



Report of the Cabinet Member for Care, Health and Ageing Well

Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel – 17th March 2020

Progress addressing WAO Recommendations, relating to the Front Door to Adult Social Care

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an overview of the WAO report and recommendations. • To highlight actions taken by Adult Services to address recommendations.
Content	This report includes a summary of the context and methodology used to produce the WAO report and conclusions, and a summary of how Swansea is performing against the recommendations.
Councillors are being asked to	Endorse the conclusion of the report
Lead Councillor(s)	Cabinet Member Mark Child
Lead Officer(s)	Alex Williams, Head of Adult Services
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1. Background

1.1 In September 2019 the Welsh Audit Office published a report “The ‘front door’ to adult social care”. The report was the product following a national review of the role of local authorities in considering adults’ well-being at the first point of contact and the subsequent assessment of need. Implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act in April 2016 (‘the Act’), through the related regulations, codes of practice and policy frameworks was viewed by Welsh Government as a largely cost neutral exercise to be driven regionally.

1.2 The main question for the study was: “Are local authority first point of contact assessment and processes better meeting the needs of service users and carers in line with the commitments of the Act?” Their review sought to look at whether the changes introduced by all Welsh Local Authorities were addressing the new requirements of the Act, by looking into the following:

- ‘What Matters to you’ assessments- and whether they are comprehensive
- Ease of access to wellbeing services and care and support
- Where there has been a shift towards prevention in social care and non-social care services; and
- Impact of assessments on people’s wellbeing, with a particular focus in all areas on carers

1.3 The context for the review, according to the Wales Audit Office is that Social Services costs a lot of money. Demand for social services has grown, and continues to increase. There is a new set of duties within the Act, with additional statutory duties, including that each Council to ensure there is an initial point of contact assessment, which can deliver the universal, ‘well-being offer’, and to facilitate access to carers, in that the Act gives carers an equal right to an assessment of their own needs in their own right. Clearly the accessibility, quality, speed of response, efficiency and outcomes of this assessment can have a major impact on the lives and wellbeing of those people seeking support, including carers.

1.4 Swansea Council was not involved in any field work, or sharing information by interviews with the Audit Office and we did not contribute to producing the final report. There was fieldwork undertaken in other Welsh local authorities. None of the conclusions in the report are based on Swansea Council submissions, or evidence of Swansea Council practice. The WAO’s analysis of activity and performance data was undertaken at a national level.

1.5 Swansea Council was only asked to provide randomised details of **50 carers** who have been assessed by the local authority in relation to their needs as carers at any time between 6 April 2016 (when the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 came into force), and the time of submission, May 2018. This contributed to a pool of 1,100 carers from which the WAO used to survey their views. Some carers may well have preferred not to, or been unable to take

part in the telephone survey. They received 550 responses with representation from all local authority areas. A further 32 carers, nationally, took part in a more in depth survey, which focussed on the impact of caring; how easy it is to access and use local authority services; and the positive impact local authority support is having on their well-being. WAO also undertook an online survey of third sector provider organisations and received 22 responses, as well as interviews with third sector organisations.

1.6 In addition to the Carers survey, below are examples of the information used by WAO, as analysis in the main WAO report: *Front Door to Adult Social Care* (published 12th September, 2019):

- Dewis Cymru published resources per local authority 2018-19
- Number of carers of adults who had an assessment between 2008-09 and 2017-18 (national)
- Real-terms Gross Revenue Expenditure on Personal Social Services (£000's) 2008-09 to 2017-18 (national p34)
- Changes in real-terms expenditure, access to IAA, assessments offered and undertaken by local authority between 2016-17 and 2017-18 (p36)
- Social services revenue out-turn expenditure in real-terms on assessment and care management by local authority (£'000) in 2008-09 and 2017-18 (Appendix 2, p43)
- Real-terms expenditure (2017-18 equivalent) on personal social services by local authority 2008-09 and 2017-18 (Appendix 3, p45)

Link to main WAO report: <https://www.audit.wales/publication/front-door-adult-social-care>

1.7 The report does not draw any conclusions in relation to Swansea, though Exhibit 8 (p36): changes in real-terms expenditure, access to IAA, number of assessments offered and undertaken by local authority appears to show that Swansea has taken a more balanced, proportionate approach to implementing changes than some other Councils in meeting the social care needs of citizens.

2. WAO Conclusions

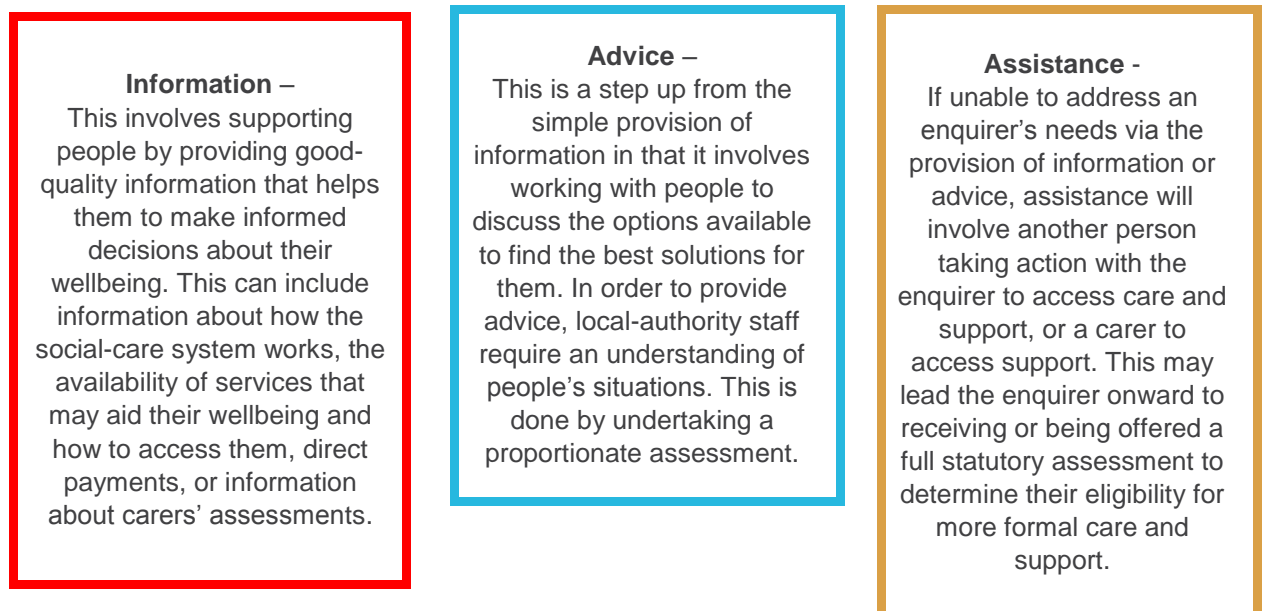
2.1 The WAO in the main report has concluded that, across Wales, councils are preventing social-care demand, but information, advice and assistance are not consistently effective.

The main report separates its conclusions into 4 Parts.

Part One: Effective Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) is key to the successful implementation of the Act – providing people with information and advice, in a timely manner, that can help them to help themselves, prevent their needs from deteriorating, and reduce dependency on their local authority. WAO found that authorities are becoming more person-centred in their approach, for example, by establishing multi-agency and co-located teams. However, there

is much work still to be done to promote access to the front door to ensure that all those who may benefit from IAA receive it.

Figure 1 IAA service (information, advice and assistance)



Source: Wales Audit Office.

Practice Example:

Dewis Cymru is a website that aims to help people seeking advice and assistance and is promoted as the 'the place for information about well-being in Wales'. Dewis Cymru is maintained by Data Cymru and is supported by all 22 local authorities which each contribute annually towards its maintenance and development. Dewis Cymru holds a wide range of information that helps support people to identify and access services that can help support them. Dewis Cymru holds details of over 10,000 local and national services. The report highlights differences across Wales in how the system is being used and promoted. At the time of reporting Swansea had around **400** resources listed in the Dewis system, whilst the Vale of Glamorgan is leading the way with close to 1200 resources (see exhibit 2, p16 main report).

Part Two: Though local authorities have increased their offer of preventative services, there is wide variation on what is available across Wales. Often, authorities do not know where gaps in provision lie, which has resulted in an inconsistent distribution and provision of services. Even where effective preventative services exist, poor co-ordination between organisations can also limit their effectiveness.

Part Three: Overall, local authorities have created good systems to identify when individuals may require an assessment or more intensive support and help. However, carers are still not getting the equal treatment envisaged by the

Act, and provision of advocacy remains challenging throughout Wales. The role of third-sector partners in helping to embed the new arrangements also needs further development.

Part Four: That no Local Authority has got the balance on spend, assessments and IAA right at this time. Whilst social care assessments are falling, spend on adult social care continues to rise and access to IAA services is not increasing at rates equivalent to the fall in assessments. In terms of improving wellbeing we found that local authorities find it challenging to demonstrate the impact of prevention services. We conclude that whilst local authorities are making sound progress, services are in transition and there remains a lot more for authorities to do.

2.2 These conclusions are general to Welsh Councils, taken from their national study. Given that their focus in the study was the well-being offer to carers, it seems justified to consider a response to the recommendations from the carers standpoint.

3. WAO Recommendations

3.1 Improving access to the front door

Recommendation 1. To improve awareness of the front door, WAO report (Part 1) recommends that local authorities:

- review their current approaches, consider their audience, and ensure that good-quality information is made available in a timely manner to avoid needs deteriorating and people presenting for assistance in 'crisis';
- work in partnership with public and third-sector partners to help ensure people accessing via partner referrals, or other avenues, are given the best information to help them;
- ensure that advocacy services are commissioned and proactively offered to those who need them at first point of contact; and
- to take local ownership and lead on the co-ordination and editing of local information published on Dewis Cymru locally.

3.2 Investing in prevention and understanding impact

WAO also identified weaknesses in Welsh Local Authorities' assurance of the availability and quality of third-sector, preventative, community-based services that they signpost people to.

Recommendation 2. To improve impact and outcomes for citizens and carers, the report (part 1) recommends that local authorities:

- map the availability of preventative services in their area to better understand current levels of provision and identify gaps and duplication;
- involve third-sector partners in co-producing preventative solutions to meet people's needs and ensure people have equitable access to these services;
- Work with third-sector partners to tailor and commission new services where gaps are identified; and]
- Work with partners to improve data to evaluate the impact of preventative services on individuals and the population more generally

4. The Position in Swansea and Progress against Recommendations.

Broadly speaking, many of the issues highlighted in the WAO report conclusions have been addressed, via the Adult Services Improvement programme and a regional approach taken to implement the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act. **The focus of this Swansea response is to consider the recommendations in general terms and from the standpoint of carers who may be seeking help with their own wellbeing**

4.1 Recommendation 1:

Swansea Social Services has well developed front door arrangements in Adult Social Care, and through a Common Access Point (CAP) there are strong links to the Health and Third sector partners. We work closely with the public by offering a 'What Matters' assessment to help identify what is most important to them and the outcomes to improve their own well-being.

4.1.1 Public Information: - In response to general queries, staff at the Common Access Point (CAP) to Adult Services will signpost callers to the Swansea Carers Centre web site, or to the Carers Centre drop in. There is a good range of public information relating to services and support available to carers on the Council website- over 500 users looked at the carer pages on the council website in the last month. We have plans to update the current "Are you a Carer" leaflet in online and hard copy format.

4.1.2 Awareness of the front door arrangements: via Common Access Point. We advertise the CAP at Swansea Carers Day / Carers rights events. As part of the assistance offer carers will be offered a carers assessment. Often staff at the Common Access Point are dealing with emergency situations, or a crisis with the cared for person, so it may not always be the right time to offer or complete a carers assessments. There has been an increase in carers

assessment, coming through CAP Multi-disciplinary team, who are often tasked with early help in the more complex, emergency type cases.

A more detailed report: *Briefing On Carers Assessments*, was presented to the Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel on 17th December 2019:

[BRIEFING ON CARERS ASSESSMENTS](#)

4.1.3 Working with third sector partners

Swansea has a good range of third sector organisations, and services, and a positive track record of signposting to other organisations who are providing support to carers e.g. Swansea CVS, Swansea Carers Centre and Hafal. As part of the regional optimum model for Intermediate Care, a third sector broker employed by the Citizens Advice Bureau has sat within the Common Access Point to help signpost people to appropriate third sector support.

One new area of development is that Common Access Point together with the Child and Family Information, Advice and Assistance service, are liaising with Swansea YMCA in extending the support offer to young carers, by increasing awareness of their rights and signposting to relevant support. There is ongoing liaison with Carers Centre.

4.1.4 Advocacy Offer- Swansea is working with Swansea Carers Centre to develop the advocacy offer to carers.

4.1.5 Dewis Cymru- We support the national launch of the DEWIS CYMRU, a nationally developed, well-being resource directory, and we use this system to complement the Council's public website and public information resources, as well as other systems such as Info-engine, Family Information System (FIS), and our regional Care Directory. Swansea currently has around 500 resources added to the Dewis Cymru portal: <https://www.dewis.wales/>

4.2 Recommendation 2:

Swansea has a strong corporate focus on well-being, a well-established, range of preventative services, and support is made available to carers

Through a shared vision, a service model and approach to improvement, change is widely understood and implemented across Adult Services

4.2.1 Availability/ access to preventative services

The Adult Services Service Model aims to ensure that there are early opportunities for citizens to engage with communities and the third sector through early engagement with the Local Area Coordinators, this helps them identify What Matters to them and enables them to make their own informed choices. All thirteen Local Area Coordinators (LACs) covering most areas of the City and County of Swansea are using a 'What Matters to you' conversation, and this enables them to make their own informed choices to achieve wellbeing.

The Local Area Coordination team now sits as part of the Common Access Point to ensure that we are supporting people at the right time.

The development of IAA service delivered through the Common Access Point focuses on improving access to prevention services. We are also ensuring that people can access the care and support they need, via professionally integrated hubs, ensuring that the right professional is available at the right time to have conversations, with individuals and carers, that are outcome focused through the identification of what matters. Achieving this may involve appropriate signposting, speaking to right person at the right time and often enabling callers to identify their own solutions through collaborative communication and prevent the need further intervention from statutory services.

Each of these new approaches are designed to support people to remain independent and keep well. We want to see more people cared for at home, with shorter stays in hospital if they are unwell, and to see a change in service delivery away from institutional care towards better community-based support.

4.2.2..Coproduction

One area of progress that Adult Services are driving forward is on implementing a *Doing What Matters* practice framework, which helps all staff to understand their roles in relation to the changes needed, and how positive conversations with citizens and partners can coproduce their personal outcomes.

We have progressed the development of a co-production strategy, which has involved many engagement events. There are already a number of key projects that have been co-produced, for example, the IAA approach, direct payments and domiciliary care commissioning strategies. This has had a direct impact on how we carry out our business; it has influenced how we manage our conversation, to ensure we establish what matters to the individual, the accessibility of our information and how user friendly our information is and so on. There have been some really good example of areas of work that have been tangibly co-produced for the benefit of citizens for example the Domiciliary Care and Supported Living frameworks.

A committed cohort of individuals have been involved in co-production, this is being further developed in partnership with the third sector to build and grow the cohorts across communities and user groups. An e-learning co-production training module is current in development to raise awareness and opportunities of this key principles

4.2.3 Commissioning gaps

The West Glamorgan Regional Carers Partnership Board has created an action plan to address the needs of carers more effectively at local and regional levels. The action plan sets out targets for improving the support offered to carers. (A copy of the detailed action plan is attached in the Briefing report on carers assessments, as mentioned previously).

Also regionally, we are improving the range and quality of Intermediate care services, based on an agreed Optimal Model. This model, which complements Swansea's Adult Services Service model, is again underpinned by the 'Doing What Matters' framework.

As part of this work, we are seeking to further enhance our reablement offer to citizens, through the development of a Hospital to Home recovery service whereby we support people to go home more quickly and do not make long-term decisions surrounding their future care until they are settled back at home.

We are also seeking to improve Care Home support to reduce emergency hospital admissions from Care Homes.

4.2.4 Impact of preventative services

We are constantly reviewing the impact of early help and preventative approaches through our Adult Services Improvement Programme, through the West Glamorgan regional partnership board work programme and through co-productive engagement, with carers.

Swansea is one of four local authority areas involved in the first phase of the fieldwork for the national evaluation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act. Prof. Mark Llewellyn, Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care is leading the study. More information about this study, – a project they are calling IMPACT – can be found here:

<https://wihsc.southwales.ac.uk/evaluation-implementation-social-services-and-well-being-wales-act-gwerthuso-gweithrediad-deddf-gwasanaethau-cymdeithasol-llesiant-cymru/>

5. Table of Progress Against WAO Recommendations

5.1 A more detailed table of recommendations and progress is set out at Appendix 1.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Whilst there are a number of areas in which the Council can improve its front door arrangements to support carers, we are generally pleased that progress is being made to ensure citizens can gain access to the full range of preventative services. We are looking forward in particular to shape our local response to carers who are seeking help to achieve wellbeing as their own right. A local carers action plan will be developed to support the regional strategy.

6.2 Proposed Actions:

- i Following the development of a Regional Commissioning Strategy for meeting the support needs of carers, work is to be undertaken on a Swansea action plan for carers.

- ii** To review carers' public information, including the current "Are you a Carer" leaflet in online and hard copy, and availability across key access points.

- iii** To use feedback and learning from IMPACT study feedback, Swansea to consider any additional improvement actions needed, in relation to IAA and preventative approaches within Adult social care.

APPENDIX 1.

SWANSEA COUNCIL TABLE OF PROGRESS AGAINST WAO RECOMMENDATIONS FRONT DOOR TO ADULT SOCIAL CARE 2019/20					
REPORT REF	RECOMMENDATION	STATUS	OUTSTANDING ACTIONS/ COMMENTS	LEAD	BY WHEN?
4.1.1	Public Information – to ensure there is a good range of public information relating to services and support available to carers	Action needed	Action: To co-produce a resource that will inform carers and citizens that will help them navigate Health and Social Care (project linked to ICF bid)	Andrew Fung /Jeanette Munn	April 2021
4.1.2	Promote awareness of the front door- arrangements to carers	On-going and complete	Awareness raised via public information, public website and events such as Carers Right day	Andrea Preddy	
4.1.3	Working with third sector partners - to extend the offer of support to carers	Action needed	Action: to coproduce development of regional and local carers commissioning strategy and action.	Peter Field/ Jeanette Munn	April 2021
4.1.4	Advocacy Offer – improving access to advocacy services for carers	In progress	To review advocacy offer/ take up by carers linked to 4.1.3, with data on current take up expected by end of year	Peter Field	
4.1.5	Dewis Cymru continue to support the development of DEWIS CYMRU, a nationally developed, well-being resource directory	In progress	Continue to review, update and add local resources to directory	Andrea Preddy	

REPORT REF	RECOMMENDATION	STATUS	OUTSTANDING ACTIONS/ COMMENTS	LEAD	BY WHEN?
4.2.1	Availability/ access to preventative services - early opportunities for carers and citizens to engage with communities and the third sector to improve wellbeing opportunities	In Progress	Continue to review approaches within Adult Services Improvement Programme, and through the West Glamorgan regional partnership board	Lucy Friday	
4.2.2	Coproduction – working with citizens and partners to coproduce their personal outcomes.	On-going and complete	Coproduction to design services and commissioning processes, as well as through Collaborative Communication implementation	Lisa Banks	
4.2.3	Commissioning gaps - to improve the support offered to carers	In Progress	As part of the regional partnership work programme and locally as 4.1.3	Peter Field	
4.2.4	Impact of preventative services – to review the impact of early help and preventative approaches	Action Needed	Action: To use feedback and learning from IMPACT study feedback and whether any additional improvement actions are needed	Lucy Friday/ Simon Jones	Sept. 2020