



City and County of Swansea

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

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Tuesday, 30 November 2021 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor S M Jones (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

H M Morris  
P R Hood-Williams

**Councillor(s)**

V M Evans  
Y V Jardine

**Councillor(s)**

C A Holley  
E T Kirchner

**Other Attendees**

Mark Child Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care & Community Health Services

**Officer(s)**

David Howes Director of Social Services  
Liz Jordan Scrutiny Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): J W Jones and G J Tanner  
Co-opted Member(s): T Beddow

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**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)**

The Panel agreed the minutes of the meeting on 20 October 2021 as an accurate record of the meeting.

Under matters arising the Panel raised a query about an article which appeared on Wales Online on 20 November 2021, as it appeared that the media did not report a response from the City and County of Swansea. Director of Social Services confirmed there was a response from City and County of Swansea, but it was hidden on the online link. Director agreed to circulate a copy of the response to the Panel for information and stated that the Authority was working with this individual and the family prior to the article. The intervention the family was looking for is now in place and the family is happy.

#### **4 Public Question Time**

No questions were submitted.

#### **5 Update on Management of Covid-19 Pandemic and Performance Monitoring**

Mark Child, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Community Health Services and David Howes, Director of Social Services attended to brief the Panel on the current position.

Discussion Points:

- Infection rates are still at a high level locally but much lower than Welsh average. Not enough is known about the new Omicron variant yet. Not seeing an indication of other respiratory illnesses at the moment.
- Overall impact of Covid on workforce, across Health and Social Care, is often having to operate with 40% of the workforce missing on any one day, particularly in domiciliary care.
- Demands for community services are currently very high as the backlog of need has flowed back into the system.
- Providers do not have enough staff to fulfil their runs and the Authority is having to pick up packages for maintenance care and is having to use the reablement team to do this. Currently using residential care capacity to cover all demands.
- During Pandemic prioritised urgent work and some of the more routine work was put on hold. Did not have opportunity to catch up on the backlog which has got bigger and bigger. Authority has started to commission out some of this backlog to an external provider to catch up with work before Spring 2022.
- Started to see some pressures in mental health services due to limited capacity linked to staff absences in Health and Social Care. Directorate is able to give assurances around most urgent interventions.
- There has been national press around Care Inspectorate Wales review of the effectiveness of Local Authorities and Health Boards support to carers. It presented an honest picture, that it is not as good as it needs to be. In current climate not able to tackle fundamental structural weaknesses but have been able to come up with a range of alternative ways to support carers.
- Directorate has some level of difficulty in every area. Welsh Government are aware of the situation and are trying to do what they can. Having discussions on Social Services budget going forward and how this might be reflective of what we are going through and what we are learning now.

- Currently do not have enough people and the Directorate is prioritising safeguarding and reducing within limits what the Authority provides to try and get over this.
- Panel commented in relation to carers, thanking the workforce and all families and friends who have stepped up and shown total commitment in such difficult times. Panel believes the true picture of the impact on carers will be seen in the next six months to a year as we recover from the pandemic.

## **6 For Information**

The work programme was noted.

The meeting ended at 4.40 pm