

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
23rd February 2017**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Graham Brown, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and County Councillor Stephen Hayes, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Gemma Bowker

Could the portfolio holders for Adult and Children's Services please provide details as to the statutory level of staff cover out of hours and the staffing patterns used by PCC for out of hours cover; and provide information as to whether there have been any occasions over the past 12 months when that cover has fallen below statutory or safe levels?

Answer from County Councillor Graham Brown, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and County Councillor Stephen Hayes, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

Powys County Council have a statutory duty to provide an Out of Hours Service however there is not a specified statutory requirement in respect of the capacity of that service other than the Council would need to be able to meet the local need.

Service users, members of the public and representatives of other agencies are able to contact the Emergency Duty Team via Powys County Council's Careline between:

- 4.45pm to 8.30am Monday to Thursday
- 4.15pm to 8.30am Friday
- 8.30am to 8.30am Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays

Each shift is staffed by approved mental health professional/social workers one covering the North and the other the South of the county. Workers will cover each other as necessary, based on the demand/priorities in any given shift. If additional cover is needed this is generally found within the existing team or if additional resources are required for specific planned tasks or activities which would not normally fall in the remit of the EDT then this resource would be identified from elsewhere. Should there be an instance when the EDT worker(s) consider the service does not have the capacity needed at any given time and there is an identified risk to the delivery of the service then this would be escalated immediately to Head of Service/Senior Managers (Children's & Adults) who are on call for advice and support out of hours on a rota basis.

The service has not had any instances in the last 12 months where it would have been deemed as unable to deliver as per requirements resulting in an unsafe service.

Supplementary question

“Could the Portfolio Holder tell me what, if anything, is being done to enhance and improve out of hours cover as a result of the integration of Powys Teaching Health Board and are Social Services and Health already working more closely together on out of hours services?”

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

The answer is that we do not currently have any formal shared arrangement in place. However, our emergency duty team frequently make contact with Health Board out of hours teams, for example when meeting needs under the Mental Health Acts.

As there are a number of different Health Board personnel providing out of hours services, some work would be required to understand and exploit any opportunities that exist, but as we work more closely together it will make increasing sense to do so, and I am grateful to Cllr Bowker for raising the issue for consideration.