

Health and Care Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Venue

By Zoom

Meeting Date

Friday, 2 June 2023

Meeting Time

10.00 am

For further information please contact

Wyn Richards

Scrutiny Manager and Head of

Democratic Services

wyn.richards@powys.gov.uk



County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5LG

26-05-2023

The use of Welsh by participants is welcomed. If you wish to use Welsh please inform us by noon, two working days before the meeting

AGENDA

1.	APOLOGIES
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To receive apologies for absence.

2.	ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR
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Arising from the Annual Meeting of the Council, to elect a Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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To receive declarations of interest from Members.

4.	DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS
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To receive disclosures of prohibited party whips which a Member has been given in relation to the meeting in accordance with Section 78(3) of the Local Government Measure 2011.

(NB: Members are reminded that, under Section 78, Members having been given a prohibited party whip cannot vote on a matter before the Committee.)

5.	MINUTES
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To authorise the Chair to sign the minutes of the last meetings held as follows as a correct record.

27-01-2023

31-01-2023

31-03-2023

(Pages 3 - 38)

6.	CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING BOARD ACTIVITY REPORT
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To receive and consider the Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report.

(Pages 39 - 44)

7.	WORK PROGRAMME
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To note the scrutiny forward work programme.

(Pages 45 - 46)

Committee Reflection

Following the close of the meeting, the Committee is asked to take 5 to 10 minutes to reflect on today's meeting.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT BY ZOOM ON FRIDAY, 27 JANUARY 2023

PRESENT: County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)
County Councillors B Breeze, G E Jones, G Preston, G W Ratcliffe, C Robinson,
C Walsh and C Kenyon-Wade

Cabinet Portfolio Holders In Attendance: County Councillors S Cox (Cabinet Member for a Caring Powys, R Church (Cabinet Member for a Safer Powys) and S C Davies (Cabinet Member for Future Generations)

Officers: Wyn Richards (Scrutiny Manager and Head of Democratic Services), Nina Davies Director of Social Services and Housing), Sharon Powell (Head of Children's Services, Michael Gray (Head of Adults Services), Catherine James (Head of Transformation and Democratic Services), James Langridge-Thomas (Deputy Head of Transformation and Democratic Services) and Emma Palmer (Director of Corporate Services).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors C Robinson, E Roderick, E. Vaughan, J Ewing, G Morgan and L Rijnenberg (Other Council business) and from County Councillor S McNicholas (Cabinet Member for Future Generations)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest from Members relating to items to be considered on the agenda.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS

The Committee did not receive any disclosures of prohibited party whips which a Member had been given in relation to the meeting in accordance with Section 78(3) of the Local Government Measure 2011.

4. PRESENTATION - CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Documents Considered:

- Presentation – Corporate Improvement Plan

Issues Discussed:

- The Plan has been informed by intelligence from a variety of sources, including the Well-Being assessment together with public engagement and consultation.
- The Plan sets the direction for forthcoming years and will need to move forward in parallel with the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy and may need to be amended depending on decisions regarding the budget.
- The number of objectives had been condensed. Climate, nature and equalities were key and the Council needed to understand its impact on those areas.
- It was the intention to review Impact Assessments to include the impact on climate and environment.

- Work was also underway with partners such as the PSB (Public Service Board) and the RPB (Regional Partnership Board), to ensure synergies between various plans to avoid duplication of work elsewhere.
- Challenge had been received from the Economy, Residents and Communities Scrutiny Committee that the plan was not explicit enough about partnerships, co-production and collaboration. The comments received from the Scrutiny Committees were being used to modify the final version of the plan.

Cabinet Member Comments:

- Whilst Children and Education were mentioned Children’s Services was not specifically mentioned. There was a need for a more detailed section in relation to children and Children’s Services. Unpaid carers were important to the Council as if they did not provide care and support this responsibility would fall on the Council. Sometimes those cared for are unknown to the Council. In addition, some carers are young people, and there was a need for more work to identify those young carers.
- In relation to Adult Social Care there was a need to understand the perfect storm of pressures falling on adult services such as sustained high demand, issues relating to recruitment and retention and demography issues. Therefore there would be an interest as to how the plan addressed these issues and improved outcomes for people. The strength based approach was key to assisting people before deciding on the need for services. There was a need for a new approach instead of focussing on the provision of services, co-producing solutions with others.

Questions:

Question	Response
<p>Does the document achieve the right balance, noting the relevant pressures for today and the future. Climate appeared regularly in the document but children was mentioned much less. Pleased that collaborative working was raised by the other scrutiny committee particularly in relation to isolation.</p> <p>Isolation has been mentioned several times, does the document recognise rurality adequately.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Response: It is for Cabinet, Councillors and officers to work out the detail to address the plan. It was covered in Objective 1 – strengthening and co-working with communities. There was a need to focus on bringing citizens into decision making processes in future.</p> <p>Officer Response: Rurality is something else which was implicit rather than explicit. Highlighting the rural nature of the Council could be undertaken and linking that to the rural cost analysis undertaken previously. The document was strategic in nature, and it was the Integrated Business Plans which would indicate how services would contribute to the objectives. This was also about how the whole Council came together to support the delivery of the objectives. The objectives were broad enough to encompass all services although they were not mentioned explicitly.</p> <p>It was difficult to keep the document succinct</p>

	<p>and strategic but did not reference all aspects within it. The detail would sit below the strategic plan.</p> <p>ACTION: Director of Corporate Services to consider the inclusion of rurality in the document.</p>
<p>In relation to loneliness, the percentage stands out as if not addressed it could lead to depression, mental health issues, relationship issues and housing issues. There is a need to focus on a model of proactive community resilience and prevention models implemented.</p> <p>This would tie into rurality and opportunities for funding under the Barnett formula as rurality is not taken into account. Assurances were sought from officers and Cabinet Members that difficulties in accessing services was due to geography and rurality rather than the Council not providing those services.</p> <p>There are a series of dates in the document as to what we will do, by when. In relation to Social Services transformation can we have an explanation of what transformation means together with timelines. Is this subject to funding being made available. The budget should be the enabler to make the service look different, but the vision should set out what the service should look like in future.</p>	<p>Officer Response: In terms of Social Services transformation a transformation board was to be established. The Council was advertising for permanent Heads of Service posts. The Council was at the beginning of the transformation journey and unable to provide the detail currently.</p> <p>The loneliness agenda was important and early help and intervention was key. The Council needed to work with and support people in the most appropriate way for them.</p> <p>The Plan needed to be strategic and high level and not looking at specific services which would assist in breaking down silos and encouraging joint working with partners. The points about children and the climate had been noted and a review of the wording in the document would be considered. There were also other boards undertaking key aspects of work such as the Regional Partnership Board.</p> <p>Cabinet Member Response: Issues such as rurality and loneliness required a whole system approach across the Council and working in collaboration with partners.</p>
<p>Climate and ecological issues are key drivers of the need for Service change and redesign. There was also rurality and demographic ageing. The Plan needs to stress these key issues as to why the Council needs to transform.</p> <p>What has been done to date to engage service users and what is proposed.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Carers, learning disability and volunteers forums have been engaged as well as third sector organisations.</p> <p>Staff in services had been asked to engage with service users. Existing focus groups such as for older people, learning disabilities and mental health had been engaged as part of the process. Whilst the Council had tried to engage as widely as possible the level of responses was disappointing. The Council would continue to engage and use those</p>

	<p>channels available to the Council but there was a need for the assistance of Members to improve response rates from constituents.</p> <p>There would be an opportunity to review the plan annually. There would also be in year engagement on specific aspects of the plan for example if a change of service model was being proposed.</p>
<p>How do we look at a long term, 15 year strategy as it is a very reactive programme with short term planning (reacting to budgets) and long term changes. The council needs to make some harsh decisions now. How does the Plan enable us to do this working across future Councils as well.</p> <p>How do you measure the difference for the long term.</p>	<p>Officer Response:</p> <p>This was the importance of the Future Generations Act, long term strategic planning and the lasting impact of decisions taken now on the future. It was sometimes difficult to measure the impact of current decisions on the long term. Some of the impacts of the plan would not be seen in the current term of Council but in future years.</p> <p>There were high level national well-being indicators. There was also the Well-Being plan which was long term and the Council needed to align with that. The budget was challenging. Discussions had been held with the Cabinet about reimagining the Council and how to redesign sustainable services for the future. There would be a programme of work with the Council and others to consider what services were needed for the future and who provided them. The Council could not continue as it had operated and needed to consider long term sustainable change.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <p>Officers to consider the establishment of a suite of KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) to measure where preventative work in place of reactive work was leading to a successful step down in services.</p>
<p>Is there more we can do with Objective 1, improving awareness of services in communities, tagging on prevention work, can the Council do more to reach families about early support, technology assisted care.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Response:</p> <p>Need to bring citizens on board in terms of deliberative processes leading to decisions.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <p>Officers to consider the need for more preventative work as part of the plan and the provision of wider information to communities regarding services.</p>
<p>Pages 12 / 15 / 18 of the Plan there are sections on how performance will be measured but there are no KPIs included. How does scrutiny obtain assurances</p>	<p>Officer Response:</p> <p>Whilst data provides a picture it needs to be triangulated. The Plan would use results based accountability with scorecards against each objectives, which included what</p>

<p>about delivery. These need to be high level KPIs in the plan.</p> <p>In addition there is a need to look at benchmarking data against other authorities.</p>	<p>difference was being made. There was also a need to use service level data and benchmarking information.</p> <p>Since the pandemic there was a set of indicators which the Council had to provide and could be made available to Members.</p> <p>ACTION: Data to be provided to Members – scorecards and service date / benchmarking.</p>
<p>Will half of the population of Powys be over 65 by 2043.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Demographics is one of the Council's strategic risks. The pandemic has also affected people's life choices about work and how they live their lives. This was why there was an objective in the corporate plan about employment.</p>

Outcomes:

- Noted
- Actions as detailed above.

5.	CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING REPORT ACTIVITY REPORT
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Documents Considered:

- Report of the Interim Director of Social Services and Housing

Issues Discussed:

Cabinet Member Comment:

- In August 2022 Audit Wales inspected the Council regarding its Corporate Safeguarding arrangements.
- The Audit Wales report was issued in December 2022 but the issues raised were already the subject of a review during the Autumn of 2022.
- The Corporate Safeguarding Board had been in existence for some time but had not established its Terms of Reference or a Corporate Safeguarding Policy.
- Terms of Reference for the Board were now established and a Corporate Safeguarding Policy agreed by the Cabinet before Christmas 2022.
- A programme of training for staff and Councillors had been undertaken. This identified that Corporate Safeguarding did not relate to individual services only but was the responsibility of the whole Council. All staff and Councillors had a role in ensuring that vulnerable people were safeguarded.
- The majority of Councillors had undertaken Corporate Safeguarding Training.
- The Corporate Safeguarding Board was meeting quarterly and was reporting both to the Cabinet and the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee.

Director of Social Services Comment:

- The Interim Director of Social Services and Housing took on the role of corporate lead on Safeguarding in August 2022.
- The report presented was following the Corporate Safeguarding Board meeting in December 2022, prior to the receipt of the Audit Wales Report.

The Audit Wales report was to be discussed at the Governance and Audit Committee on 9th February 2023 and then at the Corporate Safeguarding Board in March. Following that the report and action plan would be presented to the scrutiny committee.

- A draft Development Plan had been developed in Autumn 2022 to address the anticipated Audit Wales recommendations as well as other issues identified by the Board and officers.
- The Director thanked the Committee for reviewing the Corporate Safeguarding Policy, Terms of Reference and the briefing summary and any comments had been taken on board. Corporate communications would be issued once the intranet landing pages had been completed.
- A Corporate Self Assessment toolkit for safeguarding was developed and included into the Council's self assessment processes.
- It would be the intention to seek scrutiny input into the self assessment reports and action plans. A safeguarding dashboard was being considered for development which scrutiny could view.
- Young people's housing was discussed at the Board Meeting in December as well as increases in homeless presentations and elective home education.
- Mandatory training would be monitored by the Board. Mandatory training amongst staff had increased to 66% but this needed further work.
- The Audit Wales recommendations would be included and monitored in the quarterly regulatory tracker.

Questions:

Question	Response
<p>What lessons have been learned not necessarily in terms of systems required, but in terms of gaps where corporate safeguarding may apply. What else needs to be developed.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Need to refresh and review Board terms of reference on a regular basis. The Board was previously not delivering what was expected of it within its terms of reference. Also a need to update documents and having the correct policies in place with a corporate tracker in place to ensure that policies are updated and being delivered. A key lesson was regarding good governance.</p>
<p>Is this about systems and governance rather than service areas where corporate safeguarding might apply.</p>	<p>Officer Response: This was about the corporate overview. Service areas were delivering services to individuals using volunteers but there was no overarching corporate volunteer policy in place.</p>
<p>The report was positive showing work which has been undertaken. Mandatory training by staff – increased to 66% completed. Why are staff not engaging in undertaking the training if this is mandatory. What is being done to address this. Courses could be simplified as long as this does not dilute the impact.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Training – compliance tends to be lower where there are a high volume of front line staff in services. Some staff do not have access to laptops or IT so are the more difficult to reach groups. The team is working with services to consider depot talks and other ways to engage with these staff so staff can access the training. Communications is also being issued about the importance to complete the training. Whilst compliance has</p>

<p>The safeguarding dashboard is welcomed. Is this an internal or external system and what is the timeline for delivering this.</p>	<p>increased there is more work to be done. Dashboard – this is an internal system. There is no timescale as yet but that will be confirmed at the next meeting.</p>
<p>33.5% of staff not undertaking mandatory training is around 2000 staff.</p> <p>Is there a breakdown of service areas and compliance as well.</p> <p>Could staff who do not use IT be provided with a physical copy of the training.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The Council needs to be creative in delivering training to hard to reach groups.</p> <p>ACTION: Director to advise the Committee of measures to improve compliance and a breakdown by Service areas.</p> <p>ACTION: Chair to discuss monitoring of corporate safeguarding with other relevant committee chairs as there may be cross-over of responsibilities between committees.</p>
<p>Much of this is about spotting signs of safeguarding. This could also tie into corporate parenting responsibilities. Is there a place in the strategy for a more proactive and preventative approach in relation to corporate parenting, such as training courses on internet use for parents and children’s carers. Is there also a cross over with other services such as safeguarding in sport, preventative work with third party organisations.</p> <p>In terms of elective home education the law has changed and what Council has to do. Is it important to get the narrative and communications about this right so as not to demonise home education.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Response: These are valid points about the need for general public education as well as training staff. There are also implications for schools as this is wider than just pupils with risks also for teachers, parents and others. Safeguarding is a wider issue than just the Council.</p> <p>Officer Response: Safeguarding affects every aspect of the community, and how the Council as a corporate body can target certain campaigns during a year as an organisation rather than at a service level. The Council would need to look at themes and trends of particular safeguarding issues and use those to target specific monthly campaigns. There is a wealth of information and advice available which the council could assist in promoting.</p> <p>ACTION: Officers to consider preventative measures which could be undertaken including potential public awareness raising relating to safeguarding.</p>

Outcomes:

- Noted
- Actions as detailed above.

6.	WORK PROGRAMME
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Documents Considered:

- Forward Work Programme

Outcomes:

- Noted

County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)

Public Document Pack

Health and Care Scrutiny Committee – 31-01-2023

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT BY ZOOM ON TUESDAY, 31 JANUARY 2023

PRESENT: County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)
County Councillors G E Jones, G Preston, G W Ratcliffe, L Rijnenberg, C Robinson,
C Walsh and C Kenyon-Wade

Cabinet Portfolio Holders In Attendance: County Councillors S Cox (Cabinet Member for a Caring Powys), S C Davies and S McNicholas (Cabinet Member for Future Generations), D Thomas (Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Transformation), and J Gibson-Watt (Leader)

Officers: Michael Gray (Head of Adults Services), Jackie Pugh (Finance Manager), Wyn Richards (Scrutiny Manager and Head of Democratic Services), Lynette Lovell (Director of Education and Children), Nina Davies (Director of Social Services and Housing), Rachel Evans (Head of Commissioning), Sharon Powell (Head of Children's Services), Emma Palmer (Director of Corporate Services) and Jane Thomas (Head of Finance)

Other Members in Attendance: A Davies (Chair of the Finance Panel)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors B Breeze, G Morgan, J Ewing and J Wilkinson.

An apology for absence was also received from County Councillor P Lewington (Vice-Chair of the Finance Panel, invited to the meeting).

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members relating to items for consideration on the agenda.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS

The Committee did not receive any disclosures of prohibited party whips which a Member had been given in relation to the meeting in accordance with Section 78(3) of the Local Government Measure 2011.

4. DRAFT 2023 - 2024 BUDGET

Documents Considered:

- Draft 2023 – 2024 Budget
 - Scrutiny Report – Budget Questions
 - Cabinet Report
 - Mid Term Financial Strategy
 - Finance Resource Model
 - Cost Reductions
 - Fees and Charges Register
 - Fees and Charges Report
 - Pressures

- Reserves Policy
- Capital and Treasury Management Strategy
- Impact Assessment – Council Tax and Overall Budget
- Budget Survey 2022 Report
- Individual Impact Assessments relating to the Cost Reduction Proposals

Issues Discussed:

- The proposal included a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for a five year period from 2023 to 2028 and a financial resource model, a draft revenue budget and capital programme for the same five year period.
- The budget plan was developed in an extremely challenging economic situation, linked to inflation and the impact of the war in Ukraine on prices.
- There was an expectation of a challenging period over the next five years with public sector spending under challenge for many years.
- A provisional settlement had been received from Welsh Government with the final settlement confirmed on 7th March, 2023.
- Within the settlement there was an element relating to social care. This recognised the Council’s role in supporting residents which included funding to support the continued roll out of the real living wage. However, in terms of the sum allocated (£70m across Wales) Powys’ share was unlikely to meet the full cost for delivery by the Council. The total pressure was included in the budget plan.
- In terms of the settlement Powys had received an increase of 8.7% equating to an additional £18.298m. There was a proposal to increase Council Tax by 5% but also with a requirement for over £16m savings.

Questions:

Question	Response
What is the specific funding in the settlement for social care.	Officer Response: The sum is not identified separately in the settlement, but is estimated around £2.8m. The cost to deliver the real living wage across all providers is over £4m so the sum received will fall short of what is required.
A figure of 3% is included for pay award for next year. This is different to figure submitted to the Cabinet	Officer Response: A 3% figure was built into individual service budgets. The difference was held corporately but would be allocated amongst services together with an adjustment for National Insurance contributions.
Will this additional allocation be provided before the Council meeting in February	Officer Response: The budgets are not amended as yet as the Council was waiting for the final pay settlement to be confirmed. However, the Finance Service was reviewing this as Members would want to know the effect on individual service budgets. The Standard Spending Assessment

	was an indicator of spend but it would be for each Council to determine spending for individual services.
Is rurality taken into consideration in the formula	<p>Officer Response:</p> <p>Probably not as much as rural authorities would like. There were some elements for rurality in the social services data which was changed to recognise the costs of delivering services in a rural authority.</p>

Children’s Services:

- A review of the budget was undertaken in the autumn of 2022.
- Children’s Services Overview.
 - Base budget (£27.897m).
 - Pressures (£2.201m)
 - Savings (£2.796m)
 - Undelivered savings (£1.278m)
- Pressures:
 - New responsibilities – unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (£418,660) (The allocation was 20 young people, originally the Council had 13 young people placed in London area, but since the Autumn of 2022 some were living in or closer to Powys)
 - Placements (£865,063) (Full year effect of previous part year 2022-23 in 2023-24, step downs and changes in service provision)
 - Contractor Provider uplifts (£763,647)
 - In House / Return to Home Residential (£154,130)
 - Total £2,200,500.
- Savings:
 - Placement:
 - Closer to Home / Reduction in Children Looked After (£1,050,000)
 - Leaving Care / Post 18 (£1m)
 - Special Guardianship Orders Project (£90,200)
 - Staffing:
 - Cost Saving – using permanent social workers instead of agency staff (based on grow your own project) (£139,000)
 - Reduction in staffing expenses / family time expenses due to closer to home (£10,000)
 - Third Sector:
 - Adoption – decrease contribution to Mid and West Wales region (£40k)
 - Therapy external commissioning (£45k)
 - Using additional income effectively (£200k)
 - Young Carers – Third Party Contract (£17,510)
 - VAWDSW – Third Party Contracts (£34,520)
 - Transformation:
 - Staff - transformation and service redesign (£170k)
 - Total £2,796,230

Undelivered Savings:

- Shared costs with PTHB for CLA (£243,770)
- Continuing Care for Children and Young people (£800k)
- Grow Your Own – Agency reduction (£83,760)
- Agency - convert 5 workers to permanent social workers (£150k)
- Total £1,277,530

The Director of Education and Children’s Services commented that in terms of undelivered savings the position at quarter 1 was £3.5m. That position had improved by quarter 3 with further work ongoing to make those savings.

Questions:

Question	Response
<p>£418k pressure for unaccompanied asylum seeker children. Is there any specific funding from UK Government or Welsh Government for these children for their social or education support needs. Are we expected to absorb these pressures.</p>	<p>Officer Response: We do receive some provision per child from Welsh Government but it does not cover everything they need. When a child arrives they are assessed as to the complexity of their needs, as needs vary. A care plan was then prepared for the child based on those needs. There were specific entitlements and specific roles and responsibilities which the Council adhered to for a Child Looked After by the authority.</p>
<p>Are there contributions from other agencies following the assessment for example in terms of health needs.</p>	<p>Officer Response: There would need to be a conversation with the health provider wherever the child was placed but there would be a contribution.</p> <p>The Council has been reviewing how to address this pressure in other ways with provision in Wales rather than elsewhere in the country.</p>
<p>Placements costs over £865k. Could you provide a breakdown of this and where are the specific pressures. Are placements breaking down. Inflation increases have been accounted for elsewhere. Can you provide more detail on how the cumulative net figure was calculated.</p>	<p>Officer Response: There had been consideration of where there might have been a placement breakdown, or a change in circumstances. That could lead to escalating costs which could not be predicted. Trends had been reviewed for Children Looked After for the past year and the Service then mapped out likely pressures for the forthcoming year and tried to be realistic about predictions.</p>
<p>In last year’s budget additional funding was provided to stop placement breakdowns. Has it had an impact</p>	<p>Officer Response: Yes it did have an impact but there was further work to do. There were increasing costs in residential care settings and there was a limit as to what the Council could do to address that unless it had alternative arrangements in</p>

	<p>place. That was why the Coser to Home Board scrutinised the costs and whether the Council could do things differently. The Service was aware of the high cost placements and were reviewing how to reduce the numbers of high cost residential provision by developing in house or alternative provision.</p> <p>ACTION: The Committee to review predictions and outcomes relating to Children's Services placements on a quarterly basis when considering financial reports.</p>
<p>£153k for the development of a residential home and use of emergency accommodation. This was in place of using unregulated placements or holiday accommodation. Do those pressures come with an associated cost. Is there a separate budget line for savings which sits alongside those pressures.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Sometimes this was difficult to quantify as doing something differently did not necessarily mean a saving. The current residential provision was costly due to having to rely on agency staff. It was hoped to reduce the overspend by the recruitment of permanent staff with job fairs undertaken to attract new staff.</p>
<p>When the Committee reviewed the quarter 2 budget there was a significant overspend shown for Y Bannau. There is nothing in pressures for 2023-24 for Y Bannau. Why is that the case.</p>	<p>Officer Response: It was not identified specifically but was taken into account in the overall pressures for residential provision.</p> <p>In relation to recruitment, it was hoped to reduce the reliance on agency staff. Vacancies had recently reduced from 10 to 6 following recruitment to positions.</p>
<p>In relation to unsupported Asylum seekers with 13 placed and an allocation of 20, how certain is the Council that the increase would happen in 2023-24.</p>	<p>Officer Response: There is significant certainty. Numbers were small initially then increased from 7 to 13 over the Autumn, 2022. There is confidence that the figure of 20 would be achieved by April 2023.</p>
<p>Cost reductions normally have a RAG rating but this is not the case this year. Why was this not done this year and what are the greatest risks for savings not being delivered. Is there an assurance that the budget this year is more realistic than last year.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Everything proposed as savings in this year's budget is achievable. Some items are easier to achieve than others e.g. therapeutic budgets and use of grants in another way rather, by comparison to the closer to home and 16+ provision. Mapping has been undertaken for the children looked after and as long as the current trajectory continued there was no reason why the savings targets should not be achieved as they achievable.</p>
<p>If these are realistic and if you had to find another £500k would those be achievable.</p>	<p>Officer Response: If other savings were required there would be a need to go back and</p>

	<p>scrutinise the budget again in its entirety to find those savings. The savings proposed were realistic and achievable.</p> <p>The Head of Finance indicated that any expectation on any service to try to find additional savings this close to a new financial year would have to be questioned in terms of its robustness.</p>
<p>Why are RAG ratings not used this year.</p>	<p>Officer Response: They were used last year but were not included this time.</p>
<p>Utilisation of additional funding. £200k would be reduced from base budget as applications would be made during the year for grants to backfill the budget. There was always concern when money was taken out of the budget as it might be thought that that jobs would be lost or there would be a lack of continuity of service. Can you indicate what are you seeking specific funding for, and how do you do that without creating gaps.</p> <p>If there is a specific area of transformation should be more detail.</p>	<p>Officer Response: This is about transformation and reshaping Social Services rather than removing posts. It is about providing opportunities to be more innovative such as developing s service for babies and preventing babies coming into care. This would allow the service to look at posts and funding in a different way.</p>
<p>Welcome the grow your own staffing model. Are people dropping out which will affect savings targets as staffing numbers not being achieved. Is there an ambition to increase those numbers and does the cost of training reduce the efficiencies possible.</p> <p>Growing your own was not fully achieved last year, but the service is hoping to do more this year. How are we incentivising and encouraging students to stay with us.</p> <p>What is the figure completing the course this year as the impact assessment stated 10 qualifying this year and the presentation stated 7.</p> <p>Comment: Concern about grant funding being used for posts as that is short term and then if grant funding lost or not replaced then could impact on support packages provided.</p>	<p>Officer Response: It was a projected figure of 10 this year but due to changes of circumstances some have delayed their course for a year. Last year 5 people qualified. The number has dropped to 7 this year who are due to qualify.</p> <p>All the students mentioned earlier had come through the Open University route but the Council has also opened up the opportunity to consider Masters students and this year 2 students from Cardiff University were sponsored and undertook their placements were intending to stay with the Council once they qualified. This was undertaken as a trial and had been successful. Other staff within the council with degrees were eligible to apply for the Masters course with 10 applications for 2 places in the current year.</p> <p>In terms of supporting staff, a decision had been made to move staff back into offices for 2 days a week to create the culture of support for students and newly</p>

	qualified students. The Service was also looking to use grant funding to create a practitioner post supporting newly qualified staff.
Welcome staff going back into offices. When staff qualify do they have to stay with Powys for a certain period.	Officer Response: Yes there is a contractual obligation for 2 years post qualification for staff to remain with the Council.
In the Adults budget pressures there is a figure for children moving into adults service. Is there an equivalent figure for efficiencies in the children's budget linking into this.	Officer Response: Yes in appendix F under the £2.4M for placements.

Adult Services:

- Service specific pressures of £8.26m had been identified, most of which were due to contractor cost uplifts. Covid Pressures of £980k as well as the conflict in Ukraine. The savings proposed were just over 6.4% of the baseline budget, with the Service offering 29% of the savings proposed from across the Council.
- What had guided the Service was the ongoing transformation objectives in dealing with budget setting. The budget proposed was a continuation of previous years' efficiencies.
- Base budget - £73,938m
- Pressures - £8,260m
- Covid Pressures - £980k – these were being funded from the Covid hardships Grants funding in 2021-22.
- Savings - £4,768m
- Request for service for 2023-24 - £80,303m.
- Adults Growth Demography – Learning Disabilities children transitioning to adults services next year once they are 18 - £490,910
- Service Pressures:
 - Demography 2022-23 - £500k
 - Not in forecast outturn - £500k – full year costs of people needing services
 - Contract provider uplifts - £7,180,647 (including real living wage requirement mandated by WG)
 - Statutory requirements - £79,500 (backfill of AMHP [approved mental health practitioners] training)
 - Total - £8,260,147
- Adults Covid and Ukraine Pressures:
 - AMHP - £112,152 (funded from Covid / hardship fund previously and funding now stopping so need to be funded)
 - Older Social Work Team - £159,228
 - Hospital Team - £159,228
 - Loss of Income due to pandemic etc - £220,000
 - External Provider increase in travel - £220,000
 - Contract recommissioned - £109,456 (supported living etc)
 - Total - £980,064

- Savings:
- Transformation:
 - Full year effect of part year savings - £500k
 - Direct Payments - £200k
 - Where people live - £100k (reduction in people in care homes and specialist homes – moving people back into supported living options)
 - Funding Body Review - £750k
 - Care and Support Transformation Project - £1m
 - Travel efficiency 10% target - £64,280
 - Mobile phone 10% target reduction - £6320
 - Disability Day Opportunity redesign - £10,185
 - In House Supported Housing redesign - £27k
- Removal of Non-statutory services from the budget
 - Older day provision review - £120k (Consultation to be undertaken in 2023-24)
 - Advocacy – Independent Professional - £39,780
- Recommissioning / Decommissioning:
 - Respite for Learning Disabilities - £50k
 - Void management - £123,395
- Income:
 - Income from additional clients - £250k
 - Increase fees for appointee and deputyship services - £27k
- One Off: (Funding to go back into the base budget the following year)
 - Funding Body Review - £1m
 - Direct Payment refunds -£500k
- Total - £4,767,960
- The Service would not be carrying forward any savings from previous year as on track to deliver them. These are continuing savings on previous years.

Questions:

Pressures:

Question	Response
<p>In relation to Covid Pressures and some posts that need to be filled permanently. Are these pressures due to people not getting hospital operations when they were needed during the pandemic, so what would have been health issues previously have become social care issues.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The Service was contending with a legacy of people who did not have health care interventions due to the pandemic which had led to a greater need in the community, higher complexity and demand for social care support. This was why this was a Covid related pressure.</p>
<p>In relation to demography pressures, ONS data is used by the Service. How do you make sure there is no double</p>	<p>Officer Response: There was a level of uncertainty in the modelling so that when the FRM was</p>

<p>counting e.g. those entering the system following Covid might have been entering the system at some point anyway.</p>	<p>prepared the Service did not know the likely level of demand coming through the system. The modelling needed to be updated regularly. In terms of demography the Service considered Stats Wales data. Covid related pressure were those demands over and above expected demographic data.</p>
<p>How do you account for the difference not included in the demographic data.</p>	<p>Officer Response: This could be accounted for in terms of monthly performing reporting and the demand coming through the front door every month and the levels of assessments required compared to previous financial years. Therefore, could give an assurance that there was no double counting.</p>
<p>Contracts with other organisations. Local Authorities have been locked into contracts which due to rising inflation have become unsustainable. Some of the cost was due to the real living wage commitment. Has there been a review of contracts and a judgement made as to whether any of them are poor contracts. What work is being done to ensure value for money for Council Tax payers.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The commissioning and contracts management team worked to ensure value for money for the Council. However, there were greater pressures than accounted for with the real living wage, higher inflation levels than expected. There was also a responsibility for the Council to ensure the sustainability of the market, to ensure an adequate provision for residents. There was a robust contract management system in place. Part of that was seeking regular financial information to understand where budgets were under pressure. It would also mean looking to see if organisations had strong financial processes in place to come within contracts and manage those pressures. There was a good relationship with contractors, with an exchange of information and joint resolution of issues.</p>
<p>Contract provider uplift inflationary pressures. Does this include care home utility bill pressures.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Yes it would incorporate utility pressures as well.</p>
<p>Have we checked to see if those organisations received specific support from government for utility support. Care homes were included in that support to business. Have we done an exercise to see if the care home received support that the Council is not also being asked to cover this cost as part of the contract.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Part of the financial monitoring was to get an assessment of all income received by that organisation which would include any support provided from elsewhere. The open book accounting process will assist the Council in judging whether there was a need for additional income. All financial uplifts would be</p>

<p>Pressures from Covid. Has there been any drop off in the pressures or is this consistent. What does this look like in terms of workload for individual practitioners.</p>	<p>based on evidence of a financial need.</p> <p>Officer Response: There was no drop off currently. In relation to the number of new contacts through Assist in Dec 2021 – over 330 contacts. December 2022 - 509 which was a reduction from October 2022 (618). The demand for social care and support was outstripping the Service’s ability to meet that demand.</p> <p>In terms of the impact on staff, the Head of Service was aware of impact on staff, leading to higher than usual caseloads which was compromising the Service’s ability to undertake a strength based approach. This was not dissimilar to other Councils in Wales in relation to Adults Services. This was compounded by a national recruitment and retention crisis with difficulties in filling vacancies. The demand remained high, the impact on staff was negative and the Service was prioritising demand as it came in and was looking to redeploy staff to business critical roles where it could.</p>
<p>Some of the pressures in the current year were funded from the risk reserve. What is the level of the risk reserve.</p> <p>Increase in travel cost –this is only until the end of March so will this need to be reduced.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The risk budget was not a reserve but was a base line budget included in the revenue budget. It had been £2m for a few years but was proposed to be increased by £1m this year due to the increased risk in the budget.</p> <p>In terms of the 50p per mile that was only approved for Council staff so would need to be reviewed.</p>
<p>£79.5k AMHP training. When staff are doing this training their role has to be backfilled. Is the training a legal requirement and what benefit does it bring to the Council. Do we retain these staff once they have completed the training.</p>	<p>Officer Response: It was a requirement to practice as an AMHP. A local authority would not be able to allow an AMHP to practice without that training. It was also part of the wider “grow your own” strategy. The risk of staff leaving was a risk the Council needed to bear. There was an obligation to train staff and many of those who had undertaken training had decided to stay in Powys. The alternative would be to rely on the agency market which was significantly more expensive than training a permanent AMHP provision within the Council.</p>

	It was a legal requirement to have an AMHP on duty 24/7 which included covering emergency team duties.
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Cost Efficiencies:

Question	Response
Where is the biggest risk in terms of achieving the cost efficiencies. How realistic is the budget	<p>Officer Response:</p> <p>The budget was realistic and was a continuation of savings themes which the Service had saved against in previous financial years. The biggest risks were associated with those savings requiring significant staffing resource to achieve them e.g. where you live which required commissioning and operational resource. Similarly the care and support transformation project in terms of strength based reviews which required targeting higher level packages of care between the Council and other agencies. There was also a risk with the funding body review. This was a realistic budget but the Council needed to be realistic about the resources required.</p>
Direct Payments. Is there any assistance for an older person to procure their own care. Is there a register of personal assistants / pool of staff. What happens about monitoring	<p>Officer Response:</p> <p>A direct payments support service was available for clients. This had made it easier to administer the work related to direct payments this over past years through a virtual wallet (on-line bank account). There was a care and support provider which a Personal Assistant could join so they will be visible on their website. Clients could view the website to see the personal assistants available in their area.</p> <p>The direct payment is in place of a commissioned service delivered internally. The individual would be assessed and a care and support plan would be drawn up and the cost to deliver the care and support plan assessed. That would be the level of direct payment received by the individual. Care and support plans would be reviewed to ensure that they were still relevant for the individual.</p> <p>Individuals would request an assessment first to see if a care and support package was required and then</p>

	there would be consideration of a direct payment. Powys was one of the leaders in Wales on the take up of direct payments.
Do you review care and support packages more often than a year as the need is assessed as higher.	Officer Response: That would be on a case by case basis with individuals proactively contacting the Council so that a review would be undertaken where circumstances changed.
Additional Income for home care support. What impact assessment has been done to assess whether people can afford the support given the impacts of the cost of living increases.	Officer Response: Everyone has their unique financial circumstances. In order to determine the financial contribution, a financial assessment is undertaken. The maximum contribution for community care set by Welsh Government is £100 per week. There was a minimum income guarantee which individuals needed to have at the end of the assessment. Should Welsh Government guidance change then it would affect the Council's assessment criteria.
For those people not asked to contribute for home care, when do we reassess them, or is this on an annual basis. Are we concerned about people falling into financial difficulty due to the economic position. Comment: This is only a resource available online so not suitable for some older people. Recommendation: Council should use Councillors to disseminate information to residents as well as an online process.	Officer Response: This was a concern and financial circumstances would be undertaken as part of each review. Work had been undertaken corporately to develop a cost of living hub, which provided information about support available by the Council and elsewhere. This was being promoted by Adults Services.
Technology is a way to take things forward in terms of efficiencies. Have difficulties with broadband been factored into the risk assessment of savings as it might not be available in some areas.	Officer Response: This was not taken into account in detail and would be considered on a case by case basis. Much of the technology enabled care did not rely on a broadband connection.
Reduction in travel and phone costs by 10%. Looking at the Impact Assessment (4b) there could be an impact on staff well-being. Does this also affect staff supervision. Also under point 6b it refers to impact on workforce as none. Is this a different type of impact to that mentioned earlier.	Officer Response: In terms of travel, there is a potential initial impact on front line staff but the majority of the reduction will be achieved through non front line staff. It should not have much impact on whether front line staff travel or contact residents by phone as traditional ways of working with clients would need to be preserved.

<p>Concern about the impact on service users in more rural areas. How are you going to give guidance to staff about deciding whether to travel or contact people by phone.</p>	
<p>How are staff going to be given guidance. How will you achieve the 10% in practice.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The 10% will be achieved through the non front line practitioners reducing their travel. Decisions on travel by practitioners will be based on a case by case basis. This will need management oversight on a team by team basis. Staff travelling from home to the office were not paid for that travel so were not affected by the proposal.</p> <p>Cabinet Member Response: In relation to peer to peer support for staff, a range of measures had been established to support staff well-being.</p>
<p>Children’s services are encouraging staff to go back into offices two days a week. Are there any similar proposals for Adults Services.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The Service was encouraging this and teams asked to have discussions to decide what was best for them.</p>
<p>Provision of informal advocacy. Informal advocacy is provided by other means. Are service users aware of how they can access the informal advocacy service.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Those individuals would be made aware of this through the assessment and care and support process. This would be identified on a case by case basis when an advocate was required and the service was already provided.</p>
<p>Provision for learning disabilities and one centre not fully utilised. How long has this been going on and why was it not being used.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The setting was not being used as post covid numbers returning to the setting were very low. The service could be provided at another location, so the decision was taken not to continue renting this location.</p> <p>There was a continuity of support for those using the centre prior to Covid who would be using the alternative setting.</p>
<p>There was no Impact Assessment for the review of day centres. What is the total budget for day services and how has the £120k figure been calculated.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The Impact Assessment was available but not published in time. The cost of running in house day centres was approximately over £1m per year based on staffing costs. Some external day provision was also commissioned.</p> <p>It was believed that there were cost</p>

	<p>efficiencies which could be made but a consultation with clients and others was necessary before coming forward with proposals for day services. The proposal was to undertake a consultation. Following that proposals could be produced and more detailed Impact Assessments produced. The £120k was an estimate and there were also contracts with other providers and there could be opportunities to deliver the service differently. There would be a business case for any proposals following the conclusion of the review.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny to see the results of the consultation and the proposals. • Local members need to be involved in the consultation.
<p>Scrutiny does not know what this cost saving means.</p> <p>There is a need to consult Members at an early stage in the process.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Scrutiny and local members need to be engaged in the consultation and reviews.</p>

Commissioning:

Base budget - £3,647m
 Cost Pressures - £0
 Saving -£97k
 Request for 2023-24 - £3,805m

- Savings:
- Adults:
 - Reduce Live Well - £29,180 (vacant post)
 - Reduction in travel - £10k
 - Manage vis staff slippage and recruitment - £7,826
- Childrens
 - Realign Grade 10 p/t - £13,228
 - Reduction in travel - £10k
 - Repurposing of grant - £3k
 - Repurposing of grant other services - £14,030
 - Repurposing of grant – Integrated Youth Training - £10k
- Total £97,264

Questions:

Question	Response
For staff using their own phone are staff	Officer Response:

being reimbursed	This was Council policy regarding bring your own phone and processes were already in place for this so staff were not reimbursed.
<p>Staff using their own phones – are they covered in terms of protection of data.</p> <p>Concern about grant ceasing and then funding having to be reinstated.</p>	<p>Officer Response: Bring your own phone was in line with Council policy and there was a range of safeguards in place to protect data so there was a limited risk in relation to personal data. There were also clear instructions regarding the use of the phone.</p> <p>In relation to grants (children and communities grant), there was a high level of certainty that the grant would continue in the future. There was a high level of confidence that the grant would continue. There was also flexibility in the use of these grants.</p>

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).

The Committee considered further information in relation to Day Centres, the Funding Body Review and Legacy Children’s cases.

Scrutiny made the following observations to the Cabinet:

General:

The Committee noted that:

- The budget for Social Care included an estimate of the additional funding provided from Welsh Government for the roll out of the real living wage. However, this estimate would not cover the full cost of the scheme.
- The current budget included a 3% increase for pay awards. This would be updated once the pay settlements had been confirmed.

Children’s Services

The Committee welcomed:

- The presentations and the open and comprehensive responses provided by officers to the questions asked by Members.
- Assurances by the Head of Service that the savings identified in the budget proposals were achievable and realistic, although some of the savings were more difficult to achieve than others.
- That the Service was seeking ways to be more innovative in the way it worked particularly utilising additional grant funding.
- When questioning regarding the ‘Grow Your Own’ ambitions the encouragement of staff to return to the office for two days a week so that

peer to peer support could be provided as well as the intention to use grant funding for a practitioner post to support newly qualified staff.

- The opportunity provided to staff who already had a degree to undertake a Masters degree linking with Cardiff University.

The Committee noted:

- The detailed information provided regarding budget pressures (£2.2m), savings identified (£2m) and unachieved savings from 2021-22 (£1.277m).
- That the position in relation to the undelivered savings had improved from quarter 1 2022-23 to quarter 3.
- Following committee questioning on the financial pressures associated with unaccompanied asylum seeker children, that whilst the Council did receive some provision per child placed with the Council, this did not cover the full cost. In addition, these children also had specific entitlements as children looked after by the Council.
- For the budget pressure of £865,063 (Placements) this was an estimated cost based on previous trends relating to placement breakdowns or a change of circumstance for a child in the authority's care. This also related to the closer to home project which sought to reduce the need for high cost residential provision elsewhere and bringing children back into county. The Committee has asked for detailed breakdowns of how this pressure materialises during the next financial year and will monitor this as part of future scrutiny of the budget.
- Following committee questioning on financial pressures that the overspend in relation to Y Bannau had been accounted for within the pressures associated with residential provision and that the number of vacant posts had decreased.
- That whilst the number of staff qualifying as social workers under the "grow your own" scheme would be less than anticipated due to changes in circumstances for some of the individuals, 5 staff had qualified last year and 7 were expected to qualify in the current year. The committee questioned regarding the future ambitions of 'grow your own' as a cost efficiency and it was noted that officers are hopeful that these are achievable projections
- That the increase in travel rates for domiciliary care staff was only until the end of March 2023 and would need to be reviewed which could impact on the budget.

The Committee expressed concern regarding:

- The use of grant funding for posts as these could be short term which could affect Service provision long term if the grant funding ceased.
- Whether the pressures associated with placements are due to placement breakdowns and whether the extra resource provided to prevent placement breakdowns (in last year's budget) is having a positive impact

The Committee requested:

- That the papers should reflect officers' views on the achievability of proposed savings, highlighting whether any are of high risk in relation to achievability.
- That Scrutiny are provided further information in relation to the higher cost placed children in their quarter 1 finance update meeting. This relates to the £800,000 pressure identified regarding the cumulative placement costs.

The Committee recommends that this pressure be tracked as it materialises and information on this be brought back to committee.

- That the committee be provided with a timely overview of legacy children's cases and associated costs which are forming part of the pressures, together with the timeframe that these cases impact the budget. It is noted that this overview would need to be confidential. The Committee requests that if it has further comments/recommendations to make on this matter that they can provide them in writing to the Cabinet and Senior officers.

Adults Services:

The Committee welcomed:

- The presentations and the open and comprehensive responses provided by officers to the questions asked by Members.
- An assurance by the Head of Service that the budget proposals were realistic, but noted comments from officers that the Council would need to be realistic about the resources required to deliver some of the savings.
- That the budget setting process and the proposals presented were a continuation of the work to redesign the Service.

The Committee noted:

- The budget pressures (£8.2m), pressures due to Covid (£980k), and the proposed savings (£4.7m)
- That the Service was needing to respond to a legacy of individuals who did not receive health care interventions during the pandemic which has led to a greater need for community and social care support.
- Following committee questions regarding pressures associated with contractual uplifts and any contractual negotiations with third parties, that in relation to contractual arrangements with other organisations there was a robust contract management system in place, good relationships with contractors, and the Council used open book accounting processes to assist the assessment of requests for a cost uplift, to ensure value for money for the Council. It was noted that any government utility support provided to third party residential homes, this would have been taken into account in contractual negotiations
- That there had not been a decrease in demand for Adult Services with contacts to the front door service remaining high. This meant a higher than usual caseload for social work staff with the Service prioritising requests for support as they present themselves.
- The largest risk to the cost efficiencies were those savings requiring staffing resources to achieve them, as the Service currently had vacant posts and there was a national shortage of staff.
- Following committee questions regarding cost efficiencies associated with projected additional income from service users and the cost of living impact on this, that service users were being signposted to the Council's cost of living hub and also other sources of support to address concerns about the cost of living crisis.
- Following committee questions and concerns raised regarding the travel and phone cost reductions, and any impact to service users (particularly those in rural areas) and staff wellbeing and supervisions, that these savings were expected to be achieved from non front line staff who were working at home rather than having an impact on front line staff who dealt directly with service users. That there had been concerns raised by the

Portfolio holder regarding the impact to staff wellbeing. That this would be managed on an individual case by case basis.

- In relation to committee questions on AMHP (Approved Mental Health Practitioner) training, that having a qualified AMHP on duty at all times was a legal requirement for the Council and training staff was part of the “grow your own” strategy and less expensive than having to utilise agency provision. It was further noted that training opportunities are part of encouraging staff in their career development.
- In relation to committee questions on the saving for informal Advocacy – Independent Professional, an advocacy service was being offered to service users by other means currently on a case by case basis as part of a care package. It was noted that service users are already using this alternative informal advocacy and that they are aware of it.
- That in relation to the saving for day centres this was a part year estimate but would be reviewed following the proposed consultation with service users about the day service provision. Any proposals made following the consultation would be subject to a business case.

The Committee expressed concern:

- That the travel and phone efficiency targets would not impact on the service provided to service users and on staff themselves. The Committee sought assurance regarding the provision of guidance to staff on how to achieve the savings and that supervision would not be impacted.
- Regarding the impact of the Cost of Living linked to the charges.
- Regarding the £120,000 efficiency savings in respect to day centres and how this level of efficiency will be achieved. At the moment there is not enough information for Committee to be assured that this saving is realistically achievable or that the impact on any services users will be mitigated against.

The Committee requested:

- That the authority to consider further how to communicate with the hard to reach and vulnerable members of the community to share support and contacts relating to financial matters, and also to consider further how it utilises both the individual County Councillors and the members of the Town and Community Councils in order to communicate such matters.
- That in relation to day services the Committee be provided with the opportunity to scrutinise the outcome of an engagement exercise with service users together with any proposals resulting from the engagement.
- That local Members be engaged in the engagement exercise for day services.
- That the Impact Assessment for day services be circulated to the Committee.
- That in relation to travel and phone efficiencies the Impact Assessment should reflect any assurances provided to Members that these targets would not impact on service users and the support they receive.
- That contract related pressures should be treated as a separate column and not included with other pressures and growth items.

Commissioning:

The Committee welcomed:

- The presentations and open and comprehensive responses provided by officers to the questions asked by Members.
- An assurance by the Head of Service that in relation to the repurposing of grants there was a high level of certainty that the levels of grants being provided would continue into the future.

Scrutiny's Recommendation to Cabinet:

- 1. That in order to mitigate cost of living impact on any income projected from service users, that alternative means of providing information to hard to reach and vulnerable members of the community about financial matters other than websites be considered, including utilising local Councilor's as many older people do not have access to the internet**
- 2. That in relation to the future of day services the Committee be provided with the opportunity to scrutinise the outcome of the engagement exercise with service users together with any proposals resulting from the engagement at the earliest opportunity before any options are pursued.**
- 3. That local Members be engaged in the future engagement exercise for day services**
- 4. That before making any final decisions regarding Children's Services budget, that Cabinet awaits any further comments from scrutiny regarding the impact of Children's legacy cases on the budget**
- 5. That before making final cabinet decisions on the Adult's services budget, the Cabinet awaits any further comments from scrutiny in relation to the cost efficiencies associated with Day Services**

County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)

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Health and Care Scrutiny Committee – 31-03-2023

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT BY ZOOM ON FRIDAY, 31 MARCH 2023

PRESENT: County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)
County Councillors J Ewing, G E Jones, G W Ratcliffe, L Rijnenberg, C Robinson,
E Vaughan and C Walsh

Cabinet Portfolio Holders in Attendance: County Councillors S Cox (Cabinet Member for a Caring Powys) and R Church (Cabinet Member for a Safer Powys)

Officers: Wyn Richards (Scrutiny Manager and Head of Democratic Services), Lynette Lovell (Director of Education and Children) and Nina Davies (Director of Social Services and Housing).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor G Morgan, G Preston, and C Keyon-Wade (other Council business).

An apology for absence was also received from Cabinet Member S Davies (Cabinet Member for Future Generations) and Dr C Turner (Chief Executive).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest from Members relating to items to be considered on the agenda.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS

The Committee did not receive any disclosures of prohibited party whips which a Member had been given in relation to the meeting in accordance with Section 78(3) of the Local Government Measure 2011.

4. MINUTES

The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15-12-2022 as a correct record.

5. CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

Documents Considered:

- Audit Wales report regarding Corporate Safeguarding
- Council's Action Plan

Issues Discussed:

Cabinet Member for a Safer Powys:

- There was an Audit Wales review of Safeguarding in 2022 which reported to Council in December. The review made a number of recommendations which were included in the report regarding how corporate safeguarding arrangements could be improved.
- Before the report became public work had commenced on implementing a number of the recommendations including agreeing a Corporate

Safeguarding policy which had been approved by the Cabinet following comments from the scrutiny committee.

- The recommendations regarding training had been noted and a training campaign had been implemented to improve the level of training of both staff and Members. There had been a significant improvement in training, with Member training being at 98%.
- There was a need to embed corporate safeguarding in everything that the Council did and as a key consideration of everything moving forwards. Corporate safeguarding would be considered as part of the corporate self assessment process for all services.

Director of Social Services and Housing:

- Audit Wales published the final report on corporate safeguarding on 19 December, 2022. The report and corporate action plan was also discussed at the Governance and Audit Committee on 9 February 2023 and the Corporate Safeguarding Group in March.
- It was clear that there was much work to do and actions to be completed. An action plan was drafted and work to implement the action plan commenced working corporately across all services. The engagement from across the Council including the Cabinet, and the scrutiny committee had been positive and supported by a cross service working group.
- The Council welcomed and accepted all the recommendations outlined in the report.
- Progress had been made against all of the recommendations before the report became public.
- Many of the actions had been completed or have had significant progress achieved against them.
- All of the recommendations have been added to the corporate regulatory tracker, so that they would be monitored through the quarterly monitoring governance arrangements as well as through safeguarding channels.
- The Committee was reminded that the Audit Wales report related to the Council's overall corporate safeguarding arrangements and did not refer to those arrangements for any individual service.
- Action Plan highlights:
 - Corporate Safeguarding policy – it was recognised that the Council did not have an overarching corporate safeguarding policy in place. A policy was drafted and was approved by the Cabinet on 13 December 2022. Also created was a one page summary showing the key information on one page. The policy was on the central repository together with a refresh date.
 - The Terms of Reference for the Corporate Safeguarding Board was reviewed, refreshed and improved on 5 December 2022.
 - Communication of safeguarding was an area needing improvement. The landing pages on the intranet and public web pages went live in February and corporate communications had been issued.
 - Following the feedback from scrutiny about a safeguarding theme per month, the Corporate Safeguarding Board had agreed this in principle and would be considering a programme of monthly themes at its meeting in June. Feedback from the scrutiny committee had been included on Corporate Safeguarding Board agendas.
 - Internal Audit was coming to the end of its work on Safer recruitment. That work commenced in November 2022.

- The Director had met with SWAP to agree a rolling programme of work to ensure that safeguarding was included in future audit work. That programme would be provided for the information of scrutiny.
- Corporate Safeguarding was being incorporated in all service self evaluation work to ensure that there was a robust reporting mechanism in place. This would assist in gathering the information for the Council’s annual report.
- The self evaluation process was being undertaken currently and those workbooks would be considered by the Cabinet and the Executive Management Team.
- Previously the Council had two DBS (disclosure and barring scheme) policies. This had been reviewed and reduced to one policy (Recommendation 5),so the recommendation and action was completed.
- Recommendation 6 was to produce guidance on the recruitment of volunteers. A Corporate Volunteering Policy was being developed for adoption. This would be presented to the scrutiny committee in future.
- Recommendation 7 - Contract management. A new approach was being developed which would set out how the Council would manage its contracts with regard to contract performance which would include ensuring safeguarding practices and controls were in place.
- Recommendation 8 - Mandatory Training. There had been an improvement in the completion of mandatory safeguarding training by staff and Members.
- Recommendation 9 – Providers to be expected to provide safeguarding training to employees in accordance with CWMPAS guidelines. The Council would be reconfirming this expectation and monitoring it through the new contract management framework.

Questions:

Question	Response
98% of Councillors had undertaken the Corporate Safeguarding training. What is the percentage figure for staff.	Officer Response: It was 78% a few weeks ago but it had improved since.
What is happening about the provision of training in more accessible formats for individuals that do not have access to computers	Officer Response: This was discussed at the last Corporate Safeguarding Board and consideration was being given as to how to reach front line staff who do not have access to computers or work with computers. An update would be provided in the next update to the Committee. ACTION: Director to provide update on the training of staff in front line services that do not have access to computers.
This was a corporate review rather than about individual services. Page 24 (of the document pack) – What We Found. There is a statement under point 5, – “concerningly the Council still	Officer Response: The opinion of the Director was that the statement was no longer true. A significant amount of work had been undertaken across all services since the Summer of 2022. This had been a

<p>does not have proper control of its Corporate Safeguarding arrangements which exposes both the Council and its residents to risk”.</p> <p>Is that statement now still true. Can you provide reassurance that this situation has changed.</p>	<p>corporate response. The Council had not only taken immediate steps but also was ensuring that safeguarding was embedded and sustained in the Council's activities including ensuring that corporate safeguarding was included in the annual self evaluation work.</p>
<p>There needs to be a review of accountability arrangements as the report goes back to 2014-15. The Council and the Corporate Safeguarding Group needs to reflect and learn lessons from past mistakes to make sure we do not get this type of report again.</p> <p>The review of the policy is currently three years following publication. Is this best practice in terms of safeguarding and reviewing policy. Hope it will be reviewed more frequently.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The Audit Wales report highlighted that the Corporate Safeguarding Board was not following its own Terms of Reference. The Council had also come to that conclusion and the Terms of Reference were reviewed and updated.</p> <p>The Director would take back the issue of learning lessons to the Corporate Safeguarding Board with the suggestion that this work be undertaken.</p> <p>In terms of the three year review of the policy, policies can be reviewed at any point in that three year period with three years being the maximum time limit. The Corporate Safeguarding Board could consider reviewing the policy more frequently. The review date was set following the Council's guidance and considering best practice by other authorities.</p> <p>Cabinet Member Response: It was not possible to completely eliminate the risk of corporate safeguarding being breached as there will always be an element of risk. The risk has been managed to substantially reduce it, but the work is never completed due to changes in circumstances and staff changing in the organisation. The role of the Cabinet Member was to continually remind others and highlight the importance of Corporate Safeguarding.</p>
<p>How long ago had the Corporate Safeguarding Group been established, and was it in place before the CIW (Care Inspectorate Wales) inspection in 2017.</p> <p>How was the governance for the group</p>	<p>Officer Response: A response will be provided to the Committee.</p>

<p>established and that may have been after the CIW inspection report so the group may not have been in existence for a long time.</p>	
<p>At the beginning of the report there is a table regarding key features and scrutiny. The risk elements are not ticked in the table which they should be.</p> <p>Does the work to be undertaken by services include the schools delegated budget and what areas of volunteering are included in the Volunteers policy e.g. Rights of Way volunteers.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The volunteers policy would be corporate so would include all volunteers across all service areas. There was already a service policy for Rights of way volunteers and this would be an overarching corporate policy.</p> <p>In terms of schools delegated budget all schools have to have a safeguarding policy approved annually by the governing body. This is checked annually by the school improvement advisors. School safeguarding policies were also available on school websites. In the safeguarding audit report Education and Social Services as individual service areas were not identified as areas of concern.</p>
<p>Does the 78% of staff that have undertaken the mandatory training include schools staff.</p> <p>All requirements for volunteers should also include school governors and those that undertake extra curricular activities in schools.</p>	<p>Officer Response: No they are not included. All corporate training is undertaken separately in schools including safeguarding training and that is at 100%, but they are not included in the corporate figures.</p> <p>All school volunteers are DBS checked and that information is held by the Education Service.</p> <p>ACTION: (i) the numbers of staff who have undertaken the mandatory safeguarding training should include school staff. (ii) Mandatory training should also be available to volunteers such as governors and all individuals who volunteer with schools and come into contact with children.</p>
<p>There is a statement in Audit Wales report (Page 36) “Safeguarding does not feature on the Education Risk Register, but the Council has stated there are regular meetings with the designated lead for safeguarding.”.</p> <p>This relates to corporate culture and the</p>	<p>Officer Response: The designated lead for safeguarding in Education was a regular attendee at the Corporate Safeguarding Board. There was assurance that Education and schools were included on the agenda as far as Corporate Safeguarding work was concerned.</p>

<p>acceptance of managing risk and safeguarding activity. By training staff you start to mitigate risk issues. Has this been corrected and is a considered risk by the Education Service.</p> <p>In terms of WCCIS is there any update as to whether this is going to be replaced or not.</p>	<p>In terms of WCCIS a digital transformation project was being undertaken to review potential options. An options report would be coming forward for consideration in the next few months.</p> <p>Risk was identified in the service risk register. There was a designated safeguarding lead who actively worked with schools.</p>
<p>On recommendation 3 there is an action to improve communications. Could more detail be included against that recommendation.</p> <p>There had also been improvements to the website since the action plan was written so needed to be included.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The website information became live in February 2023. The information provided in relation to recommendation 3 will be increased.</p>
<p>The safeguarding responsibilities for staff and Members had changed since the previous reports in 2014 and 2015. Has anyone reflected why the previous recommendations were not completed.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The Director agreed to take the challenge back to the Corporate Safeguarding Group with the suggestion that the Group should reflect on why the previous audit reports were not responded to.</p> <p>ACTION: The Committee to be advised of the outcome of the reflection as to why previous recommendations were not completed.</p>
<p>What is next for the committee. The Chair was interviewed as part of the audit. There was a need for clearer terms of reference for the committee with corporate safeguarding included in its Terms of Reference.</p> <p>What is the committee's role in reviewing this matter on an ongoing basis.</p>	<p>Officer Response: The Committee had a key role. Following each Corporate Safeguarding Board meeting there would be an update provided to the Committee. If there were any policies being proposed it would be recommended that scrutiny should review these before approval by the Cabinet.</p> <p>There was also the annual self evaluation report which included safeguarding and it was hoped that the safeguarding information could be considered by the committee. Safeguarding would in addition, be included in the Annual Director of Social Service's report which the committee considered.</p>

Outcomes:

- Noted
- Actions as detailed above

6.	JOINT LEISURE WORKING GROUP
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RESOLVED that County Councillors G E Jones and L Rijnenberg be appointed as the Committee's representatives on the Joint Leisure Working Group.

7.	WORK PROGRAMME
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The Committee noted the Work Programme as set out on the agenda.

County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)

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6

Powys County Council Scrutiny Report Template

Committee:	Health and Care Scrutiny
Date:	2 nd June 2023
Subject:	Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report

1. Who will be the Lead Officer(s) / Lead Cabinet Member(s) presenting the report?

Name:	Role:
Nina Davies	Interim Director of Social Services and Housing
Councillor Church	Portfolio Holder for a Safer Powys

2. Why is the Scrutiny Committee being asked to consider the subject?

To scrutinise the way the Corporate Safeguarding Board monitors safeguarding across the whole Council, and progress against the Action Plan.

3. Role of the Committee:

The role of the Committee in considering the subject is to:

To read and note contents of the update regarding the Corporate Safeguarding Board, scrutinise the work and its impact, and provide constructive challenge to the Council about its safeguarding activity in an impartial and independent manner.

4. Key Scrutiny Questions:

What Key areas should the Committee focus on:

Summary of most recent Corporate Safeguarding Board activity including updates about work in progress, achievements and action plans.

5. Guiding Principles for Scrutiny Members:

To assist the Committee when scrutinising the topic:

- 5.1 Impact the matter has on individuals and communities :
- 5.2 A look at the efficiency & effectiveness of any proposed change – both financially and in terms of quality
[focus on value]
- 5.3 A look at any risks
[focus on risk]
- 5.4 Looking at plans and proposals from a perspective of:
 - Long term
 - Prevention
 - Integration
 - Collaboration
 - Involvement

[focus on wellbeing and future generations]

- 5.5 The potential impacts the decision would have on:
- protected groups under the Equality Act 2010
 - those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage in their lives (when making strategic decisions)
 - opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language [focus on equality and the Welsh language]

[focus on equality and Welsh Language]

Key Feeders (tick all that apply)

Strategic Risk		Cabinet Work Plan	
Director / Head of Service Key Issue		External / Internal Inspection	x
Existing Commitment / Annual Report	x	Performance / Finance Issue	
Suggestion from Public		Referral from Council / Committee	
Corporate Improvement Plan		Impacting Public / other services	
Service Integrated Business Plan			
Suggestion from Members			
Partnerships			

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

For Cabinet 23rd May 2023

For Health and Care Scrutiny 2nd June 2023

For Governance and Audit 23rd June 2023

REPORT AUTHOR: Nina Davies, Interim Director of Social Services and Housing

SUBJECT: Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Update

REPORT FOR: Information

1. Introduction

1.1 Cabinet is asked to note this update from the Corporate Safeguarding Board.

1.2 The Corporate Safeguarding Board last met on 16th March 2023; this report summarises the information provided at that meeting.

2. Agenda discussions

2.1 Update on Safeguarding Audits and Action Plan

Progress was reviewed against the Action Plan developed from the recommendations in the Wales Audit Office Safeguarding Audit Report, published in December 2022.

It was noted that an Action Plan was drafted, and work started ahead of receiving the Report. Five additional actions were proposed and accepted for inclusion.

The Action Plan will now be built into the Regulatory Tracker and be reported on during Quarterly Performance Meetings and by the Governance and Audit Committee.

2.2 Feedback from Scrutiny and Cabinet

Feedback from Health and Care Scrutiny on 27th January 2023 and Cabinet on 7th February 2023 was shared with the Board.

Feedback from Governance and Audit Committee's consideration of the Wales Audit Office Safeguarding Report, recommendations and the resultant Action Plan on 9th February was also considered.

The Board were advised that Governance and Audit Committee were keen to have sight of the Board's Activity updates in future, as well as Cabinet and Scrutiny.

2.3 Service Corporate Safeguarding Audit/Self Assessments

The Board were informed that each Service area are in the process of completing a Safeguarding Audit as part of their Annual Self-Assessment Workbook.

These will be considered at the Self-Assessment Panels in April and May, after which the information will be integrated into the Authority's overall Self-Assessment Report, pending review by Governance and Audit and then submission to Welsh Government.

The Self-Audit looks at how robust the policies and practice are, how safe the service environment is and how safe the culture is with Red/Amber/Green RAG rating.

2.4 Safeguarding in Contract Management

The Board were advised that a new robust four-tiered approach to contract management framework is being developed, which will be supported by workshops and training.

Research is underway looking at other Local Authorities' approach to communicating expectations with their supply base and defining the safeguards and standards required. When clear and finalised, this will be communicated to live contracts and be embedded into future tendering processes with planned roll out in April 2023.

The new Commercial Performance and Risk Board will be monitoring the roll out of the new contract management approach, with performance captured on the commercial dashboard that is being developed to allow reporting, governance and scrutiny.

2.5 Work Around Child Performance and Child Employment

The Board were informed that Welsh Government had reminded Local Authorities in 2022 of their statutory duties in respect of this matter, which is rooted in 90-year-old legislation. Guidance has been updated since in respect of Child Performance Licences, Child Work Permits and Chaperone Licences.

There is a lack of knowledge and understanding in the Authority, organisations, employers and the public in respect of the legislation and legal requirements.

Applications are often made with very little notice and processing time is dependent on the complexity of the application and whether the full range of required information has been provided.

Between April 2022 and January 2023, 19 individual performance licences had been issued, 10 Body of Persons Approvals (BoPA -approval for an organisation putting on a performance, rather than for the individuals taking part separately), 40 employment permits and 25 chaperone applications had been received.

The Board were informed about next steps, including strengthening cross departmental working, drafting a Policy involving cascade of that information via comms and social media, linking with community child performance groups, clarification of employment bylaws including determining powers to enter and inspect, strengthen the chaperone process by adding an annual review (in addition to the application, references, DBS and safeguarding training).

2.6 Reports by Exception were provided as below

a) Young People's Housing (16/17 year olds):

This report was accepted with no further questions.

The Board were informed that a gradual reduction in homelessness is being seen, and there were no families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation at the time of the meeting.

b) Elective Home Education:

The Board were informed that numbers of electively home educated children has increased to more than 300. This figure is partly due to some learners not returning to a school setting since the pandemic and partly because some families registering as electively home educating due to the Resource Grant being made available. Numbers are expected to alter towards the summer as some learners reach school leaving age.

The Board were advised that Welsh Government will be issuing Guidance for the new financial year arising from a court case, with a subtle shift from it being Powys County Council's responsibility to ascertain a suitable education is in place, to its being the parent's duty to evidence it is in place.

c) Mandatory Safeguarding Training, including VAWDASV

The Board were informed that compliance with mandatory Safeguarding Training has increased from 44.3% in July 2022 to 81.1% at the time of the meeting.

The Board was also advised that compliance with VAWDASV training is improving and ahead of our regional partners. Compliance sat at 80% at the time the report was written for Board and had increased to 82.1% at the time of the meeting.

d) Adult Social Care Safeguarding Performance including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

This report was accepted with no further questions.

The Board were informed there is no further update from Welsh Government in respect of the shift from Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards to Liberty Protection Safeguards.

e) Childrens Social Services Safeguarding Performance

The Board were informed that demand at the Front Door continues to increase, but child protection numbers have decreased due to intervention and support services.

The Board discussed the type and location of the placements where the thirteen asylum-seeking children and young people are currently being looked after and how this meets their needs. The Board were informed this number is likely to increase and how this might be managed in terms of the Closer to Home policy, given these children and young people's particular needs and placement availability.

2.7 Future Agenda Items are currently to include

- Programming of the newly proposed 'Safeguarding Theme of the Month'
- Preparations for the annual National Safeguarding Week (in November)
- Annual Private Fostering Report
- Service Safeguarding Audits (from Self-Assessment)
- Progress update regarding Safeguarding in Contract Management
- Progress update regarding Child Performance Licences and Child Employment Permits
- Feedback from National Safeguarding Week

2.8 Other business included

- a) Information about Reporting of Damp and Mould in PCC Housing Stock. The Board were advised this matter had been of national media interest, so the Housing Officers worked with the Tenant Scrutiny Panel to collate this information.



Information about reporting of Damp an

b) Young People’s Safeguarding Animation <https://youtu.be/SpFhqUfDPaQ>

4. Future Corporate Safeguarding Board Meetings

4.1 Future meetings are scheduled for 8th June, 15th September, 14th December 2023 and 14th March 2024.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
Cabinet receives this briefing as an update from the Chair of the Corporate Safeguarding Board.	To ensure Cabinet are fully sighted on work to date.

Relevant Policy (ies):	Corporate Safeguarding Policy		
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	All elected Members.
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	N/A
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	N/A

Is a review of the impact of the decision required?	N
If yes, date of review	N/A
Person responsible for the review	N/A
Date review to be presented to Portfolio Holder / Cabinet for information or further action	N/A

Contact Officer:	Nina Davies, Interim Director of Social Services and Housing
Tel:	01597 827683
Email:	nina.davies@powys.gov.uk

Health and Care Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme

2023

07-07-23 09.00 – 10.00	Pre-Meeting
07-07-23 10.00 – 12.30	<p style="text-align: center;">Public Meeting</p> <p>Annual Complaints Report</p> <p>Annual Report of the Director of Social Services</p> <p>Number of residential placements/costs/strategy for bringing children closer to home (Childrens</p> <p>Extra care strategy and delivery of strategy – including potential questionnaire to service users (Adults)</p> <p>Presentation from Llais as to role and link to Council / committee</p>
22-09-23 09.00 - 10.00	Pre-Meeting
22-09-23 10.00 – 12.30	<p style="text-align: center;">Public Meeting</p> <p>Direct Payments – strategy and future plans/ impact on outcomes including potential questionnaire to service users</p> <p>Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report</p>
03-11-23 09.00 – 10.00	Pre-Meeting
03-11-23 10.00 – 12.30	Public Meeting
01-12-23 09.00 – 12.30	Pre-Meeting
01-12-23 10.00- 12.30	<p style="text-align: center;">Public Meeting</p> <p>Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report</p>

2024

18-01-24	Pre-Meeting
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18-01-24 Thurs 2.00 p.m.	Performance and Risk Q3 Finance
Jan	Work Programming
30-01-24	Pre-Meeting
30-01-24 Tuesday 2.00 p.m.	Budget Scrutiny
09-02-24	Pre-Meeting (if required)
09-02-24 Fri 2.00 p.m.	Alternative Budget (if required)
11-04-24	Pre-Meeting
11-04-24 Thurs 2.00 p.m.	Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report
Mar	Self-Assessment
31-05-24	Pre-Meeting
31-05-24 Fri 10.00 a.m.	Election of Vice Chair