



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**  
Social Care **Wales**



# Annual Report and Accounts 2023-2024

## **Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016**

Annual Report and Accounts of Social Care Wales prepared pursuant to Schedule 2, Part 6 Paragraph 16(1-3) of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, for the year ended 31 March 2024 together with the Report of the Auditor General for Wales thereon and laid before Senedd Cymru pursuant to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act Schedule 2, Part 6 Paragraph 16(4).

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# Performance report

## Overview

### Statement from the Accounting Officer

Everything we do is focused on making a positive difference for high quality care and support in Wales. We are the national leadership organisation in Wales for social care workforce regulation, supporting service improvement through research and data, and delivering workforce development for the social care and early years sectors.

This is the seventh Annual Report and Accounts that have been prepared by Social Care Wales since our inception in 2017. This year, as all previous years, we are pleased to have met our statutory obligations in full and to deliver meaningful support for the social care and early years sectors and those who use their services.

The last three years have probably been the most difficult in living memory for social care in Wales and things are not any easier now. The ravages of Covid and the cost-of-living crisis have made it particularly challenging to keep providing care and support to the most vulnerable people in society. Recruitment and staffing issues are putting more pressure on sectors that are already struggling because of the increasing demand for care and support. We have continued to influence and work with key national organisations to address and contend the issues currently facing the sectors.

We must also continue to support and resource the workforce to be motivated, engaged and valued and has the capacity, competence and confidence to meet the needs of the people of Wales. Whilst supporting the sectors during these challenging times we have continued to embed the framework to transform care and support in Wales, as set out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) and Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Acts. We have worked hard with others to develop and plan the future development of social care and early years, through "A Healthier Wales" and the Welsh Government's "10-year Childcare, Play and Early Years" workforce plan, as well as evolving partnerships across Wales.

We continue to build on our national leadership role and our relationships with the social care and early years workforce, employers and strategic leaders across Wales to improve practice, increase workforce resilience and that the social care and early years workforce is highly recognised and valued. We are proud of all those working in the sector who have supported those they care for to live the lives that matter to them. We know our care and early years workers are continuing to go above and beyond to provide excellent care for the children and people of Wales.

Working with others is central to how we work, and partnership has been at the heart of the delivery of our business plan in 2023-24. We are committed to working with partners to positively influence the social care and early years services to improve outcomes for children, adults, families and unpaid carers who rely on care and support. The majority of our work is produced in partnership across public, private and third sector organisations throughout Wales.

Social care and early years workers help children, young people and adults live the lives they want, supporting people to develop, remain active and independent, stay safe and well connected to their community and wider networks. They do this alongside family, friends, volunteers and other public services. Early years workers help give our children a great start in life and provide valuable support for parents.

At Social Care Wales, we will continue to do all we can for the workforce, their employers, and strategic leaders during this difficult time and help them to continue to focus on caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

Sue Evans was the Accounting Officer during this period and retired after eight years at Social Care Wales. 'It has been a very rewarding experience, leading the organisation and working with staff, partners and our Board, to improve care and support for individuals across Wales'.

As the Chief Executive I am signing off these accounts as the Accounting Officer from 29 July onwards.

Now, more than ever, it's vital I take this time to celebrate the fantastic work we know is happening across the care sector and to say thank you to our dedicated and committed social care and early years workforce.

**Sarah McCarty**

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 25 October 2024

## Role of Social Care Wales – Who we are



## Our vision and purpose

**Our vision**  
is to make a positive difference to care and support in Wales for children, adults and their families and carers.

**Our purpose**  
We provide national leadership and expertise in social care and early years. We lead on regulating and developing the social care workforce, service improvement, data and research to improve care.

## Key issues and risks that we face

Information about our risk management and the main risks we face is provided in the Governance Statement on page 32.

The factors we think will have the greatest influence over the way we work and how we achieve our vision over the next five years are the issues facing the social care and early years sector which include:

- recruitment and retention in the social care and early years sector
- cost of living increases which reduce resource capacity in a market based primarily on public funding
- fair pay for the social care and early years sector
- the fundamental changes to the employment market after the pandemic, Brexit, and other existential events
- remaining in a period of financial constraint for public services
- the ongoing impact of Covid on the social care and early years sector alongside the continued growth in demand for social care
- the ambitious policy landscape
- the social care and early years sector response to climate emergency.

## Performance analysis

Our annual Business Plan for 2023-24 sets out our strategic outcomes, along with our high-level activities and achievement measures.

Throughout the year, we provided quarterly reports about the progress we were making on these activities against our strategic outcomes to our Executive Management Team, and these are scrutinised by our Board and the Welsh Government.

This performance analysis provides a small snapshot of the work undertaken last year under our eight strategic outcomes:

1. Improved well-being for the social care and early years workforce
2. A social care and early years workforce that is highly recognised and valued
3. Social care and early years services that attract, recruit and retain people with the right values to meet the needs of those who need care and support
4. A registered social care workforce that has the public's confidence
5. A social care and early years workforce that is suitably qualified, knowledgeable and skilled with the right values, behaviours and practice
6. Social care services that embed and deliver strengths-based approaches to care and support
7. Social care practice and policy that is underpinned by innovation, high-quality research, data and other forms of evidence
8. Social Care Wales provides effective, high quality and sustainable services.

The current challenges facing the social care and early years sector cannot be underestimated. The provision of social care and early years services will continue to change, due to the continued impact of the pandemic, increasing economic pressures and the needs of communities. The workforce is still struggling with the changes brought about by the pandemic. These changes have placed extra demands on staff, leading to an increase in stress and lower morale and job satisfaction. There are also challenges in relation to recruitment and retention across all areas of the sector.

As a national leadership organisation we have continued to work with national organisations throughout the year to influence national policy development and in responding to the challenges facing social care and early years during the year. We have a number of long-term programmes of work (5-10 years) looking at making a positive change to long term challenges in the sector. This report focusses on activities that have been achieved during 2023-24 to support those long-term programmes of work.

You will find more detail on our work on [www.socialcare.wales](http://www.socialcare.wales)



## Improved well-being for the social care and early years workforce

### Developing Wellbeing initiatives

We are committed to improving the well-being of the workforce which is a key aim of the joint health and social care workforce strategy. We held our first Health and Well-being Conference for social care workers in October 2023. The aim of the conference was to:

- connect with others in social care, early years and childcare
- share practice tips and ideas
- learn about tools and support to help people including our health and well-being framework.

100% of attendees (87) felt that the conference had met these objectives.

*“All speakers were fantastic. So grateful to have had the opportunity to experience the workshops and will take back connections that I have made to my work.”*

**Social care worker**

We held information and training sessions for the sector throughout the year, which were positively received with 94% of attendees saying the sessions met their expectations.

*“I’m so pleased I came to this session - it exceeded my expectations. Delivered in a clear manner and packed with info and resources.”*

**Social care worker**

In July we launched our new and updated webpages with more resources, guidance and information on [Health and Wellbeing](#). The webpages focus on the small things people can do to manage their own well-being at work. There’s also advice for managers to help look after team well-being. There are practical tips to get started, and signposts to organisations that can support people with the next steps. Since then nearly 3,300 people have visited the information through our website. We also have 91 members on our email network and 56 active members of the online wellbeing community. In 2024-25 we will be evaluating the effectiveness of our wellbeing offer, building on the evaluation approach we have already begun.

## Fitness to practice well-being support resources

We want to support and reassure those taking part in our fitness to practise investigations and hearings, and help make the process as easy as possible for those involved. In August we launched a new 'fitness to practise well-being support' programme to help guide, support and reassure those involved in the process. We published new web pages, which include lots of information and videos about what to expect from the fitness to practise process along with providing a free, independent and confidential well-being assistance helpline for anyone involved in a fitness to practise investigation.

## Developing our service to support Employers

During the year we have continued to develop our service to support employers. We have run 3 Employer Support roadshows in Cardiff, Carmarthenshire and Conwy with over 100 attendees. These roadshows were an opportunity to hear about our 'employer offer' which includes a wide range of services, support and resources we've created and pulled together for employers to help them in their role.

"Really helpful to get a better understanding of the purpose and role of Social Care Wales, understand future direction. There are lots of very helpful looking frameworks and tools from Social Care Wales and other presenters which I was not aware we had access to."

**Employer**

We have also attended employer sessions and network meetings across Wales with nearly 400 attendees to share information on the support and resources available. Topics covered included the WeCare Wales campaign, registration and the Welsh language. We also used these roadshows and information sessions as an opportunity to find out what else we could do to support Employers. This feedback is being used to inform our planning for this service in 2024-25.

## A social care and early years workforce that is highly recognised and valued

### Provide leadership and influence stakeholder groups

Throughout the year we continued to provide leadership and influence at a wide range of national stakeholder groups (over 170). We have been actively supporting the Welsh Government's development of the Fair Work Forum's Pay and Progression Framework (Real living Wage). We will be reviewing our stakeholder and network responsibilities during 2024-25 to make sure we continue to champion the social care and early years sector in national policy and decision making groups.

### Accolades 2023

The Awards on 27 April was an opportunity to recognise, celebrate and share excellent practice in social care and childcare, play and early years in Wales. The Accolades are open to care workers at all levels, as well as teams, projects and organisations from across the public, voluntary and independent sectors that have made a positive difference in people's lives. More than 40 projects and workers from across Wales entered or were nominated for the 2023 awards. The 15 finalists were chosen by a panel of judges made up of our Board members, representatives from partner organisations and people with experience of using care and support.

"It's so important we take this time to say thank you to those care workers and to recognise and celebrate the fantastic care and support being provided every day in every community in Wales."

**Our Chief Executive**

### Caring in Welsh Award

In August 2023, at the National Eisteddfod on the Llŷn Peninsula, we recognised and celebrated workers who make a positive difference to people's lives by providing care and support through the medium of Welsh. The award, which was sponsored by WeCare Wales, was open to any paid workers who work in social care or early years, childcare and play in Wales who provide excellent care through the medium of Welsh. This year five individuals from across Wales were chosen as finalists for the award by an expert panel of judges and the winner was chosen by a public vote, in which more than 2,250 people voted.

"Being able to work in the childcare sector is very important to me, especially when using the Welsh language. Being able to help children develop for the future is key and I hope I contribute towards the goal of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050."

**Ross Dingle, Manager and Leader at Clwb Carco Play, Cardiff**

## Workforce survey – 2023 pilot

More than 3,100 members of the registered workforce completed our pilot survey which asked questions on topics such as well-being, what it's like to work in social care, pay and conditions, training and qualifications. In October we published the survey results. We'll be using the findings to inform the support and services we offer, as well as the work of partner organisations. In January we published the 2024 survey again so that we can monitor trends over time. We will report the findings of the 2024 survey in September 2024.

## Celebrating Social Workers conferences

With BASW Cymru, we hosted two free conferences in Cardiff and Llandudno in the autumn. Our Celebrating social work conferences were an opportunity for people working in social work in Wales, especially practitioners and students, to hear from inspirational speakers and come together to share ways of working. The conferences aim to send a clear message to our social workers that their profession is valued by us, Welsh Government, public bodies, employers and the public.

*"Meeting everyone, hearing everyone's stories and the resources available"*

**Attendee, Social Worker**

## Care worker card

This card recognises care workers as key workers and allows care workers to access a range of benefits.

As at the end of the March 2024 there are  
**45,232 care worker card holders,**  
**1,762 of these work in early years and childcare.**

## Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES)

In February we hosted a panel session about the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and what it means for social care in Wales and discussed how it can be used to drive cultural change across social care in Wales. The WRES is a tool that'll help monitor the experience of people from ethnic minorities who work in health and social care in Wales. The tool will highlight where there are differences between the experience of white, black, Asian and minority ethnic health and social care staff. In 2024-25 we will continue to take forward our actions set out in the Welsh Government's Anti Racist Wales action plan.

## Social care and early years services that attract, recruit and retain people with the right values to meet the needs of those who need care and support

### WeCare Wales

The primary role and focus of WeCare Wales is to raise the positive profile and awareness to social care, childcare, play and early years. This has been carried out through a wide range of approaches starting with a key partnership across the sector and the development of a brand identity for the programme. During 2023-24 there have been five campaigns and 38 cohorts of training programmes (with 580 people completing the training). Alongside this numerous events such as Skills Cymru and Eisteddfod all further support the engagement of WeCare Wales. We have also updated our WeCare Wales website to improve the users experience.

WeCare Wales	Total
<b>Between April 2023 and March 2024</b>	
WeCare website visitors	219,286
Jobs portal visits	57,675
Jobs Portal – Published jobs	3,551

### Introduction to Social Care training programme

#### During 2023

- A total of **1,079 participants** signed up for the Introduction to social care
- The total number of adult and young people completers from January – December 2023 (46 weeks) = **580**
- **127** young people attended from the two day college programme
- Number of part completers = **125**
- **53%** of signups completed the programme

## Introduction to early years and childcare

The Introduction to childcare training programme aims to support raising awareness to the childcare sector and help advise people on beginning their career in childcare.

- **205** completions
- **13** people into jobs/opportunities
- **6** into work placements
- **4** onto apprenticeships.

## Provide financial support for Social Work students

- **172** new students received a bursary in 2023-24
- **100** of these undergraduate
- **72** were Masters students
- **224** renewing students attended courses in 2023-24.

## A Healthier Wales: Our Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care

We consulted with the social care workforce on the next phase of the delivery of our workforce strategy. The sector made it clear to us that they need their well-being to be supported, with flexible working arrangements, improved terms and conditions and parity with the NHS, in terms of pay, learning opportunities and career development. All the evidence confirms that a valued and supported workforce will be better able to provide great quality care and support. The views from the sector helped us prioritised what needs to be done.

In 2024-25 we will be publishing our delivery plan which is based and shaped by the sector's views and responses to this consultation. We'll continue to work with others to achieve the actions and we're going to set-up a national strategic implementation group to help make these ambitions a reality and to make sure the plan continues to respond to the sector's needs going forward. We will also publish a more detailed annual report on our progress of delivery against the Workforce Strategy in 2023-24 which includes progress made against:

- Direct care workforce plan
- Social Work workforce plan
- Strategic mental health plan.

## A registered social care workforce that has the public's confidence

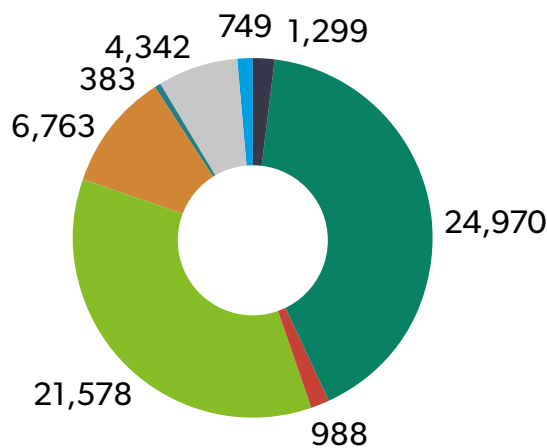
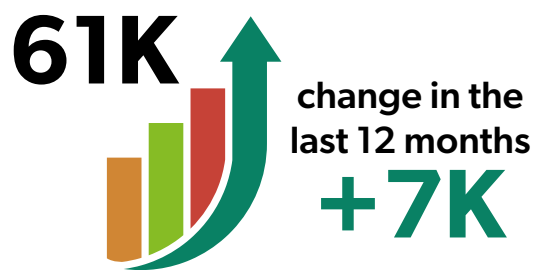
### Maintain an accurate Register of social care workers

Registration is part of our ongoing commitment to continuously protect the public whilst developing the social care workforce and raise the status of workers. We recognise the need to make sure we have a sufficient workforce that is ready to meet new challenges, with the right skills and confidence to practise.

Our Register continues to grow and at the end of March 2024 numbers over 61,000 individuals. This means that most of the social care workforce in Wales will be regulated.

## Workforce headlines

### Total number of registered workers



- Adult Care Home Manager
- Adult Care Home Worker
- Domiciliary Care Manager
- Domiciliary Care Worker
- Qualified Social Worker
- Residential Child Care Manager
- Residential Child Care Worker
- Social Work Student

## Fitness to Practice

A central part of our regulatory function is to make sure that those providing social care are competent and safe to practise. This requires an effective and efficient Fitness to Practise (FtP) process. Throughout the year we continued to implement recommendations following our review to make sure that our current FtP processes are both efficient and timely.

**During 2023-24 we received 465 referrals that we opened as cases and in total we removed 46 people from the Register, making sure they could no longer work in our sector.**

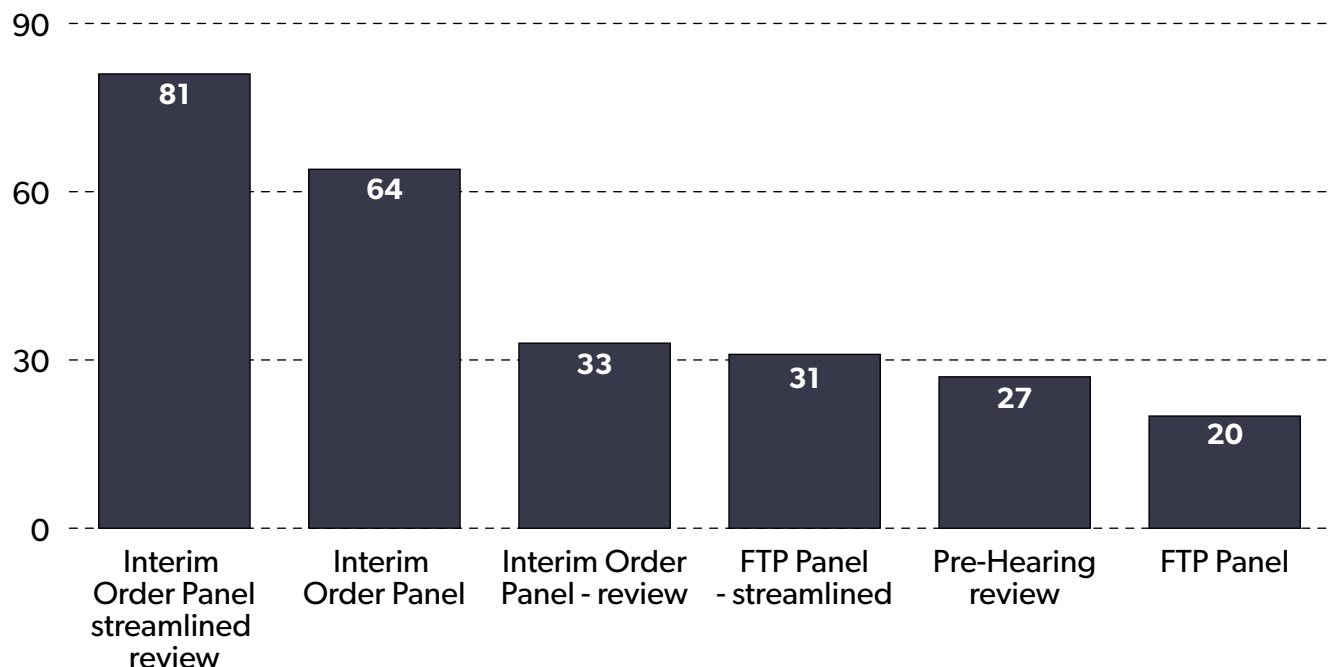
Of those removed (46), their registered roles were:

- 4 - residential childcare workers
- 2 - adult care home managers
- 8 – adult care home workers
- 1 - social worker
- 31 - domiciliary care workers.

## Hearings

The number of hearings held in 2023-24 was 256 and the number of hearings by meeting type is set out below.

### Number of hearings held by meeting type





## **Proposed changes to registration**

As the social care workforce continues to grow, we know how important it is to make our registration process as easy as for people to work in the social care sector. Between June and July we consulted with the social care workforce on proposed changes to registration. The consultation set a new way to register along with giving more time to complete qualifications before their registration renewal is due. It also included the opportunity for the workforce to provide feedback on registration requirements and practice guidance for special school residential workers and managers. In September we set out how the consultation had informed the registration changes for social care workers and managers.

## **Review of Codes of Practice, practice guidance and fitness to practice principles**

We consulted the social care sector on changes to our codes of professional practice, practice guidance and fitness to practise principles to make sure they're right for those working in the social care sector in Wales. We'll be using the feedback to put together a consultation about our proposed changes, which we'll share in 2024, with a view to making any changes in 2025.

## A social care and early years workforce that is suitably qualified, knowledgeable and skilled with the right values, behaviours and practice

### Manage the process for issuing Apprenticeship Certificates through the Apprenticeship Certification Wales (ACW)

The number of completed apprenticeship frameworks authorised in 2023-24

Legacy qualifications Children's Care Learning and Development	58
Current qualifications Children's Care Play Learning and Development	822
Legacy qualifications Health and Social Care	75
Current qualifications Health and Social Care	2,315
<b>Total</b>	<b>3270</b>

### Maintain induction, qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks for the social care and early years sector

During the year we've continued to provide support to employers and learning providers with the ongoing implementation of the health and social care and early years qualifications. This has included running ten employer engagement sessions to support social care managers and employers to help support workers to complete the employer assessment route to registration, all Wales induction framework for health and social care (AWIF) and relevant qualifications. A total of 372 people have attended these sessions. Similar sessions have been run for Childcare, Play, Learning and Development with 19 manager sessions (597 people) and 10 practitioner sessions (250 people).

### Supporting learning providers

We've worked with the sector to support the development of a best practice network for learning providers. The Network is jointly supported by The Consortium (WJEC and City and Guilds), Health Education Improvement Wales and Social Care Wales. This has involved a face-to-face session for learning providers who are delivering the level 4 and 5 Children's Care Play Learning and Development and Health and Social Care qualifications in November 2023 to discuss challenges, share good practice and solutions and to network with others.

### Early years and childcare qualifications - mapping

We've worked with sector experts to map more than 400 qualifications against the design principles which underpin the accepted qualifications on the qualification framework. We completed a gap analysis citing outcomes from research and mapping and highlighted possible solutions.

## Essential Skills Wales qualifications

We've been talking to people in the social care sector about Essential Skills Wales qualifications and the feedback we received suggests there isn't enough social care context within learning resources. In January we consulted with the workforce on how we could improve this, by identifying existing resource examples and developing new bilingual resources. We will be using the findings of the consultation to inform our work in this area in 2024-25.

## Investing in the workforce

We invested in supporting the social care workforce, so they have the right knowledge, skills, understanding and approach to provide good care and support. This included £7,640,051 which was paid to local authorities through the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Grant (SCWWDP) and was match funded by £3,274,308 local authority funding.

## Supporting Welsh language services

In May 2023 we published the Camau courses, in partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, for people working in social care. The courses offer bitesize, flexible learning that focuses on the Welsh words and phrases workers are most likely to need when they're communicating with the people they support. It counts towards registered social care workers' continuous professional development and everyone who completes it receives a certificate.

In August we also developed with the National Centre a free online tool to assess their Welsh language skills. Anyone working in social care can use the Level Checker to assess their Welsh language ability. It's free to use and available on mobiles, tablets and computers.

In January 2024 we launched a pilot programme with 18 employers to assess the current situation within their organisation and their use of our Welsh language toolkit to offer support and create an action plan to meet their goals. The plan may focus on areas such as how to recruit more Welsh speaking staff or how to help current staff build their confidence in using Welsh. In 2024-25 we will be evaluating the pilot before identifying next steps.

In February we published a new Welsh language awareness e-learning module to help people working in social care and early years and childcare learn more about the Welsh language and working bilingually.

## Safeguarding training and learning

In November we launched the 'National safeguarding learning, development and training framework' for professionals who work with vulnerable children and adults. The framework was created in partnership with colleagues from across social services, social care, education, health and the emergency services in Wales, and sets out standards for the amount and types of safeguarding training professionals need. The standards were the first of their kind in Wales and aim to make sure that professionals across Wales have consistent levels and types of safeguarding training.

## **Leadership programmes**

We've oversight of a number of management and leadership programmes. We've developed and supported these programmes and continue to monitor their impact through our National Management Programme Committee. Newer programmes focus on compassionate and collective leadership with 87% of people on the cohort satisfied that the programme met their needs. The second new programme sees opportunities for aspiring Middle Managers to better understand and prepare for moving into these roles. This latter programme supports the critical business of succession planning particularly for local authorities. During the year we have also started a new Statutory Directors cohort with 8 new starters. We will continue to evaluate all these programmes, helping us to continuously improve, develop and build on the training provided.

## **Development opportunities for people from an ethnic minority background**

We wanted to understand what kind of opportunities and programmes would support more people from ethnic minority backgrounds to get into leadership roles in social care. In February and March we ran online focus groups with the Institute of Public Care and Staff College. The focus groups were a chance for people to share their experiences with us, so we can work out better ways to support people in their career in social care. We will be using the feedback to help us make sure that professional progression and associated programmes are sustainable, racially just, fair and equitable for those wishing to progress within an equal playing field in Wales. This is part of our work to support Welsh Government's All Wales Anti-racist Action Plan.

## **Social care services that embed and deliver strengths-based approaches to care and support**

### **Supporting Strengths based outcomes approach**

An outcomes approach supports people who access care and support, and their families towards living the best lives possible, building on their own strengths and capabilities. It means recognising that everyone can contribute and take responsibility: the person, their network of friends and family, and their community. We've continued to support five local authorities to develop and deliver training to build workforce confidence and skills across both adult and social work teams in this approach. We've also supported their management teams to prepare for the systemic shift needed to support the approach/model. We are finalising on-line training resources for management within the wider social care sector and an offer to support management will be available during 2024-25.

### **Supporting the Transformation Agenda in Children's Services**

Throughout the year, we have focussed our support on the area of the transformation programme that has the highest complexity and implications for the social care workforce and where we can add most value, the elimination of profit within children's services. Specifically, we have targeted our focus on supporting the elimination of profit within residential children's care. To gain an understanding of needs in order to be able to target responses to support local authority capacity building we issued a questionnaire to Local Authorities in December. The data gathered relates to recruitment, retention, and training needs around therapeutic approaches. The data will now be thematically analysed, and key findings shared with Welsh Government.

We have been an active member on the Welsh Government elimination of profit workstream groups and have been asked to support the transformation delivery group's work on early intervention. We have acted as a conduit between Welsh Government and Local Authority Responsible Individuals (RI's) to encourage attendance at the Elimination of Profit task and finish group. Local Authority RIs continue to engage in project work and the community of action.

### **Balancing rights and responsibilities (BRR): supporting a cultural shift integrated health and social care programme: an evaluation**

In June we published an evaluation of a new programme that focused on hospital discharge. Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) found that after the programme most participants felt more confident talking to patients about what matters to them. Almost everyone said they now had a better understanding of duty of care. Of the 68 people who took part, 12 became 'mentors' or 'champions' and attended more training which helped them further embed the approach. In 2024-25 we hope to build on what we've learned particularly with health colleagues, to continue to deliver collaboratively arrived at outcome based approaches within integrated settings.

## **Social care practice and policy that is underpinned by innovation, high-quality research, data and other forms of evidence**

### **Maintaining and developing the National Social Care Data Portal for Wales**

The data portal represents our ambition to create a place that brings together data, insight, and intelligence on social care in Wales into a single place. During the year we've been working on increasing our internal capacity and capability to support future developments. We'll be launching a data portal with more data and functionality to support users in 2024-25.

### **Workforce data reports**

In June we published the social care workforce report which revealed an estimated 84,134 people work in the social care sector in Wales. We collected data for the Social care workforce report with the help of local authorities and commissioned providers in the summer of 2022. This was the second time we've collected data about the entire social care workforce in Wales as a single exercise. We changed the collection process for 2022 based on what we learned from the previous year. As a result, we received data of higher quality. All 22 local authorities in Wales returned data to us, along with 68 per cent of commissioned providers – made up of commercial businesses, not-for-profit and third-sector organisations.

### **Workforce planning report**

In August we published a workforce planning report which highlighted the variation in how local authorities across Wales carry out workforce planning for social care, and the need for more investment to help some develop their approach. The report also shows that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on workforce planning objectives. We will be using the recommendations from this report to look at potential improvements at the local, regional and national level for us as a sector to consider and plan together.

### **Social care data roadshows**

We held two events in January and February that highlighted the value of linked data research in adult social care in Wales. The events brought together stakeholders who are interested in collecting, sharing or using adult social care data to benefit the public and improve social care policies and practice. We teamed up with Administrative Data Research (ADR) Wales to arrange these events, where we looked at opportunities to make the most of adult social care data research. During the events we launched the adult social care data research group for researchers who are interested in data-intensive research projects in adult social care. In January 2024 we partnered with ADR Wales to lead on the social care theme in the ADR Wales programme of work.

### **Social care data maturity**

We carried out research into the maturity of social care data in Wales. Our aim with this project was to support all local authorities in Wales to understand how they can make best use of the data that's collected, processed and shared as part of their delivery of social care. Once all 22 local authorities have been assessed, an overall report will be published on our website in 2024-25. This report will give us an overview of the social care data landscape in Wales. Local authorities will remain anonymous in this report.

## **Ymlaen: The research, innovation and improvement strategy for social care 2024 to 2029**

We brought together partners and stakeholders to create a new research, innovation and improvement strategy for social care. Together, we want to create a culture where evidence is central to delivery and used to inform decisions at all levels of social care. Between October and December we consulted on the strategy and ran four specific workshops (40 people) to support the consultation so that people leading, developing and delivering social care feel confident, supported and inspired to use evidence and innovation. We will be publishing the strategy in 2024-25 which will be informed from the results of the stakeholder consultation.

### **Developing on-line communities of practice**

Throughout the year we've been developing, maintaining and supporting communities of practice for:

- practice educators
- newly qualified social workers
- residential childcare
- place-based care and support
- responsible individuals
- evidence
- approved mental health professionals
- best interest assessors.

The communities of practice are an opportunity for people within these communities to share their knowledge, ideas, events and resources with other people. We've been holding regular events for our community members, where we focus on what we can learn from each other and how we can put our learning into practice.

### **Developing a range of services to support innovation in social care in Wales**

Throughout the year we have been developing and user testing our new website to support a new website Insight Collective which was soft launched in March 2024. The Insight Collective is a new research, data, innovation, and improvement service for social care in Wales. It will provide access to the latest research and data, guidance on training, opportunities for collaboration, and advice on available support. Through the Insight Collective website, people involved in delivering and accessing care can discuss relevant topics, share knowledge, and gain confidence. The service focuses on three key areas: research and data, sharing and learning, and coaching and advice. The website will be launched in 2024-25.

### **Free Innovation coaching service**

In September we launched a free innovation coaching service to help social care workers get the best out of their ideas to improve social care in Wales. In January 2024 we opened a second round of applications to support efforts to improve recruitment and retention. Everyone who takes part in the coaching service will be eligible to join our 'coaching club' – a network of others who've been through the same process.

## Report on Digital Innovation in social care

In July we published a report on digital innovation which highlighted gaps in the current support for digital innovation in social care in Wales. The report used analysis based on desk research, interviews with stakeholders and experts, and a new 'digital database' of existing support. We are using the findings of this report to help guide our future actions in supporting digital innovation in the sector.

## Research roadshows

We ran two research roadshows in May (Llandudno and Cardiff), with Health and Care Research Wales, so we could find out more about the research topics that matter to the social care workforce. We had carried out work to find the top 10 research priorities in care and support for older people and children and families. But we found that people were asking questions about topics for which research already exists. The research roadshows focused on bringing this research to the workforce.



## Social Care Wales provides effective, high quality and sustainable services

More information on our role in how we work can be found in the Governance Statement section of the Annual Accounts. Below is additional information to support what we have done in the year to be an effective organisation.

### Board recruitment

With Welsh Government and Public Appointments, we ran a recruitment campaign to help us find new Board members. Our aim is to make sure that our Board represents the diversity and culture of the people of Wales and as such we want to hear from people from all walks of life. The Minister for social services appointed 6 new Board Members to start their appointments from 1 April 2024.

### Chief Executive recruitment

In July 2024 our current Chief Executive, Sue Evans, retired after eight years at Social Care Wales. During 2023-24 year we recruited to the Chief Executive role, Sarah McCarty, who will continue to provide collaborative leadership to drive forward our five-year plan in support of the Welsh Government's ambition to deliver better outcomes for people in Wales who need care and support to live the lives that matter to them.

### Financial and budget planning

Considerable work has been done to ensure that our financial resources reflect our ambitions to support reforms to improve delivery and increase the sustainability of services across the social care and early years sector.

### Accommodation strategy

During the year we reviewed our Estates. We've worked on reducing the office capacity in our Cardiff office and agreed to relocate our North Wales office to Welsh Government offices in Llandudno Junction. This work will continue and be completed in early 2024-25.

### Welsh language

We delivered the first year actions set out in our new internal Welsh language strategy. We published our annual assurance report against delivery of the Welsh Language Standards in October 2023 on our 2022-23 work.

## Carbon net zero by 2030

We fully support the Welsh Government's ambition for a carbon net zero public sector by 2030 and are committed to reducing our carbon emissions. We recognise and acknowledge our responsibility as a public sector organisation in Wales that supports the social care and early years and childcare sectors to address the urgent challenges posed by the climate crisis. The Board adopted a climate emergency at the July Board. This was launched in December 2023 as part of Wales Climate week reinforcing our commitment to lead in the social care sector on responsible resource use and the need to adapt to future climate change.

Our carbon emissions footprint reduced further during the year to 846,649 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e, as we continued to implement our Carbon Reduction Action Plan. The scope of reported activities has increased includes emissions to account for commuting and home working activity, it is now 46% lower than the level calculated for the baseline year of 2019-20 (54% on a like for like basis). This is despite experiencing organisational growth from 119 to 234 employees over this time period.

Further reductions are anticipated in 2024-25 following a reduction in office space in Cardiff from March 2024 and a relocation to more energy efficient offices in North Wales in June 2024 which will reduce our energy usage.

## Strategic Equalities Plan

We continue to contribute to the implementation of the Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan and LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales. We published our strategic equalities plan in November 2023 outlining our actions delivered against our plan in 2022-23.

## Future Generations

We will be under the Act formally in June 2024. During this year we have been preparing the requirements needed to meet our duties. We will be reporting on our work in line with the timetable set by the Future Generations Commissioner in 2025-26.

## Digital

We have continued to implement year 2 actions set out in our Digital Strategy. This has included additional recruitment to the Digital and IT teams, procurement of a new contract to support and maintain our CRM system, skills assessment of the organisation's digital skills and development of guidance and a playbook to support our digital approach. This work will continue into 2024-25.

## Our staff

On 31 March 2024 we had a total of 234 staff members and welcomed 44 new starters to the organisation during the year.

- **5.52%** staff turnover (target to remain below 15%)
- Our absence rate for this year is **3.56%** or 1.29% if we discount Long Term Sickness (LTS) absences (target to remain below 3%)
- **89%** of our staff have some level of Welsh language skills.

## Staff engagement: staff survey results

The results from our annual people survey (which is a survey to collect staff thoughts and opinions on how we work in Social Care Wales) were very positive overall and we have maintained or slightly improved on the results from last year.

### Key headlines

The response rate was **89.5%** with our overall staff engagement score **91.2%**

- Staff are interested in and sufficiently challenged by their work.
- Staff understand the organisations objectives and purpose with managers helping them to understand how they contribute to the objectives.
- Managers are considerate of people's lives outside work and are open to ideas.
- Overall, the pay and benefits section remains the lowest scoring. Less people are satisfied with the total benefits package than last year. This is still at 83% but has now seen a downward trend over the past 3 surveys.
- However more people feel that their pay adequately reflects their responsibilities (72%) and that their pay is reasonable compared to people doing a similar job in other organisations (71%).
- Staff are grateful for the hybrid working policy and believe this to be a positive feature of their employment.
- Staff are happy with the learning and development opportunities offered to some extent, but this is still an area than can be improved on.
- Staff believe that on the whole change is managed well, but there is a lot to keep up with which can impact resources and workload.

## Staff wellbeing

We've also:

- Introduced the Employee Benefits portal.
- Completed phase 1 of the Job Evaluation scheme review project.
- Completed a Skills Gap Analysis Project
- Revised our Dignity and respect at work Policy with additional practical guidance.
- Developed and rolled out a new Accessible Meetings Policy
- Administered the one off non-consolidated payment and Pay Award
- Introduced a new Employee Assistance programme with an added Menopause Support service.

## Our approach for 2024-25

We will be heading into our third year of delivery against our five-year Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan sets out our ambition and the differences and changes we want to see. These changes are dependent not just on Social Care Wales, but also on the hard work of many organisations, each with their own remit and responsibilities. But we also need to understand, and set out, our role in bringing about these changes.

We will continue to prioritise activities that support our 8 national outcomes:

- Improved well-being for the social care and early years workforce
- A social care and early years workforce that is highly recognised and valued
- Social care and early years services that attract, recruit and retain people with the right values to meet the needs of those who need care and support
- A registered social care workforce that has the public's confidence
- A social care and early years workforce that is suitably qualified, knowledgeable and skilled with the right values, behaviours and practice
- Social care services that embed and deliver strengths-based approaches to care and support
- Social care practice and policy that is underpinned by innovation, high-quality research, data and other forms of evidence
- Social Care Wales provides effective, high quality and sustainable services.

Our Business Plan 2024-25 will set out the detail of our work for the year. You will be able to find out more about our work and the impact of our work through our annual impact report for 2023-24 which will be on our website: <https://socialcare.wales/about-us>

# Accountability Report

## Corporate Governance Report

### Directors Report

#### History and Statutory Background

The Care Council for Wales was renamed Social Care Wales in accordance with the Regulation and Inspection Act (Wales) 2016 and this Annual Report and Accounts will be the seventh prepared as Social Care Wales. Seventeen Annual Report and Accounts were previously prepared as the Care Council for Wales.

The Annual Report and Accounts has been prepared under Schedule 2, Part 6, Paragraph 16(1-3) of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Wales Act 2016; it is presented in a form directed by Welsh Ministers, with the approval of HM Treasury.

#### Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

The Chief Executive and Accounting Officer for the financial year was Sue Evans.

#### Social Care Wales Board Members

At 31 March 2024 there were fourteen members including the Chair who have been appointed by the Minister for Health and Social Services. Five members term ended on the 31 March 2024.

#### Members serving 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

##### Members

Mick Giannasi - Chair (term ending 31 July 2027)

Abigail Harris (term ending 31 March 2025)

Carl Cooper (term ending 31 March 2025)

Damian Bridgeman (term ended 31 March 2024)

Donna Hutton (term ended 31 March 2024)

Emma Britton (term ending 31 March 2025)

Grace Quantock (term ending 31 March 2025)

Helen Mary Jones ( term ending 30 April 2026)

Joanne Kember (term ending 31 March 2025)

Jane Moore (term ended 31 March 2024)

Maria Battle (term ended 31 March 2024)

Peter Max (term ended 31 March 2024)

Simon Burch (term ending 31 March 2025)

Trystan Pritchard (term ending 30 June 2027)

In addition there are two further independent members who were appointed on the 1 March 2023 with their term ending on the 31 March 2025. They are Abishek Vyas who is the Cyber Security Lead and Heikki Doyle the Finance Lead

A register of the declared interests of members is available on our website

In line with best practice and guidance, Social Care Wales established an Audit and Risk Committee at its inception. Membership is drawn from Board Members plus independent members. Meetings are attended by representatives of internal and external audit and Executive Management Team.

## Statement of the Responsibilities of Social Care Wales and the Chief Executive

Under Schedule 2, Part 6 Paragraph Section 16(1-2) of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 Social Care Wales is required to prepare a statement of account for each financial year in such a form and on the basis directed by Welsh Ministers with the approval of HM Treasury.

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of Social Care Wales state of affairs at the period end, and of its income and expenditure and cash flows for the period.

In preparing the accounts, Social Care Wales is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual, and in particular to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by Welsh Ministers, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis
- make judgments and estimates on a reasonable basis
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements and
- prepare financial statements on a going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to assume Social Care Wales will continue in operation.

The Principal Accounting Officer for the Welsh Ministers has designated the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer for Social Care Wales. Her relevant responsibilities as Accounting Officer, including the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable and for keeping proper records and for safeguarding Social Care Wales assets, are set out in Managing Welsh Public Money.

I confirm that as far as I am aware there is no relevant audit information of which Social Care Wales auditors are unaware and that I have taken all steps to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

I confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and that I take personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and for the judgements required for determining that they are fair, balanced and understandable.

**Sarah McCarty**

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 25 October 2024

## Governance statement

A governance statement is a document we need to write which says what processes and procedures we have in place for us, as Social Care Wales, to do our work well and effectively.

Our governance statement sets out what structures, processes, policies and systems we have in place. It will give you an account of corporate governance and risk management, alongside a description of the strategic risks we faced in 2023-24.

My responsibilities, as Accounting Officer, are set out in the Model Governance Framework. It sets out the broad framework within which we work and details the terms and conditions under which Members of the Senedd provide Grant-In-Aid to Social Care Wales.

This governance statement sets out:

- the basis by which we were established
- the way in which we are governed and managed
- how as the Accounting Officer, I am accountable for what I do.

## Our organisation

We are a Welsh Government Sponsored Body (WGSB). This means we receive funding from Welsh Government to complete specific priorities, which are set out on an annual basis in a remit letter.

We were set up under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 in April 2017 “to continue the work previously undertaken by Care Council for Wales regulating and developing the social care workforce, while also taking on a new responsibility to lead and support improvement across the sector. This involves a range of activities from presenting data and evidence, advising on priorities for social care research and supporting and showcasing evidence-based practice.”

My governance statement is written in the context of our [5 year strategy 2022/27](#). We have set out our ambition outlining what it means for the sector, who we will work with and what we will be doing during the year through the lens of our stakeholders:

1. empower the **workforce** to achieve the best person-centred care
2. enhance the provision of services through **managers, leaders and owners**
3. enable **strategic leaders** with evidence and skills to improve planning, service development and quality
4. ensure continuous improvement and transformation of how we deliver the work of **Social Care Wales**.

Our annual business plan sets out in more detail the activities we identified to support the sector and our organisation during 2023-24. This has included a focus on cross cutting themes equality, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of our work, you can refer back to page 25 for our work on this as an organisation. Our performance was monitored and scrutinised by our Board and Welsh Government throughout the year, including through formal quarterly meetings.



## People Survey 2023

Our people survey is an annual survey to collect staff thoughts and opinions on how we work in Social Care Wales. It is an opportunity for staff to provide feedback on areas that work well and where there might be areas for improvement.

The 2023 Survey took place in April 2023 and the results were reported to, and discussed with, Leadership Team in May.

Below is a summary of the overall section scores.

### Overall section scores

	2023	2022
My work	93%	90%
Objectives and purpose	97%	97%
Line management	92%	89%
My team	94%	96%
Learning and development	83%	83%
Inclusion and fair treatment	95%	93%
Resources and workload	90%	89%
Pay and benefits	75%	74%
Leadership	92%	92%
Managing change	89%	84%
Engagement	91%	90%
Taking action	86%	79%
Organisation culture	95%	93%

Department directors have had follow up conversations with their directorates to look at specific areas for action.

## Board listening exercise

In addition to the annual people survey the Board held its annual listening exercise with staff during February and March 2024. The Chair accompanied by a few Board members attended departmental meetings to hold a two-way conversation with staff. The focus of the sessions this year was a STOP, START, CONTINUE exercise based around the appointment of the new Chief Executive.

Staff members were asked to consider:

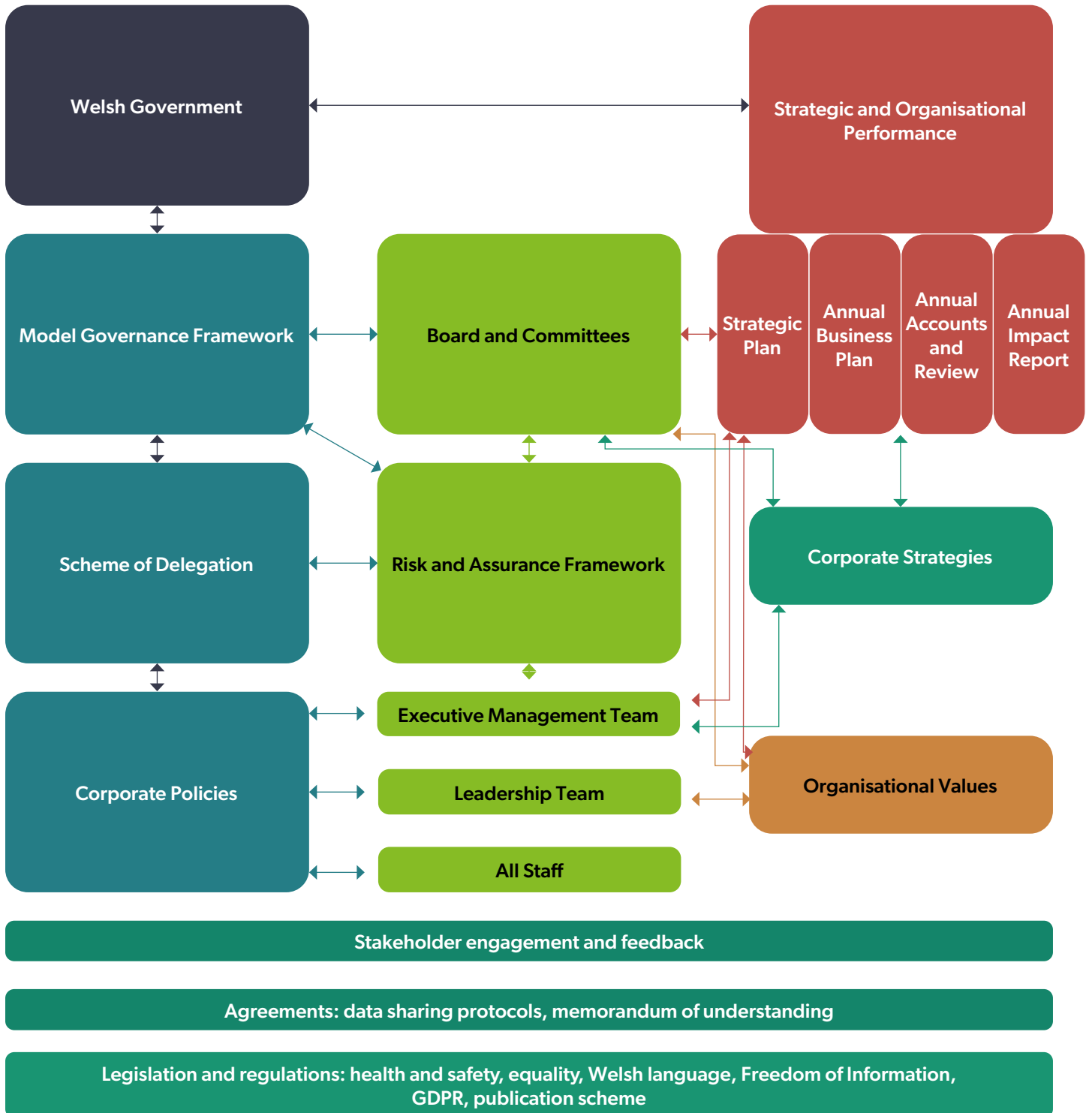
- STOP**            What are we doing currently that doesn't add value or gets in the way of you doing your job well?
- START**           What could we do differently going forward which would make you more effective in your job?
- CONTINUE**      What are the things which make Social Care Wales a great place to work (and so we should continue doing them)?

The results of the listening exercise will be reported to a Board meeting early in 2024-25.

## Our governance and accountability framework

In accordance with the 'International Framework: Good governance in the public sector'<sup>1</sup> governance 'comprises the arrangements<sup>1</sup> put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved'.

You will find our governance and accountability framework, including summary information on what the Board and Committees cover in the next few pages.

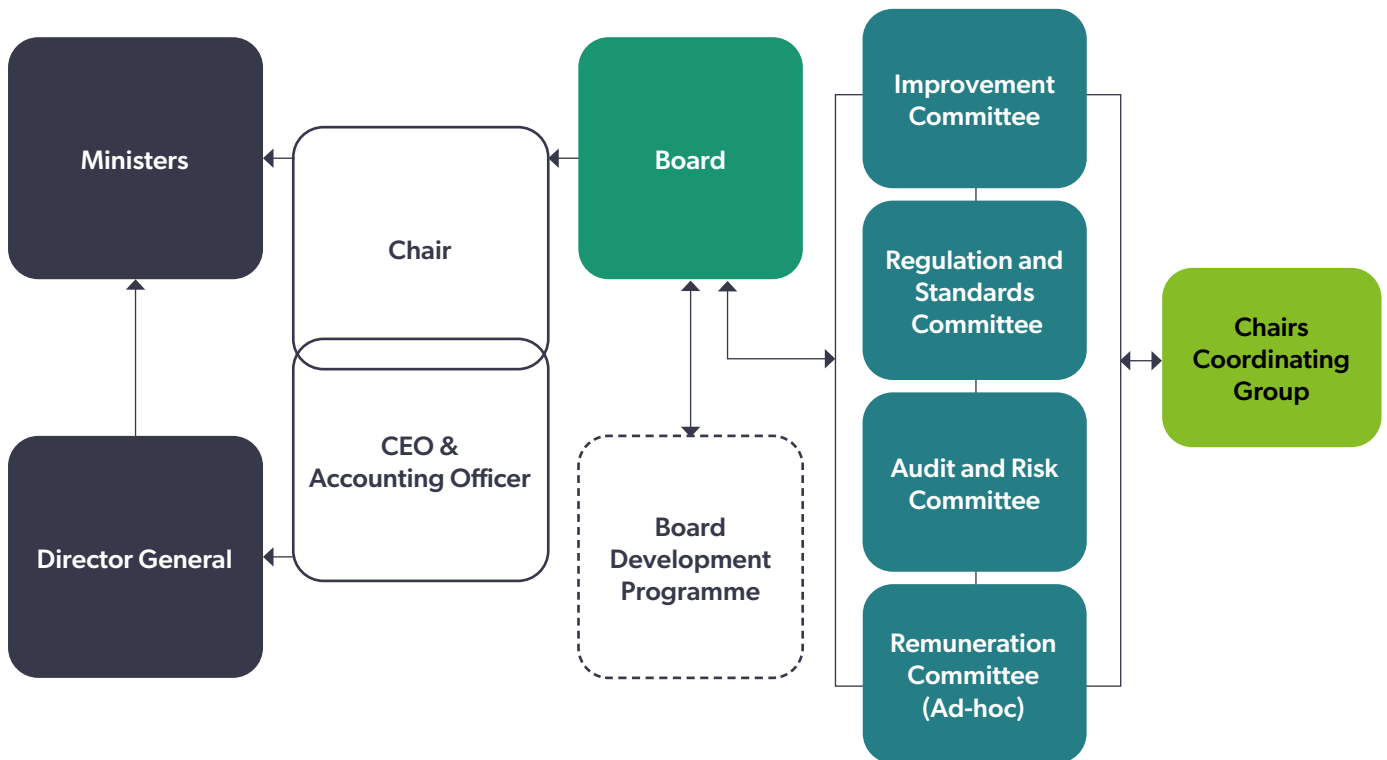


<sup>1</sup> Includes political, economic, social, environmental, legal, and administrative structures and processes, and other arrangements, as encapsulated in the principles define.

## Accountability

We are accountable to the taxpayer to make sure our work achieves value for money.

In the diagram below we have set out the accountability structure of our Board and for me as Chief Executive in my role as accounting officer.



To make sure we keep our accountability to Welsh Government in 2023-24:

- Our Executive Management Team met with representatives from our sponsorship division at Welsh Government. These meetings took place every three months to go through our business plan performance and our budget spend to date.
- I have regular meetings with the Chair of Social Care Wales and the Chief Social Care Officer at the Welsh Government.
- The Chair and I attended our annual meeting with the Deputy Minister for Social Services in October 2023.
- Our Board had its annual meeting with the Deputy Minister for Social Services in October 2023.

## Our Board and committees

Our Chair and 13 Board members (there was 1 vacancy within the Board membership during 2023-24) are responsible for providing us with leadership and direction. They work closely with the Executive Management Team to set our strategic and business plans, allocate our resources, and monitor our performance. Our work is scrutinised, informed and approved by the Board and its sub-committees.

This diagram shows our Board and Committee structure at 31 March 2024:

### Board

- makes decisions on those matters reserved for the Board
- provides leadership and direction by setting our strategic and business plan
- scrutinises resources and performance – through regular business plan performance reports (including financial, risk management and HR data)
- demonstrates high standards of corporate governance – agreeing Board and Committee terms of reference
- received messages and advice from the Executive Management Team.

### Audit and Risk Committee

#### Advises the Board on:

- the effectiveness of risk management, internal control and governance
- the integrity of the Annual Report and Accounts
- the adequacy of the response to issues that have been identified at audit assurances relating to the corporate governance requirements for the Board
- appointing internal audit provision and reviewing their effectiveness on an annual basis
- the effectiveness of our information management security systems.

### Improvement Committee

#### Advises the Board on:

- strategies and policies relating to workforce and service development and improvement
- support a highly recognised and valued social care and early years workforce.
- promote social care practice and policy grounded in innovation, high-quality research, data, and evidence
- foster a knowledgeable and skilled social care and early years workforce
- attract, recruit, and retain individuals with the right values to meet the needs of those requiring care and support
- encourage social care services to adopt and implement strengths-based approaches to care and support.

### Regulation and Standards Committee

#### Advises the Board on:

- strategies and policies in relation to the registration of social care workers and fitness to practise matters
- the quality assurance of the regulation of training programme and receive regular reports on regulation matters
- ensuring the social care and early years workforce is suitably qualified, with the right values, behaviours, and practice
- the implications of developments in the field of regulation and how these may affect the Board's responsibilities
- the implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

## Remuneration and Well-being Committee

### Advises the Board on:

- staff and regulatory panel members pay, terms and conditions in line with policy
- Chief Executive and Senior Management pay
- recruitment, dismissal and exit arrangements of the Chief Executive
- independent scrutiny of grievances involving the Chief Executive.

The Committee terms of references are reviewed on an annual basis ensuring that they are in line with our strategic and annual business plan.

## Board development and engagement

Our Board members continued their learning and development during the year. This included a series of strategic development sessions and the topics of these were:

- Informal discussions with the Deputy Minister for Social Services and Chief Social Care Officer
- Impact Report 2022-23
- Workforce Strategy – medium term implementation plan
- Developing a new social care research, innovation and improvement strategy for Wales
- Climate Emergency Declaration
- Equality Diversity and inclusion Training
- Accolades ceremony 2023 review
- Workforce survey update
- Strategic risk appetite and ways of working
- Reviewing decisions in Fitness to Practice – testing a new approach
- Social Workers learner experience voice update
- Consultation feedback – Rebalancing Care and Support
- Marketing and Communications approach
- Knowledge exchange groups – feedback
- Office accommodation re-modelling updates
- Business plan and budget 2024-25 update
- Reflections from individual Board members
- Supporting the sector in the current context
- Board effectiveness 2023-24
- Regular updates from the CEO.

People from outside the organisation came to Board development sessions. These were:

- Wellbeing and Future Generations Commissioner
- Hearing voices from care – Individuals sharing their experience
- Llais
- Older People's Commissioner for Wales.

## Board and committee effectiveness

One of our values as an organisation is continuous learning. For the Board and Committees, we regularly look at the effectiveness of our policies, processes, and meetings. For 2021-22, the Board refreshed the way it undertook the annual effectiveness. The refresh was agreed on the basis that the responses received from the anonymised member surveys which had traditionally been used had been broadly similar over the previous three years and the number of identifiable actions for improvement had been limited. The process was repeated in 2022-23 and again worked well.

In order to provide comparative data over a longer period, it was agreed that the Board would utilise the same questionnaire for its 2023-24 Board Effectiveness Review that had been used in previous years. This means that there is now three years' worth of data available which enables consideration to be given to whether there are any emerging trends.

The results of the analysis of the responses to the questionnaire indicates a generally positive self-assessment of the effectiveness of the organisation's corporate governance arrangements and consistently high levels of satisfaction and commitment amongst members.

After the review of Board effectiveness, the opportunities below have been added to our Board corporate governance action plan:

- **Redefine the ambassadorial role of Board members.**  
Members have been unclear about their role as ambassadors for the Board and the organisation. Previous attempts to clarify this have not been successful.
- **Create a Wicked Issues Log:**  
Members expressed concerns that discussions about complex, longer-term, and sometimes intractable issues were not adequately captured. These issues included topics like pay, terms and conditions, registration fees strategy, and organisational communication tone.
- **Involve Members in Stakeholder Meetings:**  
The extent to which the Board and the organisation listen to the 'voice of the sector' has been a topic of discussion. Some members want to be more closely involved in stakeholder engagement, such as attending meetings with the Chair and CEO as observers.
- **Share Summaries of Stakeholder Meetings:**  
Members desire more regular and timely information flow between meetings regarding two-way communication with strategic partners.
- **Improve Visibility of Board Member Contributions:**  
Members want greater visibility regarding how their contributions influence final strategic documents.

Meeting effectiveness is a standing item on agendas for every Board and Committee meeting, and the Chairs of each Committee and Board Secretary ask members for feedback during and after each meeting.

In ensuring ongoing Board effectiveness, the Board remains vigilant and proactive, requesting analysis of how Board discussions impact on decision making and changes within the organisation.

## Members' attendance at Board and committees

Board members are paid for two days' work a month. In addition to our 14 publicly appointed members we have several people who are co-opted onto our committees:

- Abhishek Vyas is an independent member without voting rights, with a professional cyber security background who supports the Audit and Risk Committee.
- Heikki Doyle is an independent member, without voting rights, with a professional financial qualification and background who supports the Audit and Risk Committee.
- Margaret Rooney, Deputy Chief Inspector at Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), sits on the Regulation and Standards Committee as a co-opted member.
- Jenny Williams a representative from the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Cymru sits on the Improvement Committee as a co-opted member.

The Standing Orders for the Board set out the expected attendance level for Board members at meetings at 60 per cent. This table shows members' attendance at Board and Committee meetings during 2023-24.

To assist members in making effective decisions, papers for every Board and Committee meeting are posted onto a digital portal, with a wide range of supporting technical documents.



Name	Committee membership	Attendance at Board meetings	Attendance at Board development sessions	Attendance at Committee meetings	Overall meeting attendance (inc. Committees)	Term of appointment ends
Mick Giannasi (Chair)		5/5	9/10		14/15 (93%)	31.07.27
Abhishek Vyas (Independent Audit and Risk Committee member)	Audit and Risk			5/5	5/5 (100%)	31.03.25
Abigail Harris*	Improvement, Audit and Risk	3/5	4/10	3/4 and 1/5	11/24 (46%)	31.03.25
Carl Cooper	Audit and Risk (Chair) Remuneration Committee	4/5	7/10	5/5 and 1/2	17/22 (77%)	31.03.25
Damian Bridgeman	Improvement (Deputy Chair), Audit and Risk Regulation and Standards	5/5	8/10	3/4, 2/5 and 3/4	21/28 (75%)	31.03.24
Donna Hutton	Regulation and Standards (Deputy Chair) Improvement	4/5	8/10	2/4 and 2/4	16/23 (70%)	31.03.24
Emma Britton**	Audit and Risk (Deputy Chair); Regulations and Standards Improvement Committee (joined March 2023)	4/4	6/7	4/4, 0/3 and 1/1	15/19 (79%)	31.03.25
Grace Quantock	Regulation and Standards (Chair); Remuneration Committee	5/5	8/10	4/4 and 1/2	18/21 (86%)	31.03.25
Heikki Doyle (Independent Member Audit and Risk Committee)	Audit and Risk Committee			5/5	5/5 (100%)	31.03.25
Helen Mary Jones	Audit and Risk; Improvement	5/5	7/10	4/5 and 4/4	20/24 (83%)	30.04.26
Jane Moore	Improvement; Regulation and Standards	5/5	10/10	4/4 and 3/4	22/23 (96%)	31.03.24

Name	Committee membership	Attendance at Board meetings	Attendance at Board development sessions	Attendance at Committee meetings	Overall meeting attendance (inc. Committees)	Term of appointment ends
Joanne Kember (Deputy Chair)	Regulation and Standards; Improvement; Remuneration Committee	5/5	9/10	4/4, 4/4 and 2/2	24/25 (96%)	31.03.25
Maria Battle	Improvement	3/5	6/10	2/4	11/19 (58%)	30.06.27 (resigned 31.03.24)
Peter Max	Improvement; Audit and Risk	4/5	8/10	4/4 and 5/5	21/24 (88%)	31.03.24
Simon Burch	Regulation and Standards Audit and Risk	5/5	9/10	3/4 and 4/5	21/24 (88%)	31.03.25
Trystan Pritchard	Improvement (Chair); Remuneration	4/5	9/10	4/4 and 2/2	19/21 (90%)	30.06.27

\* Attendance reviewed by Chair in consultation with relevant member. There were legitimate reasons for the level of absence which will resolve themselves during 2024-25.

\*\* Reasonable adjustment in place for attendance

## Board membership

I would like to thank the five Board members who left us at the end of March 2024, Damian Bridgeman, Donna Hutton, Jane Moore, Maria Battle and Peter Max. All five have played a significant role in scrutinising our work and ensure we follow good practice when it comes to our governance.

An extensive recruitment campaign was undertaken during 2023-24 with eleven new Board members starting over the next year, (6 in April 2024 and 5 in April 2025), with a further recruitment campaign to be undertaken in 2024-25 to recruit a Board member who has recently worked either as a Director or Head of service within social services in a local authority. The new members will bring a wide variety of skills, knowledge and experience to the Board as well as reflecting the diversity of the communities that we serve.

## Effectiveness of our governance framework

During the year I held fortnightly staff briefings to share decisions made by the Board and the Executive Management Team, to update on our performance and to provide an opportunity for questions from staff members.

Throughout the year I receive assurance that our business and strategic objectives are being met via internal management meetings, budget and performance reports, and project updates. I operate a 'virtual open-door policy' where any member of staff can contact me with any matter that may concern them. I also promote the Staff Partnership Council and Staff Forum as a way of making sure we clearly engage with staff about our work.

We use a scheme of delegation and financial instructions to carry out our work to make sure our decision making is appropriate and proportionate to the level of risk associated with it.

We also maintain and review registers of interest for employees and Board members to identify any potential or perceived conflict with our decision-making processes, so we can take the right action.

## Internal audit

The Internal audit plan has been based on a risk-based approach and was agreed by the Audit and Risk Committee. Our internal auditors submit regular reports about the adequacy and effectiveness of our systems (financial, corporate and workforce regulation) of internal control, together with recommendations for improvement. We develop management responses to all audit recommendations, which are scrutinised by Audit and Risk Committee.

10 internal audits were carried out during the year on our policies and procedures for:

Work area	Level of assurance
Corporate Governance: Operational Performance Management	Substantial
Corporate Governance: Risk Management – Business Continuity	Reasonable
Communications and Marketing	Reasonable
Carbon Reduction and Net Zero Arrangements	Reasonable
Innovation and Development – Workforce Data Collection	Reasonable
HR - Recruitment	Substantial
HR – Staff Performance and Development	Limited*
Key Financial Controls	Substantial
Grant Management	Reasonable
Workforce regulation – Fitness to Practice and Hearings	Reasonable

\*There were 5 recommendations which required actions by the end of the financial year. 4 of the 5 recommendations were implemented after the Internal Audit had reported with one recommendation due for completion at the end of June 2024.

The Head of Internal Audit, based on the audit work carried out during the year, concluded that we had reasonable and effective risk management, control and governance processes in place.

## Definitions of assurance level

<b>Substantial Assurance</b>	There is a robust system of internal controls operating effectively to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>Reasonable Assurance</b>	The system of internal controls is generally adequate and operating effectively but some improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	The system of internal controls is generally inadequate or not operating effectively and significant improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
<b>No Assurance</b>	There is a fundamental breakdown or absence of core internal controls requiring immediate action.

## External audit

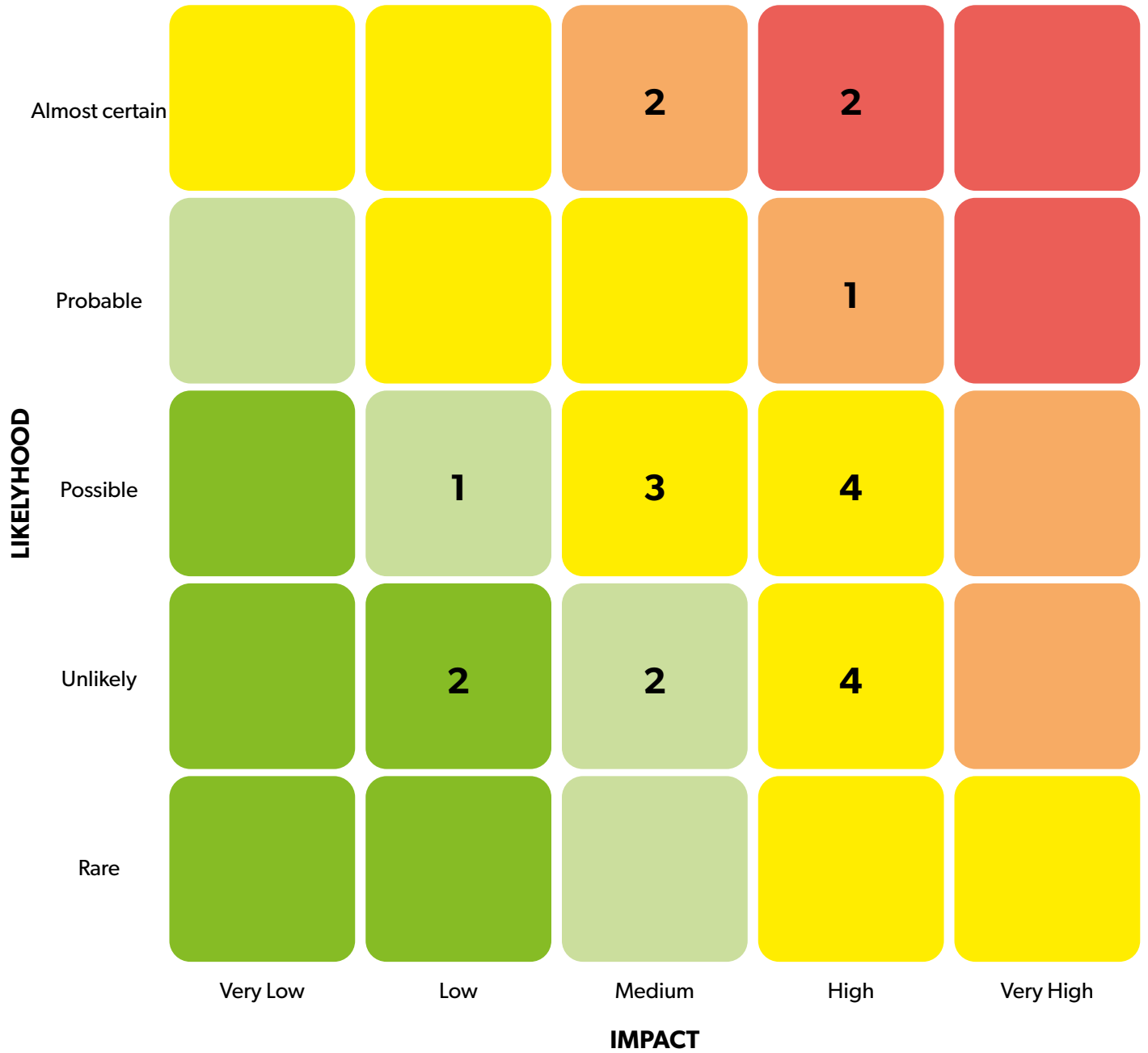
We receive an Audit of Financial Statements Report and Management letter, which reports on issues that are picked up during the audit of our financial statements.

## Risk management

We continue to look and manage risk based on our Risk Management and Assurance Policy. Our positive approach to risk management means we not only look at the risk of things going wrong, but the impact of not taking opportunities or not making the most of what we do well. Our strategic risk register is looked at every month by our Leadership Team. This is then scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis.

## Strategic Risk profile

A summary of our risk profile at the end of March 2024 is provided in the diagram below. These are 'heat maps' which shows the number of strategic risks and assesses levels of residual risk following the application of controls to mitigate their impact and likelihood.



## Risk Assessment

We take a systematic approach to risk assessment. Several key strategic risks changed during the year. Some of these risks were merged with other strategic risks, whilst others were able to be reworded and updated to show the changing environment. These included risks associated with:

Risk Title	2022-23 Residual Risk Score	Risk Title	2023-24 Residual Risk Score
Cyber Resilience	20	Cyber Resilience	15
Public Perception	16	Public Perception	12
Welsh Government Funding and Support	8	Welsh Government Funding and Support	16
Sector Collaboration Capacity	12	Sector Capacity (Spilt Risk)	16
		Sector Collaboration (Spilt Risk)	16
Climate Change	16	Climate Change	6
Research and Data	6	Social Care Data (New Title)	6
Insufficient Recruitment	9	Workforce Attraction / Pay and Conditions (Merged Risk with New Title)	12
Pay/Reward	12		

There were 8 new strategic risks added to the risk register during 2023-24 which were associated with:

Risk Title	2023-24 Residual Risk Score
Apprenticeships	9
Succession Planning	6
National Office	4
Improvement, Research and Innovation	8
Key Financial Control	6
Induction	8
Sector Capacity	20
Sector Collaboration	16

Four Risks were Closed or De-Escalated from the Risk Register during 2023-24, which were associated with:

Risk Title
Board Membership
Succession Planning - Chief Executive
COVID-19
Wellbeing Effectiveness

I will continue to ensure that risks are well managed. Where there are weaknesses, the appropriate actions are in place to tackle them and that our internal controls and assurances are regularly reviewed to make sure they stay effective.

## Risk Appetite and Management

Given what we do, our tolerance of risk in areas of governance and reputation is low. In other areas, such as workforce improvement we are prepared to accept more risk to take advantage of opportunities to pursue our ambitions.

The Board has adopted 7 assurance areas around which to structure an assurance map. This summarises existing controls and sources of assurance and highlights any gaps relative to meeting the needs of the Board. For each assurance area, the Board has broadly defined its risk appetite using the classification recommended in the [UK Government's Risk Appetite Guidance Note](#) and considers to what extent existing controls align with that appetite.

Assurance area	Risk appetite
Financial / value for money	Cautious / Open
Governance	Minimal / Cautious
Policy Work	Open
Reputational	Cautious
Our people	Open
Improvement	Open
Regulation	Cautious

## Information Governance and Security

We maintained our certification under ISO 27001 Information Security Management Systems throughout the year including achieving the triennial recertification in February 2024. Compliance was supported by the provision of a specialist internal audit service throughout the year.

In March 2024 we achieved the self-assessment for Cyber Essentials certification. Work is progressing to achieve Cyber Essentials Plus certification in Quarter 1 of 2024-25.

As a data controller registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), we make sure we have information governance controls in place. This is to keep the data we collect and process secure and in line with current data protection legislation so that we are open and transparent with our decision making.

During 2023-24:

- We recorded 22 data incidents:

2023-24	
Number of data incidents / incidents	22
Number reported to the ICO	2 by Social Care Wales
<b>Type of incident</b>	
Errors by a third party	2
Software/server issue	0
Human error/ training and awareness issue	19
Physical	0
Cyber security inc. spam attack	1

- **Two incidents were reported to the ICO, however ICO confirmed that no further action was required.** Recommendations for improvement in practice were shared with the relevant teams within the organisation.
- We responded to **22 requests under the Freedom of Information Act**, all responded to within 20 working days. The types of requests were varied this year and included requests for information regarding our workforce, IT equipment, HR & Recruitment, contracts information, and information relating to the register.
- We received **13 Subject Access Requests (SARs)** under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).
  - 8 of those were for information we do not hold, but in most cases, we were able to signpost to the relevant organisations.
  - One SAR did not provide the additional information that we requested in order to process the request.
  - One request was relating to an ongoing Fitness to Practice (FTP) investigation. Due to this we were not able to share any information through the SAR process as this may have prejudiced our ability to conduct the investigation fairly. The information was shared with the data subject in line with the FTP process.



- All other requests were fulfilled within the 30-day period. Some requests for information, for example copies of registration information, are not dealt with under the DPA and recorded as formal SARs as the information could be supplied quickly as opposed to waiting up to 30 days.
- We received **1 request for the Right to erasure** under the UK GDPR. The response was responded to in line with the policy and within one month of receipt of the request.
- We continue to look at improving our **information governance framework and DPA compliance** with our cross organisational Information Governance Group. This group looks at our compliance with ISO27001 certification, data protection legislation, accountability and alignment with Cyber (Security) Essentials. A programme of role-based training on managing data protection and information security risks was undertaken throughout the year.
- We have revised and developed a number of new policies, internal resources and staff training in relation to data protection throughout the year.

## Customer Service

We use complaints, customer feedback and queries to continuously look at how we can work better and provide better customer service.

During the year we updated our complaints policy. In 2023-24 we had 16 complaints under our complaints policy. All of these complaints were classed as 'Stage 1' complaints where the Complaints Officer and a Team Manager, if required, were able to deal with the concern or query within the 20-working day timescale.

## Whistleblowing

### Internal

All our staff are encouraged to raise issues of concern about wrongdoing that come to their attention while at work. I regard the internal identification of wrongdoing as an important contribution to managing corporate risk and ensuring good governance.

We have established internal whistleblowing policy and procedures which reflects the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and sets out a mechanism for staff for raising such matters.

In 2023-2024 no staff raised a concern under our Whistleblowing Policy as was the case in 2022-23.

### External

We are listed under The Prescribed Persons Order 2014 as a designated organisation that any worker in the social care sector can approach to report suspected or known wrongdoing. This is also known as 'whistleblowing' or making a disclosure.

As a prescribed person, we have several duties, which are set out in guidance from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), one of which is to annually report on the number of whistleblowing disclosures we receive.

For each referral received we consider the information received and in the cases of the 4 received during the year as yet no formal Fitness to Practice cases have been opened. Information has been shared with CIW, local health boards, and the police as necessary following the disclosures received.

### Sarah McCarty

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 25 October 2024

# Remuneration Report and Staff Report

## Remuneration Report

### Pay Policy Statement

This is Social Care Wales's pay policy statement for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

This pay policy statement provides the framework for decision making on pay and decision making on senior pay.

### Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer for Social Care Wales in 2023-24 was Sue Evans and was in receipt of a salary of £131,966 per annum in 2023-24. The gross salary cost of the Chief Executive in the period 2023-24 was £183,893 which includes Employers National Insurance and Employers Pension costs.

### The Board

The Board comprises of 14 Board Members led by a lay Chair Mick Giannasi. All have been appointed by the Minister, through the Public Appointments process. The remuneration of the Board members is non-pensionable and is determined by Welsh Government. For enhanced transparency, the remuneration of the Chair of Social Care Wales is disclosed in this report. Board members are remunerated £282 per day and committed to two days a month.

### Social Care Wales Staff

All members of staff are employed by Social Care Wales on such terms and conditions as the Board determines. Remuneration of all members of staff are in line with the organisations scheme for staff pay and grading arrangements that was approved by the Welsh Government in 2004 and applies equally to all staff members.

These arrangements include a salary scale with incremental salary progression during the early years of employment, and a non-consolidated award based on organisational performance. Payment of the Corporate Performance Award was suspended in 2010-11 and consequently no bonuses have been paid since 2009-10.

The pay award is subject to discussion with Staff Council and approval by the Social Care Wales Remuneration Committee and the Welsh Government annually. When determining pay strategies, the Board considers the:

- need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able, qualified and high-calibre people
- overall affordability
- pay practices in the wider public sector and comparator organisations
- relevant legal obligations including equality and anti-discrimination requirements.

The following sections in the Remuneration and Staff Report are subject to audit.

## Senior Pay Remuneration

Officials	Salary (£000)*		Pension benefits (£)		Total (£000)	
	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23	2023-24	2022-23
<b>Chair</b> Mick Giannasi	30-35	30-35	N/A	N/A	30-35	30-35
<b>Chief Executive</b> Sue Evans	130-135	125-130	7,100	38,600	135-140	160-165
<b>Director of Finance, Strategy and Corporate Services</b> Andrew Lycett	100-105	90-95	30,700	27,900	130-135	115-120
<b>Director of Improvement and Development</b> Sarah McCarty	100-105	90-95	31,200	60,900	130-135	150-155
<b>Director of Regulation</b> David Pritchard (from June 2022)	100-105	75-80	31,000	23,800	130-135	100-105

\*Included in Salary where applicable are any Taxable travel and Subsistence Allowances in accordance with our Travel and Subsistence scheme.

The senior pay remuneration of David Pritchard the Director of Regulation was not disclosed for April and May of 2022 as he was seconded into the post from Welsh Government in those months for that period until he was made a permanent member of staff. The total charge from Welsh Government was £22,510 in 2022-23 which included Employers National Insurance, Employers Pension and unrecoverable VAT. The pay scales of Social Care Wales are applicable to the seconded Director of Regulation and his salary was in the band of £90,000-£95,000 in 2022-23

The amount of pension benefits for the year which contributes to the single total figure is calculated in a similar way to the method used to derive pension values for tax purposes and is based in information received from our actuaries.

The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increase or decreases due to a transfer of pension rights.

This is not an amount which has been paid to an individual by Social Care Wales during the year; it is a calculation which uses information from the pension benefit table. These figures can be influenced by many factors e.g. changes in a person's salary, whether or not they choose to make additional contributions to the pension scheme from their pay and other valuation factors affecting the pension scheme as a whole.

Salaries consist of gross pay and pay awards agreed by the Welsh Government.

No members of staff responsible for decision making received benefits in kind from Social Care Wales other than one director in relation to our Tusker scheme for the provision of motor vehicles to staff.

<b>Pension Entitlements of Directors</b>	<b>Total accrued pension at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>Real increase in pension at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>Total accrued lump sum at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>Real increase/ (decrease) in lump sum at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>CETV at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>CETV at 31 March 2023</b>	<b>Real increase/ decrease in CETV in 2023-24</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Chair</b> Mick Giannasi	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Chief Executive</b> Sue Evans	35.0-40.0	0.0-2.5	-	-	691	568	65
<b>Director of Finance, Strategy and Corporate Services</b> Andrew Lycett	5.0-10.0	0.0-2.5	-	-	105	58	42
<b>Director of Improvement and Development</b> Sarah McCarty	35.0-40.0	0.0-2.5	20.0-25.0	(2.5)-0.0	490	337	120
<b>Director of Regulation</b> David Pritchard (From June 22)	0.0-5.0	0.0-2.5	-	-	61	23	37

The Chief Executive is an ordinary member of the Social Care Wales pension scheme. The Chair does not participate in the pension scheme.

The Cash Equivalent Transfer Value is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. It is a payment made by a pension scheme, or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme, or arrangement when a member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the pension benefits they have accrued in their former scheme.

The pension figures shown related to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures and other pension details include the value of any pension in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years at their own cost. CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

The real increase in the value of the CETV reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee, including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement, and uses common market valuation factors from the start and end of the period.

## Fair Pay disclosure

In 2023-24 all staff including the highest paid director received a pay of award of 5% (2022-23 4%), in addition a £1,500 non consolidated payment was made to each member of staff who was in post on the 31 March 2023. However the Chief Executive and Directors were ineligible.

Pay ratios	2023-24	2022-23
Highest Earner's Total Remuneration (£'000)	130-135	125-130
25th percentile pay ratio	4.3	4.4
Median pay ratio	3.2	3.5
75th percentile pay ratio	2.8	2.8
Range of total remuneration	£23,260-£131,966	£22,152-£125,682

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

The banded remuneration of the highest paid director in Social Care Wales in the financial year 2023-24 was £130,000-£135,000 (2022-23: £125,000-£130,000).

The remuneration used for the 25th percentile pay ratio, median and 75th percentile pay ratio were £30,534, £40,862 and £47,675 respectively. The corresponding figures in 22-23 were £29,080, £36,656 and £45,045.

Total remuneration is the salary cost only and does not include employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

Remuneration ranged from £23,260 to £131,966 (2022-23: £22,152 to £125,682).

## Staff Report

Staff Costs	2023-24					2022-23
	Total costs	Permanent employed staff	Temporary staff and secondees	Chair and Board members	Panel members	Total costs
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£000
Salaries and Wages	9,274	9,002	27	123	122	7,173
Social Security Costs	969	965	-	3	1	740
Other pension Costs	1,437	1,437	-	-	-	2,763
Apprenticeship Levy	31	31	-	-	-	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>11,711</b>	<b>11,435</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>10,696</b>
Add Payments in respect of inward secondments	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total net costs</b>	<b>11,711</b>	<b>11,435</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>10,696</b>

Consistent with guidance, employment costs include payments made in respect of contract staff. The total cost of salaries excluding Other Pension Costs was £10,274k (£11,711k-£1,437k) in 2023-24 in comparison to £7,933k (£10,696k-£2,763k) in 2022-23.

Other pension totalling £1,437k are the service costs (current and past) of the scheme and in addition any pension costs in relation to the increase in the holiday accrual. The £1,437k consists of actual Employer contributions based on payroll of £2,260k, and costs in relation to the holiday pay accrual of £7k. The residual difference of £830k (£810k increase in 2022-23) is the decreased charge which is required to be charged under International Accounting Standard (IAS 26). The decreased charge in 2023-24 relates to £830k of current service charges. In 2022-23 the £2,763k consisted of employer contributions of £1,953k but increased by £810k as noted above.

Staff numbers - WTE	2023-24			2022-23
	Total No	Permanent No	Other No	Total No
Chief Executive and Directors	4	4	0	4
Workforce Regulation	90	89	1	80
Improvement and Development	74	74	0	52
Corporate Services and IT	45	45	0	40
<b>Totals</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>176</b>

The table above represents the average number of whole-time equivalent persons employed during the year.

## Staff composition

As at the 31st March 2024 of the workforce of 234, 173 (74%) were women and 61 (26%) were men. In comparison as at the 31st March 2023 of the workforce of 201, 147 (73%) were women and 54 (27%) were men.

Included in these numbers are the Senior Management Team which consists of the Chief Executive and three directors. Of the Senior Management Team two were women (50%) and two were men (50%) which was the case at 31 March 2023.

Staff Composition by job family is as follows:

Staff Composition by Job Family	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
Executive Team	2	2	4	50%	50%
Senior Leadership Team	5	3	8	63%	37%
Management Team	56	16	72	78%	22%
Technical and Development Team	55	22	77	71%	29%
Support Team	55	18	73	75%	25%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>26%</b>

## Sickness absence data

The level of staff sickness during 2023-24 was 3.6 % (2022-23 was 3.6%)

## Staff Policies, Equality and Diversity

Social Care Wales has 'Investors in People' status and its human resource policies reflect best practice as part of its commitment as a learning organisation. We recognise and value diversity and ensure that all our employment practices and programmes of work embed and demonstrate not just our public duty as set out by the Equalities Act but embraces equality and diversity as a core value underpinning all functions and the delivery of high-quality services of our workforce and the sector. We will ensure that in all our work we fully embed a human rights approach. Social Care Wales through its remit, promotes and influences the importance of language choice for service users and sensitivity of language within the social care workforce. We have a leadership role in the delivery of the Welsh Government's More than Just Words - Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care. As an employer we are a truly bilingual organisation providing an environment which nurtures and develops staff to learn and improve their bilingual skills and own the bilingual ethos of the organisation.

We have also a responsibility to uphold the conventions set out in the Human Rights Act 1998. We are committed to providing a work environment that values the diversity of all people, both our own staff and those we come into contact during our work, and we fully support the rights of people to be treated with dignity and respect.

We are committed to making sure equality and openness in our pay and grading arrangements. When we considered our Equal Pay report in June 2023, we found no evidence of pay discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics. We also considered our Gender pay Gap in June 2023 which stood at 11.8%(median). This is in comparison to the position on June 2022 when it was 11.5% (median).

## Employee voice

During 2023-24 our Staff Partnership Council has had a crucial role to play in collecting and feeding back the views of staff on significant issues including the restructure and key policies. This has been achieved through regular staff forums, meeting with teams individually and producing feedback documents to HR and the Executive Management Team.

## Support and wellbeing

We introduced a new Employee Assistance Programme in 2023-24 with an added Menopause Support Service.

As part of this framework, we are able to utilise the following services:

- Access for all our staff to a 24-hour, 7 day a week telephone counselling service
- Face to face counselling
- On-Line resources.

## Flexibility and Benefits

- 23% of our workforce worked not standard hours (less than 36 hours a week or compressed hours)
- The childcare voucher scheme is closed to new entrants with five active members as at 31 March 2024
- All staff are able to work under a hybrid pattern of home and office locations
- We operate a cycle to work scheme and a salary sacrifice car scheme.

## Expenditure on consultancy

Any Consultancy costs in relation to expert opinion obtained to assist in business decision making are included in Administration costs (Professional Fees) in the financial statements. In 2023-24 there were no Consultancy costs (2023-24:0k).

## Off-payroll engagements

In 2023-24 Social Care Wales has acted in accordance with Dear Accounting Officer letter 1/14 in relation to Tax Arrangements of Public Sector Appointees and no "off payroll" engagements are required to be reported.

## Exit Packages

There were no exit packages agreed in 2023-24 as was the case in 2022-23.



## Accountability and Audit

### Regularity of expenditure

All expenditure in 2023-24 has been dealt with in accordance with any relevant legislation, the Governance Statement agreed with Welsh Government and Managing Welsh Public Money.

### Fees and Charges

Registration Fee income for the financial year 2023-24 was £2,305k (2022-23: £2,224k). As agreed by Welsh Government the fees received does not cover the full cost of registration and the excess cost is therefore funded by Grant in Aid.

### Remote Contingent Liabilities

Social Care Wales is not aware of any remote contingent liabilities.

### Long-expenditure trends

It is assumed in the term that expenditure levels will broadly remain the same based on the assumption that our Grant in Aid level will remain the same.

**Sarah McCarty**

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 25 October 2024

# The Certificate and report of the Auditor General for Wales to the Senedd

## Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of Social Care Wales for the year ended 31 March 2024 under Schedule 2 of Paragraph 6 to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

The financial statements comprise the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure, the Statement of financial position, the Statement of cash flows, the Statement of changes in taxpayers' equity and related notes, including the material accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of Social Care Wales's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its net expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual.
- have been properly prepared in accordance with Welsh Ministers' directions issued under Schedule 2 of Paragraph 16 to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

## Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects, the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Senedd and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

## Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing in the UK (ISAs (UK)) and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

My staff and I are independent of the body in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinions.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the body's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for Social Care Wales is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which require entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

### **Other information**

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and other parts of the report that are audited and my auditor's report thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information in the annual report. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Opinion on other matters**

In my opinion, the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with Welsh Ministers' directions made under Schedule 2 of Paragraph 16 to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of my audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with Welsh Ministers' directions made under Schedule 2 of Paragraph 16 to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016; and
- the information given in the Performance Report and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

### **Matters on which I report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the body and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance Report and Accountability Report.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit.
- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my team;
- the financial statements and the audited part of the Accountability Report are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns;
- information specified by Welsh Ministers regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed;
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual are not made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

## Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining adequate accounting records;
- the preparation of the financial statements and Annual Report in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view;
- ensuring that the Annual Report and financial statements as a whole are fair, balanced and understandable;
- ensuring the regularity of financial transactions;
- internal controls as the Accounting Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- assessing Social Care Wales's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by Social Care Wales will not continue to be provided in the future.

## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with Schedule 2 of Paragraph 16 to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

My procedures included the following:

- Enquiring of management, the audited entity's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to Social Care Wales's policies and procedures concerned with:
  - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
  - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Considering as an audit team how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, expenditure recognition, posting of unusual journals and (add as appropriate to the audit);

- Obtaining an understanding of Social Care Wales's framework of authority as well as other legal and regulatory frameworks that the Social Care Wales operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of Social Care Wales;
- Obtaining an understanding of related party relationships.

In addition to the above, my procedures to respond to identified risks included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations discussed above;
- enquiring of management, those charged with governance and legal advisors about actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias;
- evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all audit team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the Social Care Wales's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of my auditor's report.

### **Other auditor's responsibilities**

I obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Senedd and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

### **Report**

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Adrian Crompton  
**Auditor General for Wales**

Date: 28 October 2024

1 Capital Quarter  
Tyndall Street  
Cardiff  
CF10 4BZ

The maintenance and integrity of Social Care Wales' website is the responsibility of the Accounting Officer; the work carried out by auditors does not involve consideration of these matters and accordingly auditors accept no responsibility for any changes that may have occurred to the financial statements since they were initially presented on the website.

## Financial statements

Statement of comprehensive net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024	Note	2023-24 £'000	2022-23 £'000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff costs	15	11,711	10,696
Programme expenditure			
Training support and other long term funding schemes	4(i)	12,574	13,319
Other programme expenditure	4(ii)	4,726	4,382
Administration costs	5	2,105	1,457
Depreciation and amortisation	6,7 and 8	331	315
Pension interest charge		-	-
		<b>31,447</b>	<b>30,169</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Income from Activities			
Registration Fee Income	3(ii)	2,305	2,244
Other Income			
Apprenticeship Certification		76	68
Mental Health Workforce		505	75
National Data Resource		296	29
Introduction to Social Work		-	125
Administrative Data Research Wales		67	-
Anti Racist Wales Action Plan		109	-
Sundry Income		33	10
Pension Interest Credit	16	50	10
		<b>3,441</b>	<b>2,561</b>
Net Expenditure		<b>28,006</b>	<b>27,608</b>
(Surplus) on disposal of lease		(7)	-
Interest receivable	3(i)	(27)	(8)
Interest surrenderable to the Welsh Government	3(ii)	27	8
IFRS 16 interest payable		12	15
Net expenditure after interest		<b>28,011</b>	<b>27,623</b>
<b>Other comprehensive expenditure</b>			
Actuarial remeasurement	16	1,990	(1,290)
<b>Total comprehensive expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024</b>		<b>30,001</b>	<b>26,333</b>

Notes on pages 66 to 89 form part of these accounts.

Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2024	Note	2024		2023	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Non-current assets:</b>					
Pension Asset	16	-	-	-	-
Property, plant and equipment	6	153	193	193	193
Intangible Assets	7	34	57	57	57
Right of Use Asset	8	639	1,407	1,407	1,407
<b>Total non-current assets</b>			826	1,657	1,657
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Trade and other receivables	10	1,506	778	778	778
Cash and cash equivalents	11	217	432	432	432
<b>Total current assets</b>			1,723	1,210	1,210
<b>Total assets</b>			<b>2,549</b>	<b>2,867</b>	<b>2,867</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>					
Trade and other payables	12	(937)	(292)	(292)	(292)
IFRS 16 Finance lease within one year	13	(155)	(234)	(234)	(234)
<b>Total current liabilities</b>			(1,092)	(526)	(526)
<b>Total assets less</b>					
<b>Current liabilities</b>			<b>1,457</b>	<b>2,341</b>	<b>2,341</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>					
IFRS 16 Finance Lease	13	(486)	(1,115)	(1,115)	(1,115)
Pension liabilities	16	(1,110)	-	-	-
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>			(1,596)	(1,115)	(1,115)
<b>Assets less liabilities</b>			<b>(139)</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,226</b>
<b>Reserves</b>					
General reserve			971	1,226	1,226
Pension reserve			(1,110)	-	-
<b>Total</b>			<b>(139)</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,226</b>

The notes on pages 66 to 89 form part of these accounts.

The financial statements on pages 62 to 63 were approved by the Board of Social Care Wales on 24 October 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:

**Sarah McCarty**

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 25 October 2024

<b>Statement of cash flows</b> for the year ended 31 March 2024	<b>Note</b>	<b>2023-24</b> <b>£'000</b>	<b>2022-23</b> <b>£'000</b>
<b>Cash flows from Operating Activities</b>			
Net expenditure after interest		(28,011)	(27,623)
Adjustment for Depreciation and Amortisation		331	315
Adjustment for Pension finance Costs(net)		(880)	800
(Increase) in trade and other receivables		(728)	(79)
Increase/(Decrease) in trade and other payables		645	(164)
<b>Net cash (outflow) from operating activities</b>		<b>(28,643)</b>	<b>(26,751)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	6	(26)	-
Purchase of intangible assets	7	-	(53)
		<b>(26)</b>	<b>(53)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Welsh Government funding (including Capital)	2	28,636	27,159
IFRS 16	13	(182)	(288)
<b>Net financing</b>		<b>28,454</b>	<b>26,871</b>
<b>Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period</b>		<b>(215)</b>	<b>67</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	12	<b>432</b>	<b>365</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	12	<b>217</b>	<b>432</b>

Notes on pages 66 to 89 form part of these accounts.



<b>Statement of changes in taxpayers' equity for the year ended 31 March 2024</b>	<b>Pension reserve £'000</b>	<b>General reserve £'000</b>	<b>Total £'000</b>
<b>Balance as at 1 April 2022</b>	<b>(490)</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>400</b>
<b>Changes in taxpayers' equity 2022-23</b>			
Welsh Government funding	-	27,159	27,159
Transfer between reserves - Capital	490	(490)	-
Comprehensive expenditure for the year	-	(26,333)	(26,333)
<b>Balance at 31 March 2023</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,226</b>
<b>Changes in taxpayers' equity 2023-24</b>			
Welsh Government funding	-	28,636	28,636
Transfer between reserves - Capital	(1,110)	1,110	-
Comprehensive expenditure for the year		(30,001)	(30,001)
<b>Balance at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>(1,110)</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>(139)</b>

Notes on pages 66 to 89 form part of these accounts.

## Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024

### Statement of accounting Policies

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the 2023-24 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by the relevant authorities.

The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the circumstances of Social Care Wales for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by Social Care Wales are described below and have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

#### 1(i) Accounting Convention

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis, in accordance with the Accounts Direction issued by the Welsh Ministers with the consent of HM Treasury. They have been prepared under the modified historical cost convention.

#### 1 (ii) Financing

Social Care Wales receives monies from Welsh Government to fund its general revenue and capital activities. These amounts are regarded as financing and are credited to the General Reserve on receipt.

#### 1(iii) Registration Fee Income

This arises from fees charged for registration on the Social Care Register. This fee is not considered to be for an on-going service but for registration in the register only. In line with International Financial Reporting Standard 15 (IFRS15) Revenue from Contracts with Customers, revenue is recognised at point of registration.

#### 1(iv) Apprenticeship Certification income

Social Care Wales receives income for the compliance checking, printing and posting of Apprenticeship certificates as part of its work for the Apprenticeship Certification Authority. The revenue associated with the provision of services is recognised over time in line with the completion of the delivery of the services. In addition, as Social Care Wales have all the risks and rewards associated with the provision of the services the income is accounted for on a gross basis in line with IFRS 15 and recognises any costs associated with these services separately.

#### 1(v) Training support and other long term funding schemes

During 2023-24 Social Care Wales has made payments under the **Social Work Bursary Scheme** which is an incentive to train scheme for students enrolled on undergraduate and post-graduate social work training courses. This scheme includes payments to students of a non-income assessed bursary and an additional income assessed element for post-graduate students.

In addition, a **Practice Learning Opportunity Allowance** is also paid to all students. This expenditure is recognised as a liability on the receipt of the relevant grant claims in relation to the various elements of the Social Work Bursary scheme. This is on the basis that once the grant has been approved, Social Care Wales is unable to avoid this cost, as after eligibility has been proven there are no conditions in relation to the grant that are within the control of Social Care Wales that limit the amount payable.

**Practice Learning Opportunity Funding (PLOF)** is provided to Local Authorities as a contribution towards the costs of securing Practice Learning Opportunities for students undertaking approved Social Work courses in Wales. The grant is accounted for as a liability and the expenditure recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Expenditure once the grant application has been successful. This is on the basis that at this point Social Care Wales cannot avoid paying this liability and there are no conditions in relation to the grant that would limit the amount payable.

From 1 April 2017, Social Care Wales was given the responsibility for the administration of the **Social Care Wales Development programme (SCWWDP)** grant. The grant is provided to support Local Authorities to train and develop their own staff. Funding available from Social Care Wales through SCWWDP in 2023-24 provides 70% of the cost of the programme currently £7,640,051. The remaining 30% is to be funded by Local Authorities. The conditions attached to the grant are that the grant must be spent on eligible expenditure and must be spent within the financial year. Therefore, the liability for the grant is recognised once the grant offer letter has been provided. This is on the basis that at this point there are no conditions that remain within the control of Social Care Wales that limit the eligible costs being incurred.

Other grants include:

- Regional Facilitation Grants to Statutory Regional Partnership Boards,
- People Using Services and Carers grants to Higher Education Institutions and

The liabilities for these grants are recognised once the grant has been claimed as at this point there are no conditions that remain within the control of Social Care Wales that limit the amount payable.

#### **1(vi) Trade receivables and other current assets – Social Work Bursary Scheme**

During 2023-24 a small number of students terminated their training early, giving rise to a repayment of all or part of the award. The repayment due at 31 March 2024 totalled £103k (£89k: 31 March 2023) and this sum is included in Trade receivables and other current assets at note 10. It is the policy of Social Care Wales to seek full repayment of these funds.

#### **1(vii) Property, plant and equipment**

Property, plant and equipment of an individual or group value of £5,000 or more are capitalised. Property, plant and equipment have been valued at historic cost at the 31 March 2024, as in the opinion of Social Care Wales any revaluation adjustments are not material. Further to a review the threshold was amended for the financial year 2022-23 with the previous threshold being £1,000.

#### **1(viii) Intangible Assets**

Information Technology and Licence purchases of an individual value of £5,000 or more are capitalised. Information Technology and Licence costs have been valued at historic cost at the 31 March 2024, as in the opinion of Social Care Wales any revaluation adjustments are not material. Further to a review the threshold was amended for the financial year 2022-23 with the previous threshold being £1,000.

## 1(ix) Depreciation and Amortisation of Property, plant and equipment and Intangible Assets

Depreciation and amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write off the historic cost of each asset on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful economic life as set out below, except for office refurbishment, where costs are written off over the remaining period of the office leases when purchased.

- Communications Equipment - five years;
- Furniture - ten years;
- I.T. (Property, Plant and equipment) - four years;
- Accommodation costs - remaining period of accommodation leases when purchased
- Information Technology and - four years
- Licences (Intangible Assets).

Depreciation and amortisation is calculated monthly and begins in the month following the month of purchase. As such, purchases made in March 2024 will not begin to depreciate/amortise until the 2024-25 financial year. The exception to this rule is accommodation refurbishment costs where the depreciation charge is calculated on a daily basis.

## 1(x) Right of use assets

A right of use asset and lease liability is recognised at commencement date and is measured at the present value of the lease liability, discounted at the incremental borrowing rate promulgated in the Public Expenditure System( PES) Treasury paper.

The right of use asset is depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right of use asset or the end of the lease term.

Social Care Wales used a practical expedient when applying IFRS 16 to leases previously classified as operating leases under IAS 17 and did not recognise right-of-use assets and liabilities for leases of low value assets(e.g. photocopiers).

## Implementation and Assumptions

IFRS 16 has been applied using the modified retrospective approach and therefore the comparative information was not restated in 2022-23 and continued to be reported under IAS 17"Leases" and IFRIC 4 "Determining whether an arrangement contains a lease". IAS 17 operating leases are now included within the Statement of Financial Position as a lease liability and right of use asset.

## Previous treatment

Prior to 2022-23 we classified leases that transfer substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership as finance leases.

Leases other than finance leases are classified as operating leases. Assets previously held under operating leases were not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position. Payments were recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease. Lease incentives were recognised as an integral part of the total lease expense, over the term of the lease.

**Policy applicable from 1 April 2022**

At inception of a contract, it is assessed as to whether it contains a lease. A contract is or contains a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time. This includes assets for which there is no consideration. To assess whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset we would assess:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset;
- We have the right to obtain and substantially all of the economic benefit from the use of the asset throughout the period of use, and
- We have the right to direct the use of the asset.

The policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 April 2022.

**1(xi) Value Added Tax**

Social Care Wales is not registered for Value Added Tax (VAT). All expenditure including capital expenditure is reported including VAT, where relevant, as no VAT can be recovered.

**1(xii) Pension Costs**

Past and present employees are covered by the Local Government Pension Scheme administered by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, which is a multi-employer funded scheme. Further information is provided at note 16 to these Accounts where the principal assumptions used by the actuaries are outlined.

Pension Costs have been disclosed in accordance with IAS 19 Employee Benefits. IAS 19 requires the disclosure of certain information covering assets, liabilities and income and expenditure relating to the Scheme.

**1(xiii) Provisions and Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets****Provisions**

Social Care Wales provides for obligations arising from past events where there is a present obligation at the date of the Statement of Financial Position, it is probable Social Care Wales will be required to settle the obligation and a reliable financial estimate can be made.

**Contingent Liabilities**

Social Care Wales discloses possible obligations arising from past events where the outcome is based on uncertain future events. Disclosure is made where a present obligation is not probable or cannot be measured reliably.

**Contingent Assets**

Social Care Wales discloses a possible asset when the outcome is based on one or more uncertain future events not in the control of Social Care Wales.

## 2. Analysis of net expenditure by segment

The Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Account reflects the segments that the operating results of Social Care Wales are reported to the Executive Management Team in order that performance can be assessed by these segments. Consequently, no further analysis of Net Expenditure by Segment is provided.

3. Welsh Government funding	2023-24 £'000	2022-23 £'000
Grant in aid received from the Welsh Government	28,636	27,159
Amount credited to general reserve	28,636	27,159

As outlined in Note 1(ii) the total grants of £28,636k (2022-23: £27,159k) are now credited to the General Reserve on receipt.

3(i) Non-retainable income	2023-24 £'000	2022-23 £'000
Interest on deposit account	27	8
<b>Total non-retainable income</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>8</b>

3(ii) Reconciliation of cash received from non-retainable income with amounts repaid to the Welsh Government	2023-24 £'000	2022-23 £'000
Cash received (income exceeding Welsh Government threshold)	27	8
Total income repayable	27	8
Cash repayment	27	8
<b>Due to the Welsh Government at the year end</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Social Care Wales has a liability to repay the Welsh Government interest received during the year, and fee income in excess of the target of £2,298k. The interest received of £27k was paid to Welsh Government. The fee income received in the year in cash terms totalled 2,305k (2022-23: £2,244k). As per our Governance Framework with Welsh Government permission was obtained from Welsh Government to retain registration income over the target amount.

## 4. Programme costs

4(i) Training support and other long term funding schemes	2023-24 £'000	2022-23 £'000
Social Work Bursary Scheme payments	2,781	2,617
Practice Learning Opportunity Funding	1,289	1,121
People using Services and Carers in Social Work Training	51	44
Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme	7,640	7,145
	<b>11,761</b>	<b>10,927</b>
<b>Other long term funding schemes</b>		
Grants to regions	813	2,392
Research - Social Care Institute for Excellence	-	-
	<b>12,574</b>	<b>13,319</b>

4(ii) Other programme expenditure	2023-24 £'000	2022-23 £'000
Improvement and development	3,264	3,215
Workforce regulation including regulation of social work training	1,462	1,167
	<b>4,726</b>	<b>4,382</b>

5. Administration costs	2023-24 £'000	2022-23 £'000
Chair, members, panel members and staff expenses	68	44
Other Staff Costs	391	292
Other Chair, members and panel members costs	10	13
Other premises costs	520	209
Workshops, seminars, promotions, publications	99	98
Equipment and software	608	616
Administration	76	56
External audit- audit work	25	24
Other professional fees	308	105
	<b>2,105</b>	<b>1,457</b>



<b>6. Property, plant and equipment year ended 31 March 2024</b>	<b>Accommodation refurbishment £'000</b>	<b>Furniture and fittings £'000</b>	<b>Information technology £'000</b>	<b>Totals £'000</b>
<b>Cost</b>				
<b>At 1 April 2023</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>730</b>
Additions in the period	26	-	-	26
Disposals in the period	(107)	-	(38)	(145)
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>611</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
<b>At 1 April 2023</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>537</b>
Charged in the year	16	-	50	66
Disposals in the period	(107)	-	(38)	(145)
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>458</b>
<b>Net book value</b>				
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>At 1 April 2023</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>193</b>

<b>year ended 31 March 2023</b>	<b>Accommodation refurbishment £'000</b>	<b>Furniture and fittings £'000</b>	<b>Information technology £'000</b>	<b>Totals £'000</b>
<b>Cost</b>				
<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>1,556</b>
Additions in the period	-	-	-	-
Disposals in the period	(255)	(134)	(437)	(826)
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>730</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>1,296</b>
Charged in the year	15	1	51	67
Disposals in the period	(255)	(134)	(437)	(826)
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>537</b>
<b>Net book value</b>				
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>193</b>
<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>260</b>

7. Intangible assets year ended 31 March 2024	Information technology £'000	Software licences £'000	Development expenditure £'000	Totals £'000
<b>Cost</b>				
<b>At 1 April 2023</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>119</b>
Additions in the period	-	-	-	-
Transfer from development	-	-	-	-
Disposals in the period	-	(41)	-	(41)
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Amortisation</b>				
<b>At 1 April 2023</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>62</b>
Charged in the year	-	23	-	23
Disposals in the period	-	(41)	-	(41)
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Net book value</b>				
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>At 1 April 2023</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57</b>

year ended 31 March 2023	Information technology £'000	Software licences £'000	Development expenditure £'000	Totals £'000
<b>Cost</b>				
<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>258</b>
Additions in the period	-	53	-	53
Transfer from development	-	-	-	-
Disposals in the period	(116)	(76)	-	(192)
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Amortisation</b>				
<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>236</b>
Charged in the year	-	18	-	18
Disposals in the period	(116)	(76)	-	(192)
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Net book value</b>				
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>22</b>

8. Right of use asset 2023-24	Buildings £,000
<b>Cost</b>	
At 1 April 2023	1,637
Additions in the period	258
Disposals in the period	(1,101)
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>794</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>	
At 1 April 2023	230
Charged in the year	242
Disposals in the period	(317)
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>155</b>
<b>Net Book Value at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>639</b>

Right of use asset 2022-2023	Buildings £,000
<b>Cost</b>	
At 1 April 2022	-
IFRS Recognition of Asset	1,637
Additions in the period	-
Disposals in the period	-
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>1,637</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>	
At 1 April 2022	
Charged in the year	230
Disposals in the period	-
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>Net Book Value at 31 March 2023</b>	<b>1,407</b>

In line with IFRS16, from April 2022 Right of Use assets of £1.407 million related to leased properties that do not meet the definition of investment properties have been recognised. For more information see Note 1(x) Right of use assets.

The reduction in Net Book Value in 2023-24 reflects the disposal of a Right of Use Asset. A break clause in our lease at the Cardiff office allowed us to end the lease on one of our two floors.

## 9. Financial Instruments

As the cash requirements of SCW are primarily met through Grant-in-Aid provided by the Welsh Government, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with SCW's expected purchase and usage requirements and SCW is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

10. Trade receivables and other current assets at 31 March	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Trade receivables		
Welsh Government	176	144
Local Authorities	6	4
Social Work Bursary Scheme debtors	103	89
Other bodies	708	58
Other receivables		
Prepayments and accrued income	513	483
	<b>1,506</b>	<b>778</b>

Social Work Bursary Scheme debtors are repayable over more than one financial year, repayment contracts being agreed and signed by students which take account of their individual circumstances. However, for the purposes of disclosure, all balances have been included as falling due within one financial year.

The increase in Debtors at the 31 March 2024 was due to significant part of our funding from Other bodies only being payable post 31 March 2024.

11. Cash and cash equivalents	2023-24 £'000	2022-23 £'000
Balance at 1 April	432	365
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	(215)	67
Balance at 31 March	<b>217</b>	<b>432</b>

The balances at the 1st April 2022, the 1st April 2023, and the 31st March 2024 were held at Commercial Banks.

12. Trade payables and other current liabilities at 31 March	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade payables		
Other taxation and social security	-	-
Other payables		
Accruals and deferred income	937	292
	<b>937</b>	<b>292</b>

13. Right of Use liability 2023-24	Buildings £,000
<b>At 1 April 2023</b>	1,349
Additions in the period	258
Disposals in the period	(792)
Repaid in the year	(186)
Interest charged	12
<b>At 31 March 2024</b>	<b>641</b>
<b>Analysis of the expected timings of the future liabilities</b>	
Not later than one year	155
Later than one year and not later than five years	478
Later than five years	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>641</b>

Right of Use liability 2022-23	Buildings £,000
<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	-
IFRS Recognition of Liability	1,637
Repaid prior to commencement	(58)
Repaid in the year	(245)
Interest charged	15
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>1,349</b>
<b>Analysis of the expected timings of the future liabilities</b>	
Not later than one year	234
Later than one year and not later than five years	958
Later than five years	157
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,349</b>

## 14. Capital Commitments

There were no contracted capital commitments at 31 March 2024 not otherwise included in these financial statements (Nil at 31 March 2023).

15. Staff costs	2023-24 Total costs £'000	2022-23 Total costs £'000
Salaries and wages	9,274	7,173
Social security costs	969	740
Other pension Costs	1,437	2,763
Apprenticeship levy	31	20
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>11,711</b>	<b>10,696</b>
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	-	-
<b>Total net costs</b>	<b>11,711</b>	<b>10,696</b>

## 16. Retirement benefit obligations

### (i) Present Staff and Pensioners

Social Care Wales participates in a multi-employer funded pension scheme which provides benefits at a normal pension age which is linked to the state pension age (but with a minimum age of 65). The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of Social Care Wales and are administered by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. Social Care Wales share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme was separately identified in the actuarial valuation at 31 March 2004 for the first time.

### 16(ii) Local Government Pension Scheme, a defined benefit scheme

The Scheme is contracted out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS) and is not subject to the minimum pension requirements of the Pensions Act 1995. The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (regulation 77) specifies that actuarial valuations must be carried out at 31 March 1998, and triennially thereafter. The disclosures below relate to the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council Pension Scheme and have been provided by the Scheme's actuary Aon Hewitt Limited, London.

### 16(iii) Results under International Accounting Standard no.19 (Disclosure)

The disclosures below relate to the funded liabilities within the Rhondda Cynon Taf Pension Fund (the 'Fund') which is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The LGPS is a funded defined benefit plan with benefits earned up to 31 March 2014 being linked to final salary. Benefits after 31 March 2014 are based on a Career Average Revalued Earnings scheme. Details of the benefits earned over the period covered by this disclosure are set out in 'The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013' (as amended) and 'The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014' (as amended).

## Funding / Governance Arrangements of the LGPS

The funded nature of the LGPS requires the Employer and its employees to pay contributions into the Fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liabilities with investment assets. Information on the framework for calculating contributions to be paid out is set out in LGPS Regulations 2013 and the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement. The last actuarial valuation was at 31 March 2022 and the contributions to be paid until 31 March 2026 resulting from that valuation are set out in the Fund's Rates and Adjustment Certificate. The Fund Administering Authority, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council is responsible for the governance of the Fund.

### Assets

Social Care Wales recognises gains and losses in full, immediately through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. In accordance with International Accounting Standard no.19 - Employee Benefits (IAS 19), disclosure of certain information concerning assets, liabilities and income and expenditure relating to pension schemes is required.

The assets allocated to the Employer in the Fund are notional and are assumed to be invested in line with the investments of the Fund for the purposes of calculating the return to be applied to these notional assets over the accounting period. The fund is large and holds a significant proportion of its assets in liquid investments. As a consequence, there will be no significant restriction on realising assets if a large payment is required to be paid from the Fund in relation to an employer's liabilities. The assets are invested in a diversified spread of investments and the approximate split of assets for the Fund as a whole (based on data supplied by the Administering Authority) is shown in the disclosures.

The Fund Administering Authority may invest a small proportion of the Fund's investments in the assets of some of the employers participating in the Fund if it forms part of their balanced investment strategy.

## Risks associated with the Fund in relation to accounting

### Asset Volatility

The liabilities used for accounting purposes are calculated using a discount rate set with reference to corporate bond yields. If assets underperform, this yield this will create a deficit in the accounts. The Fund holds a significant proportion of growth assets which, while expected to outperform corporate bonds in the long term, creates volatility and risk in the short term in relation to the accounting figures.

### Changes in Bond Yield

A decrease in corporate bond yields will increase the value placed on the liabilities for accounting purposes although this will be marginally offset by the increase in the assets as a result (to the extent the Fund invests in Corporate bonds).

### Inflation Risk

The majority of the pension liabilities are linked to either pay or price inflation. Higher inflation expectations will lead to a higher liability value. The assets are not perfectly correlated with inflation meaning that an increase in inflation will increase the deficit.

### Life Expectancy

The majority of the Fund's obligations are to provide benefits for the life of the member following retirement, so increases in life expectancy will result in an increase in the liabilities.

## Exiting Employers

Employers who leave the Fund (or their guarantor) may have to make an exit payment to meet any shortfall in assets against their pension liabilities. If the employer (or guarantor) is not able to meet this exit payment the liability may in certain circumstances fall on other employers in the Fund. Further the assets at exit in respect of 'orphan liabilities' may, in retrospect, not be sufficient to meet the liabilities. This risk may fall on other employers. 'Orphan liabilities' are currently a small proportion of the overall liabilities in the Fund.

## Other Notes

### McCloud Judgement

The 'McCloud' judgement in the Court of Appeal found that the transitional protection arrangements put in place when the firefighters' and judges' pension schemes were reformed were age discriminatory. On 27 June 2019 the Supreme Court denied permission for Government to appeal this judgement, and on 15 July 2019 the Government issued a ministerial statement saying they would expect to compensate members across all public-sector schemes which contained transitional protection arrangements (which includes the LGPS).

The Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (now Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) published its McCloud consultation for the LGPS (in England and Wales) on 16 July 2020, setting out proposed changes aimed at removing unlawful discrimination in the LGPS. Further to the close of the consultation in a written statement on 13 May 2021 the MCHLG (now DLHUC) confirmed that they would be proceeding with the key principles as laid out in the consultation.

We have allowed for the impact of the McCloud judgement in these figures and the method used is closely aligned with the method proposed by the MCHLG (now the DLUHC) in its consultation. The McCloud liability was updated as part of the 2022 valuation and updated as at 31 March 2024 in line with the method adopted in the 2022 valuation.

### Cost Management in the LGPS

Legislation requires HM Treasury and the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) to undertake periodic valuations to monitor the cost of the LGPS to ensure it remains sustainable and affordable. This is referred to as the 'Cost Management Process'.

HM Treasury and the SAB had paused their reviews following the 'McCloud' judgement in the Court of Appeal. These have been unpaused and both reviews in relating to the 2016 valuations recommended no changes to the provisions of the Scheme. However, the legality of the Government's decision to include McCloud costs as a member cost within the 2016 HMT process is being challenged by a Judicial Review bought by the trades unions. If the judicial review is successful, this may cause the 2016 HMT process to be re-run and could result in changes in benefits or members contributions backdated to 1 April 2019.

However, no allowance for the Cost Management Process has been made in these figures.



## GMP Equalisation and Indexation

On 26 October 2018 the High Court ruled in the Lloyds Bank case that equalisation for the effect of unequal Guaranteed Minimum Pensions (GMPs) is required. The ruling confirmed that trustees have a duty "to equalise benefits for men and women so as to alter the result which is at present produced in relation to GMPs".

These figures assume that GMPs of members whose State Pension Age (SPA) is on or after 6 April 2016 will increase at the rate of full CPI inflation. This recognises the cost of the Government's commitment to compensate public service scheme members from the removal of the Additional Pension element of the State Pension from this date, and for the outcome of the Lloyds judgement which found GMPs to be illegally sex discriminatory. Government recognised that this solution will not address all sex inequalities for a minority of members. We are expecting further guidance from DLUHC (to and undefined timetable) on how they propose to deal with this. We expect any remaining sex inequalities to be small and believe that the approach, in line with government policy, is a reasonable estimate.

In October 2020 a second ruling in the Lloyds bank case clarified that compensation would be required to members who transferred benefits out since May 1990. The Government has not yet acknowledged a liability or indicated an approach to rectifying this. Therefore, no allowance has been made for any potential liability.

## Goodwin ruling

In June 2020 an Employment Tribunal ruled, in relation to the Teachers Pension Scheme, that provisions for survivor's benefits of a female member in an opposite sex marriage are less favourable than for a female in a same sex marriage or civil partnership, and that treatment amounts to direct discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. The chief secretary to the Treasury announced in a written ministerial statement on 20 July 2020 that he believed that changes would be required to other public service pension schemes with similar arrangements. These changes are yet to be reflected in the LGPS regulations, so no allowance has been made in the calculations.

## Virgin Media ruling

In June 2023, the High Court found in the Virgin Media case that changes to member benefits in contracted out defined benefit pension schemes between 1996 and 2016 required an actuarial certificate in line with section 37 of the Pension Schemes Act 1993 and that changes without this certification are to be considered void. This requirement applies to past service rights and future service rights, and to changes to the detriment or benefit of scheme members. The judgement was appealed in June 2024 but the appeal was dismissed.

For the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Government Actuarial Department do not believe that there are any absent actuarial confirmations. Therefore, they do not expect any liability changes to arise following this judgement. The Government Actuarial Department will confirm that actuarial confirmations are available in due course.

The Employer's regular contributions to the Fund for the accounting period ending 31 March 2025 are estimated to £2.08m. The date of the last full actuarial valuation of Social Care Wales LGPS funded benefits was 31 March 2022 and the duration of liabilities is 22.1 years.

Social Care Wales is an admitted body to the Fund.

During 2022-23 discussions took place with the pension fund regarding our status as a member of the scheme. A review of the risk profile of the organisation was undertaken. A letter of comfort was provided to the trustees to support our status, a position supported by Welsh Government Public Bodies Unit. This is reflected in the significant increase in the discount rate assumed as reflected in the table below.

Key assumptions	31 March 2024 (% pa)	31 March 2023 (% pa)	31 March 2022 (% pa)
Discount rate	4.7	4.6	2.7
CPI inflation	2.6	2.6	2.9
Pension increases	2.6	2.6	2.9
Pension accounts revaluation rate	2.6	2.6	2.9
Salary increases	3.9	3.9	4.2

The change in risk profile also resulted in significant reduction in our Employer contribution rate as outlined below:

Financial Year	Employer Contribution Rate
2022-23	29.6%
2023-24	26.5%
2024-25	23.5%
2025-26	20.4%

### Mortality Assumption

The mortality assumptions are based on actual mortality experience of members within the Fund based on analysis carried out as part of the 2022 valuation and allow for expected future mortality improvements. Sample life expectancies at age 65 resulting from these mortality assumptions are shown below:

Assumed life expectancy at age 65	31 March 2024	31 March 2023
<b>Males</b>		
Pensioner member aged 65 at accounting date	21.0	21.6
Active member aged 45 at accounting date	22.3	22.9
<b>Females</b>		
Pensioner member aged 65 at accounting date	23.8	24.2
Active member aged 45 at accounting date	25.2	25.7

Asset allocation	Value at 31 March 2024			Value at 31 March 2023
	Quoted	Unquoted	Total	
Equities	65.5%	0.0%	65.5%	69.2%
Property	6.1%	0.0%	6.1%	6.8%
Government bonds	11.5%	0.0%	11.5%	10.3%
Corporate bonds	15.0%	0.0%	15.0%	12.2%
Multi Asset Credit	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Cash	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%	0.8%
Other	1.2%	0.0%	1.2%	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Reconciliation of funded status to the Statement of financial position	Value at 31 March 2024 (£M)	Value at 31 March 2023 (£M)
Fair value of assets	40.75	33.14
Present value of funded defined benefit obligation	(26.88)	(23.52)
<b>Funded status</b>	<b>13.87</b>	<b>9.62</b>
Unrecognised asset	(13.87)	(9.62)
Additional liability due to minimum funding requirement	(1.11)	0.00
<b>(Liability)/Asset recognised on the SOFP</b>	<b>(1.11)</b>	<b>0.00</b>

The split of the liabilities obligation at the last valuation date between the various categories of members was as follows:

- Active Member 51%
- Deferred Pensioners 18%
- Pensioners 31%

Paragraph 64 of IAS 19 as interpreted by IFRIC 14, limits the amount of net pension asset (surplus) that can be recognised on the Statement of Financial Position. Therefore the surplus of £13.87m (2023-24: £9.62m) has not been recognised as it is assumed there is no economic benefit from a refund of surplus as Social Care Wales provides a statutory service and is therefore unlikely to be able to exit the Fund.

However an additional liability of £1.11m has been recognised. This is in line with IFRIC 14 due to minimum funding requirements where employer deficit contributions are being made.

<b>Amounts recognised in comprehensive net expenditure</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2024 (£M)</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2023 (£M)</b>
<b>Operating cost</b>		
Current service cost <sup>(1)</sup>	1.43	2.76
Past service cost (incl. curtailments)	0.00	0.00
Settlement cost	0.00	0.00
<b>Financing cost</b>		
Interest on net defined benefit liability/(asset) before asset restriction	(0.49)	(0.01)
Interest on unrecognised asset	0.44	0.00
<b>Pension cost recognised in net expenditure</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>2.75</b>
<b>Remeasurements in other comprehensive expenditure</b>		
Return on plan assets (in excess of) that recognised in net interest	(2.27)	2.54
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to change in financial assumptions	(0.57)	(15.90)
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to change in demographic assumptions	(0.40)	(0.04)
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to liability experience	0.31	2.49
Adjustment (gains)/losses due to restriction of surplus	3.81	9.62
Adjustment (gains)/losses due to minimum funding requirement	1.11	0.00
<b>Total amount recognised in other comprehensive expenditure</b>	<b>1.99</b>	<b>(1.29)</b>
<b>Total amount recognised in total comprehensive expenditure</b>	<b>3.37</b>	<b>1.46</b>
(1) Allowance for administration expenses included in current service cost (£M)	0.04	0.03

<b>Changes to the present value of the defined benefit obligation</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2024 (£M)</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2023 (£M)</b>
<b>Opening defined benefit obligation</b>	<b>23.52</b>	<b>33.14</b>
Current service cost	1.43	2.76
Interest expense on defined benefit obligation	1.12	0.90
Contributions by participants	0.59	0.46
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to changes in financial assumptions	(0.57)	(15.90)
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to changes in demographic assumptions	(0.40)	(0.04)
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to liability experience	0.31	2.49
Net benefits paid out	0.88	(0.29)
Past service cost (incl. curtailments)	0.00	0.00
Net increase in liabilities from disposals/acquisitions	0.00	0.00
Settlements	0.00	0.00
<b>Closing defined benefit obligation</b>	<b>26.88</b>	<b>23.52</b>

<b>Changes to the fair value of assets during the year</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2024 (£M)</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2023 (£M)</b>
<b>Opening fair value of assets</b>	<b>33.14</b>	<b>32.65</b>
Interest income on assets	1.61	0.91
Remeasurement gains(losses) on assets	2.27	(2.54)
Contributions by the employer	2.26	1.95
Contributions by the participants	0.59	0.46
Net benefits paid out	0.88	(0.29)
Net increase in assets from disposals & acquisitions	0.00	0.00
Settlements	0.00	0.00
<b>Closing fair value of assets</b>	<b>40.75</b>	<b>33.14</b>

<b>Actual return on assets</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2024 (£M)</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2023 (£M)</b>
Interest income on assets	1.61	0.91
Remeasurement gains /(losses) on assets	2.27	(2.54)
<b>Actual return on assets</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>(1.63)</b>

### Estimated pension expense in future periods

#### Funded Benefits

We provide an estimate of the charges to comprehensive expenditure on the provision of services in future periods, based on the assumptions outlined above.

<b>Analysis of amount charged in other comprehensive expenditure on the provision of services next year</b>	<b>Year ending 31 March 2025 (£M)</b>
Current service cost	1.40
Interest on net defined benefit liability	0.00
<b>Total estimated pension expense</b>	<b>1.40</b>

Allowance for administration expenses included in the Current service cost (£M) 0.04

Estimated pensionable payroll over the period (£M) 8.86

#### Sensitivity Analysis

The approximate impact of changing the key assumptions on the present value of the funded defined benefit obligation as at 31 March 2024 and the projected service cost for the year ending 31 March 2025 is set out below.

In each case only the assumption mentioned is altered; all other assumptions remain the same as summarised above.

We have not included sensitivity of unfunded benefits (where applicable) on materiality grounds.

## Funded LGPS Benefits

<b>Discount rate assumption</b> Adjustment to discount rate	<b>+0.1% p.a.</b>	<b>Base figure</b>	<b>-0.1% p.a.</b>
Present value of total obligation (£M)	26.29	26.88	27.47
% change in present value of total obligation	-2.2%	-	2.2%
Projected service cost (£M)	1.33	1.40	1.47
Approximate % change in projected service cost	-4.8%	-	5.0%

<b>Rate of general increase in salaries</b> Adjustment to salary increase rate	<b>+0.1% p.a.</b>	<b>Base figure</b>	<b>-0.1% p.a.</b>
Present value of total obligation (£M)	26.93	26.88	26.83
% change in present value of total obligation	0.2%	-	-0.2%
Projected service cost (£M)	1.40	1.40	1.40
Approximate % change in projected service cost	0.0%	-	0.0%

<b>Rate of increase to pensions in payment and deferred pensions assumption, and rate of revaluation of pension accounts assumption</b> Adjustment to pension increase rate	<b>+0.1% p.a.</b>	<b>Base figure</b>	<b>-0.1% p.a.</b>
Present value of total obligation (£M)	27.42	26.88	26.34
% change in present value of total obligation	2.0%	-	-2.0%
Projected service cost (£M)	1.47	1.40	1.33
Approximate % change in projected service cost	5.0%	-	-4.8%

<b>Post retirement mortality assumption*</b> Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	<b>-1 year</b>	<b>Base figure</b>	<b>+1 year</b>
Present value of total obligation (£M)	27.58	26.88	26.18
% change in present value of total obligation	2.6%	-	-2.6%
Projected service cost (£M)	1.45	1.40	1.35
Approximate % change in projected service cost	3.8%	-	-3.8%

\* A rating of +1 year means that members are assumed to follow the mortality pattern of the base table for an individual that is 1 year older than them.

## 17. Provisions and Contingent Liabilities disclosed under IAS 37

The lease agreements in relation to our Cardiff and St Asaph Offices potentially requires that any alterations, additions and partitioning should be removed on cessation of the lease. No provision has been made as this obligation is uncertain and is contingent on the landlord requesting the removal.

## 18. Contingent Asset

At 31 March 2024 there were £35k of registration fees outstanding. Based on experience to date only after contacting the registered person we are able to substantiate whether the registered person has not paid due to leaving the sector (and the outstanding fee will not be pursued) or if it is a genuine debt in relation to an ongoing registrant.

Therefore the £35k outstanding is not treated as income in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as we are not sure of the precise economic value of this amount as on an individual basis, we will not know whether the income will materialise until contact is made and a response is received from the registered person.

## 19. Related Party Transactions

During the year Social Care Wales has had various material transactions with the Welsh Government which is regarded as a related party. The transactions and balances were as follows:

	2023-24	2022-23
Income	£28.81m	£27.36m
Expenditure	£0.56m	£0.72m
Debtor balance as at 31 March	£0.176m	£0.144m
Creditor balance as at 31 March	-	-



## Social Care Wales Board Members and Staff

No employees including key management personnel or board members, nor their related parties were involved directly or indirectly in any transactions with Social Care Wales during the year, apart from normal expense claims, salary payments etc. Information about key management personnel is included in the Remuneration Report.

However, for transparency we do disclose material transactions with organisations in which senior staff or members or any of their family held positions of influence during the year.

Two members of our board were members of the Regional Partnership Boards which received grant funding from Social Care Wales in the form of Regional Facilitation Grant. Three members of our board were also members of Local Health Boards which we also provided funding. In addition, two of our members were associates of Practice Solutions who we commissioned work with in 2023-24 but had no involvement in the work commissioned.

The transactions were as follows:

Board Member	Role	Organisation	Expenditure 2023-24 (£)	Expenditure 2022-23 (£)
Abigail Harris	Member	Cardiff & Vale Regional Partnership Board	94,844	235,462
Carl Cooper	Deputy Chair	Powys Regional Partnership Board	52,900	92,302
Helen Mary Jones and Jane Moore	Associate	Practice Solutions	45,376	54,464
Abigail Harri	Executive Director	Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	24,268	6,768
Carl Cooper	Chair	Powys Teaching Health Board	17,500	-
Mick Giannasi	Member	Powys Teaching Health Board	17,500	-

The transactions with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board includes the recharge of the remuneration of Abigail Harris of £6,768 as well as the funding provided of £17,500.

Please note that the payments in the table above were made to the nominated local authority being Vale of Glamorgan Council (Cardiff & Vale Regional Partnership Board) and Powys County Council (Powys Regional Partnership Board) in 2023-24.

## 20. Third Party Assets

Social Care Wales does not hold any third-party assets in which it acts as a custodian or a trustee.

## 21. Events after the reporting period

There are no events after the reporting period, which require adjustment to the 31 March 2024 financial statements.



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**  
Social Care **Wales**



Ariennir gan  
**Lywodraeth Cymru**  
Funded by  
**Welsh Government**

