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## HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2025.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor J.E. Charles (Chair); Councillor N.C. Thomas (Vice-Chair); Councillors G.M. Ball, C.A. Cave, A.M. Collins, C.M. Cowpe, R.E. Godfrey, S. Lloyd-Selby, J. Lynch-Wilson, J.M. Norman, and C. Stallard.

Also present: Councillors C.P. Franks, W.A. Hennessy, G. John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport, and Wellbeing), Dr. I.J. Johnson and E. Williams (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health).

### ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chair read the following statement: “May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be live streamed as well as recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.”

### APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE –

This was received from Councillor I.R. Buckley.

### MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2024 be approved as a correct record.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

Councillor S. Lloyd-Selby declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 – Update on the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan regional Partnership Board. The nature of the interest was Personal as Councillor Lloyd-Selby had been appointed as an independent member of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. Councillor Lloyd-Selby remained in the meeting during discussion of this item.

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CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING MID-YEAR SUMMARY REPORT –  
NOVEMBER 2024 (REF) –

The reference from Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2024 was presented by the Operational Manager for Safeguarding and Service Outcomes who advised that the appended Cabinet report sought to provide Cabinet with a summary of the work that had been undertaken in relation to corporate arrangements for Safeguarding across the Council since the annual version of the report was considered and also referred to the Scrutiny Committee in September 2024.

There was a corporate responsibility to ensure that there were effective arrangements in place for safeguarding children and adults who required specific Council services, and the report provided a mid-year update on the effectiveness of said arrangements, and the developments to date, in relation to:

- Corporate Leadership & Accountability (Paragraphs 2.1 – 2.5),
- Corporate Policy (2.6),
- Scrutiny & Assurance (2.7),
- Safer Recruitment (2.8), and
- Training (2.9).

Following the Officer's presentation of the reference, Councillor Lloyd-Selby sought further clarification in relation to the outcomes of the review currently being undertaken to understand in more detail why the largest category of abuse reported to the Council was neglect of persons aged 85 and over. Councillor Lloyd-Selby referred to the matter in relation to her previous request for a report on the subject which officers had agreed to provide as part of the mid-year Corporate Safeguarding report. In response, the Operational Manager for Safeguarding and Service Outcomes advised that since Councillor Lloyd-Selby's request, officers had looked into the various sources of data that had fed into the Annual Safeguarding Report and advised that, in relation to the data for the Vale of Glamorgan 85+ population, there tended to be more safeguarding reports in relation to the said individuals because they predominantly had a care and support needs and therefore there were a number of practitioners involved over a variety of services who conversely tended to submit reports of lower level abuse or neglect. For example, the Council worked in partnership with organisations who would make a safeguarding referral to the Council because they had responded to a fall and could identify that the affected individuals did not have any care or support in their home setting. For further context, the Officer advised that in relation to the cohort of data provided, only 24% of the relevant individuals required seven-day enquiries / statutory safeguarding enquiries and it was hoped that this information would give some assurances around Councillor Lloyd-Selby's request and that the Council monitored its safeguarding referral responses and also considered more widely the Older Persons Commissioner's Action Plan in relation to older Vale of Glamorgan citizens.

The Vice-Chair then referred to paragraph 2.9 of the report which provided details in relation to the completion of mandatory Group A safeguarding awareness training and enquired after how many members of staff were required to catch up with the training and also how often individuals needed to refresh. In response, the Officer

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advised that there were different levels of training requirements depending on the staff member's role but, in terms of the basic level and awareness, every employee of the Local Authority as well as volunteers, were required to take the Group A mandatory sessions and the base line refresher would be required every three years. However, in the Vale of Glamorgan, the Council was benchmarking that training be undertaken every two years. The Council aimed to be in a position to say that 100% of all training was completed, however this was not the case, but the situation was closely monitored through the Corporate Safeguarding Group and any individual who was unable to access the relevant i-Dev e-learning module would be offered alternative access through their line manager. In addition, the Officer advised that the Vale of Glamorgan Council was offering training in line with the National Safeguarding Standards Framework which involved courses from Group A through to Group F depending on the individual's level of involvement in adult and children safeguarding processes.

Councillor Cowpe then queried the safeguarding measures in place for children whose parents or guardians had elected to home school. In response, the Officer advised that it was parental choice whether to educate a child and the relevant children were monitored electively home through the Council's Learning and Skills Directorate Inclusion Team. The Council had a number of children who were subject to Child Protection Registration and Child Protection planning who were also electively home educated and those children were under the same parameters around visitation and would have an allocated social worker who would visit them. Inclusion Officers who had the responsibility of monitoring the home-schooling arrangements would also be invited to attend the relevant Child Protection conferences. The Officer added that the Council operated under the guidance provided by Welsh Government which did not currently set out any preventative measures to stop a parent from electively home schooling their children. If there were any safeguarding concerns regarding children who were home educated, then the Council would have its own legislation and be able to follow its safeguarding processes in partnership with Inclusion Team colleagues.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Cowpe in relation to the number of children who were home schooled in the Vale of Glamorgan as well as any extra monitoring being in place, the Officer advised that through the process of agreeing the arrangements for home education, Inclusion Team colleagues would check whether there was any Children Services involvement or if there was any information that they needed to be aware of from a safeguarding perspective. In relation to the number of children, the Officer confirmed that there were only two children who were home educated who were subject to Child Protection Registration in the Vale of Glamorgan and, in terms of the total number of children home schooled, it was believed the number was around sixty pupils. In conclusion, the Officer advised that the Council was required to undertake statutory home visits to children who were on the Child Protection Register every ten working days irrespective of whether they were home educated or attending a school setting, however, the Officer was happy to provide some further assurances around what was built into the process in writing for Councillor Cowpe's attention following the meeting.

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Councillor Norman then sought clarification as to the requirements placed on the Council if a social worker was prevented from seeing a child at their home address who may be home schooled. The Operational Manager for Safeguarding and Service Outcomes referred to their earlier advice in relation to children who were home schooled and on the Protection Register needing to be sighted by social workers every ten working days, and if access was not granted then the Council would have to request support through its Legal Services or Police colleagues in order to satisfy itself that it had been able to see the child. In relation to children who were not on the Safeguarding Register, but the Council had received a safeguarding referral in relation to, the case would be assessed on an individual basis through a risk assessment. A decision would be made based on what the results of the assessment. In all scenarios, there were mechanisms in place for the Council to escalate and request assistance to sight a child or children.

With no further comments or questions, the Committee subsequently

**RECOMMENDED – T H A T** both the reference and appended Corporate Safeguarding Mid-Year Summary Cabinet report be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of both the reference and Cabinet report on the activity that had been undertaken to date in relation to Corporate arrangements for Safeguarding across the Council, and to provide assurance around safeguarding activity taking place across the Council.

**UPDATE ON THE CARDIFF AND VALE OF GLAMORGAN REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD (DSS) –**

The Director of Health and Social Care Integration for the Cardiff and Vale Integrated Health and Social Care Partnership (“External Director”), Cath Doman, presented the report which provided Members with an update on the work of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board (RPB) in relation to the integration of health and social care as per requirements of the Partnership Arrangements (Wales) Regulations 2015 that each RPB must prepare an annual report on the extent to which it had met its objectives.

The report summarised the progress of the RPB made since the report was last received by the Committee in January 2024, recognising the severe financial and capacity challenges across the partnership and the associated effect on the progress of more strategic developments.

The External Director apprised the Committee on details of the activities and impact of the RPB, as set out in detail within the 2023/24 RPB Annual Report, the hyperlink to which was provided at paragraph 2.1 of the report.

In conclusion, the External Director advised that the RPB had experienced a great deal of challenge in the last year due to the current financial climate, increasing costs, as well as recruitment, retention, and capacity constraints. This was unlikely to

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abate in the near future and, the attention of the RPB had turned increasingly to working with partners to deliver effective and efficient services.

Following the External Director's presentation, Councillor Godfrey described a scenario that they had been presented with as part of their ward/surgery work in relation to the lack of out of hours support available to a family dealing with the effects of dementia and sought the External Director's advice in relation to the case. In response, the External Director offered to gain further information from Councillor Godfrey in relation to the individuals involved in order to provide a more robust response confidentially following the meeting, however, noted that an out of hours service was available via telephone which would usually result in hospital admittance for any individual who was unable to remain in their home setting safely for both themselves, and wider family members.

Councillor Cowpe then referred to paragraph 2.20 of the report which related to the Vale's Families First Advice Line and a post service survey whereby 100% of respondents felt that both their emotional health and wellbeing and overall family resilience had improved as a consequence of services received. However, the Councillor queried the statistical data in relation to the statement, to which the External Director advised that 96 invitations were sent out for the survey and 18 responses were received in return, giving a 19% response rate.

Councillor Cowpe also referred to the Digital Care Region – Summary Care Viewer section of the report, and paragraphs 2.58 and 2.59 of the report, in relation to the Neurodevelopmental Care Pathway and Vale Community Resource Service and suggested that it would be useful in future versions of the report to highlight any new areas for improvements, problems with sharing records and/or any groups of staff with access issues considering that the shared records approach was new. In reply, the External Director advised that their previous samples provided were in relation to test beds and that the information was in the very early stages of being collated in partnership with current staff members of the aforementioned teams who were driving the digital solution. The next area of development would be in relation to discharge arrangements, which also required a co-ordinated approach between local authorities and the health board, however this work would be taking place under the harsh reality of very little funding available, but petitions had been made to Welsh Ministers for increased funding going forward. Therefore, further information would be provided in the next version of the report.

The Chair then referred to paragraph 2.21 of the report which referred to the Strategic Leadership Group agreeing a revision of the Goleudy model to include specific support staff recruited in each Local Authority instead of one commissioned provider and queried what recruitment progress had been made to date in relation to this. In response, the External Director advised that the initial proposed model was to adopt a single commissioned provider however, as understanding increased over what was trying to be achieved, it became clear that it was important for each Local Authority to be able to recruit and develop the service themselves but in a co-ordinated way across all partners. In addition, the Head of Children and Young People Services advised that the new approach was about trying to align to what was taking place within each local authority and its communities. Some support staff

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were already in place and the recruitment process was underway for additional posts to enhance the offer to children and families.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby then passed on their thanks to the individuals who had kindly shared their stories and provided real life context within the Annual report which was critical for hearing the voices of people involved and assessing the effectiveness of services. The Councillor then queried whether the approach to multi-disciplinary teamwork (MDT), in terms of cluster work, was reaching every area of the Vale of Glamorgan as well as why no data was available specific to the Vale of Glamorgan area on the number of EU attendances for people with an active care agreement on page 29 of the Annual Report. In response, the External Director advised that the Councillor's thanks was much appreciated and would be passed on to those involved. In relation to the Councillor's MDT working query, the relevant cluster information would need to be checked, and a response provided to the Councillor following the meeting however, regardless of where a person lived, there would be an MDT approach. In relation to the data contained on page 29 of the report, more Vale of Glamorgan specific information would be available in the next rendition of the report, but data collated to date could be provided in the interim and circulated to the Committee after the meeting.

The Vice-Chair then referred to the Vale of Glamorgan's Telecare Service and queried what support, if any, could be proposed by the Health Board to further support the Vale of Glamorgan service considering that partnership working was mutually beneficial to negate increasing costs. In response, the External Director advised that given the current pressures placed on both the Health Board and local authority, it was reasonable to assume that there would be no additional staff or funding available from the NHS and therefore partnership working remained crucial to progress going forward to the benefit of all partners and ensuring value for money. In addition, the Head of Adult Services advised that the Vale of Glamorgan Council did receive money via the Regional Partnership Board for some of the Falls Service by regional integration funds which was very gratefully received. The Council was looking forward to working with the Health Board on the Tele Health agenda and how it could bring services together for mutual efficiency.

With no further comments or questions, the Committee subsequently

#### RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the work being undertaken by the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board, and progress made, in particular the outcomes being achieved for local people be noted.
- (2) T H A T a further annual update on the work of the Board be received by the Committee.

#### Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the content of the report to increase awareness of the work of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board of which the Vale

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of Glamorgan Council is a major partner.

(2) To ensure that Members are informed of and engaged with the work of the Regional Partnership Board.

## LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT – YEAR 12 PERFORMANCE REPORT (DEH) –

The Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide an update on the performance of the Leisure Management Contract in relation to its twelfth year (1<sup>st</sup> August, 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2024).

Legacy Leisure, the Council's Leisure Management contractor, was required to produce an annual report detailing performance, service improvements and any operating issues. The report, as appended at Appendix A, was presented to the Committee to allow the opportunity to assess the performance of the Leisure Management Contract over the previous 12-month period.

The Operational Manager, with support from the external Area Contracts Manager for Legacy Leisure, highlighted a number of successes over the past year, which were summarised at paragraph 2.3 of the covering report, including a significant increase in usage compared to the previous year, the refurbishment of key facilities within the Leisure Centres and the implementation of the new Active Communities Strategy.

The report also detailed the continued response to comments made in Audit Reports regarding performance management.

At the end of the report presentation, the Operational Manager advised that the contract between the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Legacy Leisure was delivering the best value of any known similar contract or management arrangement for Leisure Centres in Wales.

Following the presentation of the report, Councillor Cowpe began debate on the item by referring to one of the key concerns set out on page five of the appended Annual Report which stated that Legacy Leisure had been unable to mitigate all of the cost pressures through price increases and therefore queried what future plans contract management had in relation to this going forward. As a second question, Councillor Cowpe queried the long wait times for customers to be referred via the National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) as well as complaints at site, as referred to in section 5.2 of the appended report, and sought further clarification in relation to these. In response, the Area Contracts Manager for Legacy Leisure advised that due to national inflationary increases in line with 3-4%, this put additional pressure on not-for-profit organisations. It was recognised that it was important that any profits made would be reinvested into the leisure facilities to update the building and facilities. In response to Councillor Cowpe's second question, the Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance advised that there were only 3.44-time equivalent posts that delivered the NERS program, and

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the Council continued to operate the program within the Leisure Centres to provide a more efficient engagement for users. However, because of this, complaints would often be directed to the Centre's reception desk rather than back to the Council, but this was something the Council was aware of and would be attempting to manage. The demand was currently greater than the resources available, however, the Council had lobbied for more funding in relation to this.

In response to similar questions posed by both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee in relation to the focus of contract delivery going forward, the External Area Contracts Manager advised that improving user and visitor numbers would remain a priority for the service and that there were still some areas of the leisure centre buildings which needed improvement works. It was important to increase the role of leisure centres within the local community and to build on a community feel as well as to remain health focused in all of its approaches. Plans were in place to recruit an active Communications Manager as well as continued partnership working with the Health Board and expanding service delivery in January 2025 in the Cowbridge area.

Councillor Thomas then referred to the fact that Penarth Leisure Centre had recently received solar panels via a largescale roofing project and queried whether any benefits of the scheme had been seen as of yet. In reply, the Area Contracts Manager confirmed that benefits had been seen, since October 2024, now that a full quarter had passed. Information was being collected via an installed energy meter, but this had not been analysed yet as the installation was in its early stages, but it was expected that the project would provide free energy to the leisure centre going forward.

In conclusion, Councillors Godfrey and John (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Wellbeing) congratulated officers on the success and progress of the contract over the previous year and were grateful for visits being extended to the Leisure Centre Working Group and the fact that the Council had adopted the contract with Legacy Leisure some time ago to avoid the difficult circumstances which other Local Authorities now found themselves in in relation to leisure provision.

With no further comments or questions, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the performance of the Legacy Leisure Contract for Year 12 be noted.
- (2) T H A T a Year 13 annual performance report for the Leisure Management contract be presented to Committee.
- (3) T H A T an interim six-monthly update on performance data be presented to Committee during the 2025 calendar year.



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Reasons for recommendations

(1) Having regard to the content of the report on the performance of the contractor during the reported period.

(2&3) To keep Scrutiny Committee Members informed of progress on the Leisure Management Contract and following a suggestion raised by the Council's Governance and Audit Committee.

3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER SCRUTINY DECISION TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND UPDATED WORK PROGRAMME SCHEDULE (DCR) –

The report advised Members of progress in relation to the Scrutiny Committee's historical recommendations and the updated Forward Work Programme Schedule for 2024/25:

- 3rd Quarter Recommendation Tracking October to December 2023 (attached at Appendix A to the report); and
- Updated Forward Work Programme Schedule for 2024/25 (attached at Appendix B to the report).

The Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer advised that, with regard to the one outstanding recommendation from the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2024 regarding receipt of a reference by the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee on the Children and Young People Services Annual Placements Review, the reference had been received and noted by the Committee since publication of the report under consideration and therefore the recommendation could now be marked as completed.

Therefore, the Committee was requested to agree the recommendation actions listed in Appendix A to the report as well as approve the Committee's updated Forward Work Programme for uploading to the public website as included at Appendix B to the report.

With no comments or questions raised, the Committee subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the status of the actions listed in Appendix A to the report be agreed and the status of the outstanding recommendation from 3<sup>rd</sup> December relating to the Children and Young People Services Annual Placements Review be marked as completed.

(2) T H A T the updated Forward Work Programme Schedule for 2024/25 attached at Appendix B to the report be approved and uploaded to the Council's website.

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Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report to maintain effective tracking of the Committee's recommendations.
- (2) For public information.