

Date: 19 October 2022

Councillor Norma Mackie
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Dear Councillor Mackie,

CASSC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 17 OCTOBER 2022: COMMITMENTS TO UNPAID CARERS AND LOCAL AUTHORITY SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

On behalf of the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee, our sincere thanks for attending Committee on 17 October 2022 to present the Cabinet reports on Commitments to Unpaid Carers and the Local Authority Social Services Annual Report 2021/22. Please also pass on our appreciation to Sarah, Jane, and Cath Doman from the RPB.

The comments, observations and recommendations below were captured during the Committee's discussion at the Way Forward.

We commend both reports to Cabinet for consideration.

In relation to specific issues, Members would like to comment on the following:

Commitments to Unpaid Carers

Members were very supportive of both Charters and commitments proposed for recognising and supporting the significant role unpaid carers play in our communities. We asked a number of questions regarding the following, and were satisfied with the responses we received;

- Engagement and involvement of carers in the further development of the Charters and Action Plan;
- Ensuring the workforce is suitably skilled to deliver the commitments;
- Implementation of the commitments and Action Plan, including;
 - Key challenges
 - Changes to processes and procedures
 - Monitoring, evaluation and review of the Charter and Action Plan and the inclusion of Carers in this
- Low levels of take-up of Carers Assessments to date
- Financial Implications of the proposals

Further issues raised:

Consideration of the Carers Action Plan

During the questioning relating to the development and implementation of the Carers Action Plan, Members requested an indicative timeline for this. Officers responded that the Action Plan would be developed within the same timelines as the Directorate Delivery Plan, and Members would therefore **request** that the Carers Action Plan be brought to this Committee for consideration at the same time we consider next year's DDP.

Types of Conditions Carers are dealing with

Members also enquired about the types of conditions that carers are dealing with (e.g. dementia, physical disability etc), and a breakdown of this. Officers stated that, whilst they did not have a detailed analysis of this available at the meeting, it could be provided. Therefore, Members would **request** this information - Members acknowledge that carers do care for loved ones that have multiple needs, so if you are able to provide some context to aid our understanding, it would be very welcomed.

Equalities Monitoring

Members asked a question about equalities monitoring, which would be critical in assisting in identifying and targeting individuals and communities that may not currently identify as carers and access to support. Whilst this detail was not available at the meeting, Members were offered a report on this issue, and therefore **request** that a profile of the ethnicity of current known carers be provided, linked with the profile of the City as a whole.

Respite Survey

Members were made aware of the Respite Survey that is currently underway and would **request** that the output report from this survey be provided, when available. Please provide an indicative time of when this will be available to ensure that we can add it to our work programme accordingly.

Carers that are aged 50+

Members enquired about those carers that are aged 50+ and whether any specific targeted work was being done with this cohort. Members were informed that this had not been considered, but all carers (including older carers) would be part of the overall awareness raising and engagement activities. Whilst Members do not have any specific recommendations on this issue at this time, we wish to flag that we have raised this issue and would **request** that the needs of this group be considered and included in the development of the Action Plan.

Local Authority Social Services Annual Report (LASSAR) 2021/22

Members welcomed the opportunity to consider the LASSAR for 2021/22. Members asked a number of questions on the following issues:

- Your vision and aims as the new Portfolio holder
- Improving performance in relation to the review of care plans
- Progress towards meeting the Welsh Government's plans for Integrated Care

Members also asked further questions on the following;

Workforce Pressures

Members asked a number of questions on a range of workforce issues, including sickness absence (including monitoring long/short-term sickness; assessments on return to work; and support for staff to come back to work); problems relating to the recruitment of staff, particularly social workers; the use of agency staff and what roles or gaps in provision are these in; the need for joined-up working to give staff more flexibility in their work (hours, assistance with transport etc); and were reassured that the QA Manager had been recruited and would be joining the Team soon.

Members were informed that a Workforce Plan is being developed and **request** that this be shared with Committee when available. We would also wish to ensure that information relating to the use, type and numbers of agency staff be included in the Plan. Please indicate a timescale for this, so we can add to our work programme accordingly.

Safeguarding

Members asked about the rise in numbers in relation to safeguarding referrals and requested a breakdown of what the safeguarding issues relate to (i.e types of safeguarding concerns referred), and some commentary in the reasons for the rise. Whilst this information was not available in detail at the meeting, it was suggested that this could be provided, and we would therefore **request** this information.

Discharge of Patients and Transfer of Care

Following a question on the collection of statistics and setting of targets in relation to this issue, Members were informed that the collection of statistics had been suspended during the Covid-19 pandemic period, but there had been a recent Welsh Government Review on targets for this area, which has resulted in the decision for their reintroduction. Officers informed Members that they had yet to have further information of when the reintroduction was likely to happen, but this Committee

requests that it be kept informed of progress on when these targets are to be reintroduced and these be reported to Committee accordingly.

Members were also informed that a “deep dive” into this issue was going to be undertaken and would therefore **request** that the output report be provided to this Committee, when available. Please indicate a timescale for this, so we can add to our work programme accordingly.

A response to this letter is requested, and to recap, the Committee **is requesting:**

Commitment to Unpaid Carers

- i. Agreement that the Carers Action Plan be brought to this committee for consideration at the same time we consider next year’s DDP.
- ii. Provide a breakdown of the types of conditions that carers are dealing with (e.g. dementia, physical disability etc). Some further narrative relating to those carers who are dealing with multiple needs and what these are would also be welcomed.
- iii. Provide a profile of the ethnicity of current known carers, linked with the profile of the City as a whole.
- iv. Provide a copy of the output report from the Respite survey to this Committee, when available. Please provide an indicative time of when this will be available to ensure that we can add it to our work programme accordingly.
- v. Give assurances that the needs of Carers Aged 50+ be considered and included in the development of the Action Plan.

Local Authority Social Services Annual Report (LASSAR) 2021/22

- vi. A copy of the Workforce Plan be shared with Committee when available. We would also wish to ensure that information relating to the use, type and numbers of agency staff be included in the Plan. Please indicate a timescale for this, so we can add to our work programme accordingly.
- vii. Provide a breakdown of what the safeguarding referral issues relate to (i.e types of safeguarding concerns referred), and some commentary in the reasons for the rise.
- viii. That this Committee be kept informed of progress on when targets in relation to the discharge of patients/delayed transfer of care are to be reintroduced and assurances that these be reported to Committee accordingly.
- ix. That the output report on the deep dive into discharge of patients/transfer or care be provided to this Committee, when available. Please indicate a timescale for this, so we can add to our work programme accordingly.

There are no formal recommendations arising from this letter.

Once again, on behalf of the Committee, please pass my thanks to all who attended the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee. I look forward to a response.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNCILLOR BABLIN MOLIK
CHAIR, COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

cc Members of the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee
Sarah McGill, Corporate Director, People & Communities
Jane Thomas, Director Adults, Housing & Communities
Cath Doman, Regional Partnership Board
Cllr Adrian Robson – Group Leader
Cllr Rhys Taylor – Group Leader
Cllr Andrea Gibson – Group Leader
Chris Pyke, OM Governance & Audit
Tim Gordon, Head of Communications & External Relations
People & Communities Performance Leads