



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel - Joint Social Services**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Monday, 15 February 2021 at 2.30 pm

Present: Councillor P R Hood-Williams (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
C A Holley
J W Jones
H M Morris

Councillor(s)

A M Day
Y V Jardine
E T Kirchner
G J Tanner

Councillor(s)

V M Evans
S M Jones
W G Lewis
D W W Thomas

Other Attendees

Louise Gibbard
Elliott King
Clive Lloyd

Cabinet Member - Supporting Communities
Cabinet Member - Children Services
Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care & Community Health Services
Alyson Pugh
Cabinet Member - Supporting Communities

Officer(s)

David Howes
Liz Jordan

Director of Social Services
Scrutiny Officer

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Cllr 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)

The Panel agreed the minutes of the meeting on 26 January 2021 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Draft Budget Proposals

Councillors Clive Lloyd, Elliott King, Alison Pugh and Louise Gibbard along with Dave Howes, Director of Social Services attended and went through the proposed budget proposals in relation to Adult Services, Child and Family Services and Poverty and Prevention, highlighting the main issues and answering questions.

The Panel agreed the following views and recommendations on the budget proposals in relation to Social Services it would like to make to Cabinet:

- The Panel feels it is vitally important we ensure there is sufficient money allocated in the budget to provide additional health and wellbeing support to staff following the pandemic. The Panel is keen to see a joint venture with the Health Board in terms of support for staff.
- Very pleased to see the budget situation for Social Services this year, with an increase in the overall budget and very little in terms of cuts. However, the Panel is aware that there is a great deal that needs to be achieved with this money.
- The Panel is concerned that it only sees the net budget. It would be useful to see details of the income streams as well as expenditure. Officers have agreed to work with Cabinet Members to provide this information.
- The Panel would like to support the budget process in any way it can and therefore intends to revisit the budget again later in the year to closely monitor progress.

The Convener of the Service Improvement and Finance Panel will attend Cabinet on 20 February to feed in the collective views of the scrutiny performance panels and write a letter to the Cabinet member.

The following was also discussed at the meeting:

- Real cash increase of £4 million to this year's Social Services budget
- There are a host of transformation plans for the coming year
- Extremely difficult to plan for coming year – a number of assumptions had to be made.
- Panel acknowledged there are a number of uncertainties such as WG no longer protecting Social Care and the outcomes of the Senedd elections, and queried to what extent the Council is relying on further central funding to deal with these uncertainties. Informed that from discussions with WG there is a reasonable expectation additional funding will be allocated to local authorities due to the pandemic and expect tapered relief over the coming year.
- Cabinet Members in Social Services and senior officers have heard moving individual stories from staff. Panel suggested these be presented to Full Council.
- Relationship with Third Sector has been amazing during pandemic.
- Council has in-house counselling service which is available to all staff. This needs to be promoted more.
- Officers confirmed working with partners during the pandemic has been essential and a step forward for the Council. This year and going into next year Council and Health Board have pooled funding more effectively, and some has been built into planning assumptions for this year.

- Panels need to consider including more scrutiny on Poverty and Prevention in work plans, as now part of Social Services.
- Panel requested sight of job description for integrated Head of Service Post.

Actions:

- Job description for integrated Head of Service post to be shared with Panel.

5 Update on Management of Covid-19 Pandemic

Dave Howes, Director of Social Services attended to present an update on the current situation regarding the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Discussion Points:

- Heads of Service recently presented an overall update at Full Council.
- In last two weeks have begun to see some stabilisation across Health and Social Care Services. It appears to be linked to continued decrease in rates of infection. It has taken some time to have an impact on our Services.
- Domiciliary Care has been operating at 50% of workforce. This is down to 20% absent, so there is a big increase in resource available. All Health and Care services are seeing this increase in staff present.
- Still fragility around care homes but currently seeing only a small number of homes unstable. The picture is improving, especially in last two weeks.
- Escalation tool to monitor stress has been at highest level (red) since October. In last two weeks moved into amber. This is a real milestone but does not mean Social Services will become less busy. Instead of managing emergency work will move to more planned work.
- Vaccinations – older people in care homes, care home staff and front line care staff mostly vaccinated. Mechanisms in place to pick up new staff and new care home residents.
- Panel concerned about people with learning disabilities accessing vaccine. Informed not a straightforward position. Expectation is a number of individuals will have met the criteria for one of the top four priority groups. For those that did not, expectation is majority will meet criteria for group six. Director prompted to get regional clarification that all of these are being picked up.
- Panel concerned about disturbing reports that people with learning disabilities are often the subject of 'do not resuscitate' orders. Informed Social Services together with Health Board looked at the arrangements in our region in May 2020. At the time there weren't any of these arrangements in place. Subsequently Safeguarding Board revisited this, and at that point there were none in place. Director will clarify this again with the Safeguarding Board to ensure nothing has been overlooked.
- Panel Members requested Cabinet Members and Director express once again their appreciation to staff.

6 For Information

Work Programme Timetables 2020/21 - Plan to return to separate meetings for Adult Services and Child and Family Services from March 2021. The scheduled timetables will be followed, unless informed of any issues by Cabinet Members/officers.

The meeting ended at 3.45 pm