

**SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (FORMERLY SUBJECT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2) - THURSDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (FORMERLY SUBJECT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2) HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 10:00**

**Present**

Councillor F D Bletsoe – Chairperson

S J Bletsoe

S Easterbrook

GC Haines

D M Hughes

**Present Virtually**

S Aspey

RM James

W J Kendall

M Lewis

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillors P Ford and R Williams

Suzanne Pile - Regulation Inspector – Care Inspectorate Wales

**Invitees**

Councillor Jane Gebbie

Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing

Claire Marchant

Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing

Daniel Bolton

Group Manager - Provider Services

Alex Williams

Group Manager - Locality Hubs

Ben Anderson

Care Inspectorate Wales

**Officers:**

Jessica Mclellan

Scrutiny Officer

Meryl Lawrence

Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

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**Declarations of Interest**

RM James – Personal – Wife is the Chairperson of the Bridgend Fostering Panel

**46. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Improvement Check of Childrens and Family Services June 2025**

Decision Made	<p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b></p> <p>Following detailed consideration and discussions with a Cabinet Member, Senior Officers and Invitees, the Committee made the following recommendation and request for additional information:</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Committee discussed the regional operating arrangements of the Emergency Duty Team and were advised that the arrangement was to be reviewed exploring what constitutes emergency out of hours social work and to provide clarity to prospective callers of the appropriate service to contact when necessary. The Committee <b>recommended</b> that Members are engaged in the review for their views.</li></ol> <p><b>Additional Information Requested</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. The Committee discussed the resources required to implement the fostering aspects of the Action Plan and to recruit more in-house foster carers and <b>requested</b> a Briefing paper for all Members highlighting the importance of promoting becoming a foster carer for Bridgend.</li></ol>
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

**47. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025**

Decision Made	<p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b></p> <p>Following detailed consideration and discussions with a Cabinet Member, Senior Officers and Invitees, the Committee made the following recommendations and request for additional information:</p>
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	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The Committee <b>recommended</b> that the abbreviations and acronyms in the Foster Care Recruitment Strategy in Appendix 3 are removed or that a glossary be added to assist the Committee and the public.</li> <li>4. The Committee expressed concern regarding the impact on service delivery of the Directorate's reliance on grant funding and <b>recommended</b> that this be added to the topics for discussion at the Deep Dive Group and requested that a list of all grant funding the Directorate has received in the last financial year and a breakdown of which services are funded by which grants, and which are one-off grants and which are recurring be provided to the Group and Members of the Committee.</li> <li>5. Having discussed their concerns regarding the reliance on grant funding in the above point, the Committee <b>recommended</b> that consideration be given to a zero-based budgeting exercise being undertaken exploring the possibility of bringing the services or parts of the services supported by grant funding into the Directorate's core budget, where possible.</li> </ol> <p><b>Additional Information Requested</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. The Committee discussed the improvements made in relation to workforce and recruitment which has resulted in a substantial reduction in agency staff and an increase in newly recruited or qualified social workers being employed. The Committee were mindful that there is a period of supervision and training which requires time to embed and expressed concern that this could be impacting on consistency of practice identified by the Inspectorate and <b>requested</b> a written update be provided.</li> </ol>
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

**48. Information Report - Quarter 4 / Year End Performance 2024-25**

Decision Made	<p><u><b>RESOLVED:</b></u></p> <p>The Committee considered the content of the Quarter 4 / Year End Performance 2024-25 report, the Corporate Performance Dashboard Quarter 4 2024-25 and the Regulatory Tracker updated for Quarter 4</p>
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	2024-25 within the remit of the Committee, had regard to the dashboard and the tracker when considering the Committee's Forward Work Programme report and made the following request for additional information:  7. The Committee expressed concern regarding the continued downward trend in relation to sickness absence and <b>requested</b> an update on any actions being taken to try and improve the position.
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

#### **49. Forward Work Programme Update**

Decision Made	<b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b>  That the Committee approved the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A subject to the inclusion of the recommendations below, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP as approved by the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee:  1. Review of the Regional Operating Model of the Emergency Duty Team; and 2. Review of the Fostering Service (in 9-12 months)
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

#### **50. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	None.
Date Decision Made	25 September 2025

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 13:06.

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