



SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2.00 pm THURSDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2018

COMMITTEE ROOMS A/B - NEATH CIVIC CENTRE

PART 1

1. Declarations of interest
2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (*Pages 5 - 14*)
3. To scrutinise information and monitoring issues being reported by:

Head of Commissioning & Support Services - Welfare Rights Overview

4. To select appropriate items from the Cabinet Board Agenda for pre-scrutiny (Cabinet Board reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members).
5. Forward Work Programme 2018/19. (*Pages 21 - 24*)
6. Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairman pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972
7. Access to Meetings to resolve to exclude the public for the following item(s) pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the relevant exempt paragraphs of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

PART 2

8. To select appropriate private items from the Cabinet Board Agenda

for pre-scrutiny (Cabinet Board Reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members).

S.Phillips
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Thursday 4th October 2018

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: **Councillor L.M.Purcell**

Vice **Councillor S.E.Freeguard**
Chairperson:

Councillors: H.C.Clarke, A.P.H.Davies, C.Galsworthy, J.Miller,
S.Paddison, S.H.Reynolds, D.Whitelock,
O.S.Davies, C.Williams, C.Edwards and
A.N.Woolcock

Notes:

- (1) If Committee Members or non-Committee Members wish to have relevant items put on the agenda for future meetings, then please notify the Chief Executive/Chair eight days before the meeting.*
- (2) If non-Committee Members wish to attend for an item of interest, then prior notification needs to be given (by 12.00 noon on the day before the meeting). Non-Committee Members may speak but not vote, or move or second any motion.*
- (3) For pre scrutiny arrangements, the Chair will normally recommend forthcoming executive items for discussion/challenge. It is also open to Committee Members to request items to be raised - though Members are asked to be selective here in regard to important issues.*

- (4) *The relevant Cabinet Board Members will also be invited to be present at the meeting for Scrutiny/ Consultation purposes.*
- (5) *Would the Scrutiny Committee Members please bring the Cabinet Board papers with them to the meeting.*

This page is intentionally left blank

SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

13 September 2018

Chairperson: Councillor L.M.Purcell

Vice Chairperson: Councillor S.E.Freeguard

Councillors: H.C.Clarke, C.Galsworthy, J.Miller,
S.H.Reynolds, D.Whitelock, O.S.Davies and
C.Edwards

Officers In Attendance A.Jarrett, A.Thomas, K.Warren, A.Bradshaw,
C.Howard, C.Owens, N.Dawe, K.Hughes,
T.Sinclair, C.Frey-Davies, E.Peart, D.Watts,
J.Johns, E.Street, C.Matthews, D.Morgan,
S.Jenkins, D.Harding, J.Hodges, L.Livingstone,
N.Jones and J.Woodman-Ralph

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors A.R.Lockyer and P.D.Richards

1. **MINUTES OF THE SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 2ND AUGUST 2018**

The Committee noted the minutes.

2. **OPEN FRONT DOOR PRESENTATION**

The Committee received a Presentation on the topic "The Front Door" which is the one point of access for all referrals to Adult Services.

Members asked what happens after 5pm if assistance is required when the office is closed, Officers explained the Emergency Duty Team are on call from 5pm, they would assess the call and action any urgent safeguarding issues and then refer to the relevant service the following day.

Members asked what was the reason for the decrease in the numbers of caseloads per worker from 27 to 14. Officers explained that the process has been changed to assess the needs of the service user at the point of contact to enable the appropriate service to be put in place or referred to the third sector if appropriate. Also, supervision with staff has been improved so that cases are monitored and referred to the appropriate service so as a result the backlog has been cleared and now cases are allocated as they are received.

Officers thanked the Committee for allowing the Gateway Team to give a presentation.

3. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19.**

Members mentioned the Autism report has been put down for November but were told this was being brought to Committee in September, Officers stated they said this would be brought in November and the minutes were incorrect.

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

4. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following items:

Cabinet Board Proposals

4.1 Director's Annual Report

The Committee received information in relation to the Director's Annual Report as contained within the circulated report.

Members congratulated officers on a very positive report but commented that should the report not contain the difficulties that the directorate is facing in the current economic climate.

Members also thanked officers for the careful financial planning and asked whether any underspends are kept within the directorate.

Officers confirmed that the underspend was kept within the directorate and contributed to any savings required.

Members asked what geographical areas do the Local Area Co-ordinators cover, Officers explained that the aim is to have a Local Area Coordinator across every area of NPT. An additional post has recently been recruited to so there are 6 across the Neath Port Talbot area

Members also queried what happens in the areas that are not covered by a Local Area Co-ordinator, Officers explained that the service is still available in those areas but the role of the Local Area Co-ordinator is to underpin those services.

Members asked if there was any data available on the impact and outcome of the Local Area Co-ordinator pilot areas, Officers explained that data is currently being gathered across the pilot areas with work being undertaken to develop a data base to ensure all information will be available in future.

Members asked why on the satisfaction responses 72 carers assessment were undertaken but none received support, Officers explained that Carers could be offered a variety of support from different organisation. The assessment could identify the need for a sitting service which would be provided by the third sector but that would not show up on system. Discussion are currently taking place with our partners in the third sector on how we could record this information for all to access.

Members asked if the word **promoted** contained within the document on Page 23 could be changed because it suggests that the Carers Assessment is not a statutory requirement of the Local Authority. Officers explained that the word promotion was used to promote the rights of carers to have the assessment but agreed that an alternative would be found to replace promoted.

Members asked if the All Wales Comparative data could be brought to Committee to enable Members to be able to compare Neath Port Talbot with other Local Authorities., Officers explained that no All Wales Data has been received from the Welsh Government and previously the data has been 2 – 3 years old by the time of receipt. Officers confirmed that they will speak to Welsh Government to find out the current position and highlight the need to have this comparative data.

In addition Members asked that the Cabinet Members present today raise with the Welsh Government.

In relation to The Rapid Adaptation Grants Scheme, members asked how quickly is very quickly. Officers explained they will email members with the information.

Members referred to the Performance Measure/Indicator table on Page 37 and asked Officers if they could confirm if the 2017/18 and 2016/17 data was the correct as the columns seemed to be the wrong way round.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

4.2 Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Annual Plan 2018-2019

The Committee received information in relation to the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Annual Plan 2018-2019 as detailed in the circulated report.

Members asked why the Annual Plan was being brought to Committee for approval when the plan has already been in place for 6 months. Officers explained that the timescale was not ideal but due to changes with one of the Western Bay partners the plan had been delayed and the plan has to go through a number of different approval processes for each Local Authority within the Western Bay.

Members asked in future that the Annual Plan be brought to Committee in a more timely manner.

Members asked what plans were in place to deal with the transition period and after when Bridgend leaves the Western Bay Partnership.

Officers explained that with the retirement of the existing Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Manager a new manager has been recruited and has already commenced work to manage this transition period by the end of the financial year. A report will be brought to the next meeting to update Members on impact of the changes.

Members asked if the cohort of young people with behavioural issues was getting smaller but that the type of issues was getting more difficult, Officers explained that yes, the preventative work was having an effect on reducing the numbers of young people but the issues of a smaller number of young people were getting more difficult. In addition, the work of the Pre-Court Diversion Panel was also effective in reducing the numbers escalating.

Members asked if there was data available identifying the numbers of young people involved with the Youth Justice Service who were statemented, Officers explained that information is not available but there are a significant number in the autistic spectrum within the total figures. Work is ongoing to ensure that young people are kept in education, training or employment and an additional officer has been recruited to work with schools to ensure that young people do not become NEET.

Members also asked if there was data available on how many young people were from Neath Port Talbot, Officers explained that Swansea has a higher number of young people with the Youth Justice Service but Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend are on par. In addition, the number of cases currently with Western Bay Youth Justice is 72 but previously in 2008/09 there were 807 young people accessing a service from Youth Justice.

Members asked for clarification as it states in the circulated report that there was no financial impact on the local authority resulting from this years plan but further on its states that there had been an increase in remand costs to NPT in the last financial year. How were Officers going to ensure that this does not happen again, Officers explained that previously when young people became remanded from court they became Looked After so there was a cost to the Local Authority but now other options are now being put before Courts which keep young people in the community but deprive them of the opportunities to re-offend.

Members asked for details of the Music Project, Officers explained that there are a number of different projects that young people can access, one of which is Music which has had a positive outcome. It was highlighted that Members were welcome to visit the Centre if wished. In addition, a lot of the

projects are supported by Volunteers. It has been difficult to retain volunteers some of whom are students, once they gain the relevant experience in relation to the course they are undertaking they stop volunteering. Western Bay has 3 coordinators who are responsible for Training who are continuing to promote Volunteering.

Members asked what the prerequisite to become a Volunteer was and are there any ex-offenders that volunteer, Officers explained that volunteers have a variety of experiences but few are ex-offenders.

Following scrutiny, the Committee were supportive of the proposals to be considered at Cabinet Board.

4.3 Children and Young People Services – 1st Quarter (2018-19) Performance Report

The Committee received information in relation to the Children and Young People Services – 1st Quarter (2018-19) Performance as detailed in the circulated report.

Members asked why are child assessments not being completed on time, also, what was the legal timeframe was it 10 days or 42 days?

Officers explained that there had been a drop in performance with regards to the timeliness of child assessments being undertaken. Officers were presently looking at the reason behind this but that the quality of the assessment has remained good. There had been some staff sickness which could be a contributory factor. In regard to the timescale it was 10 days for initial assessments and 42 days for more indepth assessments if they were required. Officers confirmed that these targets are for Welsh Government but the service strives for 100% and will continue to work towards.

Members asked whether these targets were mandatory targets. Officers explained that they are mandatory because it's an instruction from the Director.

Members queried whether the number of cases 25 held by the Disability Team was manageable, it was explained that previously it had been 30 cases but due to close monitoring the

cases have reduced but the number of cases held depends on the complexity of the needs of the service user. The more cases with complex needs the less cases will be held by the Social Worker.

Members referred to the graph in relation to the case closures and asked if the cases are being monitored on how many are reopened, Officers explained these are monitored very closely.

Members asked whether there was still an issue with attendance by partners at Child Protection Conferences, Officers explained that there was an issue with receiving reports in time for the Conference but the Case Conferences secretaries spend a lot of time ensuring that the invites are sent on with enough notice and that reports are received in time. No adverse issues had been highlighted to the Director if there had been the Director would raise at a high level with the partner organisation.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

4.4 Quarterly Performance Management Data 2018/19 – Quarter 1 Performance (1st April 2018 - 30th June 2018)

The Committee received information in relation to the Quarterly Performance Management Data 2018/19 – Quarter 1 Performance (1st April 2018 – 30th June 2018) as detailed in the circulated report.

Members asked how many delayed transfers of care are caused by difficulty in finding a domiciliary care package, Officers explained there are 5 people awaiting care package, also members asked how many caused by inability to find a care home placement, Officers mentioned there is 1 person.

Members asked with regards to the carers report, how are the 3rd sector figures being recorded, Officers confirmed they will email the figures to members.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

4.5 Commissioning of Learning Disability Services

The Committee received information in relation to the Commissioning of Learning Disability Services as detailed in the circulated report.

Members asked what was meant by Closer to Home Schemes, Officers explained the aim is to bring service users who are currently residing in out of county placements to reside closer to home. A more strategic approach is being developed to ensure this takes place that was why the commissioning will be undertaken separately from other schemes due to the specialist nature of the provision.

Following scrutiny, the Committee were supportive of the proposals to be considered at Cabinet Board.

5. ACCESS TO MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That pursuant to Section 100A (4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

6. PRE-SCRUTINY

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

6.1 Contractual Arrangements For Neath Port Talbot Carer Related Services

The Committee received information in relation to Contractual Arrangements for Neath Port Talbot Carer Related Services as detailed in the circulated report.

Members asked in relation to risk management, it reads 'there are no further risk management issues', members asked what are the other risks, Officers explained there is an error with the

wording and should read 'other than those risks already mentioned'.

Members queried why are Carers Assessment undertaken by an independent agency, Officers explained that Carers are more comfortable discussing their needs with an independent person rather than their own Social Worker.

Members asked if Carers have the option to have the Carers Assessment undertaken by Neath Port Talbot staff rather than the Carers Service, Officers explained that there would be a time delay in the Assessment process if it was provided Social Services, Health and Housing staff eg Social Worker. Neath Port Talbot Carers Service undertakes the assessment quickly and it works very effectively.

Following scrutiny, the Committee were supportive of the proposals to be considered at Cabinet Board.

6.2 Review of Homecare Services

The Committee received information in relation to the Review of Homecare Services as detailed in the circulated report.

Members asked why was there a difference in the costs from the last time the proposal was before Committee, Officers explained that the last proposal was not implemented and since then some of the costs have changed and we are now providing a very specialist service.

Officers stated they will bring back the results of the review to this Committee.

Following scrutiny, the Committee were supportive of the proposals to be considered at Cabinet Board.

CHAIRPERSON

This page is intentionally left blank

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
SOCIAL CARE HEALTH & WELL-BEING SCRUTINY
11th October 2018**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMISSIONING & SUPPORT
SERVICES – Angela Thomas**

Matter for Information

Wards Affected: All

WELFARE RIGHTS OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an overview of the Directorate's Welfare Rights Unit.

Executive Summary

The Welfare Rights Unit (the Unit), established in 1996, is a non-statutory, preventative service. The role of the Unit is to promote benefit maximisation to people living in the County Borough. The Unit support the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people with advice and assistance in claiming the benefits to which they are entitled.

Welfare rights benefits advice is a very specialist area of work in an ever changing benefits world. It is extremely important to receive correct advice in this area as the implications of wrong advice can be detrimental to a person's financial security.

The Unit contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22 well-being objective "to improve the well-being of all adults who live in the County Borough" which is measured by "people unable to work can maximise their income". The Unit's target is to maintain current performance in relation to financial income levels.

The Unit offer its services to all residents living within the County Borough, including Social Services and Housing service users, as well as encouraging referrals from Members, Local Authority staff and health care professionals to promote social inclusion through the maximisation of income, maintenance of maximum income and development of an understanding of entitlement to income through the benefits system.

The Unit consists of 13 members of staff, made up of a Senior Officer, Benefits Officers, an Appeals Officer, MacMillan Benefits Advisors, administrative support and a modern apprentice; we are fortunate to receive external funding for 7 of these staff through working in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Charity and Communities for Work Legacy Fund.

The Unit provide advice and assistance through a number of different ways, for example, its Advice Line Service; at one of its 8 outreach Advice Surgeries situated throughout the County Borough; at Appeals Tribunals; through Advisors based at Neath Port Talbot, Singleton, Morriston and Bridgend Hospitals; or in some cases via home visits.

The Unit is a dependable source of advice and assistance for front-line social work teams who often deal with families in financial crisis, ensuring further hardship is avoided; this may include completion of benefit forms, which are often very daunting and lengthy and carry out 'better off' calculations if circumstances are about to change. The Unit also undertake Special Guardianship Order calculations for Social Workers who prepare reports for Court outlining the financial support the Local Authority are duty bound to give.

The Unit has recently began working with Finance Directorate colleagues within the Financial Assessment team and Council Tax team to ensure service users and residents are maximising benefit entitlement and are able to pay towards the services they receive from the Council.

The Unit prides itself on the services it provides and has been successful in gaining an Advice Quality Standard (AQS) in recognising excellence. Since April 2018, The Unit has opened over 1,400 cases, including 600 via the advice line. The Unit has represented at 164 benefit Appeals Tribunals since April and has a further 173 appeals pending; the Unit has an 80% success rate at overturning decisions at appeal.

The Unit has currently raised over £4m for residents in this financial year and is on target to at least match the £8.2m raised in 2017-18. Members will note the case studies provided in Appendix 1.

The Unit faces a number of challenges in the future; it is currently bolstered by external funding which, to date, has enabled it to provide a non-exclusive, comprehensive and high quality service. Core funding

has been reduced year-on-year which means the Unit heavily relies on the partnership working and associated funding; the challenge is to maintain its funding beyond this year, as without it, the service provided at present would be seriously depleted.

The Unit and its staff has to keep up-to-date with the very latest changes in the benefits system and this is done in many ways; one of the most important ways is receiving specialist training from external organisations when significant change is due to occur. This is becoming more and more difficult to access due to budget constraints both internally and externally.

Financial Impact

The work delivered is funded by existing revenue budget and external funding streams.

Equality Impact Assessment

Not Applicable

Workforce Impacts

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

Risk Management

Not applicable.

Consultation Outcome

Not applicable.

Sustainability Appraisal

Not applicable.

Recommendation

This item is for information only.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

Not applicable.

Implementation of Decision

Not applicable.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Welfare Rights Overview - Case Studies

List of Background Papers

Not applicable.

Officer Contact

Angela Thomas, Head of Commissioning, Support and Direct Services
Telephone: 763794 Email: a.j.thomas@npt.gov.uk

Leighton Jones, PO Governance & Policy Support, Commissioning and
Direct Services, telephone: 763394 email: l.jones@npt.gov.uk

Allison Southall, Senior Welfare Rights Officer, Welfare Rights Unit,
Telephone: 685237 Email: a.southall@npt.gov.uk

Welfare Rights Overview – Case Studies

Case study A

Mr A has dementia, hearing loss and physical problems with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD); he is 83 years old and his wife, 82, cares for him full time. Mrs A has problems with her legs and suffers with arthritis throughout her body; she is subject to falls and receives a lifeline service.

Following a referral to The Unit, a Welfare Rights Officer assisted Mr & Mrs A to complete the required Attendance Allowance (AA) forms; they were both successfully awarded the higher rate of AA at £85.60 per week (each); this had a positive knock-on effect to other means tested benefits. They now have entitlement to Pension Credit of £223.10 per week and full Council Tax reduction. This extra income means they are able to pay for a cleaner, to have their lawns mowed and can now afford to pay the maximum home care charge as they receive 4 calls a day.

Maximising their benefit income through assistance and advice from the Unit has ensured they maintain their wishes to remain independent in their own home.

Case Study B

Mr B, 22 years old, has a visual impairment and learning disability; he works part-time. He had previously an award of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at the lower rate for both care and mobility, a total of £45.30, along with Working Tax Credits (WTC) as a disabled worker. Due to changes in the benefits system Mr B was made to claim Personal Independence Payments (PIP) as this replaced his DLA. Following an assessment for PIP it was found that he did not satisfy the criteria and his DLA subsequently stopped as he failed to migrate to the new benefit. He also lost his WTC as he was no longer classed as a disabled worker.

The Unit assisted Mr B to challenge this decision and subsequently represented him at his appeal, which was successful and he was awarded PIP standard rate daily living of £57.30pw and standard rate mobility of £22.65pw. The Unit also helped with a successful claim for Universal Credit to top up his earnings from his employment as he could not reclaim WTC because of the break in his claim.

Successfully representing Mr B at Appeal Tribunal has ensured he has maintained the maximum income possible following changes in the benefit system.

Case Study C

Mrs C is 45 years old and lives with her 19 year old son in a privately rented house. She worked 40 hours a week on a zero hour contract and also received Working Tax Credits to top up her low income. She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and had to stop working; her employers agreed to pay her until the end of the month.

The Macmillan benefits advisor supported her to make a claim for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and also helped her with housing benefit and council tax support. She was also eligible for a Macmillan grant for help with heating costs, clothing and travel costs.

Following surgery Mrs C was advised that they were unable to remove the tumour and was given a terminal prognosis. The MacMillan benefits advisor made a claim for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) under 'special rules' on her behalf. Mrs C secured an enhanced rate of PIP.

Intervention and support from Macmillan advisors has ensured Mrs C has maximised her income during this very difficult time.

(DRAFT)
Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
Forward Work Programme 2018/19

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Officer
10 May 2018	Asset Based Approach- Detail and Update	Andrew Jarrett
31 May 2018	Forward Work Programme Workshop	
7 June 2018		
5 July 2018	Autism Strategy- POSTPONED	Keri Warren
	Review of High Cost Placements- DEFERRED TO AUGUST	Keri Warren
2 August 2018	Review of High Cost Placements	Keri Warren

**Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
Forward Work Programme 2018/19**

13 September 2018	'Open Front Door' Presentation	Keri Warren
11 October 2018	Welfare Rights Update	Leighton Jones
8 November 2018	Report on Rota Visits Feedback	Gemma Hargest
	Autism Strategy	Keri Warren
6 December 2018	Mental Health Recovery Plan Monitoring	
10 January 2019	Monthly Performance Indicators	David Harding

7 March 2019		
4 April 2019	Monthly Performance Indicators	David Harding
2 May 2019	Mental Health Recovery Plan Monitoring	Andrew Jarrett

30 May 2019		

To be built in:

- Monitoring of Direct Payments
- Valleys Action Plan
- Income Generation/Budget Monitoring
- Community Transport Element of Asset Based Approach
- Learning Disability Service and Mental Health Service Strategic Business Plan Monitoring