

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2 - THURSDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2023

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2
HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET,
BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 10:00**

Present

Councillor F D Bletsoe – Chairperson

E L P Caparros	P Davies	P Ford	D M Hughes
M Lewis	A Wathan	AJ Williams	R Williams

Apologies for Absence

RL Penhale-Thomas

Officers:

Lucy Beard	Scrutiny Officer
Jackie Davies	Head of Adult Social Care
Carmel Donovan	Group Manager - Older People
Councillor Jane Gebbie	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Social Services and Health
Rachel Keepins	Democratic Services Manager
Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Jessica Mclellan	Scrutiny Officer
Mark Wilkinson	Group Manager - Learning Disability

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing declared a personal interest in agenda item 3 as she has a close family member in receipt of Domiciliary Care in Bridgend.

25. ADULT SOCIAL CARE PRESSURE AREAS

The Head of Adult Social Care presented the report, the purpose of which was to detail the service pressures being experienced in Adult Social Care, describe the mitigating actions the service was undertaking and the work across Health and Social Care to manage the overall situation, focusing on the Care and Support at Home/Domiciliary services, and the social work service.

The Chairperson thanked the Head of Adult Social Care and Members discussed the following:

- The single and multidisciplinary goal-orientated rehabilitation programmes used in short-term intervention services with the focus on the delivery of services in the home.

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- The number and average age of people awaiting packages of care at home and in hospital, factors affecting the variable waiting times for a care and support package.
- Active management of waiting lists including regular phone calls, social work visits, reassessments and therapies.
- The impact of the pandemic on people's physical and mental health, the significant recovery funding received to help rebuild capacity and the importance of preventative services.
- Age profile of care workers and encouraging uptake of GCSE and A Level social work courses to attract younger people and raise awareness of the benefits of social work.
- The increased cases of dementia, whether dementia patients require more complex packages of care and the focus on living well with dementia at home and in a dementia friendly and supportive community.
- The cost of care at the new dementia unit in Parc Prison, an initiative by the Health Board.
- The level of support offered by independent provision, the need to rebalance the market in relation to independent providers and in-house support and that workers should be paid for all hours worked, including between calls.
- The necessity for a professional level of pay, terms and conditions, highlighting the competitive market in non-regulated sectors offering higher wages.
- Attractive NHS terms and conditions for some job bands and arrangements enabling domiciliary care staff to be employed under NHS terms and conditions and work for the Local Authority under the Council's governance.
- Support for care staff including help maintaining a car, public transport passes and recent funding obtained to support staff wishing to take driving lessons.
- Reasons for Social Workers leaving the Authority, including retirement, the competitive market for registered Social Workers along the M4 corridor and the cost-of-living crisis.
- Exit interviews routinely conducted in Children's Social Services but not yet been fully implemented in Adult Social Services.
- 20 days average time for allocation of social work cases and active management of unallocated cases.
- The number of BLACK level/Business Continuity Stages being called and recognition that it had become a more frequent occurrence over the past 3 months.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions for the Invitees, thanked Invitees for their attendance and, advised that if they were not required for the next Item, they may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee made the following Recommendations:

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1. That consideration be given to whether there is adequate promotion/awareness of the benefits available to support care staff with their fuel or other travel expenses incurred during their shifts and the recent funding obtained to support staff who wish to take driving lessons.
2. Having heard that exit interviews routinely take place in Children's Social Care, that consideration be given to how this can also take place in Adult Social Care, as soon as possible, in order to capture the data and reasons why staff and social workers in particular, are leaving the local authority.
3. Having heard that the Health Board had been recruiting staff into domiciliary care under the more favourable NHS Terms and Conditions, and those staff then worked for the local authority under a Section 33 arrangement, the Committee recommended that consideration be given to how there could be a rebalancing of staff terms and conditions in order that being employed directly by the Local Authority is equitable.

and the Committee requested:

4. A copy of the response to the Cabinet's letter to the Welsh Government Minister regarding the cost and funding arrangements for care staff in Parc Prison, when received.
5. The number of occasions a BLACK level/Business Continuity Stage has been called in the Princess of Wales Hospital in the last 3, 6 and 12 months.

26. THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING DISABILITY SERVICES

The Head of Adult Social Care presented the report, the purpose of which was to describe the learning disability services operating in the County Borough and to report on developments in the way learning disability services were provided and the key factors that affect it.

The Operational Manager for People First Bridgend advised that People First is a charity giving people with learning disabilities a voice and helping them have more choice through self-advocacy and independent advocacy. He also highlighted a number of other areas the charity assists people including providing training and translating documents into easy read formats.

The Service User Invitees to the meeting advised that they appreciated how advocacy had made them feel that they were being treated with respect and highlighted how People First had helped them with important life skills such as dealing with police, fire service and medical staff and managing their own financial affairs.

The Chair thanked the Head of Adult Social Care and the Invitees and Members discussed the following:

- That the Service Users were generally happy with the services they receive such as help with chores, budgeting and travel but highlighted issues with staff punctuality and late notification of staff sickness.
- The number of people with learning disabilities known to the Bridgend Community Learning Disability Team, timely identification of people with learning disabilities in need of support, importance of prevention and wellbeing services and expansion of local community coordination.

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- The external expert review of the model of day activities including the impact of the pandemic.
- Funding of the service and investment to implement the remodelling and the creativeness and dedication of staff to delivering services.
- Transportation in Day Services and efforts to make it more coordinated and cost efficient, including development of a new app and the challenges and barriers to use of public transport.
- Increased work due to implementation of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.
- The ways in which the pandemic impacted on the Service Users, particularly their social lives and, as services are returning, they are feeling more positive.

The Chairperson advised that Members of the Committee who wanted to ask questions had all spoken, so as there were no further questions for the Invitees, thanked them for their attendance and advised that they may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee made the following Recommendations:

6. That consideration be given to how staff lateness and short notice of staff sickness can be managed to avoid delaying or postponing a day out that Service Users described as having a disruptive and unsettling impact upon them.

The Committee expressed concern about the impact that the WG Policy modal shift from use of cars to public transport could have, by disenfranchising people with learning disabilities and neurodiverse conditions, who can face fear and distress when accessing and using public transport, and recommended that the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing write to the Welsh Government to highlight this as a potential area of concern.

27. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Committee with the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A for discussion and consideration, requested any specific information the Committee identified to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wished to attend, requested the Committee to identify any further items for consideration on the FWP having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3, asked the Committee to note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meeting in Appendix B and asked the Committee to note that the FWP and Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet for the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee requested that the following items be considered for addition to the 2023-24 Annual Forward Programme at the next Scrutiny Planning Meeting for SOSC 2:

- The outcome of the external expert review into learning disability services following its completion.

There were no further items identified for consideration on the FWP having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3, and this could be revisited at the next meeting.

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There were no requests to include specific information in the item for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Committee approved the FWP in Appendix A, subject to the incorporation of the above requests, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP, Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and any updates from the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of COSC.

28. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting closed at 14:00