult sector and monitor the outcome of the provision in each locality to ensure accessibility for all.

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11. Reablement

The current in-house domiciliary care service is focused on reablement and complex needs. The Commissioning Review will look at whether this approach should be maintained going forward and whether reablement in the community should be developed depending on the needs of the population. Reablement should be a care scheme for all providers whether the client has complex needs or not.

12. Performance Management Frameworks

The first iteration of the Adult Services Performance Framework will be presented to BPSG shortly by the Cabinet Member. It is the intention to subsequently bring the Performance Framework to one of the early meetings of the Adult Services Performance Scrutiny Panel. It is imperative that the Performance Framework reflects the changes within the sector so that changes in one section can be tracked to changes in total care and underpin the ongoing development of corporate objectives.

13. Finance

I would concur the move of the transactional finance functions from Social Services to the Corporate Centre has been extremely positive. The amount of income generated via 'windfall' has as a consequence been much higher than previous years.

14. Budget

Robust monitoring of the budget is in place and the Head of Adult Services holds monthly challenge sessions with each Principal Officer to monitor the budget position, overall performance and HR performance. This is reported to and scrutinised through the Social Services and People Budget performance and Management system. Adult Services has developed a clearer understanding of its key areas of overspend, the reasons behind it and what activity needs to be undertaken to address it.

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The critical component of the Adult Services Improvement Programme which is currently in draft is the activity required to address this. This approach has allowed Adult Services to significantly reduce the level of overspend during the course of the 2015/16 financial year resulting in an overall balanced position for Social Services.

15. Respite

This is a critical element which is being explored as part of the Commissioning Reviews.

The involvement of Members in development is considered important and where pre-decision scrutiny is appropriate.

Yours sincerely

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