

Draft Minutes



Performance Scrutiny Committee – People

Date: Tuesday, 12th December 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Hybrid Meeting/Committee Room 1

Present: Councillors W Routley (Chair), J Cleverly, C Townsend, B Davies, P Drewett and D Jenkins

In Attendance: Cllr S Marshall (Cabinet Member for Social Services – Childrens Services), Cllr J Hughes (Cabinet Member for Social Services – Adult Services), Sally Anne Jenkins (Strategic Director for Social Services), Mary Ryan (Head of Adult Services), Rhianydd Williams (Service Manager for Integrated Family Support), Mandy Shide (Service Manager for Prevention and Inclusion), Rhian Brookes (Service Manager for Childrens Services), Samantha Schanzer (Scrutiny Advisor), Emily Mayger (Governance Officer) and Simon Richards (Governance Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Bright

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Bright and Cllr Harvey as the Cabinet Member for Community and Wellbeing.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the **28th November 2023** were **agreed as a true and accurate record.**

4. 23-24 Mid-Year Reports - Social Services

Prevention and Inclusion

Invitees:

Mandy Shide - Service Manager for Prevention and Inclusion

Rhianydd Williams - Service Manager for Integrated Family Support

The Service Manager for Integrated Family Support (IFS) and the Service Manager for Prevention and Inclusion (PI) presented the report.

- The Committee congratulated the Youth Service for their aim to achieve the Silver Quality Mark.
- The Committee queried who provided out of hours support for Youth Services. The Service Manager (PI) noted that most support was provided in-house but there were some contracts with community organisations with specialist skills.
- The Committee appreciated the inclusion of case studies.
- The Committee raised concern that incomplete actions were reported as green and highlighted the action for Robust Volunteering Provision. The Service Manager (PI) assured Committee of ongoing work with Communications and Human Resources and anticipated that the action would be completed by the deadline, which was why it had been marked green. The Cabinet Member for Social Services – Adult Services noted that actions could be influenced by outside parties and subject to delays which could change its RAG rating but highlighted that green ratings indicated that an action was on track. The Cabinet Member for Social Services – Children’s Services highlighted that the commentary for actions would provide context and highlight any difficulties. The Service Manager (PI) informed Committee that no risks had been identified regarding the volunteering project.

Children and Young People Services

Invitees:

Councillor Stephen Marshall - Cabinet Member for Social Services – Children’s Services

Sally Ann Jenkins – Strategic Director for Social Services

Mary Ryan – Head of Adult Services

Rhian Brook – Service Manager for Childrens Teams

The Service Manager for Childrens Teams (CT) presented the report.

- The Committee queried the issues regarding staff retention. The Service Manager (CT) informed the Committee that it was a national issue and that there were difficulties within residential services specifically. The Head of Adults Services noted that there too few Social Workers in training which created a deficit and highlighted the importance of retention and training which Newport City Council offered though the Open University.
- The Committee queried whether there were contingency plans regarding the Not for Profit/Eliminate project. The Service Manager (CT) informed Committee that they had looked to address the highest cost pressures such as reducing the use

of agency staff by bringing in internal staff and building on the existing portfolio, citing Cambridge House which was due to be ready in July 2024.

- The Committee queried what could be done to increase collaborative working with the NHS. The Cabinet Member for Social Services – Children’s Services informed the Committee of the close relationship with the Health Service which covered a spectrum of areas. They noted the significant pressure on NHS services and added that the work of Social Services helped reduce the quantity of hospital patients. The Service Manager (CT) highlighted Windmill Farm as an example of collaboration with the Health Services and added that Windmill Farm was at full capacity.
- The Committee queried whether there was any support the Committee could provide to help ensure funding for VAWDASV. The Strategic Director for Social Services explained that funding for VAWDASV came from a mixture of funding streams and added that although reasonably secure, they would continue to monitor whether grant funding remained at the same level. The Committee noted their concern regarding the funding.
- The Committee requested further information regarding housing for care leavers. The Strategic Director noted they could not discuss specifics in the meeting but agreed to provide a general information report to the Committee.
- The Cabinet Member noted the challenges faced by Social Services and highlighted their successes. They noted their appreciation for the work undertaken by all staff from within Newport City Council, partnerships, and foster carers.

Adult and Community Services

Invitees

Councillor Jason Hughes – Cabinet Member for Social Services – Adult Services

Sally Ann Jenkins – Strategic Director for Social Services

Mary Ryan – Head of Adult Services

Mandy Shide – Service Manager for Prevention and Inclusion

The Head of Adult Services presented the report.

- The Committee asked for clarification on where stroke patients would be treated. The Head of Adult Services informed Committee that from December 2023, they would be treated at Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr, with the intention of it becoming a centre of excellence.
- The Committee requested an update on the progress of the Newport Dementia Hwb. The Head of Adult Services reassured Committee of the strong partnership work and desire to progress this project but highlighted challenges with funding. They noted they were looking into alternative routes of driving progress such as slippage funds, partnership work and using Council-owned facilities. The

Committee recommended that there was a continued search for an alternative internal venue provision.

- The Committee queried the impact of not meeting the target for Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs). The Head of Adult Services informed Committee that it was a statutory function. They noted that work had been done regionally to equalise pay between Local Authorities within Gwent to aid in retention. They informed Committee that 3 AHMPs had been employed since the summer and 4 were currently in training. They highlighted the importance of the investment into AHMPs and the need to appropriately support them.
- The Cabinet Member for Social Services – Adult Services reassured Committee of the commitment to Dementia Services in Newport. The Head of Adult Services assured Committee that despite delays in the Dementia Hwb, there was and would be continuous daily support for Dementia patients and their families. The Cabinet Member thanked all staff for their work amid growing pressures. They highlighted that Newport was a leading authority in Social Services nationally in many areas and that the service redesign had ensured that the service remained fit for purpose.

5. Conclusions of Committee Reports

- The Committee thanked and congratulated staff for their hard work.
- The Committee requested an information report regarding the work being done for care leavers, including housing.
- The Committee highlighted the importance of funding for the VAWDASV service.
- The Committee recommended looking at alternative internal provision for the Newport Dementia Hwb.

6. Scrutiny Adviser Reports

a) Actions Arising

The Scrutiny Adviser provided an update to the Committee on the outstanding actions.

b) Forward Work Programme

The Scrutiny Adviser informed the Committee that the Budget meeting date had been rescheduled for the 16th January to ensure that it fell within the consultation period.