



**Report of the Cabinet Member for Care, Health and Ageing Well**  
**Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel – 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

**LOCAL AREA COORDINATION UPDATE**

<b>Purpose</b>	To provide an overview of Local Area Coordination in Swansea
<b>Content</b>	This report is an update on the current position with the Local Area Coordination Team.
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	Councillors are being asked to consider the information contained in the report and the impact that Local Area Coordination is having in Swansea
<b>Lead Councillor(s)</b>	Councillor Mark Child Cabinet Member for Care, Health and Ageing Well
<b>Lead Officer(s)</b>	Alex Williams Head of Adult Services
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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Local Area Coordination is a long-term, evidence based approach to supporting people (children and adults, families and carers) who may be isolated, excluded or who face challenges due to age, disability, physical or mental health difficulties to;
- Stay strong, safe and connected as contributing citizens
  - Build more welcoming, inclusive and supportive communities
  - Build partnerships with local people, communities, organisations and services.
- 1.2 Research and evaluation studies show that where implemented correctly, Local Area Coordination supports:
- The building of community capacity and resilience.
  - The prevention of, or reduced demand for, costly services.
  - Service reform and integration (leading to high quality services becoming a valued back up to local solutions).
- 1.3 These outcomes reflect the direction of travel in the Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014 and the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and will support Swansea to meet the requirements of the new legislation.
- 1.4 Each Coordinator works in a specific community with a maximum population of between 10 and 12K, and can work with anyone of any age with no criteria limiting number of visits. The way the coordinators work is to walk alongside the citizens they are introduced to and support them to become more confident and connected, through identifying strengths and encouraging contribution. Local Area Coordination is probably the only model in social care which focuses on strengths and links contribution and participation in community with wellbeing.

## **2. DEVELOPMENT IN SWANSEA**

- 2.1 Local Area Coordination started in Swansea in June 2015, with three coordinators and an Implementation Manager. By the time of the last Scrutiny Committee report in July 2018 the team had expanded to ten Coordinators and a Manager.
- 2.2 In November 2018 the Fire Service withdrew from a secondment agreement a year early and the Gowerton, Loughor post was vacated. However, also in November 2018, two new posts were established in Blaenymaes and in Llansamlet. Both posts are funded through external partners; the Blaenymaes post is funded by Pobl Housing and the Llansamlet post is funded by Cwm Tawe GP cluster.
- 2.3 This brought the team up to eleven coordinators plus the Manager. The need for supervision support was identified and in October 2019 two of the current team were promoted to Senior LACs, and now hold a part-time coordinator and part-time supervisor role.

2.4 In November 2019, five new posts were advertised. All five are financed through the Welsh Government Transformation 'Our neighbourhood approach' fund and as such all are located in the Llŵchwr and Cwm Tawe GP cluster areas in the north of the county.

2.5 These posts were recruited to last week, using an established co-produced process involving community members and five candidates were appointed to new posts in the following areas, bringing the team strength to sixteen:

1. Penclawdd, Gowerton & Loughor
2. Treboeth, Clase & Llangyfelach
3. Clydach & Birchgrove
4. Morryston North
5. Landore, Hafod, Plasmarl & Morryston centre

### **3. FUNDING**

3.1 While the majority of the eleven posts are funded by the Council there is significant investment from external partners who include;

- Coastal Housing Association
- Family Housing Association
- Pobl Housing Group
- Swansea University
- City GP Network.

3.2 There is ongoing work to identify future partners who may also invest. A link has been established with final year Marketing and Business students at Swansea University, and a group of students are currently working with us on developing a marketing strategy to attract funding from new external organisations.

### **4. LEADERSHIP GROUP**

4.1 Since the establishment of Local Area Coordination in Swansea, a Leadership Group has been in place to help develop the model across Swansea. The Leadership Group is responsible for the effective and timely design, development and implementation of Local Area Coordination in Swansea and should comprise local Councillors and senior decision makers from Social Services, SCVS, Health, the PSB, and Housing Associations, some of whom have become financial investors in the development of Local Area Coordination.

4.2 We realised the group had become unwieldy and was not operating effectively so in August 2019 it was discontinued with a plan to start a new, leaner and more focussed group in the Autumn. An initial meeting took place recently which the Director attended and further work is planned to establish the terms of reference for the group so that it has a true partnership and development focus. There are several key partners who are committed to attending and participating.

## 5. NATIONAL LAC NETWORK

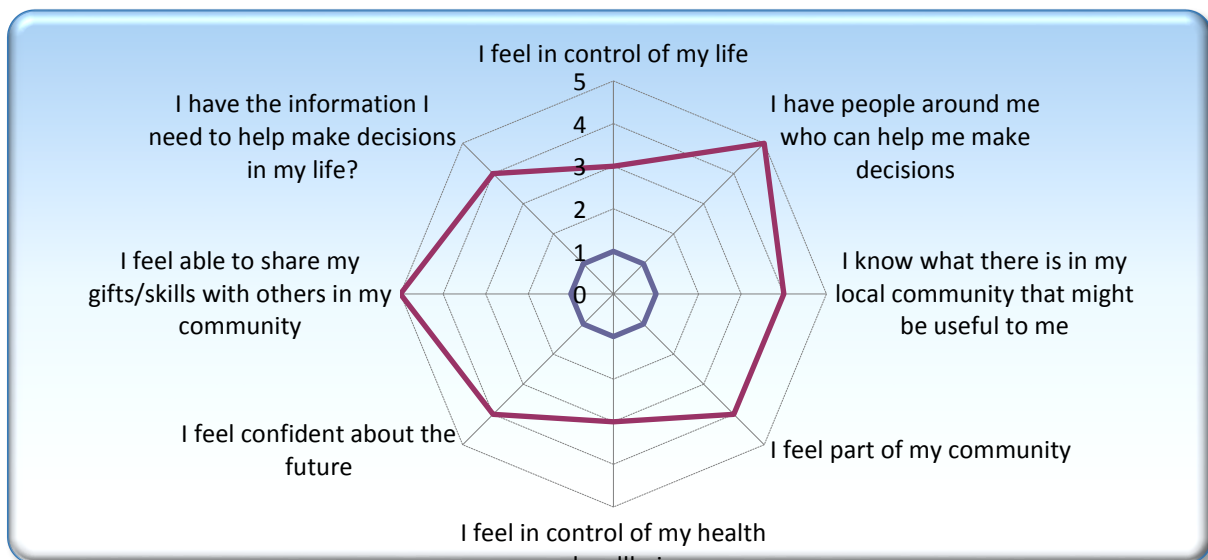
5.2 We are members of the National LAC network and receive training, advice and support from them as well as the opportunity to discuss and share good practice with other teams around the UK. There are twelve other Local Authorities operating Local Area Coordination and this number is increasing as more areas adopt the model. In 2018 the leadership of the network changed and this has led to improved communication, support and an enhanced membership offer

## 6. MEASURING THE IMPACT

6.1 The Coordinators record their introductions with individuals on a database and also record the number of informal interactions they have daily onto a spreadsheet. Also recorded are outcomes that relate directly to the Social Services and Wellbeing Act. The statistics can, however, only show a fraction of the effect of a coordinator's intervention and it is the stories which show the wide ranging impact on people's lives. Written stories are produced regularly and the team have produced several video stories which are very powerful.

### Video Stories:

- First is Pete's story. He is interviewed by Pete Russell, the Coordinator for Blaenymaes.
- The second video story is Hub on The Hill, from Mount Pleasant. Claire McCarthy Reed is the Coordinator for the area.



6.2 The stories which the team produce include a distance travelled tool which is illustrated below: The tool is used at one of the first meetings with a person, and then revisited at a later date, regularly improvements are seen in each – or many - of the question scores.

### ***Swansea Star Journey Travelled***

Question	Answer	Review	Journey
I feel in control of my life	1	3	2
I have people around me who can help me make decisions	1	5	4
I know what there is in my local community that might be useful to me	1	4	3
I feel part of my community	1	4	3
I feel in control of my health and wellbeing	1	3	2
I feel confident about the future	1	4	3
I feel able to share my gifts/skills with others in my community	1	5	4
I have the information I need to help make decisions in my life?	1	4	3
			24

## 7. EVALUATION

- 7.1 A formative academic evaluation was carried out by Swansea University in 2016 which showed the positive results of the impact of the team in the early days. A further evaluation has been proposed, and researchers at Southampton University are planning a multi-site evaluation which will study the effect of Local Area Coordination in three different locations. Swansea has been chosen as one of the sites and we are awaiting further news about funding for the research. This evaluation will focus in part on measuring the impact of preventative interventions.

## 8. COMPLIMENTS AND GOOD PRACTICE

- 8.1 The Local Area Coordination team regularly receive compliments and thanks from people they work with and also other professionals. Just one example is a letter which was received from the Sandfields Resident's Association commending Dan Garnell. They described him as a "huge benefit to the Sandfields area" and went on to say that the community had "adopted him and they felt he had adopted them".
- 8.2 Two colleagues have been nominated for the annual ABMU Patients Choice Award – Claire McCarthy-Reed in 2018 and Emma Shears in 2019.
- 8.3 A particularly encouraging letter from a community member is attached at Appendix A. While this refers to a specific coordinator, the comments could apply across the whole team, and show the wide ranging impact that the team are having in our communities.
- 8.4 There are regularly requests from professional colleagues, both within the Council and externally, for Local Area Coordination support in areas where we don't currently operate. We're not able to support people outside the areas we cover, but there is high demand for the kind of alongside support which the team offers, and its continued expansion across the county would be hugely beneficial.

## **Appendix A**

Thank you for recalling our recent conversation.

I am honoured to feedback here on my experiences of the work Emma Shears - Local Area Co-ordinator produces across: Gendros, Manselton, Cwmbwrla, Cwmdru.

I think Emma's (and her colleagues) work is the 'glue' that enables vulnerable/marginalised individuals and groups to grow and develop as contributors rather than being mere recipients of services and opportunities. Key to this success is her unique way of being in the world. Emma's positive energy and enthusiasm for all people is evident. Her mode of working is based in openness, listening, hearing, reflection, followed by collaborative action. She is a great asset engendering empowerment in these communities. I feel privileged to know of her handiwork.

Emma embodies the pillars of positive psychology in the day-to-day delivery of this project: through facilitation of positive experiences, modelling and promotion of positive individual traits, and development of positive inclusive local experiences and institutions. I believe Emma demonstrates true understanding of the role positive emotions plays regarding; contentment with the past, happiness in the present, and hope for the future. She sets this at the centre of her work.

At a practical level Emma is the human face of a local hub linking people in need to health and social support. Each generation of my family has benefitted from her work. Examples include; assisting older members to organise a peer group day out; and linking voluntary groups to a community fun day for families in a local park.

When I reflect on Local Government in 2019, I am minded of a range of functions/services that can appear autocratic, especially in periods of austerity. I think the work undertaken by Local Area Co-ordination is key to helping people with vulnerabilities to link to those with power. Expansion and continuation of the work of this unique group of workers is paramount to the health and wellbeing of communities across the City of Swansea.