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Health and Care Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Venue
By Zoom
Meeting Date
Thursday, 11 April 2024
Meeting Time
10.00 am



County Hall Llandrindod Wells Powys LD1 5LG

For further information please contact **Kath Flanagan-Jones** katharine-maria.flanagan-jones@powys.gov.uk

05.04.2024

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

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest from Members.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS

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.)

4. MINUTES

To authorise the Chair to sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 8th March 2024 as a correct record.

(Pages 3 - 8)

5. FOSTER CARER ANNUAL FEEDBACK REVIEW

To receive a verbal update in relation to the Foster Carer annual feedback review.

6. SAFER ACCOMMODATION

To receive and consider a presentation on Safer Accommodation.

7. RESPONDING TO POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL'S RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION CHALLENGE IN SOCIAL CARE

To receive and consider a report on the Recruitment and Retention Challenge in social care.

(Pages 9 - 16)

8. WORK PROGRAMME

To note the scrutiny forward work programme. (Pages 17 - 20)

Committee Reflection

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

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Health and Care Scrutiny Committee Friday, 8 March 2024

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD BY ZOOM ON FRIDAY, 8 MARCH 2024

PRESENT

County Councillors: G E Jones (Chair), J Ewing, L Rijnenberg, C Robinson, C Walsh, L Brighouse.

Cabinet Members in attendance

County Councillors S Cox, S C Davies and D Selby.

Officers in attendance (Powys County Council)

Nina Davies (Director of Social Services and Housing), Rachel Evans (Head of Commissioning and Partnerships), Sharon Frewin (Head of Adult Services), Sharon Powell (Head of Children's Services), Jenny Ashton Head of Community Services, Rachel Williams (Senior Manager Mental Health and Disabilities), Gavin Williams (Senior Manager Care and Support) and Joanna Harris (Senior Strategic Commissioning Manager.)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs A Jenner, H Hulme, E Roderick, B Breeze, Lynette Lovell (Director of Education and Children), Jane Thomas (Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer), Charlie Darwin (Senior Manager Corporate Parenting).

There were no apologies for absence.

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 AND ACTIONS LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on the 1st December 2023 were agreed by Committee members present, as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting and ratified accordingly by the Chair.

Update on Actions from previous meetings as follows:

WCCIS replacement – Work was continuing with the national team and with Welsh Government for a replacement for WCCIS, progress will be shared at April's committee meeting.

Cyber issues – for clarification the Councils does not have any operating systems that are as old as Windows 7 or 8. There were however a limited number of operating systems which were due for decommissioning, that have recently gone out of active support.

All other action items were scheduled within the forward work programme.

5. UPDATE ON THE JOINT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP - LEISURE REVIEW

The Committee received a brief overview of the report from Cllr G E Jones, Chair of the Joint Scrutiny Leisure Review Working Group.

Cabinet Member, Cllr David Selby commented that the scrutiny process had been very positive, with much learning undertaken and acceptance of the comment that more information had been required, which would be provided moving forward under the Sustainable Powys programme.

In response to the question on the whether wider impacts had been considered during the process, the Chair informed that the process had been light touch, but focussed on where provision was without input from social care professionals regarding the social and well-being impact.

6. CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING BOARD ACTIVITY REPORT

Background:

- The Corporate Safeguarding Board review progress of actions on the Safeguarding Regulatory Tracker, all actions were either completed or in progress.
- Highlighted within the Regional Safeguarding Annual Report was Powys CC's work on Child Exploitation, the strategy for which has been rolled out across other regions.
- The National Safeguarding Week held in November was considered very successful.
- The Boards focus in December was on Child Performance Licencing and Child Work permits, this included a spotlight on safeguarding to raise awareness, and further awareness raising scheduled for the Royal Welsh Show.
- There has been an increase in the number of 16-17yr olds in need of interim accommodation due to homelessness. The Board has requested data of Powys Care Experienced young people will be included in future reports to retain a focus.

- There has been a significant improvement (72%) in contact with Elective Home Educated (EHE) children and families.
- Powys will be participating in a pilot on Children Missing Education.
- In relation to Safeguarding Compliance, concern was raised of School staff compliance with VAWDASV level 1 with training, the Board were informed of ongoing work to improve the position, with a steering group established and Level 3 trained staff to support across the schools service.
- For noting the JICPA (Joint Investigation on Child Protection Arrangements) was completed in October 2023, the report has been received and will be on the Safeguard Boards agenda for the March meeting.

Issues Raised by the Committee:	Responses Received:
Would it be possible to inform within Section 2.8B the actual number rather than a percentage of children who, are Electively Home Educated	The Director would take the action away to review and include if numbers were sufficient as to not lead to identification of individuals.
Were there any trends or analysis available as to the reasons the EHE numbers have risen, or purely lifestyle changes following the pandemic.	There were a range of reasons, from the disruption caused during the pandemic, religious, medical and sporting reasons. The aftermath of the pandemic gave parents a different lens to view their child's education. In some cases, children were not wanting to go back to a formal school setting and parents had found that they could successfully educate at home, which afforded them greater flexibility.
Clarification sought on referrals in relation to Care Homes staff not meeting threshold were those issues noted and taken up with the various providers	Social Care review every Safeguarding by scrutinising circumstances that had led to the situation occurring. In some circumstances referrals are not deemed to be safeguarding issues, and others may require contract monitoring visits to be undertaken. We share information through the Joint Information Monitoring Panel with CIW PTHB covering a range of reasons and circumstances to identify or understand any patterns and trends that may result in training issues.
In relation to WCCIS downtime and slowness, with the need to prioritise provision and the ability sign off assessments, can assurance be given that these issues had been included within the Risk Register and in addition that paperwork was completed by staff.	The Director assured that issues due to the WCCIS had been reflected within the Risk Register. Head of Adults Social Care gave assurance that work was completed by staff during periods of downtime or slowness of WCCIS. The Heads of Service receive e-mail

notifications of system downtime and would contact Senior & Team Managers to ensure staff revert to the paper process, with additional administrative support, if needed, to upload information when the system returns.

For additional assurance even when the live system is down, there is still the read only function. This does cause and creates challenges in terms of practice and the timeliness of inputting data in the short term, however, children are still seen. A continuing risk, would be that as the system is becoming less operational as move to a new system, there could be increased periods of downtime, this is monitored week by week and the service facilitate the recordings in a different way at different juncture points.

7. POWYS COUNTY COUNCILS RESPONSE TO LLAIS ENGAGEMENT REPORTS

Issues Raised by the Committee:	Responses Received:
When appropriate could the Director request information in relation to the age range of the individuals who gave feedback as helpful to understand the engagement undertaken by the organisation in particular to younger people from a preventative stance. Also, could be beneficial for Llais to contact the Clerk for the Town and Community Councils to use these networks to broaden to scope of engagement possibilities.	The Director will raise this challenge with the Regional Director of Llais at the next fortnightly meeting and request an update on what engagement Llais would be considering in the future.
Could commentary provided back to Llais, if there were delays in service provision often an apology at the outset can diffuse further escalation.	There was still work in progress with Llais, the comments made were at times unclear if related to Health or Social Care, so it could be helpful to have this discussion with Llais, around areas in which they could improve.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

• The forward work programme was noted by Members present.

9. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following items of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 1,2 & 3 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).

The Monitoring Officer has determined that category 1,2 & 3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules applies to the following item. His view on the public interest test (having taken account of the provisions of Rule 14.8 of the Council's Access to Information Rules) was that to make this information public would disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

These factors in his view outweigh the public interest in disclosing this information. Members are asked to consider these factors when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Liz and seconded by Cllr Chris with all Committee Members in agreement.

10. TRANSITION BETWEEN CHILDREN'S AND ADULT SERVICES

The Committee received a presentation on the Transition between Children's and Adults Services from Rachel Williams, Senior Manager Mental Health and Disabilities and Gavin Williams, Senior Manager Care and Support.

11. NOT FOR PROFIT FOSTERING FRAMEWORK AND BUSINESS CASE

The Committee received a presentation on the Not-for-Profit Fostering Framework and Business Case from Sharon Powell, Head of Children's Services and Jo Harris, Senior Strategic Commissioning Manager Children's Services.

County Councillor G E Jones (Vice Chair) This page is intentionally left blank

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

Report for Health & Care Scrutiny Committee 11th April 2024

REPORT AUTHOR: Dr Holly Gordon, Senior Manager Safeguarding & QA

REPORT TITLE: Responding to our Recruitment and Retention Challenge in

Social Care

Introduction:

This report provides an overview of recruitment and retention activities in Powys Children's Services (CS) and joint activities with Adult Services (AS) specifically focusing on social work recruitment. It covers activities undertaken in 2023 and planned activities during 2024 including the grow our own social work project and developments from the health and care academy.

Recruitment:

Powys social services have updated the way in which job vacancies are advertised. This includes a more detailed summary for each vacancy such as the tasks and roles the applicant will be undertaking, skills and values the candidate must possess as well as including the new ways of working statement. We have utilised the new corporate branding and have developed information packs for social work and residential job roles. All our vacancies are advertised on the PCC job site, social media platforms and the We Care Wales web site. In 2023 a successful bid to Social Care Wales was submitted which led to the employment of a full time Project Officer over a three month period to organise and hold social work recruitment events and to develop recruitment brochures. Social Services were able to secure venues within the allocated funding budget and held 4 recruitment events in 2023.

During March 2023, Powys Social Services held four Social Work recruitment events across the county, the events were purposely scheduled to target people on their way home from work and venues chosen for their location to major road networks within the county and just over the border. These events produced limited success in the way of applications, but they have supported an increased awareness of the benefits of working for Powys Social Services.

91 CS staff responded to 2023's recruitment and retention survey. The respondents relayed that the biggest attractions to work in the department was the location, job role and having supportive colleagues/managers. Staff felt that the key selling points for prospective employees were flexible working, career development and training opportunities. Staff also relayed that workloads were the least liked element of their employment. The survey highlighted that the key reasons why staff stayed within the department were friendly staff and making a difference. The majority of staff stated that they always feel supported by their

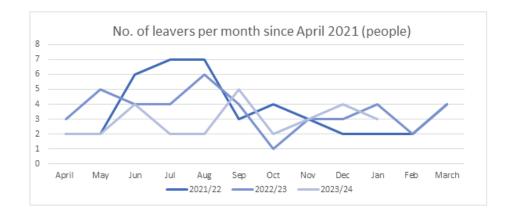
manager. The results of the recruitment and retention survey support recruitment campaigns and provide useful insights into staff satisfaction levels.

There will be an enhanced recruitment drive focusing on social work vacancies in May 2024. The Practice Development Team continue to attend national social work recruitment fayres such as Compass and Social Work today which includes presenting a seminar on social work practice in Wales.

Employment information:

The data available illustrates that workforce trends are starting to change, and the workforce is stabilising to some extent. Data available on the leaver rate across the financial years highlight that the rate of employees leaving CS has reduced significantly in the 2023/24 financial year. Within the previous 12 months, monthly figures also show that the starter rate is now significantly surpassing the leaver rate on a month-by-month basis.

Financial year	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
No. leavers (people)	44	43	29



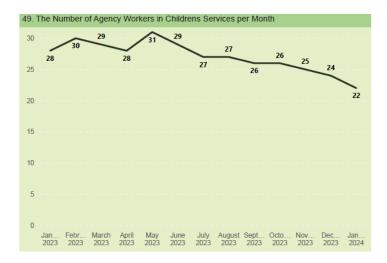


Despite recruitment campaigns and retention payments for specific teams, children's services have required significant investment in agency social work expenditure which reflects a national picture. However, it is important to note that the numbers of agency workers are reducing primarily due to the success of the grow our own project. At the time of writing children's services currently have 21 agency social workers within teams.

Date	Agency Social workers in place
5 March 2021	33
4 March 2022	49
3 March 2023	30
1 March 2024	21

It is also of note that within the previous 12 months, a total of six agency workers holding a variety of social work posts, have became permanent employees.

The 2023 figures are presented below:



Grow Your Own Social Worker Project:

The high rates of experienced social workers who are leaving the profession (Hall, 2023), combined with the difficulties in recruiting social workers to vacant positions, have meant that 'Grow your own' social worker schemes have become increasingly important for Local Authorities to ensure that have they have sufficiently qualified staff in the workforce.

The Grow Your Own social work project has been in scale up in Powys since 2020. The project aims to promote professional growth and development from employees of Powys Local Authority by financially supporting staff to undertake a social work qualification. The rationale for the project has been recognition of the lack of qualified social workers employed by Powys and challenges relating to recruitment in key social work teams. The grow our own social work project is overseen by the Practice Development Team which supports both Children's and Adult social services staff with their professional development. The Open University sponsorship route has been shown to be the most cost-effective option for sponsoring a social work qualification. In Children's Services, this has been supplemented by funding a small number of Master's opportunities.

The table below illustrates the number of social services staff who have taken up Year 1 modules (K102 and KZW113) of the social work degree with the Open University. In 2023 the offer was extended from social services staff to all PCC departments:

K102

K102 Financial Year	Number from Adult Services	Number from Childrens Services	Number from Wider Council Service
2015 – 2016	4	0	N/A
2017 – 2018	5	3	N/A
2019 - 2020	5	10	N/A
2020 - 2021	3	20	N/A
2021 – 2022	13	16	N/A
2022 – 2023	1	8	N/A
2023-2024	5	10	3

KZW113

KZW113 Financial Year	Number from Adult Services	Number from Childrens Services	Number from Wider Council Service
2017 – 2018	1	3	N/A
2018 – 2019	2	1	N/A
2019 - 2020	3	7	N/A
2020 - 2021	2	16	N/A
2021 – 2022	13	17	N/A
2022 – 2023	2	5	N/A
2023-2024	8	11	3

After completion of Year 1, staff can apply for Year 2 and Year 3 modules. This is a competitive process with applicants needing to be successful at interview. The course costs for the degree sponsorship are met by the SCWWDP budget which is administered by Social Care Wales. Those completing social work degrees through the OU are required to remain in Powys in a social work position for two years post qualifying. The retention rates of social workers from the grow our own cohort is considerably lengthy than the stipulated minimum period.

OU Degree	Number from AS	Number form CS	Total
Sponsorships			
2017-2018	3	4	7
2018-2019	6	1	7
2019-2020	5	2	7
2020-2021	5	6	11
2021-2022	3	9	12
2022-2023	5	7	12
2023-2024	5	6	11

Masters in social work sponsorship:

In 2021, Children's Services advertised two sponsorships for the Master's in social work commencing in 2021 to all employees in PCC. The successful applicants had their course fees fully funded and were paid a Grade 7 (£27,803-£29,777) for the duration of the course. The applicants are now qualified social workers working within frontline Children's Services teams. Two further applicants were offered this opportunity in 2023 and are continuing to

study. These employees will be required to remain within the service area for a 3-year period after qualifying. The costs of this initiative have been met by children's services.

Practice Learning Opportunities:

It is vital that social services provide high quality, well supported practice learning opportunities (PLO's) for all social work students on placement. This is a compulsory part of any social work qualification where students can develop their skills, knowledge and values in direct practice under supervision. Students are required to successfully complete a placement in Year 2 and Year 3. The placements for Year 2 and Year 3 occur at the same time, which has led to a significant increase in student placements.

In 2021, a total of 15 PLO's were offered which increased to 22 PLO's in 2022. In 2023 this increased again to 29 student placements. The 2024 student cohort are currently undertaking their PLO's. There are a total of 30 students accessing placements across Powys currently. This figure includes 25 grow our own internal employees as well as students from Glyndwr, Cardiff and Swansea University.

Each student must be allocated a Practice Educator to support the learner. The role of the Practice Educator involves observation, teaching, supervision, and assessment. All Practice Educators must have the appropriate qualification or must be undertaking the qualification. Any Practice Educator completing the qualification must be allocated a Practice Supervisor to oversee their practice. Currently in Powys there are a total of 44 practice educators, 6 of which are currently studying for the qualification.

<u>Projections</u>: Qualifying social workers, OU sponsorship / MA sponsorship

Area	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
cs	1	5	1 (2020) 4 (2021) 2 MA (2021)	3 (2021) 5(2022)	3 (2022) 3 (2023) 2 MA (2023)	3 (2023) 6 (2024)	
CS Total	1 (went to AS)	5	7	8	8	9	38
AS	2	3	2 (2020) 3 (2021)	2 (2021) 3 (2022)	2 (2022) 3(2023)	3 (2023) 5 (2024)	
AS Total	2	3	5 (1 went to CS)	5	5	7	27
total	3	8	12	13	13	16	65

The figures for 2021-2023 are actual figures of qualifying staff. The figures for 2024-2026 are projections. Figures based on 12 sponsored OU degree's (7/5 estimated divide between CS and AS). There are difficulties in predicting whether the qualified social workers will be employed by CS or AS. Students being sponsored by the OU route do not need to decide which service area to work for prior to qualifying. Students are not able to undertake both

placements within either children's or adult's services. There is no guarantee that students selected from one service area will seek to continue in that service area upon qualifying.

Staff retention / wellbeing initiatives:

The results from a staff wellbeing survey in 2022 showed that staff were requesting additional support when exposed to distressing and traumatic events which has supported and shaped initiatives led by the in-house psychologist in Children's Services. This feedback has directly shaped new initiatives to support staff wellbeing. This includes piloting one to one decompression sessions to support newly qualified social workers with the emotional demands of their new role, providing individual and group debriefing sessions for staff and carers who have been affected by traumatic events/distressing material in work, and we have held our first staff wellbeing event (13th October 2023) to promote and support workforce wellbeing. In addition, Schwartz rounds are about to commence. These will enable staff to participate in a supported facilitated group space, where on a monthly basis, they can share and reflect upon the emotionally challenging aspects of practice. Additionally, there is practice guidance in place to support newly qualified social workers in their first three years of practice. This guidance supports managers and social workers by ensuring that inductions are of a good standard, mentors are in place and caseloads are closely monitored.

Health and Care Academy:

Powys Health and Care Academy has built on the School's Initiative pilot that was run in the 2022/23 academic year and worked with education settings to develop a programme to provide young people with exposure to the opportunities in health and social care in Powys through the new Academy Careers Education and Enterprise Scheme (ACEES). Working closely with Powys County Council and Powys Teaching Health Board colleagues, the Academy has developed a programme of engagement with 10 of the 13 secondary schools and two further education colleges across Powys. This programme compromises of sessions delivered to Powys' young people aged 11-18 and aims to motivate them to consider a career in health and social care. The offer includes clinical and professional skills sessions, volunteer opportunities, information on flexible routes to health and social care careers, along with recruitment advice and top tips, with the aim of maximising the number of young people across Powys gaining employment in health and social care.

A full evaluation is being undertaken and will reported to the Workforce Futures Programme Board, co-Chaired by the Director of Social Services. To date, the Academy Careers Education Enterprise Scheme has reached 3,707 learners through the whole school approach and two Careers festivals for those studying health and social care in Y12 and Y13. An adapted version of the scheme is being offered in three Additional Learning Needs settings in Powys in March/April 2024 (reaching around 110 learners), and the offer is available to the Pupil Referral Unit on request, should a suitable group of learners be identified in that setting.

Childcare Workforce

To address some of the current workforce challenges across the childcare sector and to support the Flying Start Expansion the Childcare and Play team within Children's Services has developed a Childcare Apprentice scheme. The Flying Start Apprentice Scheme was developed as a pilot in an attempt to make a positive impact on the recruitment of a qualified childcare workforce. The scheme, which is fully funded by Welsh Government Flying Start grant currently funds nine childcare, play, learning and development apprentices in nine Flying Start childcare settings across the County. All apprentices interact positively with the advisory team and attend training when appropriate to support their professional development. The majority of the apprentices will qualify prior to the Summer term 2024. It is anticipated that this will be a rolling programme and further apprenticeship opportunities will be advertised over then next few months.

Dr Holly Gordon Senior Manager, Safeguarding and QA

08-03-24 Friday	Minutes ■ 01/12/23	
2.30 – 4:30pm	Q3 Strategic Risk Report Considered at joint scrutiny instead?	Bets Ingram/Directors/ Heads of Service/Jackie Pugh
	Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report	Nina Davies / Cllr Richard Church
	PCC response to Llais feedback • Ystradgynlais and Builth	Nina Davies/Lynette Lovell
	 Confidential Session Transition between Children's and Adult Services Planning and management of the transition and support required. How does this change? Financial impacts and considerations. Anonymised case studies may be considered in confidential session. 	Sharon Frewin/Sharon Powell/Gavin Williams (Service requested this report be considered in confidential session, due to risk of identifying service users)
	Reflection: Review Self-assessment workbook/action log before annual self-assessment session on 15/03/24	Scrutiny Officer/Committee
03-04-24 Friday 14:00	Self-Assessment	
11-04-24	Pre-Meeting	
11-04-24 Thurs	Foster Carer annual feedback review	Sharon Powell/Charlie Darwin
10:00 a.m.	Safer Accommodation update	Sharon Powell/Jo Harris
	Options regarding Learning Disability Services	Rachel Evans/Sharon Frewin/Cllr Sian Cox
		Holly Gordon

	Responding to Powys County Council's recruitment and retention challenge in social care through:	
23-05-24	Pre-Meeting	
23-05-24	Election of Vice Chair	Scrutiny Team
Thursday 10.00 a.m.	Q4 Risk Report	Bets Ingram
	Corporate Safeguarding Board	Nina Davies/Cllr Richard Church
	JICPA Report & Action Plan	Nina Davies / Sharon Powell
	Child Practice Review	Nina Davies / Sharon Powell
	Social Services End of Year Performance Review	Nina Davies/Sharon Powell/Sharon Frewin/Rachel Evans
	Direct Payments Review update	Rachel Evans/Nina Davies
	Work Programming	
18-07-24	Pre Meeting	
18-07-24 Thursday 2.00	Annual Complaints Report	Steve Holcroft/Nina Davies
p.m.	Annual Report of the Director of Social Services	Nina Davies
	Our challenge with and plans for Residential Care	Sharon Powell
	Scrutiny of the options following the Older Persons Day Opportunity Review	Rachel Evans/Sharon Frewin/Cllr Sian Cox

	Extra Care Strategy update	Rachel Evans
20-09-24	Pre-Meeting	
20-09-24 Fri 10.00 a.m.	Adult Services Q1 Performance Children's Services Q1 Performance	Sharon Frewin Sharon Powell
	Corporate Safeguarding Board	Nina Davies / Cllr Richard Church
	Review the Unaccompanied Asylum- Seeking Children (UASC) allocation process.	Sharon Powell/Charlie Darwin
	To review the actual cost of the proposed modelled average cost savings relating to UASC placements.	
25-10-24	Pre-Meeting	
25-10-24 Fri	Q2 Risk Report	Bets Ingram/Heads of Service
10.0 a.m.	Adult Social Care workforce themed item (TBC)	Sharon Frewin
	Powys Health and Care Academy	Nina Davies/Sharon Frewin/Sharon Powell/Rachel Evans/ Powys Teaching Health Board
	Prevention of falls work • What difference was this making?	Sharon Frewin/Nina Davies
19-12-24	Pre-Meeting	
19-12-24 Thursday	Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report	Nina Davies / Cllr Richard Church

10.00 a.m.	Update on the cost pressures around	Sharon Powell/Gavin
	recruiting additional staff for residential	Williams
	homes caring for children with complex	
	needs.	