

Health and Care Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Venue

By Zoom

Meeting Date

Friday, 3 November 2023

Meeting Time

10.00 am

For further information please contact

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County Hall
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5LG

27/10/2023

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

3.	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.)

4.	MINUTES AND ACTION LOG
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(i) To authorise the Chair to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held as follows as a correct record:

- 08/09/2023
- 22/09/2023

- (ii) To receive and consider the Action Log.
(Pages 5 - 40)

5.	CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS - QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT
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To receive and consider the Cabinet response to the scrutiny recommendations made at the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee held on 8th September 2023.
(Pages 41 - 42)

6.	POWYS SOCIAL SERVICES RESPONSE TO LLAIS FEEDBACK (SUMMER 2023)
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To receive and consider the responses of the Director of Social Services and Housing.
(Pages 43 - 50)

7.	UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN
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To receive and consider a presentation from Children's Services.
(Pages 51 - 64)

8.	WORK PROGRAMME
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To note the scrutiny forward work programme.
(Pages 65 - 68)

9.	EXEMPT ITEM
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To consider passing the following Resolution:

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 Monitoring Officer has determined that category 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 14.18 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.

10.	JICPA INFORMATION SUMMARY
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To receive an information summary from the Director of Education and Children regarding the recent Joint Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA).

Committee Reflection

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

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwriadol

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD BY ZOOM ON FRIDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2023****PRESENT**

County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)

County Councillors:

G E Jones, L Rijnenberg, C Robinson, E Roderick and C Walsh

Cabinet Members in attendance:

County Councillor S Cox (Cabinet Member for a Caring Powys)

Officers in attendance:

Rachel Evans (Head of Commissioning and Partnerships), Sharon Frewin (Head of Adult Services), Catherine James (Head of Transformation and Democratic Services), James Langridge-Thomas (Deputy-Head of Transformation and Communication), Sharon Powell (Head of Children's Services) and Rachel Ysart (Strategic Business and Programme Manager)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Heulwen Hulme, Little Brighthouse, Benjamin Breeze, Elwyn Vaughan, Josie Ewing, Sandra Davies (Cabinet Member for Future Generations), Jack Straw (Chief Executive Officer), Nina Davies (Director of Social Services and Housing) and Lynette Lovell (Director of Education and Children).

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. Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT**Documents Considered:**

- Q1 Performance Report (to Cabinet and Scrutiny)

Background:

- The purpose of the report was to present the Council's 2023 to 2024 Quarter 1 (April to June) Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan Scorecard. The report was the first presentation of the Council's progress against the new Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan.

- The Scorecard had been made available on the Council's website: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/14124/Corporate-Plan-Updates>
- The Quarter 1 Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan Scorecard showed the Council's performance against its expectations between April and June 2023.
- The new performance year commenced on 01 April 2023 to coincide with the publication of the Council's new Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan: Stronger, Fairer, Greener (abbreviated as 'CSEP').
- The purpose of the CSEP was to present the well-being priorities for the Council for the years 2023 to 2027, which supported the seven national well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Council's priorities were its three corporate well-being objectives, which were:
 1. We will improve people's awareness of services, and how to access them, so that they can make informed choices.
 2. We will support good quality, sustainable, employment, providing training opportunities, and pursuing real living wage employer accreditation.
 3. We will work to tackle poverty and inequality to support the well-being of the people of Powys.
- The CSEP contained all the priority work for the Council, driven by the Cabinet's work programme and ambitions. The objectives and measures integrate the equality objectives and measures to ensure that the Council worked towards a fairer Powys in all aspects of work, and that equality is at the heart of the approach taken.
- The well-being objectives were organisation-wide areas of focus that were actively pursued so that the Council can make positive improvements to services. The performance process helped the Council to reflect on the year so far, to evaluate its approaches and contributions, to consider what has been learned, and to plan what actions can or should be taken to support ongoing progress.
- Each service had provided a written update about how they had contributed towards the achievement of the Council's three corporate objectives and, where appropriate, the supporting measures.
- The new reporting system only provided the following options for identifying progress against a measure target:
 - On track
 - Off track
 - No data (data not due to be reported)
 - Not reported (data unexpectedly unavailable or not yet provided)
- Importantly, measure statuses were automatically calculated by the system as an indicator to identify whether the progress towards the activity met planned expectations (the targets). These statuses were used as conversation starts to enable activities to be considered in a more detailed context to determine what went well, where more or different support or resource may be necessary, and what lessons may be learned.

Issues Raised by the Committee and Responses Received:

Issues Raised by the Committee:	Responses Received:
I understand why the quarterly reporting used percentages, however could the raw figures be included also, to aid in understanding what the target would be?	The Member's points would be considered.
<p>Referring to the number of apprentices who have started working for the Council in the last quarter (3), does this figure include schools?</p> <p>The Chair asked for clarification as to whether the figure included all, or only new apprentices for the previous quarter.</p> <p>Recommendation to include current apprentices in the scorecard, alongside new apprentices within the last quarter.</p>	<p>The figure was specific to Social Services, however the report allows filtering for each Service.</p> <p>The Head of Commissioning and Partnerships noted that there were eight apprentices within Childcare settings in total, and questioned whether the scorecard was only displaying new apprentices for quarter 1.</p>
Regarding Objective 3, the amount of rental income lost was referred to as a percentage, how can we find the amount rather than the percentage?	The amount of rental income lost should be included in the Service's written narrative.
Regarding the new partnership being formed between the Preventative and Restorative Justice Team and Freedom Leisure to support families, is information available to explain why this was specific to the Llandrindod Wells area? Was any work completed in other areas of Powys where Freedom Leisure also operates?	The Head of Transformation and Democratic Services did not have further information relating to the question, although noted that the Service could be requested to provide the information.
Noted that for the first quarter, it was difficult to make comparisons and identify trends. However moving forward, this will be a useful tool to use alongside the commentary from Service Areas, which provides context and aids understanding and insight into the CSEP Objectives.	
The report mentioned that three measures were underperforming, what	Response from SP, some families step down and receive help from

<p>actions were Services taking to bring these measures up to target?</p> <p>For example, one of the measures, 'The percentage of children using the Intervention and Prevention Service' remains at 89%, with the target being 91%.</p>	<p>services such as the Early Help or Youth Justice team. It appears as a deficit, it would be beneficial to be able to compare to these, so the data capture would need to be there to show on the quarterly performance scorecards.</p> <p>The Chair noted that this was one of the reasons why the performance reports and operational data were requested, as more service-specific information would give the Committee a better picture of the situation.</p> <p>The Head of Children's Services firstly agreed that the Scorecard should include the actual number in addition to the percentage. Regarding the percentage, when measuring the intervention for a particular child and family, the support does not always end in the Intervention and Prevention Service, due to them receiving support from the Early Help Team, or receive intervention from the Youth Justice Team.</p> <p>Although it was reported as a deficit, this does not specifically mean that children and families did not receive an intervention from another service within Children's Services.</p>
<p>Do you think that you have set particularly challenging targets?</p>	<p>Potentially, when looking at the end of quarter one, the Service were striving to meet their targets, although the Head of Children's Services noted that work needed to be undertaken regarding how the support families receive was being reported.</p> <p>ACTION - Following the request from the Chair, the Head of Children's Services agreed to provide the monthly performance reports from April 2023.</p>
<p>Regarding WCCIS issues, did the Head of Children's Services have concerns on potential impacts on reporting performance, for example due to issues</p>	<p>The Head of Children's Services noted that there are complications with WCCIS as a system, there are plans to replace it in the future.</p>

<p>with extracting data?</p> <p>Do you have any concerns with WCCIS around managing risk?</p>	<p>However, it is not impacting on the reporting of the data contained within the Quarterly Performance reporting.</p> <p>The Head of Children’s Services noted that she does not have any concerns regarding the management of risk, if there were complications with the system, the information is well-sighted, and the Head of Service is aware.</p> <p>Regardless of the system, children can still be seen by officers. There are sometimes complications with recording information in a timely manner, although this does not have an impact on risk.</p>
<p>Regarding Objective 2 – Supporting the Workforce, when the WCCIS system was not working properly, I would imagine staff are frustrated and impacted by this, has the situation improved?</p> <p>Are the Data Quality clerks’ role designed to support staff?</p>	<p>Through engagement with the workforce, for example the regular Social Services Staff Roadshows, WCCIS issues are regular frustrations of staff, however the system had been working better in recent weeks.</p> <p>Most staff members would likely say that WCCIS issues are continuing to cause frustrations, especially when a social worker needs to input information into the system, and it is not working. In these circumstances, staff would need to record the information on a Word document.</p> <p>There are dedicated Data Quality Clerks and Co-ordinating officers who monitor the data being inputted into WCCIS, this also aids in lessening the frustrations of social workers. There are therefore several mechanisms to work with staff on the areas which cause repeated frustration.</p> <p>Yes, their roles are focused on the collection and input of data into the system, which allows the social workers and other staff to be more available in their practice when the system is not fully working.</p>
<p>The ongoing work on replacing WCCIS was due to be presented to the</p>	<p>The Head of Adult Services noted that conversations were underway,</p>

<p>Committee, was this still due to happen?</p> <p>The Chair noted that further debate may reveal commercially confidential information and noted that confidential updates to the Committee could be undertaken.</p>	<p>although specific updates could not yet be provided.</p>
<p>Closing the item, the Chair thanked the Head of Transformation and Democratic Services and the Deputy-Head of Transformation and Communication for presenting the Quarter 1 Performance Report.</p>	

Actions:

- The Chair requested that the monthly Children’s Services performance/KPI reports be made available to the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee’s Teams channel to review, and to ask any supplementary questions following the scrutiny of the Q1 Performance report item.

Observations and Recommendations:

- Overall recommendation that the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee be provided with the monthly performance/KPI report for each Service, to enable the Committee to drill-down further when scrutinising the corporate quarterly performance report.

5.	STAFFING AND SICKNESS TRENDS
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Documents Considered:

- Verbal updates from the Head of Adult Services regarding Q1 staffing and sickness trends.

Background:

- The Quarter 1 Performance Summary provided an update on:
 - Sickness Summary – Percentage of workforce absent due to sickness (01/04/2023 – 30/06/2023)
 - Long-term sickness absence (LTSA) for Quarter 1
 - Short Term Sickness Absence (STSA)
 - Number of occurrences over previous 6 months (01/01/2023 – 30/06/2023)
 - Quarter 1 had seen a reduction in both occurrences and working days lost compared with Quarter 4. The number of staff absent due to long-term sickness absence had fallen each month during Quarter 1. However, long-term sickness absence (exceeding 28 days) continues to be significant. It was reported that managers were conscious of the subsequent impact on the Authority in relation to budgets, ability to deliver services and impact on colleagues in work.

- It was noted that Team Managers within Adult Services had support and training in managing sickness absence, including 1-2-1 sessions with the HR Advisor.
- Workforce data summary
 - The headcount as of 30th April 2023 was 547, equivalent to 460.29 FTE.
 - The headcount as of 31st May 2023 was 552, equivalent to 464.79 FTE.
 - The headcount as of 30th June 2023 was 554, equivalent to 469.54 FTE.
 - During Quarter 1, there had been 10 PCC leavers compared to 16 during Quarter 4, with no qualified leavers in Quarter 1, which accounted for 12.5% of the leavers during the previous Quarter 4.
- Exit interviews had been offered to all leavers, and information from the interviews was feedback to the Service to act upon where appropriate. It was noted that exit interviews for Social Worker Qualified leavers were undertaken by Senior Managers and HR.
- 10 new starters had successfully commenced in post during Quarter 1, which was the same number as Quarter 4.

Issues Raised by the Committee and Responses Received:

Issues Raised by the Committee:	Responses Received:
Where would work related stress be recorded in the data?	There are two columns in the data table, as work related and non-work related stress are recorded separately.
<p>Noted that the downward trend in sickness absence was a positive development. The first table was slightly confusing as the Head of Adult Services reported that the sickness rate was 25%, whereas it was 25% of staff who had a period of sickness within the quarter. Could we have a percentage of the working days lost, rather than percentage absence?</p> <p>Has the improvement in sickness affected the budget, are less agency staff being employed?</p>	<p>This could be included in the future performance reporting.</p> <p>There were more agency staff being employed due to additional funding being made available from different streams to support the transformation process. The Head of Services would need to check the impact on the budget due to the additional funding. It was noted that as a result, there was more staff time being spent with clients.</p> <p>Action – to revisit the impact on the Adult Services budget when scrutinising the quarterly finance performance.</p>

<p>How do the figures provided compare to the pre-Covid period, especially relating to stress-related sickness? Were there issues due to staff not being available at offices? It had been previously noted at a Council meeting that due to changes in working patterns and the ability to work from home, work-life balance had improved.</p> <p>The Chair added to the question that the Committee had previously discussed whether a deeper investigation was required into staff wellbeing when working remotely, for example, was there evidence suggesting that staff were feeling isolated and not sharing worries?</p>	<p>The Head of Adult Services noted that she did not have the information available and was not in post at the time.</p> <p>The Head of Adult Services noted that staff had raised a mixture of points at the regular roadshows and team meetings. It was reported that staff wanted to retain the ability to work from home when needed, although they are also enjoying the return to the office. The Head of Adult Services noted that team meetings and supervisions should be face-to-face wherever possible, or available in the office on certain agreed days.</p> <p>It was reported that there had not been an increase in requests for flexible working to condense hours for example, although these were still available, and it was noted that this was often due to life changes.</p>
<p>The Chair noted that when working from home, it can be considered more acceptable to work even when staff are unwell. However, this could increase the length of illness due to the staff not resting. Would this then affect the workforce overall, due to the risk of staff burnout?</p>	<p>The Head of Adult Services noted that the Service do have those conversations to ensure that staff are resting and not working from home.</p> <p>The Head of Commissioning and Partnerships noted that the Social Services staff roadshows were very useful to meet with staff, however under the New Ways of Working policy, people are still able to come into the office to meet face-to-face to share any problems they are experiencing.</p> <p>It was further noted that protected lunch breaks, not booking meetings as a principle on Friday's, taking regular breaks from screens, to reflect and exercise was important, according to the Wellbeing Protocol. This protocol was reinforced during regular 1-2-1s, supervisions and team meetings.</p> <p>In respect of the Commissioning Team,</p>

	<p>the Head of Commissioning and Partnerships noted that due to most staff working remotely, there had been cases where staff were working from home when unwell. Conversations had been undertaken to ensure staff do not work from home when unwell to ensure a full recover.</p>
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Actions:

- To revisit the impact of agency staffing on the Adult Services budget when scrutinising the quarterly finance performance.

Documents Considered:

- Verbal updates from the Head of Children's Services regarding Q1 staffing and sickness trends.

Background:

- The Quarter 1 Staff Sickness Trends for Children's Services provided an update on:
 - Long-term sickness absence (LTSA)
 - Short-term sickness absence (STSA)
 - All sickness absence reasons by month (April, May and June 2023):
 - For June 2023, the reasons with the highest rate of absence were 'test/treatment', 'stress, depression, anxiety etc.' and 'pregnancy related'.
 - For May 2023, the reason with the highest rate of absence was 'test/treatment'.
 - For April 2023, the reason with the highest rate of absence was 'stress, depression, anxiety etc.'
 - The Head of Children's Services noted that HR record the reasons of stress/mental health between work-related and non-work related sickness absences.
 - The number of absence occurrences over the previous 12 months (01/07/2022 to 30/06/2023) were:
 - 2 occurrences – 54 employees,
 - 3+ occurrences – 45 employees.
 - Employee starter and leaver rates:
 - The Head of Children's Services noted that the rates of employees who started with (starters), and left (leavers) Children's Services changed each month between the June 2022 to June 2023 reporting period.
 - The highest rate of leavers was seen in August 2022 at 7.3.
 - The lowest rate of leavers was seen in May 2023 at 1.0.

- The highest rate of starters was seen in March 2023 at 9.6.
- The lowest rate of starters was seen in December 2022 and January 2023 at 2.0.
- The Head of Children’s Services reported that the spike in starters during March 2023 (9.6) was due to the recruitment drive held across December 2022 and January 2023, to recruit staff into the Council’s Children’s Residential Homes.
- It was further reported that the leaver rate had stabilised, whilst starter rates had increased, with the focus being on retention of staff by strengthening wellbeing and a positive work culture, in addition to professional development.
- Support from a psychologist was offered to staff, in addition to group sessions to reflect on complex situations.
- These developments were recognised by Social Care Wales.
- Agency workers:
 - From June 2022 to June 2023, the number of agency workers in Children’s Services ranged from 24 to 32 per month, with the peak of 32 having occurred during October 2022. In more recent months the number has stabilised at 29 agency workers for June 2023.
 - The Head of Children’s Services noted that the aim was to reduce the reliance on agency workers through the ‘Grow Our Own’ social worker scheme to provide financial sustainability, stability and permanency to the workforce, however it was clarified that agency workers were valuable and played an important role.
 - Children’s Services were subsequently focusing on managing the transition of newly-qualified social workers whilst some of the agency workers leave the Service.
 - It was further noted by the Head of Children’s Services that more agency workers were showing interest in converting to permanent roles.

Issues Raised by the Committee and Responses Received:

Issues Raised by the Committee:	Responses Received:
How do staff notify line managers of their sickness?	The Head of Children’s Services reported that the sickness absence policy states that the employee must verbally notify their line manager which would be recorded.
What is the timeframe for being able to self-certify?	The Head of Children’s Services explained that employees may self-certify for up to seven days, where sickness absence exceeds seven days, a return-to-work interview is undertaken and recorded by the supervisor/line manager.

<p>When staff fill in the self-certification sickness form, for example for gastroenteritis, at what stage do managers further investigate the sickness absence to consider other root-causes such as wellbeing and mental health issues?</p>	<p>If there were reoccurring themes, conversations could start which may involve an occupational health assessment, or a counselling referral.</p> <p>The Head of Adult Services noted that supervisors maintained regular contact with staff who were absent due to sickness, which ranged between weekly to no-less than fortnightly contact. Reasonable adjustments and other support could then be discussed to enable the employee to return to work.</p>
<p>Could future Children's Services staffing reports include the headcount of FTE, as was reported in the Adult Services data?</p>	<p>Yes, we will include this in future reporting.</p>
<p>Could a flu vaccination drive be implemented as is done in the Health Board, as flu-related illnesses can become heightened during the Winter months.</p>	<p>The Head of Children's Services noted that social care staff had the opportunity to receive a Covid booster vaccine which was shortly due to begin.</p> <p>The Head of Adult Services noted that in other local authorities, the offer of a flu vaccine did lead to a reduction in the number of flu-related absences. Both Heads of Service agreed to discuss how a flu vaccine could be offered to PCC social care staff.</p>
<p>Could staffing and sickness reporting use the same reporting format, or be combined for Adult and Children's Services?</p>	<p>The Head of Children's Services noted that she would liaise with the Head of Adult Services to standardise their staffing and sickness reporting.</p>
<p>Do you anticipate that staffing and sickness will be affected as a result of planned management of change within social services? Was engagement with staff undertaken regarding co-production of services?</p> <p>The Chair added that where future changes to services and transformation was planned, staff may have concerns around how the changes could affect their position. How could sickness absence, for example due to work-related stress be captured due to changes to service arrangements?</p>	<p>Regarding management of change and reshaping of services, the Head of Children's Services offered to provide a report to the Committee regarding the future shaping of services.</p> <p>Children's Services have utilised engagement roadshows for staff to develop Sustainable Powys, it was not anticipated that any radical changes would be undertaken within Children's Services. Rather, changes were about strengthening the work already ongoing. This included the 'Grow Our Own' social worker programme, and to reduce the reliance on agency staff.</p>

	<p>The Head of Children’s Services noted that she had been clear to staff within the service through engagement, that work was to be strengthened, rather than drastically changed.</p> <p>Surveys had been undertaken, alongside joint surveys with Powys Teaching Health Board. A summary could be reported to the Committee in future. The Head of Children’s Services further noted that she attended team meetings regularly to find solutions with staff where they have worries due to emerging trends within the Service.</p>
<p>Was there a reason why the WTE showed an upward trend around August 2022?</p>	<p>The Head of Children’s Services noted that the change in WTE may be due to the exit of a managed team known as ‘Innovate’, however it was noted that she was not in post at that time.</p> <p>The Strategic Business and Programme Manager noted that it was likely due to the exit of the managed team.</p>
<p>Regarding the number of social worker vacancies, which averaged around 25 for the quarter. In terms of the agency being used, were they solely being utilised to fill these vacancies?</p> <p>Agency workers tend to cost the Council more, was the use of agency workers having an effect on the budget?</p>	<p>Yes, the agency rates were equivalent to the social worker vacancies, however there were one or two additional agency social workers to increase the capacity due to the demand in cases entering through the ‘Front Door’.</p> <p>The costs do vary due to the cost of an agency worker per day being considerably higher compared to the cost of a full-time-equivalent permanent employee.</p> <p>There was a deficit in terms of the staffing budget due to the use of agency worker expenditure. The ‘Grow Our Own’ programme supports the reduction in use of agency workers.</p>
<p>How was benchmarking managed by the Services, was data from other Local Authorities utilised in addition to professional experience?</p>	<p>The Head of Adult Services noted that benchmarking was undertaken by comparing data with other authorities in addition to professional experience. Regarding absences, it was noted that incident/accident rates were analysed to</p>

<p>The Chair asked the Head of Adult Services what actions would be undertaken based on the monthly performance reporting.</p> <p>Would you also expect the dialogue to be instigated from the individual teams upwards to senior management? Does this happen freely or do you need to push for it?</p>	<p>identify any trends.</p> <p>In addition to conversations with equivalent officers in other Authorities, cross-referencing data from monthly and previous years' reporting to identify any trend. It was further noted that supervision of specific teams was paramount, especially when there were differences across the county, to establish the reason for the irregularity.</p> <p>Conversations would be undertaken with the specific team, in addition to analysing the data to identify any trends where applicable, where this was identified a different support mechanism would be considered.</p> <p>As part of the supervision process, sickness, demand and performance was a standard item for discussion. The Head of Adult Services reported the positive and proactive nature in how managers were undertaking sickness absence management. It was further noted that this happened freely in team meetings.</p> <p>The Head of Children's Services noted that this was also applicable to Children's Services, however it was reported that vacancy rates were scrutinised on a regional basis with other Heads of Children's Services in other local authorities.</p> <p>Likewise, this was undertaken as a national objective at the All-Wales Heads of Children's Services group, where there is a national drive to reduce the use of agency workers which involves benchmarking with other local authorities. Benchmarking enabled a greater understanding of the specific reasons why certain local authorities were experiencing problems whereas others did not.</p>
<p>Where does the Portfolio Holder for a Caring Powys see her role in terms of oversight, was data available through the WLGA (Welsh Local Government Association)?</p>	<p>The Portfolio Holder for a Caring Powys was not aware of conversations with the WLGA regarding benchmarking and sickness specifically, however this could be raised with the WLGA. The Portfolio</p>

<p>The Chair noted that she did not want to create work for others, however if the data was held it would be interesting to compare against other Local Authorities.</p>	<p>Holder reported that she did have conversations between Heads of Service to discuss sickness absences.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder agreed and further noted the analysis of the workforce futures survey to understand how PCC staff wellbeing compares to PTHB (Powys Teaching Health Board).</p>
<p>Regarding Care First, was the offer changing, has it been adapted post-Covid and who provides the quality-control?</p> <p>The Chair asked whether there was a cost associated with these services, although it was noted that Human Resources may need to provide this information.</p>	<p>The Head of Children’s Services noted that Human Resources oversee Care First. It was noted that the offer had developed since the pandemic including more opportunity for different types of counselling.</p> <p>The Head of Adult Services noted that data was available reflecting the waiting times and referrals to Care First.</p> <p>The Head of Children’s Services noted that the Head of Workforce and Organisational Development should be able to provide the costing information.</p> <p>The Head of Children’s Services further noted that there was work ongoing within Workforce relating to recruitment and retention.</p> <p>ACTION – Recommendation to write to the Head of Workforce and Organisational Development regarding the cost of Care First services to the Council, and to provide clarity as to how the service was measured for quality.</p>
<p>Was it possible for managers to see which staff were not able to take their annual leave allowance?</p>	<p>It was possible. The Head of Adult Services noted that managers were being reminded to encourage and enable staff to take their leave.</p> <p>The Head of Commissioning and Partnerships noted that the supervision process was important to ensure staff were resting by using their annual leave, and also to ensure that leave was taken appropriately so there were not large periods where multiple officers were on leave.</p>

<p>When did the in-house psychologist start working for the Council?</p> <p>The Chair noted her experience as a member of the Foster Panel in the past, which involved a series of traumatic cases which were reported on by national news sources. The Chair had spoken to social workers who had been involved in those cases to understand the support they received, and it was confirmed they did not receive support.</p> <p>Would the answer be different now and do managers ensure that staff are actively supported in their roles?</p>	<p>The Head of Children’s Services noted that the psychologist had been post for at least two years, however the Head of Children’s Services noted that she did not have the exact figure.</p> <p>The Heads of Service ensure that staff who are involved in very serious cases can access the support from the psychologist, whether this is on an individual, group or team basis. It was noted that debriefing techniques were vital to support staff.</p> <p>The Head of Children’s Services further explained that trauma-informed practice and ways of working were necessary to support staff, not only for specific services but also the wider workforce across the Council.</p>
<p>Regarding agency staff who were converting to permanent employees of PCC, how do you capture the reasoning for why they are staying, could this good practice be shared with other teams?</p>	<p>The Head of Children’s Services noted that whilst the Service do record the number of agency staff who convert to work permanently for the Authority, the reasons were not specifically recorded. It was reported that agency staff had noted the culture of working for PCC in addition to the residents.</p> <p>ACTION - The Chair recommended that the reasons for agency staff who were converting to permanent roles should be specifically identified, to understand the good practice which should be shared across teams, which may further encourage other agency staff to convert to a permanent role.</p> <p>The Head of Adult Services noted that there can be circumstances where there are fees incurred to the Council when agency workers convert to being employed by PCC, therefore a robust business case was required.</p>
<p>Was there a particular reason why it was difficult to recruit social workers to Children’s Services compared to Adult Services?</p>	<p>The Head of Children’s Services noted that previously there were around 55 agency social workers working for Children’s Services, the impact was likely</p>

	<p>due to the poor inspection outcome by Care Inspectorate Wales in 2017. There was an effect on Adult Services too, however Children's Services was predominantly affected as seen by the increased rate of staff leaving the Service.</p> <p>The Service was still reliant on agency staff and whilst there was a downward trend in use of agency staff, the Service recognised that a different approach was necessary to attract and retain staff by building from within. The Head of Children's Services noted that there was greater scrutiny of social workers who work with children, especially in the media and courts.</p> <p>It was reported that there is a national shortage of social workers, although the shortage was especially prevalent for social workers who work in front-line children's services, safeguarding and child protection due to the nature of the roles. The Head of Children's Services stressed that maintaining staff wellbeing was therefore very important.</p> <p>It was further noted that there were so many career opportunities for young people to explore with some being more popular than others, whereas social work as a profession requires a person who is passionate and prepared for the profession. For Powys specifically, an ageing population with less young people would likely narrow the number of people who want to pursue social work.</p>
	<p>The Head of Commissioning and Partnerships noted that a recent Commissioning Team away day found that staff valued being able to provide a better future for their family first, followed by work-life balance, to learn new skills and being paid well. These factors would then inform future recruitment.</p>

Actions:

- To include a headcount of FTE across the quarter for future reporting.

Observations and Recommendations:

- Recommended that the Committee write to the Head of Workforce and Organisational Development regarding Care First and tracking the Agency Costs. How is the quality measured?

6.	PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION UPDATES
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The previous recommendations were noted by the Committee.

7.	RECOMMENDATION TRACKER
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The Committee reviewed the Informal Recommendation Tracker and noted the completed actions and recommendations.

The two recommendations made during the meeting were recorded to ensure that a timely response from Officers was received by the Committee.

The formal recommendations relating to the scrutiny of the Quarter 1 Performance Report were recorded in the Formal Recommendation Tracker. A report would be considered by the Cabinet on 19 September 2023, to either accept, partially accept or not accept each of the Committee's recommendations.

According to the Council's Constitution, a formal response from the Cabinet and relevant Cabinet Member should be received by the Committee within two months of the report being considered at the Cabinet meeting.

8.	WORK PROGRAMME
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The Committee noted the Work Programme and resolved to review it again at the next meeting.

County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwriadol

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD AT BY ZOOM ON FRIDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2023**

PRESENT

County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)

County Councillors:

J Ewing, L Rijnenberg, C Robinson, E Roderick, L Brighthouse

Cabinet Members in attendance:

County Councillors S Cox (Cabinet Member for a Caring Powys) and S Davies (Cabinet Member for Future Generations)

Officers in attendance:

Nina Davies (Director of Social Services and Housing), Rachel Evans (Head of Commissioning and Partnerships), Sharon Frewin (Head of Adult Services), Michael Gedrim (Education Manager and Dedicated Safeguarding Lead for Education), Pamela Iyer (Senior Strategic Commissioning Manager), Sarah Quibell (Service Manager for Education Support Services) and Wayne Welsby (Professional Lead – Procurement and Commercial Services)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Chris Walsh, Elwyn Vaughan, Heulwen Hulme, Gareth E Jones, Benjamin Breeze, Richard Church (Cabinet Member for a Safer Powys), Jack Straw (Interim Chief Executive Officer) and Sharon Powell (Head of Childrens Services).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Following advice from Officers, the Chair explained to Members that they should declare an interest in Item 6 on the agenda if any of their family members used Council-provided day services.

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 ACTION LOG

Members received the draft minutes of the previous meetings held on 2nd June 2023 and 7th July 2023. The motion to approve the draft minutes was proposed by County Councillor J Ewing and seconded by County Councillor C Robinson.

RESOLVED that the Chair be authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meetings as a correct record.

5. CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING BOARD ACTIVITY REPORT
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Documents Considered:

- Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report - 08/06/2023
 - A presentation was received from the Professional Lead – Procurement and Commercial Services regarding safeguarding considerations in contract management, followed by;
 - Verbal responses from the Education Manager and Designated Safeguard Lead and the Service Manager for Education Support Services regarding safeguarding and elective home education arrangements.

Background:

- Corporate Safeguarding Board (The Board) met on 8th June 2023, although the Director of Social Services and Housing noted that the report presented to the Committee had been delayed somewhat due to annual leave commitments over the summer period.
- The Board noted that the following actions had been, or were close to completion:
 - Lead Officer and Lead Member for Safeguarding's roles and responsibilities had been published.
 - The Volunteer (Safer Recruitment) Policy was completed pending minor amendments and would be circulated to the Board in due course.
 - The gathering of contractual monitoring information from services regarding safeguarding issues, and the clarification of the Council's expectations of contracts regarding safeguarding training had taken longer than expected.
 - The Corporate Regulatory Tracker link was now included in the Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report as requested by the Committee.
- Feedback from the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee was received by the Board which were outlined in the report. Of the four requests, three were agreed, however the fourth request required processes to be explored.
- The Director of Social Services and Housing reported that the Schools Service was currently undertaking work around the Committee's request to include school staff and volunteers in the mandatory safeguarding training compliance statistics. This information was expected to be received by the Board at a future meeting.
- The Committee had previously asked what the timeframe was for staff to complete mandatory training – the Board were advised there is a two-week deadline.
- The Committee had also asked how staff without access to computers could access the mandatory training. The Board were advised that staff had been provided with hard copies of the training material, and training

was also being delivered at different times of day to suit the varied work patterns.

- The report noted a significant increase in corporate safeguarding and VAWDASV training compliance in both the Catering and Cleaning and HTR Service Areas as of 1st June, compared to 1st January.
- SWAP DBS Audit
 - The Board were provided with the Audit Report, and the SWAP Officer confirmed the DBS Team provided high assurance, however there were areas with limited assurance (Taxis, Foster Carers and Procurement) which required improvement. The Heads of Service confirmed remedial actions had been identified and were in the process of being implemented.
- Safeguarding Audits/Self Assessments
 - The Board were informed further work was needed to analyse the collated information following the Safeguarding Audit. It was noted that different templates were used and not all questions were relevant for every service area. Heads of Service had allocated a series of actions for themselves, resulting in further communications and reminders to staff. There were further points to review at a future Board meeting.
- Preparations for National Safeguarding Week
 - Preparations were undertaken to deliver the event which was planned for November 2023. Noted that Powys were hosting the National Safeguarding Conference on 16th November 2023 with the theme being 'Safeguarding in Rural Communities'.
- Safeguarding Theme of the Month
 - Themes were discussed and it was proposed to align with national awareness raising weeks. Suggestions were to be drafted into a table, the Board agreed that subjects should be bitesize to promote accessibility and understanding for potential audiences.
 - The Director of Social Services and Housing noted that the first theme, "What is Safeguarding?" was due to be published in the following week.
- Annual Private Fostering Report
 - The Board were informed that Private Fostering Arrangements fell within childcare legislation, which applies to any child under the age of 16, who moves into another household outside of their immediate family for longer than 28 days. The Board were informed that the Local Authority has statutory duties to assess, undertake DBS checks and visit to ensure the child is safe and that their needs were being met.
 - It was reported that only two private fostering arrangement notifications were received in the proceeding twelve months at the Board meeting in June 2023.
 - The Board noted that whilst awareness raising was key, this should be to promote support and good outcomes, rather than statutory intrusion. It was reported that guidance and support was available for social workers as the area of work was less common.
 - Noted that the Private Fostering Report was circulated to all Councillors to increase awareness and understanding.

- Young People's Housing
 - Discussion of options for young people experiencing homelessness and the associated challenges, including 'Bed and Breakfast' accommodation.
 - Cases were discussed and it was reported that 'Bed and Breakfast' accommodation may be the least-worst option for young people, due to promoting their safety which resulted in better outcomes compared to other options which may increase their vulnerability.
 - The Board were informed that Housing Development Business Cases were being progressed including interim modular accommodation.
- Elective Home Education
 - The Board were informed that Welsh Government guidance had been issued, although the Education Service required some time to reflect and make appropriate service developments.
- Mandatory Safeguarding Training, including VAWDASV.
 - The Board were informed that all service areas have increased their compliance with both the mandatory Safeguarding and VAWDASV training.
 - It was noted that Children's Services had a lower compliance rate (82%) compared to other service areas. Following reflection, the service decided that although staff receive other safeguarding training, the mandatory training would be kept and managed through supervision sessions.
 - It was reported that VAWDASV 'Ask and Act' Training was at 91% compliance rate which compared extremely favourably with other Authorities.
- Adult Social Care Safeguarding Performance, including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
 - The Board were informed that the Appointeeship and Deputyship Unit had received a positive outcome report following the inspection by the Office of the Public Guardian.
- Children's Social Services Safeguarding Performance
 - The Board were informed that whilst some dips had been identified, in some areas of performance, the trajectory was showing overall improvement. Numbers of children on the Child Protection Register were low (around 100) in contrast to the twelve months previous.
- Future agenda items were noted by the Board and were contained within the report.
- Home Office Anti-Terrorism Notifications
 - The Board were informed that the Property, Planning and Public Protection Service had received correspondence from the Home Office regarding anti-terrorism information sharing processes, in particular, notifications about individuals living in Powys who may or do pose a threat. The signing and return of a Memorandum of Communication identifying the Prevent Lead would allow the Home Office to provide Powys with such notifications.
 - The Board resolved that the Prevent Lead (Senior Manager within the PPPP Team) should receive the notifications.
- Safeguarding Fora

- The Board were informed that these multi-agency learning and development sessions had resumed following the Covid pandemic. It was noted that the first forum focused on sexually harmful behaviour attended by an expert guest speaker.
- The aim was to run two sessions per year, although this may increase as partner agencies were being encouraged to use the 'Safeguarding For a' banner to run their own safeguarding learning events.
- The Director of Social Services and Housing reported that the next Corporate Safeguarding Board Meeting was scheduled for 14th December 2023.

Safeguarding considerations in contract management

- The Committee received a presentation from the Professional Lead – Procurement and Commercial Services regarding the Council's safeguarding considerations in contract management.
 - Contract Management
 - Contract Management had been identified as a key weakness for the Council, as per the CIPFA 5-Star Council assessment in 2019.
 - Contract Management was a vital tool used to ensure benefits realisation, effective management of contractual risk and the maximisation of opportunities throughout the contract lifecycle.
 - These mechanisms were important to allow contracts to be adjusted flexibly to meet the future needs of the Council.
 - It was noted that when contract management was poorly undertaken, value of the contract can be lost due to poor contract management.
 - Corporate approach to contract management
 - The Council-wide Contract Management Framework categorises contracts into four Tiers based on risk and value, which provided a consistent approach across the organisation.
 - Following the audit, contract registers were updated to ensure all contracts were identified. A Financial risk management approach had been introduced to suppliers in addition to implementing mitigation action plans to minimise risk of suppliers going out of business.
 - Contract managers responsible for suppliers with annual expenditure of £1 million and above were required to undertake the GCS Contract management Training. Awareness training was being developed for lower tier contracts.
 - Tiering Approach
 - Platinum – High Value/High Complexity and Risk (1st tier)
 - Gold – High Value/High Complexity and Risk (2nd tier)
 - Prioritised resources with robust monitoring and improvement plans. Contract Managers were

identified for these tiers and had completed the GCF Contract Management Training.

- Silver – Low Value/High Complexity and Risk (3rd tier)
- Bronze – Low Value/Low Complexity and Risk (4th Tier)
 - Lower level (silver) or minimal contract management activity (bronze). Contract Awareness Training Module was recommended but not mandatory for bronze tier contracts.

Safeguarding considerations in elective home education

- Verbal updates from the Education Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead for Education and the Service Manager for Education Support Services were received by the Committee.
 - The Education Manager confirmed that guidance from Welsh Government had recently changed. Welsh Government had previously provided additional funding, which allowed the Education Service to improve their systems in how the Council interacts with elective home-educated families; therefore, the changes were already in place before the guidance had been released.
 - The Education Manager confirmed that although there were no changes in legislation relating to elective home education, the Welsh Government guidance was statutory and therefore there was an expectation for these changes to be communicated with elective home-educated families.
 - Although the Service were already communicating with families, meetings were set up to ensure families were aware of the enhanced onus on the family as set out in the guidance.

Issues Raised by the Committee and Responses Received:

Issues Raised by the Committee:	Responses Received:
How had these steps which had been implemented by the Commercial and Procurement Team, mitigated the risk in a safeguarding perspective? For example, were the Council's contractors aware of safeguarding procedures, or if they had concerns?	The Professional Lead – Procurement and Commercial Services reported that certain procedures such as the tiering approach had only very recently been agreed and implemented. Platinum (highest value and risk) contracts for example would be required to contain a safeguarding mechanism, which would specify the minimum number of contract review meetings required.
If a new school was being built by the Council which could be considered a platinum tier contract, would there be consideration for safeguarding when managing this type of contract?	The individual contract manager would have the responsibility to manage the specific requirements of the contract, including safeguarding.
If the Council were to procure services to provide accommodation for 16- and	The Service would ensure that the requirements of the contract were set

<p>17-year-olds, as part of the periodic contract review meetings, would the Council monitor whether sub-contractors were undertaking DBS checks for their employees?</p>	<p>out and checked, provided that there was a DBS and monitoring requirement included in the contract.</p> <p>The Head of Commissioning and Partnerships reported that the Service had collaborated with the Commercial and Procurement Team to produce an annual self-assessment form. The focus was originally for social care and included safeguarding provisions, however it was realised that the tool could be adapted to be used across the Council at a much wider level. The form allowed suppliers and contractors to self-assess against a range of specified requirements, and also enabled the Council to undertake audit activities.</p>
<p>How do we obtain a definitive list of families who choose elective home education?</p>	<p>The Education Manager noted that the information the Council holds on families who choose elected home-education was not definitive. There was no requirement for families to notify the Local Authority, although some families do, and this was usually when the child was at the pre-school stage.</p> <p>It was noted that if the child was enrolled at a school, the family must inform the school that they were withdrawing their child for elective home education who would then inform the Education Service. There was a process for this. Where a family move to Powys and the child was previously enrolled in a school or were electively home educated in the former area, the former Local Authority would inform the Council when they move.</p> <p>Officers from other Service Areas within the Council may inform the Education Service if they believe that a child was being electively home educated.</p> <p>The Service Manager for Education noted that where a child was identified</p>

	<p>to be missing education, the Education Service had a robust process to address this. In the majority of cases, the focus was to reengage the learner with the school.</p> <p>The Education Manager noted that there were more families who were now informing the Council of their decision to home educate their children, therefore the increase in numbers does not necessarily mean the number of children being electively home-educated was increasing.</p>
<p>How was elective home education learning monitored?</p>	<p>The Education Manager noted that the legislation required the family to assume all responsibility for meeting the education needs of their child when they choose elective home education. The Council would act if it was apparent that the child was not receiving a suitable education.</p> <p>The new statutory guidance from Welsh Government now expects families to proactively prove the child was receiving a suitable education. Previously, the onus was on the Council to react when it became aware that the child's education needs were not being met.</p> <p>Where elective home education registration was considered to not be in the best interests of the child, the Service would work with the family to bring the child back into school-based education.</p> <p>In terms of contact with families, the Service Manager for Education noted that it was led by families and a family-specific approach was utilised to build the relationship with Officers. This may start with the family and child attending at a library before a statutory school was considered. The Education Manager noted that there were multiple methods of communication such as by phone and face-to-face.</p>

	<p>Contact with the family may be by email, phone or face-to-face, and it was noted that contact was regularly undertaken.</p> <p>Signposting included details of how parents can access and refer their children to additional support services such as school nursing, speech and language therapy or support for additional learning needs.</p>
<p>Does the signposting information provided by the Council allow families to access services such as speech and language therapy?</p>	<p>The signposting information included contact details for school nursing and for additional learning needs support. The ALN Code required that the Council make a referral for the child with the parent's consent if they are identified as potentially being in need of ALN support.</p>
<p>Do you hold a percentage, or the number of children registered for elective home education?</p> <p>How does this compare to pre-covid figures?</p>	<p>The most recent figure as of the 30th August was 312.</p> <p>The Education Manager noted that the number of children who were registered with the Council as electively home educated was around double, compared to pre-covid figures, which was similar to other Welsh Local Authorities.</p> <p>It was reported that the increase was likely due to the increase in support provided by the Council, where families had now come forward to register with the Council as providing elective home education.</p> <p>The Service Manager for Education noted that the number of children registered as electively home educated was reported to Welsh Government monthly. This also included details such as eligibility for free school meals and additional learning needs. It was reported that during the last academic year there were 177 children and young people newly registered as receiving elective home education. However, 49 children and young people deregistered and</p>

	<p>returned to school. 47 ceased elective home education at the end of Year 11 (30th June 2023) as they were no longer of statutory school age.</p> <p>The use of software such as WCCIS and Teacher Centre were useful in tracking learners who move between school settings and elective home education. Due to some learners moving between school and home education settings, the Education Welfare Team provided continuity between statutory school and elective home education settings.</p>
<p>How does the Council ensure that children who are in receipt of free school meals were having their nutritional needs met at home?</p>	<p>There was no remit for the Council to provide meal vouchers once learners become electively home educated.</p>
<p>It was reported that the onus was on the family to demonstrate that the education they provide was effective. How does this work, do the Service periodically ask for information?</p>	<p>The Education Manager confirmed that the Education Service had always asked for an annual report from families to show what has been taught at home. Meeting with the child was an expectation of the new statutory guidance, however this was not a requirement, so work was ongoing with families to establish the need to frequently meet with children to assure that their educational needs were being met.</p> <p>It was noted that elective home education does not need to follow the Curriculum for Wales and can take many different forms, therefore there was no checklist approach and elective home education was reviewed on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<p>Regarding ALN, was there any evidence to suggest that families were needing to electively home-educate their children due to a lack of sufficient support?</p>	<p>It was reported that it would be the family's decision to decide to electively home educate their child, if they feel that they do not have sufficient support in a statutory school setting. It was confirmed that there was support available for ALN in statutory school settings, and the Education Service would work with families to establish the support required.</p> <p>The Service Manager for Education</p>

	<p>noted that the Council were required to provide monthly figures to Welsh Government, which included whether children were eligible for free school meals and had additional learning needs when they were studying in a school setting.</p> <p>It was reported that there was not a disproportional number of learners who were electively home educated and had additional learning needs, and was likely lower when compared to the school-based learners.</p>
<p>Was remote learning considered to be elective home education?</p>	<p>Yes. It was clarified that remote learning settings were considered as elective home education and were not the same as independent schools.</p>

Actions:

- Request for the Director of Social Services and Housing to amend the link to the tracker included in the report, as Members reported the link did not function.
- The Chair asked for clarification whether the annual private fostering report was sent to schools, in addition to County Councillors. The Director of Social Services and Housing noted that she would need to check with Officers before confirming.

Observations and Recommendations:

- Regarding the Safeguarding Themes of the Month, the Chair asked whether the resources would be shared with third sector organisations and in settings such as GP surgeries.
 - The Director of Social Services and Housing reported that the engagement was planned with schools and external partners and networks such as town and community councils.
- The Chair asked for clarification regarding the National Safeguarding Conference due to be held in Builth Wells, including whether Cabinet Members and County Councillors were expected to attend.
 - The Director of Social Services and Housing noted that she would need to seek clarification as there were limits to the number of attendees, if there was availability the Chair would be invited. It was noted that other Councillors were also due to attend.

6. WORK, LEISURE AND LEARNING PROGRAMME UPDATE

Documents Considered:

- Work, Leisure and Learning: Innovative models of day opportunities for adults presentation

Background:

The Head of Commissioning and Partnerships provided a presentation to Members.

Introduction

- Pre-Pandemic:
 - Traditional Day Services/Centres
 - Many services were closed through a controlled process due to Covid.
 - Diversified alternatives – examples included some supported living providers which tailored their offer within existing services.
 - Day Centre and Day Services staff to provide in-reach support.
- Recover and Return:
 - Opportunities for reflection, what did and did not work.
 - Information gaps – conversations with clients were undertaken.
 - Gained a greater understanding of the relationships, friendships and shared experiences that were important to clients, such as younger adults living with a learning disability.
 - Employment opportunities – how does the Council enable peoples' skills to ensure they are ready for employment? Regional Integration Funding was utilised to support the project.
- Future Focus:
 - Whole population – understanding peoples' future aspirations, were their outcomes met?
 - Creating collective resources and ideas, including the relevant staff, to provide the peer support and shared learning.
 - Developing expertise in co-production of services between Commissioning and Social Services staff, as required by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
 - Explore different models to ensure the person is at the centre of the offer.
 - What does 'good' look like, does the Service understand what clients expect?
 - Community offer and building capacity.
- Remit and Scope:
 - 'To engage adults with learning disabilities and older people, carers, communities and other stakeholders, in co-producing the services they want, now and for the future'.
 - The Work, Leisure and Learning Project was engaging people about daytime opportunities, employment and leisure across Powys.

- To deliver services for older people and adults with learning disabilities that reflect their needs and wants, now and into the future.
- The project aimed to extend across to older people with care and support needs and younger adults with learning, physical disabilities and mental health issues.
- Project team were undertaking a large-scale co-production and engagement exercise with those in receipt of a day service or attending day centres, and other stakeholders to explore short- and longer-term aspirations and models of support.
- The project was key to informing a Stronger, Fairer, Greener Powys and was a priority transformation project for Commissioning and Adult Social Care.

- Traditional model:
 - Day opportunities provided individuals with the chance to enhance their wellbeing, develop relationships and gain new skills.
 - Day opportunities within the existing model included:
 - Day centres for older people and day services for adults with learning disabilities – place-based services provided by the Council, or organisations on behalf of the Council, to help people achieve their identified outcomes and lead a fulfilled life.
 - Day time activities targeted at individuals needing care and support, such as a disability support group, dementia café or writing for wellbeing group.
 - Day time activities were open to everybody, and individuals attend with support if need, this may be by a family member, friend or paid carer.

- Underpinning principles:
 - Co-production
 - The Service were to underpin their work where providers and service users work together to reach a collective outcome.
 - Approach was value driven and built on the principle that those affected by a service were best placed to help design it.
 - Third sector organisations supporting people to sit on the task and finish group.
 - Engagement was to utilise mixed methods, including surveys, public events, focus groups and interviews).
 - Strengths-based
 - Noted that strengths based commissioning was an approach that involves considering the assets and strengths that already exist within local communities.
 - To consider Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) and concurrent work.
 - Sharing good practice
 - To learn from the lived experiences of the citizens of Powys.
 - Understanding what positive outcomes had been achieved from other workstreams and projects across the local

authority and third sector (such as external day centre reviews, Transition project and climate change work).

- Methodology:
 - Designed as a co-operative inquiry, a form of action research
 - Robust and evidence-based
 - Learning from Pembrokeshire and other Welsh authorities; Birmingham model.
 - Work with adults with learning disabilities required an ‘alongside’ co-production approach (Speech, Language and Communication Needs) and extended one-to-one time with each service user.
 - Older People’s day opportunities were to utilise a more structured approach.
 - Public meetings and open days scheduled for November 2023.
 - Visits to facilities, ‘what matters’ conversations with people, their carers and families and other research methods.
 - Discursive questions.

- Mapping of Services:
 - Service to map relevant day opportunities in Powys – including Powys funded day services, Llais, advocacy organisations, relevant third sector services and existing community provision.
 - Use information from the population needs assessment and other relevant data sources.
 - Project was engaged with the Leisure Review, including linking to survey responses and building/asset review.

- Key dates:
 - September to December 2023 – public meetings were booked provisionally between 13th and 25th November.
 - Engagement across county, place-based public meetings and discussion.
 - Survey – Once translated, the survey was due to open on 16th October and close on 4th December 2023.

Issues Raised by the Committee and Responses Received:

Issues Raised by the Committee:	Responses Received:
Does the Service hold a list of service users who the Commissioning Team plan to engage with?	Yes, a list was available, and those people will be the first to be engaged with. 90 people including families and carers have had discussions.
How does the programme fit in with the Commissioning cycle for older people and learning disabilities.	Regarding commissioned day centres, the Senior Strategic Commissioning Manager reported that there was one day centre under discussion with Shaw Healthcare, as to whether they take over operating the day centre or not.

<p>Would this work feed into the review of contracted disability services?</p>	<p>The Head of Commissioning noted that the planned work was an important part of the commissioning cycle under the discovery phase. In terms of recommissioning contracts, there were key elements of a contract that were required to meet the Service's contract specification. The voice of the individual was always paramount in this process.</p>
<p>When would the consultation likely be completed by, to report back to scrutiny?</p>	<p>Regarding sustainability, a wider conversation about the future with the people who currently or in the past used day centre services was required, however this could allow the scope to change.</p> <p>The consultation (high-level milestones) was planned to be complete by December 2023, with work beginning in January 2024 which should take around two months. Outcomes should be available for scrutiny by March 2023.</p>
<p>Have you already spoken with the County Councillors who have day centres within their wards?</p>	<p>The Service do hold a list and the Head of Commissioning believed the conversations had started, although it was noted that further engagement must continue.</p> <p>A communications strategy was to be utilised as part of the planning process, to gain a greater understanding of the people who need to be engaged within specific localities, which will have different needs based on the population.</p> <p>ACTION – Teams folder to be used to share presentations and additional information on the project with scrutiny Members.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for a Caring Powys noted that she made a commitment to the Committee to keep local Members informed, and would contact the Members directly where they have day centres in their wards.</p>

The Chair asked for the Committee to be involved in the scrutiny of the engagement process, and following discussions with Officers it was suggested that a questionnaire could be randomly sent to identified service users.

The questionnaire would ask questions such as “were you aware of the WLL Programme and the review of day centre services?” and “have you attended a community engagement session?” for example.

Actions:

- To review WLL Programme work in early Spring 2024.
- Health and Care Scrutiny Committee to seek an update on the WLL Programme in early Spring 2024.
- To add WLL Programme resources to the Committee’s Teams channel for review when they become available.

Observations and Recommendations:

- Recommendation to inform County Councillors who have day centres within their ward areas to be made aware of the engagement work.
- Recommendation to clearly identify to the public that the WLL Programme included a review of day centre services.

7.	WORK PROGRAMME
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Documents Considered:

- Health and Care Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme – 2023/24

Actions:

- To schedule meetings with the Finance Manager, Chair and Vice-Chair to discuss budget efficiency savings for both Childrens and Adult Services in January 2024, before budget scrutiny begins.

8.	EXEMPT ITEM
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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).

9.	DIRECT PAYMENTS
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The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Commissioning and Partnerships regarding Direct Payments.

County Councillor A Jenner (Chair)

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwriadol



**Economy, Residents and Communities Scrutiny Committee
Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee
Health and Care Scrutiny Committee**

The following Committees met on:

Health and Care Scrutiny Committee – 08.09.2023

Economy, Residents and Communities – 11.09.2023

Learning and Skills – 13.09.2023

And considered the following document: Quarter 1 Performance Report

Scrutiny Observations to Cabinet on: 19.09.2023

The Scrutiny Committees thank the Portfolio Holder and Officers for providing the report.

Health and Care Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny made the following observations:

- Noted that as this was the first quarter, it was difficult to make comparisons and identify trends. However, moving forward this will be a useful tool alongside the commentary from Service Areas.
- Members questioned the apparently low level of new apprentices that started in Q1.
- Noted that the Committee needed to be provided with the monthly performance/KPI reports for each Service first, to enable the Committee to drill-down further when scrutinising the quarterly Corporate Scorecard.

Scrutiny's Recommendation	Accept (plus Action and timescale)	Partially Accept (plus Rationale and Action and timescale)	Reject (plus Rationale)
1. To include clear targets for each of the measures listed under the three Objectives in the Scorecard. It would also aid understanding to display the actual figure alongside a percentage.	Accept		
2. To provide Scrutiny Committees with service-specific	Accept		

performance reporting in addition to the CSEP Scorecard, in advance of the Scrutiny meetings when the quarterly reports are due to be scrutinised.			
3. To include the current number of apprentices in the Scorecard, alongside new apprentices within the last quarter.	Accept		

Membership of the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee on 08.09.2023:
 County Councillors: A Jenner (Chair), G E Jones, L Rijnenberg, C Robinson,
 E Roderick and C Walsh.

In accordance with Rule 7.27.2 the Cabinet is asked to provide a written response to the scrutiny report, including an action plan where appropriate, as soon as possible or at the latest within 2 months of the date of the Cabinet meeting i.e., by 20.11.2023

**Nina Davies**

Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a Thai
Director of Social Services and Housing

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Eich cyf / Your ref :
Ein cyf / Our ref : ND/
Dyddiad / Date : 13th October 2023

Dear Llais,

Thank you for your emails containing the feedback reports from the community events Llais attended over the summer. It would be helpful if future reports could also be copied to the Social Services Feedback team using the email address SocialServicesFeedback@powys.gov.uk

The Social Services Feedback Team have reviewed the reports and will progress relevant aspects through the Quality Assurance process for both Adults and Childrens Services. This process considers learning and outcomes from complaints and feedback, and promotes best practice highlighted through compliments received. Agreed actions are noted and monitored with themes being recorded in the Annual Report.

The Llais reports, and Powys County Council response, will be considered at Social Services Briefing meetings with Portfolio Holders, and provided to the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee.

Perhaps Llais could consider sharing copies of Powys County Council's social services feedback leaflet at engagement events, or signpost people to our feedback webpage at <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/11274/Social-Services-Compliments-Comments-and-Complaints-Process>. Members of the Team would also be happy to attend future Llais engagement events where appropriate.

This is the first Powys County Council response to Llais engagement reports, and I think it is important to clarify a few points at this stage. As the reports contain limited and anonymous information, we have sometimes only been able to provide limited feedback. If an individual requests a detailed response on their personal circumstances, please could you ask them to make contact via the contact information provided above. For some comments it has not been possible to ascertain whether they relate to council services or not. For example, Mental Health Services are delivered jointly, therefore it is difficult to respond where there is no indication of whether the resident received the support from Social Care Services or Powys Teaching Health Board.

Comment	Response	Action
<p>Concerns about bin collections.</p> <p>An older person with mobility issues had contacted Powys County Council eight times advising they were unable to move their bin themselves and been told that the issue would be resolved but nothing happened.</p> <p>Another person advised that the change in the collection of non-infectious waste that happened a few years ago.</p> <p>A Carer looking after a number of householders with incontinence issues and other health needs resulting in additional household waste had been advised by the Council that they could not have an additional bin. Credu had advised that this was incorrect information.</p>	<p>Assisted Bin Collection and Bin allocations are dealt with by the Refuse Team, contact details below.</p> <p>01597 827465 Waste.awareness@powys.gov.uk Missed Bin Collections - Powys County Council</p> <p>If a resident who is being supported by a Social Worker has an issue with assisted bin collection, they can ask their Social Worker for assistance in escalating the matter or make a complaint through our Corporate Complaints team via</p> <p>01597 827472 Comments, Compliments and Complaints - Powys County Council</p>	<p>Comments passed to the Highways, Transport and Recycling Department.</p>
<p>Difficulties in completing DWP forms</p>	<p>This is a matter for the Department of Work and Pensions. There are a number of organisations that can support residents completing these applications.</p> <p>If an individual is receiving support from a Social Worker they may ask for assistance with the forms, but</p>	

	<p>organisations like Citizen's Advice, Age Cymru and the Benefits Advise Team can also assist.</p> <p>https://en.powys.gov.uk/benefits</p>	
<p>Concerns about Carers mental health.</p> <p>Carers talked about the stress they experience and often being at the top of the 'Pyramid of Stress' whereby a slight incident could trigger much more significant issues.</p>	<p>Carers who want or need more support or respite can ask the Local Authority to complete a Carers Assessment, quite independently from the person they care for.</p> <p>Credu works to support family members and friends (of any age) who are looking after someone who is unwell or disabled.</p>	
<p>Concern about the shortage of paid carers, and delay in care packages being put in place.</p>	<p>Social Services are aware of this challenge and are working to try and address the shortage of paid carers across the county, both internally and with provider organisations. The challenge of Powys' rurality and pay are noted. Earlier in 2023 the Council adjusted the recruitment process for carers, making the process easier and faster, as well as running various recruitment events.</p>	<p>Service developments are being progressed both internally and with providers to strengthen the sector and promote this as an attractive career.</p>
<p>Carers seemed unaware of the Powys Health and Care Academy and the School of Volunteers and Carers being developed.</p>	<p>These are relatively new initiatives and awareness raising is ongoing, however, this feedback will be taken to the Regional Partnership Board.</p>	<p>Feedback to the Regional Partnership Board about the visibility and promotion of the Health and Care Academy and sub-groups.</p>
<p>A central list of Independent Carers was suggested for residents to access.</p>	<p>There is a 'Support Finder' available via the following link: caresupportfinder.org/s4s/WhereILive/Council?pagelId=5357</p>	
<p>Concern that medical needs affecting school attendance should be recognised.</p> <p>A parent felt that recognition for children with</p>	<p>This is a matter for the Education Department and individual schools.</p> <p>01597 826422 Education@powys.gov.uk Schools and Education Service Contacts - Powys County Council</p>	<p>Forward the comments to the Education department.</p>

<p>medical needs which might affect attendance should improve, with letters being bespoke rather than standard to avoid upset and stress. They felt more understanding and support is needed in these circumstances.</p>		
<p>Those attending Team Around the Family meetings should arrive on time, and the meeting should not be cancelled.</p>	<p>Agreed. This will be fed back to Childrens Services to ensure the Lead Professional manages these meetings well.</p>	<p>Feed this back to the Early Help Team.</p>
<p>A parent does not feel able to advocate self-referring to Childrens Services following their own poor experience after doing this.</p> <p>They felt judged rather than supported or helped and described it as a horrible experience.</p>	<p>Powys County Council are concerned to hear that anyone has had such an experience when asking for help, and would encourage them to make contact so we can investigate further.</p> <p>Feedback, compliments and complaints (via the links below) are welcomed from residents, to allow matters to be resolved, training needs identified and practice to improve and develop.</p> <p>01938 827 515 Socialservicesfeedback@powys.gov.uk Social Services Comments, Compliments and Complaints - Powys County Council</p> <p>Staff are trained and required to use appropriate language and non-judgemental practice.</p>	
<p>Three separate organisations referred a parent to Social Services for support, failing to meet threshold on each occasion.</p> <p>The parent received a very good service from Montgomeryshire Family Crisis Centre.</p>	<p>A threshold is in place to ensure statutory intervention is appropriately directed; requests for support that do not meet this threshold are offered support from the Early Help Team.</p>	

<p>Support from some Mental Health Social Workers is poor, where they fail to do anything until a complaint is made. Good social workers are overburdened with work.</p>	<p>All staff strive to provide an excellent service within the appropriate legislation, guidance and policy, but at times an individual's needs can be better met by a more appropriate organisation.</p> <p>The demand on all social care staff is recognised, having increased since before the pandemic.</p>	
<p>Concerns about Direct Payments including lengthy delays in getting paid, difficulty and confusion with the system.</p> <p>A paid Co-ordinator to cover an area and help with Direct Payments and finding/allocating carers for people was suggested.</p>	<p>The Local Authority is aware of the previous challenges with Direct Payments and significant work was undertaken to address and mitigate the problems that arose.</p> <p>Payments are now made in a timely manner when the process is followed.</p>	<p>Ensure staff have the right information about Direct Payments.</p>
<p>Call handlers not knowing where to signpost residents when they call Social Services, and not providing a promised call-back.</p>	<p>Powys County Council are concerned to hear that residents have not been called back when promised.</p> <p>Both (Adults) ASSIST and the (Children's) Front Door (Children) Team works closely with the Community Connectors and the Family Information Service respectively to provide signposting to organisations.</p>	
<p>Support services for autistic adults could be improved.</p>	<p>Support for those with social care needs is assessed through a strengths-based assessment model. Assessed social care needs may be met with advice, information or support from the Council, or through community resources including Third Sector Partners.</p> <p>Feedback on service developments is always welcome and can be provided via</p> <p>01938 827 515 Socialservicesfeedback@powys.gov.uk Social Services Comments, Compliments and Complaints - Powys County Council</p>	
<p>A resident with health issues struggles to access services.</p>	<p>Knowing which services the resident struggles to access would allow the Authority to link with corporate colleagues or partner organisations to try and resolve this.</p>	

	<p>Feedback can be provided via</p> <p>01938 827 515 Socialservicesfeedback@powys.gov.uk Social Services Comments, Compliments and Complaints - Powys County Council</p>	
<p>A contact with Social Services about lack of carer visits for an elderly relative resulted in a call back being promised, which has still not been received 18 months later.</p>	<p>Powys County Council are concerned to hear that residents have not been called back when promised.</p> <p>Alternatively, they can provide this feedback via</p> <p>01938 827 515 Socialservicesfeedback@powys.gov.uk Social Services Comments, Compliments and Complaints - Powys County Council</p>	<p>Reminder to staff about importance of following up on agreed call backs.</p>
<p>Uncertainty about how and or difficulty in accessing social care services.</p>	<p>Awareness raising of the social care services that Powys County Council provide is important, as is information on how people can access them.</p> <p>Information is available in a range of Council buildings including libraries, on the website (link below) and from partner organisations such as Credu, GP surgeries, Age Cymru etc.</p> <p>Social Care and Support - Powys County Council</p> <p>Promotion and sharing of information about Council and other services is part of ongoing service delivery developments.</p>	<p>Continue to promote (Children's) Front Door and (Adult's) ASSIST services.</p>
<p>Insufficient services for Early Years.</p>	<p>Services are provided by Health Visitors, Child Care providers, Flying Start provisions, 3-Yr Old Education, Speech and Language Services, and Early Help Programmes such as Incredible Years or Baby and Toddler Support.</p> <p>Feedback on service developments in this area is always welcome and can be provided via</p> <p>01938 827 515 Socialservicesfeedback@powys.gov.uk Social Services Comments, Compliments and Complaints - Powys County Council</p>	
<p>Checks on the experience of those living in Care Homes should be undertaken given the negative comments about Care Homes.</p>	<p>The inspection of care homes is undertaken by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Social workers also regularly visit care homes and will monitor the care being provided. The Commissioning and Partnership Service maintain close connections with Care Homes and those providing that service.</p>	

	<p>Any concerns or worries about the standard of care in a Powys Care Home should be raised with Care Inspectorate Wales (link above) or to our Feedback Team via</p> <p>01938 827 515 Socialservicesfeedback@powys.gov.uk Social Services Comments, Compliments and Complaints - Powys County Council</p>	
<p>There are no support services in Powys or Wales for children diagnosed with Tourette's Syndrome, the nearest being in the West Midlands.</p> <p>Advise is needed about what and how to discuss a child's needs with their school in this situation.</p>	<p>The Family Information Service may be able to provide some useful information.</p> <p>SNAP Cymru SNAP Cymru provide support for parents with getting the right support for their child, so could be contacted for support in talking to the school about a child's diagnosis.</p>	
<p>Concerns for residents placed in Jubilee House in Knighton but without suitable support; why is there no designated Social Worker for this property.</p>	<p>Whilst Social Workers are not allocated to specific accommodations or locations, residents may have their own allocated Social Worker or carer, or a support worker from another partner organisation.</p>	
<p>A Baby/Toddler Group run by the Local Authority could support many families (who currently attend Church run groups)</p>	<p>Powys County Council have previously run Parent and Toddler Group initiatives but found that attendance was low.</p> <p>The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 advocates that families' use of community-based resources should be promoted, which the Local Authority does via the Commissioning and Partnership Team. Partner organisations have greater freedom to run at a time and location that best suits local families and provide services that meet their needs.</p>	
<p>An elderly resident had to wait 3 weeks after being discharged from hospital before</p>	<p>Powys County Council teams work hard to complete the most urgent adaptations as soon as possible. If individuals or families have any concerns over timings, please don't hesitate to contact their allocated worker, the Duty Team or Social Services Feedback team.</p>	

recommended handrails were installed		
<p>Childrens services needs to be better monitored. One experience of Childrens Services was not good and whilst within the law, 'did not seem right'.</p>	<p>Powys County Council understands that at times a family may consider or experience Social Services intervention and support as 'invasive' and unwelcome.</p> <p>Feedback and further discussion would be needed and welcomed to better understand the family's experience so practice can be developed and improved from that learning.</p> <p>01938 827 515 Socialservicesfeedback@powys.gov.uk Social Services Comments, Compliments and Complaints - Powys County Council</p>	

I hope the information and comments provided above are helpful, informative and constructive. I would appreciate your feedback, in due course, to discuss if this approach meets your needs and expectations.

Yours sincerely,



Nina Davies
Cyfarwyddwr Dros Dro Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a Thai
Director of Social Services and Housing

8

Date and Time	Type and Detail
01-12-23 09.00 – 09:30	Pre-Meeting
01-12-23 09:30 – 13:00	Public Meeting Q2 Strategic Risk Report Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report Therapeutic Attachment Team work relating to Children’s Services. North Powys Wellbeing Hub <u>Confidential session</u> Safer Accommodation Hospital Discharges Rapid Escalation Plan Joint working (Accelerated Sustainable Model)

2024

Date and Time	Type and Detail
18-01-24 1:00 p.m.	Pre-Meeting
18-01-24 Thurs 2.00 p.m. The Chamber, County Hall / Zoom	Foster Carer annual feedback review Children’s and Adult Services review of budgets and potential efficiency savings.
Jan	Work Programming
30-01-24	Pre-Meeting – Budget
30-01-24 Tuesday 2.00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adult Services budget scrutiny ● Children Services budget scrutiny

Date and Time	Type and Detail
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use of agency staff and impact on the budget (<i>action from 08/09/2023 Committee meeting</i>).
09-02-24	<i>Pre-Meeting (if required)</i>
09-02-24 Fri 2.00 p.m.	<i>Alternative Budget (if required)</i>
08-03-24 2.00 p.m.	Pre-meeting
08-03-24 Friday 2.30 – 4:30pm	Q3 Performance and Finance <i>Day Centre/Opportunities Review Update (TBC)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Potentially speak to Service Users</i>
15-03-24 Friday 14:00	Self-Assessment
11-04-24	Pre-Meeting
11-04-24 Thurs 10:00 a.m.	Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report
23-05-24	Pre-Meeting
23-05-24 Friday 10.00 a.m.	Election of Vice Chair Q4 Risk Report
	Work Programming
18-07-24	Pre-Meeting
	Annual Complaints Report

Date and Time	Type and Detail
18-07-24 Thursday 2.00 p.m.	Annual Report of the Director of Social Services Extra Care Strategy update
20-09-24	Pre-Meeting
20-09-24 Fri 10.00 a.m.	Adult Services Q1 Performance Children's Services Q1 Performance Q1 Performance and Finance
25-10-24	Pre-Meeting
25-10-24 Fri 10.0 a.m.	Q2 Risk Report

Mae'r dudalen hon wedi'i gadael yn wag yn fwriadol