

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD AT ON THURSDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2021**

PRESENT

County Councillors A Jenner (Chair), S M Hayes, S McNicholas, G Morgan, L Rijnenberg, L Roberts, K M Roberts-Jones, D Rowlands, A Williams, J M Williams, R Williams, J Gibson-Watt, S C Davies, Mrs S. Davies, Mrs M Evitts and E Roderick

In attendance: County Councillors

Cabinet Portfolio Holders In Attendance: County Councillors R Powell and MC Alexander

Officers: Dylan Owen, Head of Commissioning

Other Officers In Attendance: Carly Skitt, Assistant Programme Director and Sarah Astley, Strategic Programme Manager, Schools Transformation

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors R G Thomas and T J Van-Rees

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

County Councillor D Rowlands declared a personal interest in item 4, North Powys Wellbeing Programme as a Governor of Ysgol Calon Y Dderwen and having children in the same school.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS

There were no disclosures of party whips.

4. NORTH POWYS WELLBEING PROGRAMME

The Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee had been invited to attend to participate in this item.

The Assistant Programme Director, Head of Commissioning and Strategic Programme Manager, Schools Transformation gave a presentation to update Members on the North Powys Programme. The presentation will be circulated to Members following the meeting.

Discussion:

- The Strategic Outline Case will be scrutinised at an additional meeting of the Committee on 21 January 2022 before being considered for approval by Cabinet on 1 March 2022

- The Chair noted that the Committee had been briefed so far but would welcome the opportunity to scrutinize details. She would hope that themes could be identified for scrutiny before decisions are made.
- It would be useful to scrutinize the Strategic Outline Case, Outline Business Case and governance arrangements. The Chair requested a copy of the principles of working together.
- The Bach a Lach scheme was noted but Members questioned teachers' involvement given that this was for Foundation and Pre School phases. Both training and activities have been delivered and it is hoped that these will be available more widely. The scheme has been operating in north Powys for approximately 18 months. Any project receiving transformation funds is subject to evaluation and this is being carried out by an external company. The evaluation report is likely to be available in May 2022. It was hoped that the evaluation would continue as children transfer into education. The Assistant Programme Director agreed to investigate this issue further.
- Further detail was requested regarding how the health and education will work together and whether there will be opportunities for satellite health care provision in other schools in North Powys particularly in light of potential new school builds in the area. The Chair has been keen to promote the wider benefits to the area throughout the programme. The Assistant Programme Director reported that the aim was to offer one stop for services and in providing those in close proximity regardless of whether a family has universal or complex needs would be of benefit.
- Work is ongoing with Early Years to be more collaborative, and this will progress further. An informal group to explore synergies is to be set up. The operating model for early years is rather disparate and closer working with all partners is required to understand what the new model could look like. The Chair noted that this should not be developed in isolation and become too self-contained a group.
- A question was raised regarding wider engagement with the public. There have been several staff briefings and meetings with key stakeholders. A survey has been completed on campus. The next step is to take concept drawings to these groups to stimulate further discussion. Topics such as travel times and the use of digital services will be discussed. An Engagement Officer and Community Development Officer will be in place to facilitate engagement.
- Communication with the District General Hospitals was also key to ensure that full use was made of the facilities that will be provided. A business case to support cross border working has been produced.

Outcomes:

- **The Chair would write to the Assistant Programme Director outlining the Committees' expectations**
- **The Chair would discuss the matter with the Chair of the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee to establish how to take scrutiny of the programme forward**
- **The presentation will be forwarded to Members of both Committees for information**
- **Principles of Working Together to be made available**

5.	MINUTES
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Documents:

- Minutes of the last formal meeting held on 8 September 2021

Outcomes:

- **The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes as a correct record**

6.	ANNUAL REPORT - SOCIAL SERVICES COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS
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Documents:

- Annual Report 2020/21 Social Services Complaints, Compliments and Representations Report

Discussion:

- In 2017/18 there had been more complaints but fewer enquiries- this has reversed in recent years as communications have improved and the service has evolved
- Complaints can arise where a decision does not go in favour of a client. Such complaints are inevitable in this service.
- If a case is subject to a court case, staff are not permitted to correspond until such time as the case is resolved – this too can generate complaints
- The pandemic has raised further issues as some clients find virtual meetings challenging.
- The importance of effective communication has been highlighted. The Committee asked for a breakdown of themes within ‘communication’ for clarity
- The Service takes the approach of ‘right first time’
- A new Policy Officer and Complaints Manager has been appointed and is having a positive effect. Learning is taken from complaints to guide policy and practice. Adult Services are developing a Customer Care Charter which will inform the public as to what they can expect.
- The Portfolio Holder reiterated that there will always be two types of complaints – those where a family member opposes decisions made and those which highlight a potential failing. The first are inevitable and the second must be a source of learning and improvement.
- The Committee questioned whether training was given in non verbal communications and the challenges particularly in virtual meetings. It was hoped staff could be briefed and trained to ensure meetings are positive. Social workers and occupational therapists are trained and experts in communication. Staff have supervision and are able to talk through challenges. The Head of Commissioning indicated that he would review the new ways of working and discuss with the other Heads of Service if specific training was needed.
- It was suggested that anonymised compliments could also be shared with the Committee as these were as important as complaints for identifying good practice and whether training could be rolled out
- Specific time is not allocated to managers to review complaints. Complaints are encouraged and reviewed at Senior Management Team where decisions can be made regarding reviewing of policies.

Independent reviewing officers can be based anywhere in the country – they are professionals and further information regarding the required training and qualifications would be circulated to Members.

- Within social care it is considered positive if clients feel enabled to complain

Outcomes:

- **The Annual Report was noted**
- **Further information would be obtained regarding training and qualifications for the independent Reviewing Officers**

7. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 3 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).

8. ACCOMMODATION FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN POWYS

Documents:

- Scrutiny overview report
- Report of the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

Discussion:

- The service is looking to develop different types of accommodation to respond to a range of issues including guidance, legislation and the needs of specific areas within Powys. Also need to consider how Covid has changed peoples' ideas about the type of accommodation they would like.
- Officers were confident that partners could be found to provide accommodation, as the proposed long term contracts would allow partners to invest capital in the accommodation and see returns on this investment.
- Much of the current accommodation provided did not meet modern standards such as rooms having en-suites and this was the situation across Wales and there was an urgency to develop better provision.
- Communication was seen as a key element of the development and the Communication Team was involved in the Accommodation Steering Group.
- Lessons needed to be learnt in respect of the communication from the Neuadd Maldwyn development as issues needed to be pre-empted.
- Citizen engagement featured in the Communications plan. The Committee considered that engagement with communities was important and the involvement of scrutiny was raised and how people could be involved in scrutiny.
- The development of the Health and Care Academy was noted and its role in developing a care workforce, which currently was unstable.
- It was noted that from a scrutiny perspective, the Committees' involvement became about late in the Academy's development. The roadmap for the Academy was questioned.

- The Portfolio Holder advised that an issue which scrutiny could consider was the need to ensure that access to the same level of learning was available to all students across Powys disregarding of whether they accessed learning online or at the Academy's base in Bronllys.
- In addition to talking to individual involved in developing and running the Academy it was considered that Scrutiny should also engage with the students.

Outcomes:

- **Involvement of the Scrutiny Committee should be developed at this early stage.**
- **Engagement with communities regarding the proposals was important and Scrutiny should look at how to involve people in its work.**
- **The roadmap for the Health and Care Academy should be considered by the Committee.**

9.	DOMICILIARY CARE
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The Committee received a presentation by the Head of Commissioning.

Discussion:

- The service was currently managing demand but the challenges were significant.
- Pressures in other parts of the care system was having an impact on the social care budget, which included situations where people were not receiving healthcare but needed support, individuals not being able to access care through direct payments and other service providers being unable to continue providing a service.
- Recruitment to domiciliary care had been successful. The use of micro enterprises was helping to mitigate the impact on the service. Individuals who could provide a few hours care each day, were valuable to provide care in their local area but could not travel great distances to provide care. The service was talking to this potential workforce and the needs in local areas could be promoted.

Outcomes:

- **Information about micro enterprises and how they could support the care system and provide care in their local neighbourhood should be promoted to all Councillors.**

10.	WCCIS
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The Committee received an update from the Head of Commissioning regarding the issues with the WCCIS data system

Outcomes:

- **The Committee had previously raised concerns and recognised the risks. The Committee gave its full support to the Portfolio Holders in raising the issues with the Minister.**

County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)