

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2
HELD IN REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY, 17 JUNE 2021 AT 09:30

Present

Councillor AJ Williams – Chairperson

S Aspey	MC Clarke	PA Davies	SK Dendy
J Gebbie	M Jones	JE Lewis	CA Webster
DBF White			

Apologies for Absence

AA Pucella, KJ Watts and PJ White

Officers:

Jackie Davies	Head of Adult Social Care
Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Tracy Watson	Scrutiny Officer

136. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

137. CARE INSPECTORATE WALES (CIW) INSPECTION OF BRIDGEND COUNTY
BOROUGH COUNCIL'S (BCBC) DOMICILIARY CARE IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE

The Corporate Director Social Services & Wellbeing introduced the report and advised that it was important to report regulatory reports in respect of Social Services & Wellbeing, which were pertinent to the remit of this Scrutiny Committee. She paid tribute to the Head of Adult Social Care, as responsible individual for the service, to the staff and frontline workforce as well as the Provider Service Manager - Support at Home/Accommodation Services and Operational Services Manager attending the meeting. The Head of Adult Social Care then presented the report.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services & Early Help thanked the Officers present for the report and the positive comments from people that were cared for. She felt that the Authority's care workers needed to be given the upmost credit, wanted to pass on her thanks, and said how proud she was of everybody.

Members asked the following:

A Member noted that the report was a welcome read and noted the pleasing extract at point 4.3 of the report. As Members, it was easy to scrutinise and criticise at any given time, but when inspections and reports as good as this were received, credit should be passed on to everybody in the Service.

A Member also stated that she was proud of the fact that the Authority had a very good record for looking after everyone. She noted that sickness levels, normally without the Pandemic, were quite high in the care profession, which was understandable. She asked how the sickness levels had fared during the pandemic.

The Head of Adult Social Care explained that there were times, since the pandemic started, where it did peak. Some of the teams were 25% staff down with some of that

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actual sickness, some off with Covid-19 related sickness and some isolating because of the track and trace process. In the care sector there was always with direct care staff higher figures, although what was able to be done throughout the pandemic was to look at the workforce as a whole, with staff prepared to go and work in different settings in order to cover those sickness levels. The Head of Adult Social Care did not have the sickness levels, but in adult services, the position was slightly above what it was in the previous year and that was with the Covid-19 situations. There were parts of the service where there were low levels of sickness and others where there were whole teams on the sick at certain times. What the report evidenced was whilst there were levels of sickness, the service continued to deliver everyone's care and support plan and was able to cover all of the services that were in place.

A Member noted the areas for improvement at 4.7 and asked how these had been addressed. The Member also noted at 4.8 the wording 'need to know basis' and asked for an explanation.

The Head of Adult Social Care explained that Regulation 60, notifications under the regulations, there was very clear criteria of when CIW should be notified which is done by an electronic system. When CIW had looked at individual files, they identified that there were some reportable incidents that hadn't been reported in the official way, although they did evidence that the incidents had been dealt with in an appropriate way through the normal safeguarding referrals. This was addressed straight away and all incidents are now reported through the notification system in the appropriate way. In terms of policies and procedures there was a whole raft that were required to be completed in order to register the service and that ranged from safeguarding, to infection control, to the Corporate HR Policies. When the service was registered in January 2020, all those policies and procedures were up to date. Some of the procedures need to be reviewed on annual basis but some could be in place for a number of years, although some were council wide procedures, so not just policies and procedures that related to the service. There was a mechanism in place to look at all policies and procedures with a rolling programme of reviews for those.

In terms of the comment at 4.8, it refers to when there was a safeguarding issue e.g. a medication error, a referral would be made into the safeguarding team and then a notification should go in to CIW on their online system. CIW evidenced that safeguarding referrals had been done but not the CIW notification. Therefore what was being said was that when the notifications are made, that they are only made to people that needed to know about those incidents, including CIW, the safeguarding team, the Head of Adult Social Care as the regulated Responsible Individual and families and people involved.

A Member referred to page 15 paragraph 3 and asked if the service was now back on track with formal supervisions. The Member also referred to paragraph 4 and asked for clarification as to whether the quality assurance report had been completed and what the current situation was with the latest report.

In terms of the quality assurance report, the Head of Adult Social Care confirmed that this was now in hand and they would be available.

The Provider Service Manager - Support at Home/Accommodation Services explained that in internal residential care homes, supervision continued to take place during the pandemic, because team leaders and residential managers were on site. It was a little bit different in the community, with domiciliary staff, because they worked right across the borough. It was really important knowing that face-to-face formal meetings could not take place, due to the restrictions, although the wellbeing calls continued. Team leaders continued doing joint visits to bring people into the service and undertake the assessments and support plans, and saw staff face to face on some of those visits,

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where possible. The Team were now back on track in relation to supervision and appraisals had commenced.

The Operational Services Manager explained that in her service area a lot of support that was in place had been increased for staff on a more informal level of supervision by placing team leaders, etc., within services continuously. Without being able to use office bases, alternative methods for supervision needed to be considered e.g., virtually, etc. The Team were now back on track in relation to direct face-to-face supervision, there was a need to be mindful of the restrictions still in place and adapting to that. One area that was increased during that time was a group supervision option, rather than just a one-to-one, which seemed to be an effective mechanism of support for staff and something being taken forward.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services & Early Help noted that social services and social care, in particular, were still under an incredible amount of stress and strain and the workforce under pressure with people leaving the care service to go back into retail and hospitality jobs as the economy opened up. There were enormous difficulties recruiting into these important roles and she appealed to elected Members to publicise and promote the career pathways within social care, to those suitable in the community who might be looking for employment.

A Member asked if the same problem was occurring within the independent sectors as well and was a concern to the authority.

The Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing began by saying in support to what the Cabinet Member had said, retention, first and foremost but then recruitment into care work roles was a challenge both in the in-house service and the independent sector. People had lots of choices and the more that could be done, collectively, to promote working and opportunities with the sector, including job satisfaction and the difference people could make, then the better.

The Chairperson thanked The Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing and the Head of Adult Social Care for their report and gave a massive thank you and congratulations to the staff for such a positive report and also thanked them in recognition of their continued hard work and commitment.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the contents of the report and noted the contents of the final inspection report attached in Appendix A.

138. CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION NOMINATION REPORT

The Chief Officer – Legal, HR & Regulatory Services submitted a report, the purpose of which was to request the Committee to nominate one Member as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee as an invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

The Chairperson invited nominations, following which it was

RESOLVED: That Councillor P J White be nominated to represent Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 as an Invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

139. **NOMINATION TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD SCRUTINY PANEL**

The Chief Officer – Legal, HR & Regulatory Services submitted a report, the purpose of which was to request the Committee to nominate one Member to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

The Chairperson invited nominations, following which it was

RESOLVED: That Councillor P J White be nominated to represent Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 as an Invitee to meetings of the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

140. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Senior Democratic Services Officer – Scrutiny presented the Committee with the proposed draft outline Forward Work Programme (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 Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.6; and asked the Committee to note that the proposed draft Forward Work Programmes for the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of COSC, with the comments from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee, following consideration in their June Committee meetings.

Members of the Committee discussed the following:

A Member asked if the report on the Social Services and Wellbeing Strategic Programme coming to the committee in July, could cover how the service was going to operate this coming year in terms remote and home working and what that might mean for the service and/ if it would be opening up at any time.

Members of the Committee asked for updates on the following

1. What is happening regarding remote/ home / face to face working for Members in the coming year?
2. Staff have had DSE's for working from home but what about the requirements for Members to complete DSE's?
3. Has consideration been given for Members to have the appropriate length of meetings / breaks?

A Member raised the issue that there had not been a response to the questions requested in the previous meeting regarding Safeguarding. The Chairperson advised that it would be raised with the Directorate in the next Officer Planning Meeting, that timely responses were needed.

There were no further items identified for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.6, and this could be revisited at the next meeting.

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

RESOLVED: That the Committee considered and agreed the proposed draft outline Forward Work Programme in Appendix A and noted that the

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proposed draft Forward Work Programmes and any feedback from the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

141. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

The meeting closed at 13:00