

Extracts from CASSC Chairs letters and responses received to these

1. At the end of each scrutiny committee meeting, Members agree comments, observations and recommendations that they wish to send to Cabinet Members and officers; these are captured in letters from the Committee Chair. The relevant Cabinet Member, or officer in cases where the Cabinet Member was not able to attend the meeting, then responds to these letters.
2. Relevant extracts, regarding carers, from Chairs letters and the responses received to these are provided below, in chronological order 2012 – 2015.

November 2012 – following scrutiny of Q1 2012/13

*'Members are concerned that the targets set for night sitting and day sitting respite services are not properly correlated. Officers informed committee that the reduction in the number of respite nights target was justified as more requests were being received for day sitting as opposed to night respite. However, the decrease of 729 nights is not matched by a similar increase in day sitting. Members were informed that every request for respite service is met and so there is no unmet need. However, given that carer assessments have reduced, Members are concerned that there is unmet need. Members were interested to hear that a review is being undertaken into carers services and request details on this be provided as part of the Quarter Two report, including the scope, timeline and any findings to date. Members were pleased to hear officers support for our planned Inquiry into the provision of services for carers and agree that this will provide useful evidence about the services that carers would wish the Council to provide. Finally, Members note that officers referred to Direct Payments being used to facilitate respite care and recommend that steps be put in place immediately to ensure that useful data is captured on the provision of this element of respite care.'*¹

Response Received – Letter from Councillor Holland, dated 6th December 2012

The service area contends, that in general, requests for respite are being met. However the ongoing work on reviews and consultation with carers may highlight additional areas for improvement, to which the service area will respond.

As requested a copy of the Adult carers support & services consultation documentation has already been provided for inclusion in the Quarter Two report.

As suggested at the meeting, action is being taken to ensure data on the use of Direct Payments for respite care is captured and reported.

¹ Letter to Councillor Luke Holland, Cabinet Member, dated 23rd November 2012, from Councillor Patel, Chair CASSC

December 2012 – following scrutiny of Q2 2012/13

‘SCA/018 (b) - Members accept the Chief Adult Services Officer’s offer to investigate the data presented for Quarter One and Quarter Two, whether they should be cumulative and whether the indicator should be showing as Green rather than Red. With regard to SCA/015 (a) Members accept his offer to review the target; Members wish to highlight that the findings of the recent respite survey, attached in Appendix C of this item’s papers, show that carers do wish to receive respite care.’²

Response Received – Letter from Councillor Holland, dated 10th January 2013

The data set requires this indicator to be cumulative as it accrues during the year, hence the current performance will still result in the indicator being red.

As we review the information held on carers the updates will continue to have an impact on the results for the carer indicators during this year.

These updates have resulted in the number of carers recorded to increase from 1037 in Quarter 1 to 1553 in Quarter 2. Since the offer of a carer’s assessment has been added to the new Unified Assessment form, the number of offers has increased to 357 in Quarter 1 and 853 for Quarter 2.

The percentage of carers who had an assessment or review during the quarter is a cumulative indicator. The increase in the denominator for this indicator during Quarter 2 (the number of carers of adults who were offered an assessment) has, in turn, reduced the percentage of carers who had an assessment, although the number assessed has increased this year. With regard to SCAL015 (a), performance in recent years has been consistently below the target set, but delivery has been seen as reflecting the known demand for the service, hence the target was reviewed to reflect what was identified as demand.

The current work on identifying carers will inform ongoing requirements and a revised target will be provided at the meeting which discusses the Quarter Three performance. This will also inform the setting of the baseline in Quarter Four.

July 2013 – following scrutiny of Q4 2012/13

‘Members were pleased to hear Stuart Young acknowledge that not every carer who needs a service is currently receiving a service. Allied to this, Members were disappointed to hear that the rise in the number of carers identified has not led to recognition of the need to increase the services available for carers. With specific regard to respite care, Members wish to receive assurance from you that monies that are under-spent will not be taken as savings. As our recent Inquiry into the Provision of Services for Carers demonstrated, there is a need to provide appropriate and accessible respite for carers. Members hope that the Cabinet Response to this Inquiry recognises this and contains plans to address these points.’³

No response required

² Letter to Councillor Luke Holland, Cabinet Member, dated 21st December 2012, from Councillor Patel, Chair CASSC

³ Letter to Andrew Kerr, Chief Operating Officer, dated 25 July 2013, from Councillor Patel, Chair CASSC

September 2013 – following scrutiny of Q1 2013/14

*'At our July 2013 meeting, Members discussed Carers' Assessments, and the figures around those who have been offered an assessment, those who subsequently received an assessment, and (of those) how many had refused our service. We would like to ensure that there is clarity provided at future meetings that the number of assessments offered and provided is increasing. A Member also asked whether the reasons cited by carers for refusing a service were gathered. Sue Schelewa offered to explore this and come back to Committee with details, and we look forward to receiving these.'*⁴

Response Received – Letter from Councillor Huw Thomas, dated 11th October 2013

With regard to the committee's recommendations, I can assure you of the service area's commitment to increasing and improving services to carers and we will seek to offer greater clarity on this at future meetings.

Sue Schelewa has taken the opportunity to look into the issue of carers who do not receive a service following an assessment and I can advise that the number who decline a service is not recorded.

One additional aspect of this issue is that if the service originally provided in the name of the carer is identified at the time of review as a long term need, then it may become part of the formal care plan of the service user. For example, meal preparation may be offered to give the carer a break, but may be added to the full care plan if it is an ongoing requirement.

March 2014 – following scrutiny of Q3 2013/14

*'Carers Assessments – Members wish to receive a written response to clarify the relationship between SCA/018 a, b and c and between these and FCLi44.'*⁵

Response Received – included in Committee Papers for July 2014, available at

<https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/Your-Council/Councillors-and-meetings/CouncilMeetings/Pages/default.aspx#lists>

July 2014 – following scrutiny of Q4 2013/14

*'Members wish to accept officers offer to provide the numbers for the carers performance indicators SCA/018 a-c in the comments box on the report; this will aid our understanding of the Council's performance with regard to Carer Assessments.'*⁶

Response Received – quarterly performance reports amended.

⁴ Letter to Councillor Huw Thomas, Cabinet Member, dated 15 September 2013, from Councillor De'Ath, Chair CASSC

⁵ Letter to Councillor Huw Thomas, Cabinet Member, dated 5 March 2014, from Councillor De'Ath, Chair CASSC

⁶ Letter to Councillor Susan Elsmore, Cabinet Member, dated 7 July 2014, from Councillor Groves, Chair CASSC

September 2014 – following scrutiny of Q1 2014/15

*'Members note Siân's comment that she finds setting stretching targets assists her in driving the cultural change required to deliver a step-change in service delivery performance.... Members asked about poor performance with regard to Carers Assessments and Direct Payments and were interested to learn that care packages will not be approved unless the officer can demonstrate that direct payments and a carer's assessment have been offered and that officer's performance on these factors will be monitored via the PPDR process. Members will look to see whether this results in better performance in Quarters Two and Three.'*⁷

No response required

December 2014 – following scrutiny of Q2 2014/15

Quarter Two Performance Report

*'Members recognise front line staff are working hard to deliver services within a climate of increasing demand and stretched resources and we commend them for their efforts. However, the same areas have been suffering from poor performance for the last eighteen months. These are areas that deal with service provision to some of the most vulnerable adults in our society who deserve better than this. What appears to be missing in improving the performance in these areas is management ownership to realistically deliver improved performance. Members recognise that wholesale system change is underway in Health and Social Care and that it takes time for these changes to deliver improved performance. Previously we have raised our concerns that the targets set were therefore not realistic and noted your response that you wished to set stretching targets to assist cultural change. However, other Directorates took a different view to this, adjusting performance targets where there were known pressures, whilst still achieving cultural change, system change and improved service delivery. Members are deeply concerned that there appears to be no other plan to improve performance and do not believe it is acceptable to simply continue with the current approach, hoping that this eventually delivers improved performance.'*⁸

Response Received – Letter from Siân Walker, Director of Health & Social Care, dated 24th December 2014

The Directorate continues to work hard to deliver improved performance in Carer Assessment and Direct Payment numbers. Our work to improve performance will continue during the remainder of 2014/15 and through into the next year. We reject the assertion that there is no management ownership in these areas; on the contrary, these are areas where senior and middle managers have worked hard to bring about improvements which have been gradual but have not achieved the stretch targets initially set.

⁷ Letter to Councillor Susan Elsmore, Cabinet Member, dated 8th September 2014, from Councillor Groves, Chair CASSC

⁸ Letter to Siân Walker, Director of Health & Social Care, dated 9th December 2014, from Councillor Groves, Chair CASSC

March 2015 – following scrutiny of Q3 2014/15

‘Overall, Members agree with your comments at the meeting that there are problems with performance in this area and challenges in addressing these. We note the Director’s, Siân Walker, comments that she appreciates that the discussion on performance focuses on the same issues each quarter due to under-performance and that this is disappointing. Members feel that their comments following Quarter Two performance scrutiny still stand, as set out in my letter dated 9th December 2014, which in your absence was addressed to Siân Walker.’⁹

Response Awaited

⁹ Letter to Councillor Elsmore, Cabinet Member, dated 9 March 2015, from Councillor Groves, Chair CASSC