

Meeting of:	<b>Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Tuesday, 11 June 2024</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Healthy Living and Social Care
Report Title:	<b>Annual Review of Commissioned Services to Adults with a Care and Support Need</b>
Purpose of Report:	To outline the activity undertaken regarding commissioned services for adults with care and support needs, and the priority actions for 2023/24.
Report Owner:	Director of Social Services
Responsible Officer:	Operational Manager, Commissioning and Finance
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Head of Resource Management and Safeguarding Team Manager – Finance Team Manager - Commissioning
Policy Framework:	This report is consistent with the Policy Framework and Budget
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This report outlines the activity with regards to commissioned services for adults with care and support needs, undertaken by the Resource Management and Safeguarding Division during 2023/24. The report also includes the commissioning priorities for the wider directorate 2024/25.</li> </ul>	

## **Recommendations**

1. That Scrutiny Committee consider the on-going challenges and demand for commissioned social care services.
2. That Scrutiny Committee considers the changing population of the Vale of Glamorgan and the associated increase in demand for care services.
3. That Scrutiny Committee also considers the availability of commissioned services for Vale of Glamorgan residents and the associated increase in expenditure.
4. That Scrutiny Committee considers the improved timeliness of providing home care to residents.
5. That Scrutiny Committee continues to receive an Annual Review of Commissioned Services for Adults with a Care and Support Need report.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

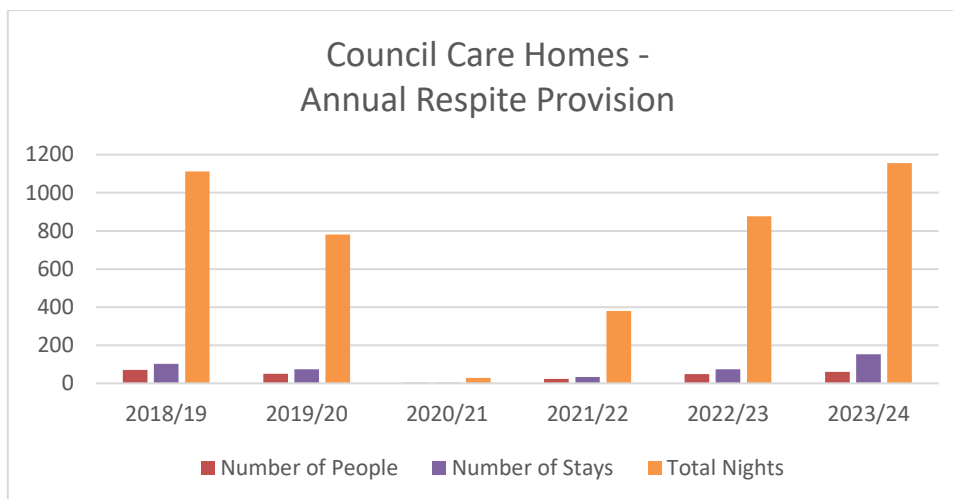
- 1 To provide Members with an opportunity to exercise oversight of this key statutory function.
- 2 To ensure Members are aware of the demographic changes in the Vale of Glamorgan, the relevant social care legislation, and the impact for commissioning care.
- 3 To ensure Members are informed of the budget implications of providing more care and at a higher cost and the response of the Council in meeting this increase.
- 4 To ensure Members are aware of the changed and sustained position with respect to the availability of home care for our residents.
- 5 Scrutiny receives annual update for their consideration and information.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 Under the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 (the Act) adults who believe they have social care needs that may affect their health, safety or independence can make a referral for a care and support assessment. The process for assessing care and support needs is based on what matters to the citizen, considering their personal strengths, and support available from family members, friends or others in the community. The assessment usually includes questions about:
  - Personal circumstances
  - What matters to the citizens – their personal outcomes
  - What is stopping them from achieving these outcomes and possible solutions
  - Risks to the citizen or to other people if these outcomes are not achieved
  - Their personal strengths and capabilities.

Should the assessment evidence the need for care and support, work is undertaken with the citizen to agree what type of support would suit them best, and when and how often they would like / need that support. Support provision takes many forms from attending day services to residential care. The Commissioning and Finance Teams within the Resource Management and Safeguarding Division commission such care for Social Services, and work with social work locality teams to ensure that a bespoke service is secured for the citizen that will meet their care and support needs, and their personal outcomes.

- 1.2** The demand for social care services for citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan has been progressively increasing since the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014, which came in to force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.
- 1.3** There continues to be recruitment challenges and some social care staff are leaving the profession for jobs in other sectors with better terms and conditions. These issues are due to many factors, including the cost-of-living crisis, registration requirements with Social Care Wales, working patterns and hours and the responsibilities that come with providing social care services.
- 1.4** The Vale of Glamorgan has an ageing and growing population, with the proportion of people aged over 65 and over 85 projected to rise, from 29,207 in 2021 to 35,158 by 2031, an increase of 20%. Census 2021 information shows that between 2011 and 2021 there was an increase of 24.9% in people aged 65 and over in the Vale of Glamorgan; this compares to an increase of 17.7% for the whole of Wales. The growth of the population aged 65 and over is particularly prevalent in the Western Vale. In mid-2013 the Western Vale outgrew Barry as the most populous area of the Vale of Glamorgan for those aged 65 and over. In mid-2019 an estimated 9,737, 34% of the Vale of Glamorgan's 28,347 people aged 65 and over live in the Western Vale. During this time service provision within the Western Vale has not grown at the same pace.
- 1.5** Many citizens and their families are choosing to receive care in their own homes, rather than through residential or nursing placements. There has been an increase in the number of people receiving care and support at home (home care) in the last 12 months; as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, 920 citizens were receiving a total of 14579 weekly hours of care and support. By 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, this number had increased to 1016 citizens receiving 16058 weekly hours of care and support. The average number of weekly hours provided per citizen has remained the same at 15.8 hours in both 2022/23 and 2023/24. This increase is evidence of the growing demand for services.
- 1.6** With citizens living independently for longer they are entering residential or nursing care later, and with more complex needs. The main pressures on placements are for residential and nursing dementia placements. In addition, due to the increased frailty of people staying at home there is increased demand for respite and emergency placements often for people with nursing needs. Nursing homes tend not to offer respite bookings in advance. The respite usage for the Council owned residential homes now exceeds pre-pandemic levels as shown below:



- 1.7** There is also a growing need for services for younger people with early onset dementia that struggles to be met by existing services. The Commissioning Team have been supporting a local nursing home provider in their plans for supporting citizens with younger onset dementia, which has recently received planning permission for a nine-bed unit.
- 1.8** Many of the existing care home provision is in older buildings that do not necessarily meet the needs of citizens with a dementia. These buildings require investment to maintain standards or adhere to regulations set by Care Inspectorate Wales. The Council’s own residential homes have had capital funding over the last 3 years to improve technology and the home environment, designed to make them dementia friendly homes.
- 1.9** The Population Needs Assessment for Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan (PNA) was considered by this Scrutiny Committee and subsequently Council. It was published on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014. [Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Population Needs Assessment - Cardiff & Vale Integrated Health & Social Care Partnership \(cvihsc.co.uk\)](https://www.cvihsc.co.uk)
- 1.10** A Market Stability Report has been completed, which assesses the overall sufficiency of care and support in the Vale of Glamorgan, and the stability of the regulated care provision for adults. [Document Library – CAVRPB](#) . This report, together with the PNA and Market Position Statement, is used to review our commissioning priorities for preventative, integrated, citizen-centred care and support services for the coming years.
- 1.11** The Council’s Local Delivery Plan relating to the Market Stability Report was presented to Scrutiny in December 2023. It reports that there will be continued increased demand for home care services, with services being required to focus on prevention of escalation in care and support needs and based on the citizens’ required outcomes.
- 1.12** The implementation of quality assurance visits to care homes in the Vale of Glamorgan have allowed for exploration of the lived experience of citizens within care settings. The Quality Assurance Officers have identified themes for potential areas of development, and these will be shared with providers in the coming months. Work continues with partners to build a regional quality assurance

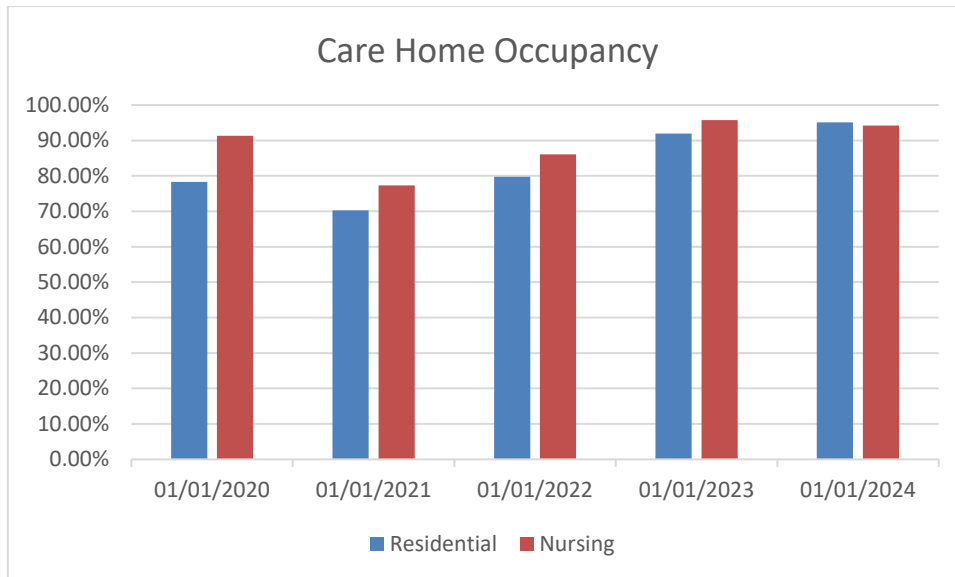
framework for use in monitoring the quality-of-service provision, against the required outcomes.

- 1.13** Budgets are under constant pressure, and, despite careful management and oversight, there was a overspend of approximately £2.1m on the community care and residential / nursing provision budgets for the 2023/24 financial year.
- 1.14** Within the last 12 months there have been no care home closures within the Vale of Glamorgan. Two existing care homes have been acquired by a current provider, increasing their overall market share in the county. A new Nursing home is currently under construction in Wenvoe.
- 1.15** In respect of domiciliary providers, 8 new providers were included on the Approved Provider List. Two agencies closed during 2023/24, both of which were due to the financial management of the organisations and not because of provider performance issues. The citizens supported by these organisations were transferred to alternative agencies in a planned and timely manner, with compliments being received from families for the support given during this time.
- 1.16** The Vale of Glamorgan is one of a minority of authorities in Wales that has internal residential care home provision. This mixed economy of care enables significant risks to be managed when placements have closed and urgent transition of residents in terms of placements is required. Families and residents continue to report their satisfaction with the high-quality care of services provided by the Council's internal residential homes, and compliments have been received from partners regarding the work that was undertaken to ensure residents' transitions go smoothly.
- 1.17** Recruitment remains a critical issue for the sector, particularly within domiciliary care, with providers reporting low numbers of staff being recruited and retained. During 2023/24 the Fast Track to Care training programme continued to be delivered and allowed for potential care staff to receive all necessary training via the Council's Training Department. At the end of the training, details of employment opportunities with both internal and external providers are given to attendees to encourage them to take up employment opportunities within the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 1.18** The Council continued to enable the Welsh Government commitment to providing funding for the Real Living Wage (RLW) in 2023/24, with both domiciliary and residential/nursing care fee increases allowing for the increase in the RLW to be paid to those staff in registerable roles.
- 1.19** Commissioned services are subject to regular monitoring and review. Any concerns raised regarding providers are dealt with under the Council's Escalating Concerns Protocol or contract management arrangements as appropriate. A multi-agency Quality Assurance meeting is held every month to discuss providers of concern.
- 1.20** There is an on-going programme for recommissioning social care services. The latest service to undergo this process was the recommissioning of the domiciliary care service for the Extra Care provision in Golau Caredig. The new contract started in December 2023 with an established domiciliary care provider being awarded the contract. Regular monitoring visits with citizens, families and staff

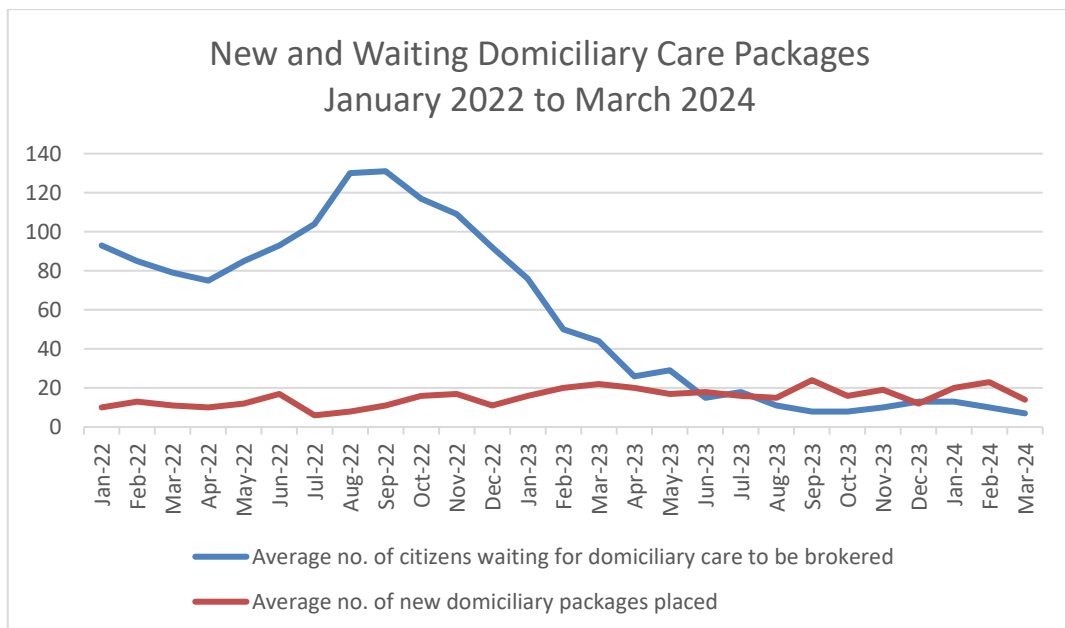
have taken place since, with feedback being given to the provider for them to act upon as necessary. Over the next 12 months there are several services that are commissioning priorities, including support services for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, Support Services for Direct Payment Recipients, Advocacy for Adults, and Older Persons Day Opportunities.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1** There are 35 care homes for adults in the Vale of Glamorgan registered with Care Inspectorate Wales. Of these 19 are predominantly for older people, 14 for citizens with a learning disability and 2 for citizens with a mental health issue or acquired brain injury. The new nursing home provision in Wenvoe has yet to be completed, with the latest revised opening date of 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024 not being achieved. A meeting with the provider has taken place, but it is unlikely that the Council will make use of this provision due to the high weekly fees that will be charged by the provider.
- 2.2** In 2023/24 the ongoing impact of the cost-of-living crisis to social care providers remained, with reports of further increases in the price of utilities, food and equipment. Whilst the Council remains committed to funding social care providers to pay the Real Living Wage (RLW), the settlement from Welsh Government has not allowed for this in the 2024/25 fee increases. For the first time, we adopted a sliding scale of fee increases to care home providers, based on the Council's standard contract rate and the currently weekly fees being charged. Providers who accept the Council's standard contract rate received an 8.86% increase, with further increases applied down to 3.1% for those care homes that currently charge the highest weekly fees.
- 2.3** Domiciliary care agencies were again subject to a sliding scale of fee increases. Those agencies that accept the Council's standard hourly rate received 3.1% increase, with other increases between 0.5% and 1.5% applied based on current hourly rates.
- 2.4** Despite best efforts during the fee setting process, the uplifts for both domiciliary agencies and care homes may not cover the increase in the RLW or other increases in providers' staffing contributions such as pension contributions. As a result, several providers have engaged with senior managers in the Local Authority to highlight their concern in relation to the fees that have been set and their ability to remain financially viable over the next 18 months. The issues raised include ability to provide the full increase in the RLW to staff, competition from the NHS for similar roles with improved terms and conditions, the consequence of implementing the sliding scale of fee increases and the costs of recruiting overseas staff.
- 2.5** The financial viability of a small number of care homes providers is of concern and monthly monitoring of void placements takes place within a Quality Assurance meeting. Pre-pandemic, the occupancy for older persons' residential care homes was around 85% and nursing homes 90%. In March 2021, average occupancy levels fell to 71% for residential and 60% for nursing homes. As at the end of March 2024, residential homes reported average occupancy levels of 95% and nursing homes 94%.



**2.6** As at the end of March 2024, there were seven citizens who had been assessed as requiring care and support at home who were waiting for a domiciliary agency to take their care package. Below shows the trend during 2023/24 of the average number of new packages placed each week and the average number of citizens waiting for care and support at home. This an area where we have made and sustained our ability to reduce waiting times to place packages, with the average number of days to make a placement reducing from 22 days in April 2023 to 3 days in March 2024. Whilst we have reduced the numbers waiting for packages this remains an area of demand and the situation is subject to weekly monitoring. In addition to the packages placed, citizens were removed from the waiting list for a variety of reasons, including hospital admission, care home placement or they had died.



**2.7** Whilst there is currently a small waiting list for domiciliary care packages and providers can respond to request for new and increased care and support requests, there is a considerable reliance by some agencies on overseas carers on sponsorship arrangements. Of the 25 agencies that responded to a recent

information request, 10 have not engaged in the sponsorship programme. The remaining 15 agencies have a total of 395 staff, 125 (31.6%) of whom are on sponsorship arrangements. One element for the continuation of the sponsorship arrangement is the ability to evidence 37 hours of work per week. We are beginning to see instances of the Home Office challenging providers on this arrangement and there is a real risk of the current overseas carers losing their sponsorship arrangement. Whilst there is currently some capacity in the market, if this were to happen it would have an immediate and significant impact on the agencies' ability to existing care and support calls, and for Brokerage to place new and increased packages of care. For their part, the Commissioning and Finance Teams are responding immediately to requests for information regarding this matter.

- 2.8** The Your Choice outcome based domiciliary care scheme has increased during 2023/24, with 18 providers now being part of the scheme. Approximately 46% (7217) hours of the total domiciliary care packages are provided under Your Choice, supporting approximately 48% (412) of the citizens receiving domiciliary care. It is the aim of the Directorate for all citizens to continue to be transferred to the Your Choice scheme throughout the year where it is appropriate to do so. The Provider Support Group continued to meet throughout the year and dates are set for the next 12 months. Reconciliation meetings have taken place on a quarterly basis with all Your Choice providers, with a total of £38,847 being recouped from providers during 2023/24.
- 2.9** The positive relationship with social care providers continues, with monthly forums taking place. These forums now include colleagues from the UHB and Public Health Wales on a regular basis, which has been welcomed by providers.
- 2.10** There is daily communication between the Brokerage Section and domiciliary providers to ensure the best use of staffing when delivering domiciliary care. Due to this initiative providers have been able to put 'runs' of calls together in smaller geographical areas of the Vale.
- 2.11** In 2022, the commissioning functions of the Directorate were separated into a new team. During 2023/24 all posts in the team have been recruited to, with the benefits of additional capacity already being seen, for example, relationships between commissioners and the Children's Commissioning Collaborative Cymru (4Cs) have been re-established, additional capacity is assisting Children and Young People's Services with commissioning functions, and regular monitoring visits to providers are in place.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** There are various mechanisms in place with colleagues in Adult Services and Children and Young People's Services to ensure that the commissioned services meet the short and long term needs of citizens. To ensure that providers have security in the services being commissioned, most contract terms are for 5 years plus an option to extend.



- 3.2** Several services are commissioned as information or ‘signposting’ services for citizens who do not require care and support but wish to access assistance from a third party. The work of the Performance and Information Team includes Family Information, the Disability Index the Carers Services and DEWIS.
- 3.3** Commissioned services are in line with the requirements of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.
- 3.4** A Regional Commissioning Board is in place, chaired by the Head of Resource Management & Safeguarding in the Vale of Glamorgan, to ensure an aligned regional approach with partners to commissioning services is undertaken wherever possible.
- 3.5** Commissioning tasks, including procurement of services, involve citizens. It is vital that we ensure commissioned services are appropriate to meet not only people’s care and support needs but also the outcomes they wish to achieve. An example of this during 2023/24 was the recommissioning of domiciliary care services for Extra Care at Golau Caredig. A citizens’ panel was established and supported by members of the Commissioning Team to develop questions for potential providers during the interview stage of the process. This part of the evaluation was given equal weighting to the Council’s staff panel.
- 3.6** As part of our Section 16 responsibilities under the Act, engagement with Third Sector Providers has increased, with an initial engagement session being held December in April 2024. Further workshops regarding how Third Section providers can assist with specific workstreams in Adults’ and Children and Young People’s Services will be held in 2024/25.

## **4. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

- 4.1** There are no Climate Change and Nature Implications as a direct result of this report.

## **5. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 5.1** The budgets for commissioned social care services in 2022/23 was £50.421m, with a projected year end out-turn of £52.5m. Income is received from various sources including assessed charges from citizens, UHB contributions to jointly commissioned care, and the Social Care Workforce grant. This grant was reduced by £251,769 in 2023/24, which has had an impact on the income for both Adult’s Community Care and the placement budget within Children and Young People’s Services.
- 5.2** The community care budget for 2024/25 is £56.05m which is an increase of £6.05m from the 2023/24 budget.

### **Employment**

- 5.3** There are no employment implications associated with this report.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

5.4 There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

### **6. Background Papers**

Report to Health Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023.