

Minutes



Performance Scrutiny Committee - People

Date: 28 February 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Present: Councillors W Routley (Chair), J Cleverly, T Watkins, B Davies, P Drewett, D Jenkins, M Pimm, A Screen and M Al-Nuaimi

In Attendance: Samantha Schanzer (Scrutiny Adviser), Taylor Strange (Governance Support Officer), Pamela Tasker (Governance Support Officer), Caroline Ryan-Phillips (Head of Prevention and Inclusion) and Sally Ann Jenkins (Strategic Director - Social Services)

Apologies: Councillors C Townsend and P Bright

1 Apologies

Cllrs P Bright and C Townsend.

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held 24th January 2023 were **accepted as a true and accurate record.**

4 Prevention and Inclusion Update

The report was presented by the Strategic Director for Social Services and the Head of Prevention and Inclusion.

Questions:

The Committee thanked the Officers for their hard work. The committee asked what facilities would be needed over the coming years to help aid programmes and staffing.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion noted that the Service Plan covers the immediate short-term areas of focus. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion noted that there was a key focus on the quality of interventions provided as well as the quality of the workforce. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion informed committee that most of the work carried out takes place in service users' homes and noted that they had key working relationships with schools. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion noted the only building provision they need currently is for Flying Start. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion highlighted the importance of using the spaces they

already have available.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion informed committee that the focus in the next five years would be on growing core services and partnerships but that they were working with Housing and Communities to identify and make use of community facilities where necessary.
- The Strategic Director noted the focus on working in partnership was to ensure that all services provided to people work effectively. The Strategic Director noted that the council doesn't provide every service to a person.

The Committee asked whether they had an idea of what spaces would be beneficial to the service in the future, such as soft play areas and green spaces etc to work with service users.

- The Strategic Director noted that the place that used held less importance than the quality of the staff and therefore the focus should reflect that.

The Committee asked whether the Governance Board included representation from Trade Unions and how much input the Trade Unions have had on the recommissioning programme.

- The Strategic Director informed committee that they established an internal for Newport Board which works with various representatives to have oversight of the budget, services, and the recommissioning of the Families First service. The Strategic Director noted that due to its nature, it is an internal Officer's Board and therefore Trade Unions aren't represented on it.
- The Strategic Director noted that the recommissioning of the Families First service had been completed. The Strategic Director clarified that the impact on staffing was not an internal issue but instead an issue around commissioned services and Union representation would've been with their own organisations and Unions linked to them.

The Committee asked how the service had been affected with difficulties recruiting qualified staff.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion noted that recruitment was an issue impacting all services and that a key focus was on providing training and development from within. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion noted that there was working being undertaken to upskill current staff and expand their breadth of knowledge.

The Committee welcomed the work that the team and detailed the positive impact that Youth Service had on the community. The Committee noted that they felt there wasn't a lot of youth leadership or youth clubs. The Committee asked what form youth work will take.

- The Strategic Director noted that work is ongoing to grow the Youth Service across the city out of the resources we have. The Strategic Director highlighted the importance of providing services to meet the needs of different areas and communities. The Strategic Director acknowledged staffing issues but felt that a focused approach and working with partners is effective in addressing these issues.

The Committee felt that the visibility of youth workers is important within the community, as they can act as role models.

- The Strategic Director understood the importance of these role models within the community and appreciated the feedback.

The Committee asked how many youth clubs had been reinstated.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion informed committee that youth club provision within the city is still a work in progress but there were 9 currently. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion noted that the number of clubs was not the only goal but also the frequency of their operation. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion also noted that there is currently limited staff and resources although the service is pleased with what has been achieved so far.

The Committee asked were there plans for outreach teams to undertake targeted work on a street level.

- The Strategic Director highlighted that once staff had completed other work then outreach work would be able to commence. The Strategic Director emphasised the importance of understanding why Anti-Social Behaviour takes place, and then working with the range of partners to tackle this such as those in Youth Justice.

The Committee asked whether the service worked with schools in order to help deal with issues.

- The Strategic Director detailed to the committee that schools and education are worked with on issues, however there is a place for wider discussion to take place with education.

The Committee noted that the Youth and Community course taught in Newport struggled with staffing to run the qualifications.

- The Strategic Director informed committee that they do have qualified staff and asked if cases where this is an issue can be forwarded to them so that it can be dealt with by their team.

The Committee raised that certain wards lacked parks and sporting facilities and asked whether there were plans to build facilities and whether they were working with partners to rectify this.

- The Strategic Director noted that the wider provisions of sport and leisure isn't specifically within their remit, although when it does fall within the areas control, they do work with their partners. The Strategic Director reiterated the importance of the quality of staff versus the place where meetings take place.
- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion reinforced the importance of partnership working. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion confirmed that discussions took place.

The Committee queried why Duffryn hadn't been included in the list of new and planned provision for Flying Start.

- The Strategic Director noted that there were already established Flying Start provisions in place within Duffryn and the key focus has been on improving provision for the the whole of Newport which meant that focus was on areas that lack provisions. The Strategic Director noted that further details could be given more directly outside of this committee.

The Chair reminded committee that their role was to assess the impact for the whole of the city, not specific wards or areas.

The Committee questioned whether the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) backlog caused by the pandemic had been cleared and whether the DFG would be expanded.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion raised that the revenue funding had increased in the current year and explained that although the work in clearing the backlog had been slower than preferred, they were confident that the backlog should be cleared by the end of the next financial year. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion then explained that once the backlog had been cleared the team will then be able to look further ahead.

The Committee asked whether housing associations work with the Council on anti-social behaviour prevention.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion detailed that the team does have links with social and private landlords, although it's not their strongest area but this is something that can be investigated. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion explained that they have a focus on building links and clearing their backlog with the desire to encourage a wider breadth of referrals once they can. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion wanted to highlight a key focus being on early prevention within the referrals.

The Committee asked whether they were looking to expand by bringing in more organisations under their control.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion informed committee that the current focus was working with the teams and services they had currently. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion noted the focus on creating working partnerships rather than having everything done in house.

The Committee wanted to thank the Officers again for their work and highlighted the importance of areas having good role models.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion emphasised the importance of positive influences in people's lives such as those in youth clubs and schools etc. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion noted that they make sure all members in the social services create positive links within the community without creating dependency.

The Committee agreed with this and asked why age 25 is the cut off point for youth work.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion stated that traditionally youth work covered ages 0-25 years old; work done after this point was covered by Adult Services.

The Committee asked for more information on the work done by the Substance Misuse Team.

- The Head of Prevention and Inclusion highlighted that all areas of work are important and noted that substance misuse issues are acted upon in a regional team. The Head of Prevention and Inclusion detailed that there is a range of services within an integrated pathway, with emphasis on tackling substance misuse in all stages of its development.
- The Strategic Director highlighted that peer mentorship has helped many people dealing with substance misuse.

The Chair wanted to thank the committee for the questions raised during the meeting and thanked the Officers for presenting the report and for the answers provided.

After the meeting, the committee noted that the numbers for Welsh language provision in 2022/23 were low and needed to be improved significantly for the coming year. The committee asked whether the Officers agreed and if so what steps were they proposing to take to fulfil that key priority area.

- The committee were informed that:
- There is agreement with the statement made and there is commitment within Prevention & Inclusion to improve the Welsh language provision of Flying Start.
- The 2022/23 target for Welsh Language take-up reflects the current offer available in Newport through Flying Start.
- 2023/24 plans include an increase in Flying Start Welsh Medium providers in the form of private Cylch Meithrin who have been successful via a procurement process to increase the available Welsh Medium places from 1 setting to 4.
- There is also a commitment and significant work/support being undertaken with existing English medium settings to increase Welsh language skills amongst practitioners and increase the Welsh language offer across the board.
- Work is ongoing with the Welsh Education Forum (WEF) to encourage take-up, promote the benefits of bilingualism and promote preschool childcare places and Ti a Fi (baby and toddler) groups across the city by working with Mudiad Meithrin, Welsh Schools and their pupils and LA Education department.
- Capital Projects proposed for the city through Flying Start expansion has a focus on the development of Welsh medium childcare, and plans are awaiting initial sign off by WG and will then be presented once approval has been given.
- Parental choice is always a factor that we must be mindful of, however working with partners including Health, Education (WEF) and Third Sector organisations is vital to increase the uptake of Welsh medium provision. This work takes place via marketing, information sharing, upskilling the workforce in terms of their own Welsh language skills and targeted procurement of Welsh medium childcare or capital development.

5 **Conclusions of Committee Reports**

There were no comments or recommendations due to the session being information only.

6 **Scrutiny Adviser Reports**

The Scrutiny Advisor informed committee that there had been a request to alter the work programme, whereby a report would go the meeting scheduled for the 28th March 2023 instead of the 14th March 2023.

This was agreed by the Committee.

The date of the next meeting would be the 14th March 2023 at 10am.

7 **Live Event**

The recording of the meeting can be watched [here](#).