



PUBLIC BOARD MEETING

28 January 2021

Virtual meeting

09:30 – 13:15

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To note and receive

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To discuss

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 29 April 2021



Gofal Cymdeithasol Cymru
Social Care Wales

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING

22 October 2020

Virtual Zoom meeting

09:15 - 13:30

Present:

Board Members:

Mick Giannasi
Abigail Harris
Carl Cooper (items 1-8)
Damian Bridgeman
Donna Hutton
Emma Britton
Grace Quantock
Jane Moore
Jo Kember
Kate Hawkins
Maria Battle
Peter Max
Rhian Watcyn Jones
Simon Burch
Trystan Pritchard

Social Care Wales Officers:

Sue Evans (Chief Executive Officer)
David Pritchard (Director of Regulation)
Sarah McCarty (Director of Improvement and Development)
Geraint Rowlands (Assistant Director Finance & ICT)
Jon Day (Assistant Director Workforce)
Kate Salter (Assistant Director Corporate Services)
Abu Askira (Engagement and Development Manager)
Malcolm Williams (Communication and Public Affairs Manager)
Rhianon Jones (HR and Wellbeing Manager)
Llinos Bradbury (Governance Senior Officer - minutes)

In attendance:

Aled Jones, Cymen (simultaneous translation)
Andrew Lycett
Bernie Davies
Daxa Varsani
Natalie Price

Items 6.1 and 6.2:

Julie Morgan, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services
Albert Heaney, Deputy Director General
Matthew Thomas, Welsh Government

Item 6.1

Vaughan Gething, Minister for Health and Social Service
Andrew Goodall, Director General for Health and Social Services
Helen Arthur, Welsh Government
Emma Coles, Welsh Government

HEIW Board and Officers:

Chris D.V. Jones	Alex Howells
Tina Donnelly	Julie Rogers
Ruth Hall	Eifion Williams

Gill Lewis
Heidi Phillips
John Hill-Tout
CJ Phillips

Pushpinder Mangat
Angela Parry
Nicola Johnson
Dafydd Bebb
Angie Oliver

Public session:

1. Welcome and Opening Comments from the Chair

- i. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that this was a virtual public Board meeting with simultaneous translation available. The Chair encouraged those who were able, to contribute in Welsh.
- ii. The Chair in particular offered a welcome to Andrew Lycett who has recently been appointed as the Director of Finance, Strategy and Corporate Services, and was observing the meeting prior to starting on 2 November. Bernie Davies was welcomed as she has an interest in public appointments and possibly becoming a Board member in future. Two new staff members, Cheryl Stevens and Olivia Mortimer were also welcomed as observers to the meeting as part of their induction to the organisation.

2. Apologies and declarations of interest

- i. No apologies were noted.
- ii. No new declarations of interest were noted.

3. Minutes of the Board meeting 16 Jul 2020

- i. The minutes of 16 July 2020 were discussed and **endorsed** by the Board as an accurate record of those meetings.

4. Action log and matters arising

- i. Members' attention was drawn to the rolling action log which provides updates on progress which has been made against outstanding actions since the last meeting.
- ii. SMC updated the Board on the action from the July meeting which was to establish a presence on the health Workforce and Organisational Development (WOD) Network. She informed the Board that there is a range of work being undertaken, both with health and within other settings to try and look at how the links to the jobs portal and the We Care campaign can be improved. Regular meetings have been set up with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) on the implementation of the Winter Pressures Workforce Strategy Plan. Work is also being undertaken with Careers Wales to support individuals at risk of redundancy. An update on the breadth

of work and activities in relation to recruitment and retention will be provided to the Improvement Committee at its March 2021 meeting.

- iii. The Chair referenced an action from the April meeting in relation to the Board's visibility to Social Care Wales Staff and how this can continue whilst working virtually. The Chair will attend the Regulation team meeting in November to thank them for their work on the registration of the domiciliary care workforce. There will then be more opportunities for Board members to attend meetings with staff, where there is a particular interest by Board members. Further discussions will be held at the next Chairs Coordinating Group (CCG) to develop a programme of engagement with staff.

ACTION

5. Update from Committee Chairs

- i. As Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, RWJ provided a summary of discussions at the most recent Committee meeting. In particular, she highlighted the introduction of new members to the Committee and the positive effect on the discussions at the meeting, the ability of staff to maintain the stability of the organisations whilst working from home and the standard and quality of the papers being presented at the meeting, which was appreciated by all Committee members. RWJ informed the Board that the Committee is maintaining oversight on the work in relation to website accessibility requirements and data protection which are ongoing pieces of work.
- ii. As Chair of the Improvement Committee, PM highlighted recent discussions at the Committee on the data strategy and the discovery phase, with publication expected shortly. The Committee also spent time reflecting on working more strategically and concluded that although the Committee Terms of Reference did not need changing, early years should receive more scrutiny in future. There were practical ideas on how the Committee should behave and operate differently including time at the end of each item to reflect on what could be done differently or improved. There will be further discussions on the Accolades at the December meeting and PM wished all those involved with the virtual broadcast every success.
- iii. As Chair of the Regulation and Standards Committee, SB highlighted the report on benchmarking against the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) good regulation standards which were fully met this year and demonstrated that the organisation is working in line with UK comparators. A review of the regulatory changes due to COVID-19 was undertaken and the Committee took a detailed look at the Fitness to Practise (FTP) review project, with an external review being undertaken over the coming months.

6.1 Launch of the Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care

- i. The Chair welcomed to the meeting the Minister for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething MS, the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, Julie Morgan MS, Andrew Goodall, Director General of Health and Social Services, Albert Heaney, Deputy Director General and the Board and Officers of HEIW to the meeting.

- ii. The Minister for Health and Social Services said that he was pleased to be able to join the meeting to speak to both Social Care Wales and HEIW and confirm the launch of the Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care, as committed to within A Healthier Wales. There was a clear need to signal a long-term ambition for health and social care and the workforce is a key driver in making that ambition a reality.
- iii. Social Care Wales and HEIW have worked well together and with stakeholders to produce the strategy. As with any strategy, people will want to say more and go further but from experience the most difficult part of any strategy is to move from the ideas to implementation. If the strategy is delivered it will make a real and significant difference.
- iv. The Minister said that he understood why the strategy has been delayed due to the current pandemic but it had been encouraging to see the way the health and social care system has gone about its task of keeping the people of Wales safe during the pandemic. Progress has already been made within leadership elements of the strategy and in particular the development of a compassionate leadership approach which focuses on understanding what staff require from their leaders.
- v. The Minister said effort which has gone in to managing the pandemic will inevitably take its toll in the future and there is a need to look after the well-being current workforce, even as we look to develop the workforce of the future. The workforce of the future are mostly already working in the system and therefore looking after them is important.
- vi. The Minister went on to highlight the high expectations for the strategy and that the partnership work that has got the strategy to this point will be just as important going forward. He said that the Workforce Strategy which he was launching has a range of priorities for the next six months which will be supported by a joint delivery plan. Looking ahead and to the speed of pace and the challenge in future, there will need to be a staff mix that allows a change to the way the system is delivered, to put the person at the centre of their care and to change the culture of the workforce in doing so. The challenges have accelerated and are more urgent now due to the pandemic.
- vii. The Minister said it was a pleasure to launch and confirm the strategy at the meeting and he looked forward to seeing how the strategy will help to deliver the health and social care system of the future that everyone wants to see. The Minister thanked Social Care Wales and HEIW for their work on the development of the strategy and the individuals currently undertaking the work across communities in Wales.
- viii. The Deputy Minister for Health and Social Care signalled the launch of the strategy as an important moment as the long term vision for the health and social care workforce; the Deputy Minister also acknowledged the delay to the launch of the strategy due to the current pandemic. She said that she was also encouraged that so much work has already been progressed during this difficult period and thanked both Social Care Wales and HEIW for progressing.
- ix. The Deputy Minister said that the importance of the strategy can't be understated. Social care workers have continued to deliver care and support in very challenging circumstances over the past period and she was grateful to them for their hard work

and dedication. Launching the strategy provides the opportunity to think about the wellbeing of the workforce

- x. The Chair thanked the Minister and Deputy Minister for their comments and acknowledged the amount of work that had been progressed prior to the launch of the strategy.
- xi. Dr. Chris Jones, Chair of HEIW, reflected on how difficult things had been in recent months but felt that the strategy provided hope. 1,900 people took part in the consultation and there were 200 formal responses which were reflected in the strategy. He paid tribute to the leadership provided by the executive team and the effort and commitment of those who worked with tremendous commitment to ensure that the partnership working is the best it can be between HEIW and Social Care Wales.
- xii. Dr. Jones emphasised that real traction will not be gained unless both organisations are also working in partnership with those delivering health and social care across Wales. The aspiration within the strategy is to deliver a workforce that is trained, prepared, supported, led and valued in the best way to provide the best opportunities to give the best of care. Collectively, health and social care are the two arms that support our communities, and the pandemic has emphasised how they are both valued by the population, although this must not be taken for granted.
- xiii. He thanked both Ministers for their leadership, compassion, passion and care during this period in time and committed both organisations to building strong partnership in delivering A Healthier Wales.
- xix. The Minister thanked the organisations for the response and looked forward to working with the organisations. The Chair thanked all those who attended for the launch. At that stage, the Minister, The Director General and members of the HEIW Board and senior leadership team left the meeting.

6.2 Accountability with Julie Morgan MS, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services

- i. The Chair welcomed the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services and Albert Heaney, Deputy Director General to the Board's annual accountability meeting. The Chair explained that meeting would follow the same format as previous years with a presentation from Committee Chairs highlighting achievements and challenges faced during 2019-20. The Chair would also touch on the response to COVID-19 and look ahead at the priorities for 2020-21 and beyond.
- ii. As Chair of the Regulation and Standards Committee, SB highlighted the following issues in his presentation:
 - The Register has been expanded with the addition of domiciliary care workers, which is on track against the ambition to have over 50,000 care workers on the register by 2022;

- In response to COVID-19, the vast amount of information created has been synthesised and targeted appropriately to those on the register;
- Breakdown of care workers by postcode has been provided to the NHS as they prepare for the vaccination programme against COVID-19 which would not have been possible had they not been registered;
- Public protection remains a priority with 211 final hearings held during 2019-20, an increase of 44% when compared to 2018-19. 26 people were removed from the register;
- Cost of holding hearings has created budgetary pressures as the number and complexity of hearings continue to increase;
- 88% of social work training places were filled which is sufficient for current needs but attracting new social workers into the sector remains a challenge across the whole of the UK;
- Support has been expanded to the Open University as part of the 'Grow Our Own' initiative which provides further opportunities for those already working in the sector to become social workers.

iii. As Chair of the Improvement Committee, PM highlighted:

- The extensive engagement work undertaken to enable the development of the workforce strategy for Health and Social Care;
- The WeCare campaign, which has raised the profile of the sector with over 50,000 visitors to the website and 26 stories created by those working in the sector being viewed over 700,000 times;
- The continuation of the annual Social Care Accolades which will be broadcast in November following a postponement of the initial ceremony in April;
- Continued administration of the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP) with an investment of £7million pounds being matched by an additional £3million provided by Local Authorities;
- New qualifications implemented in September 2019 for levels 1, 2 and 3 with levels 4 and 5 becoming available later this year;
- Training and resources provided to support the outcomes focussed work with online resources being developed for the improved outcomes of children programme and dementia training resources;
- National social care data portal launched with further work on scoping a data strategy scheduled during this year.

iv. As Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, RWJ highlighted:

- The induction of a new Chair and two new Board members during 2019-20, plus the recruitment of an independent member of Audit and Risk Committee;
- The work of the Committee in scrutinising the business plan on a quarterly basis plus its role in monitoring and checking that the organisations arrangements for risk management and internal control are adequate;
- Work has been commissioned to assess how Corporate Services work effectively across the organisation;
- An unqualified opinion was received from Audit Wales on the annual accounts which were laid at the Senedd in July;
- Substantial assurance ratings were received on 6 out of 8 internal audits which were conducted

- Engagement with partners from across the sector to ensure that the organisation remains effective;
- The focus provided on staff wellbeing as indicated by low levels of staff turnover and sickness absence;
- Within a week, the organisation ensured that all staff were able to work from home from the 23 March and provide stability through the pandemic period.

v. In summarising the organisation's response to the onset of COVID-19 and how this had impacted on the organisation's future plans, the Chair highlighted:

- The speed at which the organisation adapted to the onset of COVID-19; the business plan 2020-21 was revised to take into account the pandemic with a focus on empowering the workforce, enhancing services through managers and leaders, and supporting strategic leaders by providing evidence and skills;
- The speed with which the regulatory framework was adapted to create a temporary register for Social Workers, to provide longer time for those wanting to register and to adjust some registration requirements to make it easier for the workforce to manage the implications of COVID-19 ;
- That the organisation has established a one stop shop for COVID-19 information and resources for the sector;
- The focus on the wellbeing of the workforce, ensuring that appropriate resources were available;
- The development of an employee assistance programme due to launch in December following additional investment from the Welsh Government;
- The rapid introduction of the Social Care Worker Identification Card which allowed the workforce to get the recognition they deserved as key workers and resulted in positive feedback from the sector;
- The focus which the organisation had provided on maintaining its standards of governance during the pandemic response.

vi. Looking ahead, the Chair emphasised the importance of the consultation which was currently being conducted on the organisation's strategic priorities for the next 5 years. This focuses on the following priorities;

- continuing to play a central role in the pandemic and the recovery of the sector;
- improving outcomes for adults and children who rely on care and support;
- developing proposals to support employees, employers and the workforce through an enhanced provision of services;
- supporting managers and leaders with the evidence and knowledge needed to make the right strategic decisions;
- continuing to extend the register;
- improving access to information for the workforce and better supporting employers through the establishment of an employer liaison service;
- continuing to support the Welsh Government's early years and childcare 10 year workforce plan, which includes the registration of the workforce if that is the decision made by the Welsh Government;
- implementing the Workforce Strategy;
- continuing to raise the profile of the sector through We Care Wales and celebrate success via the Accolades;

- improving the use of evidence and intelligence through the research strategy and the data strategy.
- vi. The Deputy Minister responded to the presentations, saying that they showed the breadth and importance of the work being undertaken. She congratulated the organisation for the speed and flexibility with which it had responded to the pandemic and highlighted the importance of strong and effective governance in the process.
- vii. The Deputy Minister welcomed the emphasis on raising the profile of the sector, commenting that many more people were now aware of social care than previously. In particular, she reflected on the advantages which the registration of the domiciliary care workforce had provided, not least being able to share data to help with the future vaccination programme. The Social Care Worker Identification Card was also a great step forward allowing the workforce to use registration as a benefit to them.
- viii. The Deputy Minister asked about the registration of social workers and the challenges of filling courses in future and what could be done to improve the situation. SE responded, saying that a number of ideas were currently being considered and that the responses to the strategic plan consultation will help design the priorities in this area moving forward. This included ideas to address parity of esteem in order to attract people to become a qualified social worker. There is currently an unlevel playing field and enhancing bursaries could make a difference. At the same time, Universities have faced challenges in terms of their finances, and this has had implications for staffing. There have been extensive and productive dialogue between Social Care Wales and the Universities to emphasise the importance of the undergraduate scheme in replenishing the social work workforce and this has resulted in staff who might otherwise have been laid off being retained. Other routes are also being explored such as a social services practitioner going through the Open University to become social workers.
- ix. DP added that Wales has been resilient and relatively successful in this area over recent years due to the effective partnership working between Local Authorities, Social Care Wales and Higher Education Institutions (HEI). The We Care campaign has been promoting social work and raising the status of the profession and Local Authorities have continued promote progression from the wider social care workforce into social work roles. As a result, Wales has fared better when compared to the national UK level where there is greater concern. Work is ongoing at a UK level to understand the numbers of new social workers coming through into the profession and it is becoming clear that incentives to train as a social worker have lagged over time in comparison to other professions.
- x. SMC mentioned that one of the actions within the Workforce Strategy was the need for a workforce plan for a number of occupations, and Social Workers were identified as one of the four key occupations needing priority attention. This action is already being progressed and a workforce plan for social work will be developed during 2020-21; this will cover all the areas within the workforce strategy, from initial attraction through to ongoing retention, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), leadership and workforce planning.

- xi. A steering group from across the sector has been established and is working to understand the range of challenges being faced. This includes understanding what can be learnt from the data and research at various stages (e.g., attraction, supporting through degree programmes, grow your own schemes, etc.) and how this can be supported through the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP) and other sources of funding. This also covers those already working as social workers and extending the time that they work in the sector, as retention isn't as strong as it should be for a range of factors. One element that is progressing this year is supporting the Post Qualifying (PQ) learning that will be pulled together into a workforce plan aligned to the workforce strategy.
- xii. EB drew upon her own experience as a qualified social worker and said that the approach to the PQ route is important and needs to be enhanced for the progression of current social workers. EB also questioned whether the bursary route was always the right route as this tended to attract people to the course who did not ultimately want to become a social worker; there may be an opportunity to focus in on attracting the right people through Local Authorities and the Open University. EB felt that a lot of social workers reach the burn out phase very quickly and were unable to cope physically and emotionally with full time work. Many of those would like to continue but there is a lack of flexibility (e.g. in term so the availability of suitable part-time opportunities) which mean that people leave the profession.
- xiii. JM said that it was important not to lose the focus on the social worker role amidst the wider focus on social care workers and felt that it was to Social Care Wales' credit that the importance of the social worker role hasn't been lost amongst the volume of work.
- xiv. From a further education perspective, KH said that people are often making choices between a health or a social work career and there is a need to make the career pathway in social work much more visible. By way of comparison, it is much clear to people the various routes that a nursing career can take. Echoing previous comments on PQ, a continuing professional education and learning framework needs to signpost the different tiers of social work that people could become a part of. As people often make the choice to become a social worker at a mature stage 'grow your own' schemes and the open University are particularly important.
- xv. The Deputy Minister thanked the Board members for their perspective and noted the lack of availability for part time work for social workers and the Open University route to becoming a social worker. The wellbeing of the workforce is a concern for the Deputy Minister and with many working for independent providers, she wondered how those workers are reached and their ability to access training.
- xvi. SE responded by saying that Social Care Wales is well known for its collaborative approach and has regular conversations with Care Forum Wales, the National Provider Forum and ADSS Cymru. The Register offers the opportunity for direct communication with those registered and they receive regular e-bulletins. These have seen a significant increase in readership during COVID-19 as people have seen Social Care Wales as a 'one-stop-shop' to gain the information required for their roles. In terms of training and learning and the sharing of notable practice, this is done through a whole system approach engaging with all parts of the sector.

- xvii. SMc added that wellbeing had emerged as a key focus within the Workforce Strategy and since the pandemic, this has been a key priority for the organisation. A wellbeing stakeholder network has been established, which provides an opportunity to share intelligence, develop an understanding of the workforce wellbeing challenges and explore how partners can be responding collectively and pool resources to support wellbeing.
- xviii. When the Employee Assistance Programme is launched later this year, the breadth of the network can be used to help get the message to managers and the front-line workers alike. Over the coming months, it will be important to keep communicating the range of support that is available as well as listening to where new needs might emerge; as an example, peer support is coming through as being important at the moment as managers are valuing the opportunities to come together with their peers to share the challenges that they are facing.
- xix. PM explained that he works for a social care provider as a Responsible Individual (RI) and has a particular understanding of that role and regulations. He wondered whether as the RI role is a requirement for all social care organisations, there is an opportunity to use the role as a focal point to help with the alignment of the workforce strategy and improving the wellbeing of the workforce.
- xx. DH said that the pandemic has highlighted key issues for the workforce which needed to be monitored due to the impact on equality. Employers have been encouraging people to work for one employee in order to improve infection control but the reality is that as a result of zero hours contracts, many employees need more than one job to make a living. Time will need to be spent looking at the impact of the pandemic on the workforce. The majority of the social care workforce is dedicated to what they do and are prepared to go the extra mile but are frightened both for themselves and the potential impact on their families.
- xxi. Whilst she would have liked to have continued the discussion, the Deputy Minister indicated that she would need to leave for her next appointment. The Chair thanked her for her continued support for the sector and the organisation which was tangible and greatly appreciated.
- xxii.. She in turn thanked the Board for sharing their ideas and perspectives, which will be followed up in due course where appropriate. The Deputy Minister also thanked the Chair and SE for the leadership they had provided during this difficult period and at that stage, left the meeting together with her officials.

7. Business Plan: Quarter 2 progress report

- i. KS outlined the purpose of the paper which was to provide the Board with updates on performance against the Business Plan at the six-month stage. Members would also be asked to approve an additional activity which related to the establishment of an Employee Assistance Scheme for the private and voluntary sector workforce.

- ii. KS drew members attention to the overall status of progress where there are 17 targets that require additional support. These are mainly due to the impact of COVID-19 and related to:
- the planned engagement with the adult care home managers who are able to register as part of the extension of the register;
 - the ability to hold final fitness to practise hearings;
 - the number of bursary applications;
 - a number of decisions outside the organisation's control such as the transition programme for early years;
 - a number of actions relating to external commissioning and activities awaiting the results of procurement processes to complete;
 - capacity within the organisation to deliver the work.
- iii. In relation to the number of bursaries within priority theme one, KS noted a timing issue here in terms of when students enrol onto courses; a clearer picture on this is expected over the next few months.
- iv. MB asked how hearings are being impacted by COVID-19 and what is being done to overcome that. KS responded, saying that 22 final hearings are currently scheduled up until the end of 2020-21. HD added that interim panel orders and more recently, FtP full hearings have been conducted remotely with members of the public and press able to attend where there is interest in doing so. The backlog of hearings have now been scheduled, together with new hearings which have emerged whilst the organisation has been working remotely. He emphasised that the indicator was rated as amber due to the impact of COVID-19.
- v. There were no further questions on priority theme one and KS moved the focus onto priority theme two. CC asked about the difference between the number of bursaries awarded in comparison to the number budgeted, whether this is an issue and if so, what is being done about it. GR responded, explaining that 175 bursaries have been allocated compared to the 227 budgeted. This has been a theme over the last three years where the numbers allocated has been lower than the numbers budgeted. During the last three years, the numbers allocated have varied between 190 and 200 which suggests that COVID-19 has had an additional impact this year.
- vi. SE said that following discussions on the Workforce Strategy and the new strategic plan, there was an increased focus on creating parity of esteem in comparison to health. CC responded building on previous comments and asked whether consideration is being given to how the bursary is applied and offered. SE explain that there was a particular focus in the workforce plan on qualified social workers. This will look at how people are attracted to the professional and looking at initiatives like 'grow your own' and the Open University provision. Bursaries are not the only issue, but it is a fact that in comparison other similar occupations, (e.g. nursing) there is a significant difference in the bursaries which are offered. SMC added that £1.6million of SCWWDP funding is currently going to social worker PQ and 'grow your own' schemes. GR added that the allocation to the Open University has increased this year from 40 to 60.
- vii. The Chair wanted to check his understanding that as a result of the lower level of bursary activity a £379k underspend is predicted in the allocated budget. He

wondered where the money would be re-allocated if the predicted underspend does materialise. GR answered that in regards to the specific £379k, the Leadership Team will be considering areas where investment can be increased in line with priorities, for example, digital, the wellbeing of the workforce and additional costs for working from home. The projection is that the final overall out-turn will be within the 2% budget carry over at year end.

- viii. The Chair felt that as this money was set aside to invest in the workforce, it was important that the surplus was spent in a way which was broadly consistent with the original intention. SE reassured the Board that the budget is aligned to the priorities which the Board has set and that any surpluses would be re-allocated in line with those priorities; there is a dedicated session on 28 October where the Leadership Group will be reviewing the current situation and identifying where adjustments are needed and what the potential budget scenarios might be going forward.
- ix. KH asked whether the organisation is adequately resourced for the qualifications activities within the business plan due to the importance of qualifications during the COVID-19 period. KS responded, saying that internal resources have been increased over the last year and the planned work for this year in terms of digital learning involves staff from across the organisation, not just those working on the qualifications. In terms of digital inclusion, the organisation is mindful of the need to further develop both online and offline resources. SMC also provided additional reassurance on the resources and capacity available internally for this work. There is a lot of work happening with Qualifications Wales and the Consortium to work through the challenges from COVID-19 and what it means for the support of assessment and placements of qualifications.
- x. AH asked about the workload of the FtP team as the number of open cases grows each quarter and whether there is confidence that they will be able to keep on top of the increasing workload. HD responded, noting that since the registration of domiciliary care workers, the number of referrals has risen, as has the backlog of final hearings needing to be arranged. He said that 18 months ago, there was recruitment above the number needed at that time to the FtP team in preparation for the anticipated rise in the number of cases and referrals which means that there is currently adequate resource in place to support this work. COVID-19 has changed the way the FtP team are having to work and obtain witness statements virtually. As part of the strategic financial plan and in preparation for the adult care home workers joining the register, there will be further recruitment into this team next year.
- xi. There were no further questions on priority theme two. KS introduced priority theme three and emphasised that there were some activities graded as amber, mostly related to capacity. Additional resources are currently being recruited into the research and data team to start in November which will allow more capacity to drive those activities forward.
- xii. JM asked for further detail in relation to the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on vulnerable children and young people which is considering the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable people. SMC responded, stating that there has been continued engagement with MAG when it has met. There have recently been discussions with colleagues in Welsh Government around how we can best support the challenges of

children who are or at risk of being looked after. There are several potential options being considered and SMC agreed to update further once there is clarity. **ACTION**

- xiii. There were no further questions in relation to priority theme three. Moving onto priority theme four, KS highlighted the work in relation to website accessibility with a further update being presented to the December Audit and Risk Committee meeting. There were no questions in relation to priority theme 4 from the Board and the Chair invited SE to comment broadly on the Business Plan update.
- xiv. SE said that priorities have been refocussed and some areas will progress more slowly than anticipated due to COVID-19. Executives are involved in a number of Welsh Government groups looking, not just at the response to COVID-19, but also the long-term future of social care, which has an impact on the resources available to support planned work internally.
- xv. MB agreed with SE's comments in relation to resources and said that in the first wave of COVID-19 everyone had focused on responding to the impact of the pandemic at pace. In another organisation she was involved in, staff had asked for a firebreak to enable them to re-group and re-prioritise as a lot is being asked of them.
- xvi. The Chair echoed the need to take time to reflect and take stock. He said that through the Chairs Coordinating Group, he would ask the Committees to take stock of the legacy of the of the COVID response to ensure that there are no long-term issues which have been over-looked. **ACTION**
- xv. GR presented the budget report and informed the Board that income is in-line with the projected budget. A lot more registration income is expected during the second half of the year due to renewal payments expected for domiciliary care workers registered.
- xvi. Expenditure is in line with budget. In terms of projected outturn for the year, as previously discussed, the grants programme budget has a £379k projected underspend; this is due to less uptake of the bursaries, which then effects the Practice Learning Opportunity Funding (PLOF), and the fact that Universities are planning placements later in the year than usual.
- xvii. For the Workforce Regulation budget there is a current underspend of £20k and the outturn has been reduced to reflect staff vacancies in the Regulation department. It is anticipated that 22 final FtP hearings will be held in the coming months and therefore there has been no change to the outturn figure.
- xviii. The Improvement and Development budget is underspent at the moment due to a matter of timing although an overspend is projected by year end due to additional investment in some programmes of work. The early years and childcare budget is on target and expected to be so at the end of the financial year. In the Strategy and Business Support there is a predicted overspend of £27k due to maternity cover budget pressures in salaries and additional investment in website accessibility.
- xix. Overall, there is a projected budget underspend of £250k, with the Leadership team shortly to consider areas for additional investment, in line with business plan priorities. GR also highlighted the risks in relation to the PLOF with further information expected

from HEIs on when placements will be undertaken, this should become clearer during quarter three.

- xx. There were no questions from the Board on the budget update.
- xxi. RJ highlighted the HR dashboard in appendix 3 and assured the Board that the indicators at the moment shows that the workforce has adapted well and continues to do so. There have been challenges and there will need to be a strong and continuous emphasis on the wellbeing of staff, particularly as the autumn and winter months approach. An internal winter wellbeing plan will be launched the week of the 26 October. This has been developed in partnership with the Health and Wellbeing Group and the Staff Partnership Council with the aim that staff feel well supported, engaged and connected, with the opportunity to prioritise their own wellbeing at this challenging time.
- xxii. Recruitment and induction has continued virtually and feedback received from those involved has been positive. A joint leadership and management programme has been launched this month: this has been developed alongside a group of other Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies (WGSB) and will be run over the next 3 years for line managers and strategic leaders with the programme being underpinned by the well-being goals within the Well-being and Future Generations Act.
- xxiii. RWJ asked how the organisation was going to support staff who needed to work in an office environment for personal or operational reasons. RJ answered, noting that following a recent round of risk assessments there were a small number staff whose wellbeing was a cause for concern due to the impact of working from home and discussions have begun with their managers on whether there could be an opportunity to open up some office space for occasional use. The Business Continuity Team has been asked to develop guidelines to ensure that any potential risks are minimised.
- xxiv. There were no further questions on the HR update.
- xxv. Members agreed that they had **scrutinised** and **approved** the progress against the Business Plan 2020-21 at the six-month stage.
- xxvi. Members **agreed** that an additional activity be included within priority theme one, (Social Care and Early Years Workforce) which relates to the development of an Employee Assistance Scheme for the private and voluntary sector workforce.

8. Annual Equality Report 2019-20

- i. The Chair provided the context to the report and emphasised the duty on the organisation to publish annually an equality report. The Equality and Human Rights Commission wrote to all public bodies in March stating that due to the impact of COVID-19 they were not requiring public bodies to publish their annual reviews. However, as an organisation Social Care Wales had decide to proceed to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the current situation in advance of preparation of a new strategic equality plan that will align with the new strategic plan from April 2021. The Chair invited AA to provide an overview of the report.

- ii. AA highlighted to the Board the statement within the report on where the organisation stands on racism and issues brought to attention through Black Lives Matter.
- iii. In terms delivery against the objective in the existing strategic equality plan, AA highlighted the following issues which he felt were significant:
- Objective 1 – the ‘you and your social care worker leaflet’ was translated into the 14 languages most commonly spoken in Wales in order to promote awareness of code of professional practice;
 - Objective 2 – a guidance document was produced on how the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and the UN Principles for Older People can work alongside each other;
 - Objective 3 – the ambition to create a more diverse and more representative social care workforce remains a challenge; the We Care campaign is the primary lever in helping to achieve this;
 - Objective 6 – the organisation has made further progress in improving the accessibility of the corporate website and work is underway to identify what needs to be strengthened and publish an action plan to support this work;
 - Procurement – Social Care Wales has committed to the development of a sustainable risk assessment tool and used the recent tender exercise for the Employee Assistance Programme for the social care workforce to test out some possible questions.
 - Black Lives Matter – the report contains a statement setting out how the organisation is responding to the movement.
- iv. The Chair thanked AA for the overview and asked Members for their questions and comments.
- v. MB said that she was encouraged to see the passion which the organisation has for this subject and the relevance of the actions being taken. She shared information about a governance initiative which she had set up in another organisation which involved the development of a BAME Board Advisory Group. The two vice-chairs sit on the main Board and are overseeing the development of a BAME network. AA thanked MB for her comments and reflected on the need to see how more networks can be created and embedded both internally and within the sector.
- vi. DB said he wanted to ensure that the organisation was the best that it could be in terms of digital inclusion and suggested some time be spent at a future Board Development Session upskilling on digital inclusion so that members could become digital champions. The Chair agreed to discuss this further at the next Chairs Coordinating Group meeting. **ACTION**
- vii. EB added her support to the idea that members should become digital inclusion champions. She was also pleased to see the Black Lives Matter statement and associated actions within the report. EB shared a recent experience of recruitment and asked whether a similar initiative could be adapted for social care. EB also felt that there was more the Board could be doing to help support efforts to improve diversity through vlogs and blogs. AA thanked EB for her comments and said that he

would like to pick up with EB the recruitment initiatives mentioned outside the meeting. **ACTION**

- viii. AA mentioned that a cross cutting organisational equality and diversity group has recently been established within the organisation and this group will help in taking all these initiatives forward.
- ix. CC referred to the data within appendix 1 of the paper which profiles the workforce in terms of protected characteristics and noted the high percentage of contributors who had not provided information. This raised a question about how dependable the data is as a basis for decision making. The Chair was also interested to know whether this was a process issue in terms of how the data is collected or whether it was a cultural issue that needed to be addressed.
- x. RJ responded stating that the lack of completion does reduce the validity of the data. When new staff join the organisation, they are asked to complete the equality and diversity profile on the system. Newer members of staff seem to be doing this. The issue seems to be with those staff who have been employed for some time and it may simply be a case of reaching out to them to complete the data and emphasising the importance of having an accurate analysis. The Chair requested further updates on how this is being progressed through the quarterly HR reports **ACTION**.
- xi. JM said that the report was helpful and encouraging. However, in terms of the future workforce, there has been very little change in the diversity of student social workers over the last 3 years and wanted to know what work is being done to address this.
- xii. AA responded to CC's comments and said that the data on students has been taken from the annual monitoring report for social work and committed to providing a more comprehensive picture prior to the publication of the report **ACTION**.
- xiii. Responding to JM's comments, AA said that as part of the development work on the strategic equality plan, there was a focus on issues of diversity within the workforce and where there are levers which Social Care Wales can use to increase diversity, whether through bursaries, or by looking at the routes into social work, these will be tested out with stakeholders prior to the consultation of the strategic equality plan.
- xiv. SB said that he was pleased to see the anti-racist practice statement at the start of the report and the actions to deliver that working with the wider sector.
- xv. RWJ asked that a cross reference to the Welsh Language standards be included within this report so that readers are aware that Welsh language issues are being dealt with elsewhere. AA agreed to include the reference to Welsh language in the report prior to publication. **ACTION**
- xvi. The Chair thanked AA for producing such a clear and 'easy to read' report and commended him on the energy and passion which he had shown in responding to members questions.
- xvii. Board members **approved** the publication of the Annual Equality Report.

9. Equal Pay Audit 2019-20

- i. RJ highlighted the purpose of the report which is to:
 - ensure that the organisation's pay system is transparent;
 - ensure employees receive equal pay for equal work;
 - identify and explain any differences in pay;
 - report on any gender pay gap.
- ii. The gender pay gap is currently higher than the UK average and higher than the previous year. RJ pointed out that in-depth analysis on protected characteristics is difficult due to the absence of a complete set of data from staff; however, on the basis of the information that is available there is no signs of any discrimination.
- iii. DB reflected again on why people were not completing the monitoring data and referenced a report written by the Whitehall and Industry Group which focuses on encouraging people to declare their disability and other protected characteristics. He said that he would be happy to share information about the methodologies used to make people feel safer in declaring their characteristics. **ACTION**
- iv. There were no further questions from Members.
- vi. Members **noted** and **discussed** the report.

10. Update on the Social Care Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP)

- i. JD presented the report and drew members attention to points 1.4 and 1.5 within the report. The initial plan for 2020/21 was to undertake a full review of the grant and align the grant with the themes of the Workforce Strategy. However, the pandemic has caused significant challenges for local authorities in being able to deliver on the priorities agreed in the plan in March, prior to the initial lockdown. All services have reported a need to refocus the original plans that were submitted in February to shift to a more digitally enabled approach and highlighted the problem associated with the re-deployment of staff to other areas, such as front line services and the 'track and trace' system.
- ii. JD highlighted the level of support and co-operation which had been received from local authority workforce teams, in responding to calls for evidence, in providing intelligence and in facilitating the mid-year monitoring report which was brought forward by 6 weeks. In particular, local authorities have provided comprehensive intelligence on the shift to digital solution allowing an understanding of the changes. The intelligence from the mid-year reports, digital surveys and monthly meetings will be used to re-focus the grant letter for 2021-22. This will be produced in time for discussion and approval at the December Improvement Committee with a view to implementation from April 2021.
- iii. The full review of the grant in line with the Workforce Strategy will be undertaken during 2021-2.

- iv. The Chair asked for questions or comments
- v. AH said that she understood the impact of COVID-19 on this work and supported the approach suggested. She asked whether there is stipulation that the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) needs to sign off the plan and if not whether this was something to consider as a means of ensuring there is visibility amongst all partners.
- vi. MB welcomed this suggestion as the issue should be visible to RPB leaders. JD responded noting that there is a clear element in the remit that asks the regions to identify the governance process and a request that the RPB has sight of the submission. However, there are complexities in asking the RPBs to sign the submission off because of the 30% contribution of funding from Local Authorities to the overall grant. AH agreed that the sign-off at RPB level would be difficult but agreed that the Chairs of the RPBs should be getting sight of the letter as a key element of the workforce agenda. JD agreed to reflect the conversation in the review of the Grant Letter for 2021-22.
- vi. PM suggested that if the Chair of the RPB is not sighted on the SCWWDP plan, then assurance cannot be provided that the governance is effective. JD explained that three signatures are currently required on the endorsement form - from the lead finance director, the lead workforce manager for the region and the lead director of social services. He suggested that a fourth signature could be added from the Chair of the RPB, who could be asked would be a sign off that they had seen the plan as part of the governance structure of the RPB. SE re-emphasised the point that it would be difficult to have RPB sign off as this is a specific grant for social care; however, sight of the plan would be good practice. In the longer term, RPBs would benefit from having sight of the total spend on learning and development across health and social care. It was agreed to discuss this issue further at the December Improvement Committee meeting. **ACTION**
- vii. JM asked whether there had been sharing of innovative approaches to promote consistency across local authorities. JD answered, saying that there were monthly meetings where there were opportunities to share good practice and ideas; data has also been collected from the digital survey and this has been shared with the network. Where people have been asked to respond quickly, there have been inconsistencies; some authorities were further ahead in their digital journeys prior to the pandemic and have been able to build upon that. There are national initiatives as part of this year's Business Plan that seek to pull together the digital initiatives at a national level whilst being mindful of the work already being done on a local level to build upon this. The biggest issue for the sector in the move to digital is investment in infrastructure and the skill base of the workforce.
- viii. The Chair thanked JD for the report. The Board agreed that it **considered** the progress made to date on the refocus of Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP) and the plans for a full review in 2021.
- ix. Board **delegated** the detailed consideration of the remit for the 2021/2022 grant to the Improvement Committee and delegated authority to the Chair and CEO to sign off the grant letter, for this year only, given the timing of Board and Committee meetings.

11. Chairs Coordinating Group Terms of Reference

- i. The Chair provided context to the paper whereby, following a discussion on governance in December, it was concluded that there was a strong governance framework within the organisation but always room for improvement. A package of options was developed to strengthen governance, and some have already been put in place.
- ii. A discussion was held at the Board Development Session on 15 October on the potential benefits of developing a Board Assurance Framework and the Chair thanked the members for their contributions. The debate was helpful and detailed, and he had received positive feedback from Audit Wales. A decision record from the meeting is being prepared and will be shared with Members shortly. **ACTION**
- iii. Work is also ongoing looking for similar organisations who have adopted and found value in a Board Assurance Framework. The Board will be kept updated on this work. **ACTION**
- iv. In its meeting in July 2020, the Board agreed to develop a Chairs Coordinating Group (CCG) as forum which would bring together the Chairs of the Committees, the Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive to coordinate the work of the Board and Committees. The terms of reference were agreed although some reservations were expressed that this could become another Committee of the Board or take away some of the Board's responsibilities which was not intended. The first meeting of the CCG was held on 10 September and some time was spent reflecting upon the role and purpose of the Group and reviewing the terms of reference in light of those discussions.
- v. The report summarises those discussions and reflects the view which was reached by the Group that the Terms of Reference were broader than was necessary for the organisation's needs. On that basis, it was felt appropriate to propose revised Terms of Reference which provided a narrower the focus for the CCG as follows:
 - co-ordinate the work of the Board and Committees to ensure that they operate in a cohesive, effective and efficient way;
 - look back at the previous cycle to identify what went well and what might have been done better;
 - look forward to the next cycle to ensure that the activities of the Board and its Committees are co-ordinated and that any gaps are identified;
 - provide oversight of Board development, Board and Committee forward plan
- iii. The Group felt that it could take on other responsibilities on an ad-hoc basis but only if delegated to do so by the Board. The revised Terms of Reference reflect the core principles as discussed and identifying the types of work which could be delegated to the Group if the Board considered that appropriate.
- iv. There were no questions or comments from members.

- v. Board members agreed that they had **discussed** and **approved** the revised terms of reference for the Chairs Coordinating Group.

12. Key messages from Chief Executive and Directors

- i. SE highlighted the following to the Board:

- A wellbeing action plan is being developed for staff with ideas from across the organisation alongside the Health and Wellbeing Group, the Business Continuity Group and the Staff Partnership Council to have a range of activities to support staff over winter. The action plan will be placed on the portal when ready; **ACTION**
- A number of meetings are being held with key partners as part of the consultation on the organisation's strategic priorities; partners are being asked to be critical friends and think not only what Social Care Wales should be doing, but also to highlight any gaps and what should not be prioritised;
- SE and SMC are now members of the Social Care Futures Group with the second meeting being held this afternoon. The group is looking at how social care can become more sustainable. There are also sub-groups established with officers representing the organisation such as the Social Care Forum which DP is currently attending and is looking at fair pay. It is expected that this work will come together in the form of a Cabinet briefing in December;
- There is a new UK Alliance for regulators to meet with workforce development organisations as part of an enhanced Skills for Care and Development forum. The ambition is to combine the meetings for efficiency and effectiveness under the theme regulation for improvement;
- The process for the negotiation of next year's remit and associated budget has started, recognising challenges for everyone due to COVID-19 expenditure and the difficult decisions the government has to make on public spending.

- ii. SMC highlighted the following:

- Following the launch of the Workforce Strategy, the immediate actions are those identified within the winter plan. Regular meetings are being set up with HEIW around the joint areas of delivery. Time will be needed to develop the full implementation plan for the strategy over the next 10 years;
- The Employee Assistance Programme for the workforce is on track to be launched on 1 December 2020;
- An update paper on social work will be uploaded onto the portal shortly with a fuller workforce plan coming later in the financial year. **ACTION**
- The publication of the Data Discovery Report is imminent and will soon be available on the website.

- iii. The Chair returned the launch of the Workforce Strategy earlier in the meeting and emphasised the fact that there were still a number of unanswered questions, for example, in relation to who owns the strategy, how it will be delivered and whether there will be any resources or strategic policy developments which will support implementation. He asked SE to advise members how those conversations were being taken forward in the background.

- iv. SE updated the Board that she meets with our senior Welsh Government sponsor on a regular basis and there is active engagement on these issues. The Directors meet with the Welsh Government Deputy Directors to provide the evidence of funding required and the proposed business plan is scrutinised by the Welsh Government. It is clear that resources will be difficult over the coming years; however, the ambition in terms of what we would want to do and what the sector needs will be set out in our business plans which will form part of the negotiations to secure the necessary resources of resources.

13. Meeting effectiveness

- i. The Chair commented that during their end of year PADR review, KH had reflected that the Board was not doing this standing item on the agenda justice. He asked KH to share her thoughts with other members.
- ii. KH felt that asking the same questions with limited time for discussion had resulted in a sense that we were simply 'going through the motions'. She thought that it could be done differently and better and proposed some ideas, including:
- not routinely asking the same questions each time;
 - asking more focused questions that would bring out useful information which would benefit the Chair and members;
 - covering areas like how people have prepared for the meeting, improvements that could be made, something that was appreciated, one thing that should have been said but wasn't, things that members wanted the Board to know about what was happening in their sector;
 - not all of the questions needed to be left until the end of the meeting.
- iii. The Chair thanked KH for her ideas and asked from comments from other Board members:
- MB agreed with KH comments that the item was rushed at the end of a meeting and had become institutionalised
 - Agreement from all that this was something to pursue and agreed for the Chair, KH and LIB to meet outside the meeting to progress further **ACTION**
- iv. The Chair suggested a focus on reviewing the launch of the Workforce Strategy and the Accountability meeting from this meeting and asked for Members comments:
- The Chair reflected on his confidence in the Board in being able to open to comments and questions to the Deputy Minister;
 - GQ built upon previous comments on the meeting effectiveness and referred to the different personalities within the Board who may reflect after a meeting rather than during the meeting and therefore a way of feeding back outside of the meeting may be useful.
 - GQ also commented on the open way the Chair invited members to comment during the Accountability meeting and the Ministers welcome for those diverse comments;

- EB echoed GQ comments as the interactions with the Deputy Minister felt very participative and is reflective of the relationship with the Welsh Government;
- DB said he would have liked to see the Minister in a closed session and hear more about thoughts on the future membership of the Board

v. The Chair thanked KH for stimulating the discussions.

vi. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 13:32.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 28 January 2020.

Actions

Item	Action	Who
Item 4 - Action log and matters arising	Programme of engagement with staff developed with further discussion at the next CCG meeting	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury
Item 7 - Business Plan: Quarter 2 progress report	Board to be kept updated on Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on vulnerable children and young people work	Sarah McCarty
	CCG to look at the Committee forward look plan to ensure sufficient time is allocated to address longer term implications of COVID-19	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury
Item 8 - Annual Equality Report 2019-20	CCG to discuss digital inclusion as a topic for an upcoming Board Development Session	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury
	Discuss BAME recruitment initiatives further	Abu Askira & Rhianon Jones & Emma Britton
	Update on progress of completion of equality and diversity monitoring data	Rhianon Jones
	Further detail to be added on the data about students in the report prior to publication	Abu Askira

	Cross reference to Welsh Language standards to be included in the report prior to publication	Abu Askira
Item 9 - Equal Pay Audit 2019-20	Sharing of methodologies used to make people feel safer in declaring their characteristics	Damian Bridgeman and Rhianon Jones
Item 10 - Update on the Social Care Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP)	Improvement Committee to discuss visibility of the remit letter within RPBs	Jon Day
Item 11 - Chairs Coordinating Group Terms of Reference	Decision record from Board Assurance Framework discussion to be shared on the portal	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury
	Board to be kept updated on developments in relation to a Board Assurance Framework	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury
Item 12 - Key messages from Chief Executive and Directors	Staff wellbeing action plan to be uploaded onto the portal when ready	Llinos Bradbury
	Updated paper on Social Work to be uploaded onto the portal	Sarah McCarty
Item 13 – Meeting effectiveness	Progress the ideas and suggestions discussed further outside the meeting	Mick Giannasi and Kate Hawkins and Llinos Bradbury

Social Care Wales Board meeting actions

Rolling action Log 2020-21

Meeting date	Item	Action required	Action by	Target date	Outcome / update	Current status	Date completed
22.10.20	Item 4 - Action log and matters arising	Programme of engagement with staff developed with further discussion at the next CCG meeting	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury	12.11.20	The Chair, accompanied by other members where appropriate, has been participating in departmental and team meetings during November and December 2020. This practice will continue on a structured basis into 2021 and members will be provided with the opportunities to participate in meeting, linked to their areas of interest, as they emerge.	CLOSED	12.11.20
22.10.20	Item 7 - Business Plan: Quarter 2 progress report	Board to be kept updated on Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on vulnerable children and young people work	Sarah McCarty	January 2021	We understand the current Ministerial Advisory Group will come to an end shortly as it is the end of the term of Government. We are working with		

					Government to support plans to enable improvement through masterclasses and a peer learning and support framework. We have commissioned work to help identify the key elements needed for a preventative strengths-based approach for vulnerable children and families in Wales.		
22.10.20	Item 7 - Business Plan: Quarter 2 progress report	CCG to look at the Committee forward look plan to ensure sufficient time is allocated to address longer term implications of COVID-19	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury	12.11.20	Discussed at CCG meeting on 11 November and agreed that EMT will pick up on any actions required to support the sector through attendance at groups that have been established in response to COVID-19	CLOSED	12.11.20
22.10.20	Item 8 - Annual Equality Report 2019-20	CCG to discuss digital inclusion as a topic for an upcoming Board Development Session	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury	March 2021	Board Development forward plan will be discussed at the 11 February CCG meeting and	Open	

					consideration given to including a session on digital inclusion.		
22.10.20	Item 8 - Annual Equality Report 2019-20	Discuss BAME recruitment initiatives further	Abu Askira & Rhianon Jones & Emma Britton	By March 2021	Meeting to be arranged in February.	Open	
22.10.20	Item 8 - Annual Equality Report 2019-20	Update on progress of completion of equality and diversity monitoring data	Rhianon Jones	By March 2021 in readiness for April 2021 reporting	Communication to be sent to staff in March to encourage wider completion with a view to reporting against this in April.	Open	
22.10.20	Item 8 - Annual Equality Report 2019-20	Further detail to be added on the data about students in the report prior to publication	Abu Askira	October 2020	Completed - detail has been added to social work student data	CLOSED	October 2020
22.10.20	Item 8 - Annual Equality Report 2019-20	Cross reference to Welsh Language standards to be included in the report prior to publication	Abu Askira	October 2020	Completed. Cross referencing completed. Report is now going through quality assurance and Welsh translation prior to publication.	CLOSED	October 2020
22.10.20	Item 9 - Equal Pay Audit 2019-20	Sharing of methodologies used to make people feel	Damian Bridgeman and Rhianon Jones	March 2021	Rhianon Jones to arrange conversation / sharing of information	Open	

		safer in declaring their characteristics			with Damian in February.		
22.10.20	Item 10 - Update on the Social Care Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP)	Improvement Committee to discuss visibility of the remit letter within RPBs	Jon Day	02.12.20	Wording strengthened in the draft grant remit letter which was discussed at December Improvement Committee for approval. It will require regions to confirm when the application and end of year monitoring have been to RPB.	CLOSED	02.12.20
22.10.20	Item 11 - Chairs Coordinating Group Terms of Reference	Decision record from Board Assurance Framework discussion to be shared on the portal	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury	November	Decision record shared and uploaded onto the portal on 10 November	CLOSED	10.11.20
22.10.20	Item 11 - Chairs Coordinating Group Terms of Reference	Board to be kept updated on developments in relation to a Board Assurance Framework	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury	January 2021	Discussion on integrating an assurance framework into a revised Risk Management Policy was held during the Board development session on 21.01.21.	CLOSED	21.01.21

22.10.20	Item 12 - Key messages from Chief Executive and Directors	Staff wellbeing action plan to be uploaded onto the portal when ready	Llinos Bradbury	November	Social Care Wales staff wellbeing action plan uploaded onto the portal on 2 November	CLOSED	02.11.20
22.10.20	Item 12 - Key messages from Chief Executive and Directors	Updated paper on Social Work to be uploaded onto the portal	Sarah McCarty	November	Update paper and definition of a social worker uploaded onto the portal on 19 November.	CLOSED	19.11.20
22.10.20	Item 13 – Meeting effectiveness	Progress the ideas and suggestions discussed further outside the meeting	Mick Giannasi and Kate Hawkins and Llinos Bradbury	January 2021	Chair, Kate Hawkins and Llinos Bradbury met on 19 January to discuss and agreed a way to progress the suggestions during future Board meetings.	CLOSED	19.01.21
16.07.20	Item 6 - Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2019-20, Audit of accounts report	Board members to receive race and cultural awareness training	Llinos Bradbury, Senior Governance Officer	March 2021	Awaiting confirmation of a date in March for training to be delivered by Diverse Cymru.	Open	
16.07.20	Item 11 - Covid-19 and the Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy	Explore links with Health HR network further	Jon Day, Assistant Director Workforce	September 2020	Agreement reached for HEIW to have a seat around our workforce network and vice versa – awaiting dates of meetings for 2021	CLOSED	December 2020

30.04.20	Item 8 – Regulation matters	Work with the FtP team to develop a criteria for when Section 160 of the Regulation and Inspection Act (RISCA) could be used more, as it gives the power to require information from persons or bodies involved in FtP cases.	Hywel Dafydd, Assistant Director Regulation	16.07.20	We are in negotiations with Welsh Government lawyers to implement section 160. Once this is achieved, we will set a criteria. The Welsh Government's work on this has stalled due to Covid-19 but we are in regular contact and hope to make progress soon. A meeting was held with the Care Standards Tribunal on 8 October.	Open	
30.04.20	Item 9 – Opportunities to strengthen corporate governance	Board visibility and accessibility to staff members to be considered as part of the development schedule	Mick Giannasi	Ongoing	Discussed further with the Chairs Co-ordinating Group on how this can be done whilst working virtually and agreed that the Chair accompanied by Members where appropriate would attend virtual departmental and team meetings going forward.	CLOSED	12.11.20

Previously closed actions

16.07.20	Item 10 – Governance Improvements update	Chairs Action Process (CAP) to be clear that a special meeting of the Board would be convened should there be no agreement by CAP Additional contextual paragraph to be added to CAP	Llinos Bradbury, Senior Governance Officer	August 2020	CAP revised as requested, updated version was uploaded onto the portal on 06 August asking for feedback if there were any further comments. No further comments received.	Closed	06.08 20
16.07.20	Item 11 - Covid-19 and the Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy	Letter to Health Minister to be uploaded onto portal once sent	Llinos Bradbury, Senior Governance Officer	July 2020	Letter uploaded onto the portal on 24 July.	Closed	24.07.20
16.07.20	Item 13 – meeting effectiveness	Further discussion on meeting effectiveness at future meeting	Llinos Bradbury	October 2020	Additional time on the agenda for a discussion at the October meeting.	Closed	22.10.20
30.04.20	Item 8 – Regulation matters	Questions asked by members to be referenced as part of	David Pritchard, Director of Regulation	Ongoing	David continues to work with colleagues across the UK	Closed	October 2020

		the development of UK wide indicators and metrics of regulation data			however this work has been given less of a priority and deferred to 2021-22 to make way for responding to Covid-19.		
30.01.20	Item 8 – Key messages from the Chief Executive and Directors	Invite the Registration team to the April Board meeting to ensure their achievements are recognised appropriately	Llinos Bradbury, Senior Governance Officer	30.04.20	Due to having to hold the Board meetings virtually the Chair will be invited to the next suitable Regulation team meeting to pass on the Boards gratitude for their work on registering the domiciliary care workforce.	Closed	24.11.20
30.04.20	Item 9 – Opportunities to strengthen corporate governance	Update on the schedule of work in relation to strengthening corporate governance at the July Board meeting	Mick Giannasi	16.07.20	Update on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised Remuneration committee ToR - Committee membership - Chairs co-ordinating Group ToR - Chairs Action Process 	Closed	16.07.20

					For discussion at July meeting		
30.04.20	Item 11 – Meeting effectiveness	On-line debrief following form first virtual meeting to be conducted	Mick Giannasi	01.06.20	De-brief conducted, results and key themes shared with the Board	Closed	12.06.20
30.01.20	Item 6 - Social Work in Wales	Keep the Board informed as the action plan and governance is developed	Sarah McCarty, Director of Improvement and Development	2020-21	Within the Business Plan 2020-21 is a work programme to develop a social work workforce plan and take this forward. Progress against this work will be provided as part of the quarterly business plan progress reporting to the Board.	Closed	16.07.20
30.01.20	Item 6 – Social Work in Wales	Include discussion on political developments at April Board development session	Llinos Bradbury, Senior Governance Officer	30.04.20	This was discussed at the Board Development session on 2 July.	Closed	02.07.20
30.04.20	Item 5 – Covid-19: our response	Board to be kept updated on future enrolment numbers for the Social Work degree	David Pritchard, Director of Regulation	16.07.20	Numbers are better than previously expected as most courses have successfully recruited and are	Closed	16.07.20

					carrying reserve lists.		
30.04.20	Item 7 – Business Plan 2020-21	Extraordinary Board meeting to be scheduled for May for the Board to approve the 2020-21 Business Plan prior to submission to Welsh Government	Llinos Bradbury, Senior Governance Officer	31.05.20	Extraordinary Board meeting was scheduled for 28 May, following this the draft business plan was submitted to Welsh Government on the 9 June.	Closed	28.05.20
30.04.20	Item 7 – Business Plan 2020-21	High-level overview of the Business Plan to be circulated to members for initial comments	Sarah McCarty, Director of Improvement and Development	08.05.20	High-level overview shared with members on the portal on 4 May and feedback received from members.	Closed	11.05.20
30.01.20	Item 5 – Business Plan update	Look at how the number of open FTP cases are presented in the Business Plan	Hywel Dafydd, AD Regulation	April 2020	Paper on April Board agenda to discuss change in business plan target for 2020-21	Closed	30.04.20
30.01.20	Item 5 – Business Plan update	More detail to be included on the number of FTP cases over 18 months in future and an assurance of scrutiny at Committee level	Hywel Dafydd, AD Regulation	April 2020	Quarter 4 update presented to Board on 30 April with further detail.	Closed	30.04.20

30.01.20	Item 5 – Business Plan update	Send information on statistical process control to officers	Grace Quantock	February 2020	Information sent by Grace and being considered by Officers as part of Business plan 2020-21 reporting to the Board along with the requirements set by Welsh Government on accountability reporting.	Closed	17.04.20
30.01.20	Item 5 – Business Plan update	More detail on the management of long-term sickness to be included in future reports	Kate Salter, AD Corporate Services	April 2020	Quarter 4 update presented to Board on 30 April with further detail.	Closed	30.04.20
30.01.20	Item 8 - Key messages from the Chief Executive and Directors	Consider the introduction of a Chairs Action Process as a formalised way of delegating decisions	Mick Giannasi, Chair	30.04.30	Included as part of governance improvements paper considered at April Board meeting	Closed	30.04.20



CYFARFOD / MEETING	Board meeting				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE		CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC		
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DYDDIAD / DATE	28.01.21				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	6				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/03	Business Plan 2020-21: Quarter 3 update				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Sue Evans, Chief Executive				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:					
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1 – Business Plan Progress: 9 months update – performance commentary including risks Appendix 2 – Budget Report for the period to 31 December 2020				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES / BUSINES PLAN ACTIVITY	All Business plan activities				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	CYMERADWYAETH / APPROVAL	DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER	DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE	TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION	CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE
	×	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	×
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Members are asked to scrutinise and approve the progress against the Business Plan 2020-21 at the nine-month stage.				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION;	This performance report provides an update against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress against all priority themes including exception reporting of amber and red activities in Appendix 1: • our financial position at 9 months in Appendix 2 				

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	
ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	Impact assessments are completed for specific pieces of work.

Business Plan 2020-21: Quarter 3 update

1. Purpose of report and recommendation

- 1.1 This report provides Members with the quarter 3 progress against our 2020-21 business plan.
- 1.2 An update on progress against all priority themes is provided in appendix 1 including exception reporting of amber and red activities. Members are asked to consider and approve the progress against the Business Plan 2020-21 at the nine-month stage.
- 1.3 Whilst significant progress has been made in the majority of business plan activities; there is a recognition that the pandemic is having a significant, continued impact on the sector. Therefore we have reviewed all our activities in order to focus on supporting the sector during COVID-19 in terms of the current challenges of responding rapidly to the current situation whilst managing and maintaining our regulatory remit.
- 1.4 Revised plans for work areas which will now move into our future business plan will be developed in quarter 4. An update on our Business Plan framework for 2021/22 will be presented to Members during the January Board meeting.

2. Context

- 2.1 The Business Plan 2020-21 sets out our priority themes, activities and budget for the year. It is the tool through which our Board and the Welsh Government monitor our performance in delivering the targets set.

3. Performance against business plan as at nine months

- 3.1 As at nine months the overall status of Social Care Wales' progress against activities is:

	Activities	On track	Requires additional support	Major concerns	To start
Business plan targets	52	38	14	0	-
% as at 9 months		73%	27%	0%	-
predicted as at the end of 20/21		39 (75%)	11 (21%)	2 (4%)	

- 3.2 Some key performance indicators have been included in the exception report. However, further work and refinement of measures and indicators will continue in line with our work in relation to measuring our impact and revision of our Strategic Plan.

3.3 As part of our response to COVID-19 we developed a specific risk register that reflects the risks specifically associated to this pandemic and our initial response in supporting the social care and early years sector in responding to COVID-19. We have now included a number of those risks in the overall Strategic Risk Register as we recognise that we are now living in a COVID-19 world. The Strategic Risk Register will be reviewed by the Executive Management Team (EMT) on a monthly basis.

4. Role of the Board

4.1 Two of the four collective responsibilities of the Board, as set out in the Governance Framework, is to:

- make sure that Social Care Wales' activities are conducted efficiently and effectively
- monitor performance to ensure that Social Care Wales fully meets its aims, objectives and performance targets.

4.2 Therefore, on reviewing the six-month performance information, including the budget and risk information some questions for the Board to consider:

- To what extent does the narrative provide you with an indication of progress?
- Are there any gaps in the information you require?
- What implications does this have on the future execution of the business plan?

Business Plan 2020-21 - Quarter 3 update

1. What is in this report?

This report provides an overview of progress against our Business Plan 2020/21.

It is set out to include:

1. The relevant priority themes
2. An overview of the indicators used to support the priority theme
3. The performance commentary then provides an overview of the performance on the overall theme
4. Further detail on amber/red activities is then provided.
5. Strategic risks: where there are strategic risks associated to the objective these are included. The strategic risk register is considered and endorsed at each Audit and Risk Committee. The following is the scoring of these risks in accordance with our risk management policy:

Risk scoring:

L: Low; M: Medium; H: High; E: Extreme

		Impact				
		1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood	1	1	2	3	4	5
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	5	5	10	15	20	25

6. Our budget position as at the end of December 2020

Priority theme 1 - Social Care and Early Years Workforce

Performance Indicators	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Comparator / Target
Processing times of applications*	68%	88%	92%		90% within 5 days
Number of outstanding applications	1494	704	507		Less than 600 open at any one time
Eligible students receive a bursary with a placement provided	n/a	132	166		100%
No. enrolled for the digital version of the Social Care Worker card	28,450	29,852	31,257		30,000 by year end

* from complete form being received to registration being granted/renewed

Performance Commentary

We have improved on our delivery against key performance indicators for professional registration during this quarter whilst maintaining adaptations to our regulatory framework in supporting the sector's response to COVID-19. We will review our delivery plan for adult care home registration in light of the current situation with the pandemic. We are also in ongoing conversations with Welsh Government colleagues about the early years and childcare transition programme, to ensure a considered way forward that is sensitive to the sector's needs to stabilise and consolidate following the impact of the virus on the delivery of services.

The introduction of the employee assistance programme will form part of the overarching health and well-being framework being scoped at present and is a clear indication of the work beginning on the themes and actions identified within the Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy launched in October 2020.

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 3	QTR 4
Extend professional registration to adult care home workers and new managers	<p>We have not been actively communicating the registration message, but an internal working group has been formed with the first meeting held in December. The initial priority for the group is to develop an engagement plan with a draft going to the Executive Management Team in quarter 4 prior to Welsh Government as soon as possible after that.</p> <p>The status of this activity remains as amber as we are not on track to register 1,500 adult care home workers in year one. We are around a third of the way there but with only three months of the year remaining, without sustained engagement it's unlikely we will reach the target.</p>		
Develop a digital learning and	A third-party company has been commissioned to work with us on piloting approaches to digital learning. Work is		

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 3	QTR 4
network approach to enable ongoing skills and learning development - to be piloted in key areas of demand including: dementia; safeguarding procedures; peer networks; LINS; national learning programmes	underway on the two pilot modules (Safeguarding; Principles and Values). Safeguarding is on track, but we are expecting delays in the Principles and Values due to the volume of work required, the capacity of our internal team and also the sector to support this work. This needs further consideration. Discussions are also needed in relation to the learning for the act resources and their incorporation. Extra module being piloted jointly with health for IPC level 1 and 2 based on joint standards that have been developed. Positive conversations with NHS shared services around a possible Learning Management System (LMS). User research continues being mindful of the current pressures on the sector. Recommendation paper for best online platforms to engage with stakeholders has been delivered to EMT following extensive testing. The first of our digital learning courses was held in December for 30 members of staff. A further session is scheduled for the 14 January.		
Develop and embed evidence informed practice and approaches	Working groups for development of Using Evidence recommendations completed; key informant interviews for Phase 2 (engaging with providers) completed; design of Phase 3 with SCIE (engagement people with lived experience) has started and will continue into the next quarter. Development of the Developing Evidence Enriched Practice (DEEP) curriculum with DEEP programme lead, our Evidence & Engagement Co-ordinator and subject expert academics has commenced. Activity marked 'amber' due to decision about our future digital platforms. This discussion will form part of wider evidence offer considerations. Planning and scoping workshops with identified stakeholders from our working groups to begin in in the next financial year dependent on COVID-19 considerations.		

Strategic risks	Inherent score	Residual score
If we don't refresh and reform our regulatory processes, then the additional resources required will undermine our organisational stability and undermine work across our objectives, as well as missing the opportunity to link regulation with improvement more closely. If our changes are not supported by the sector and Welsh Government policy, we could struggle to deliver effective change and destabilise the sector.	Red (20)	Yellow (10)
If we are not clear on the implications of the end of the transition period on exiting the EU (Brexit) for the social care and early years sector then we will not be in a position to provide additional support and clear guidance to the sector during this period.	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)

Priority theme 2 - Social Care and Early Years Managers, Leaders and Owners

Key Performance Indicators	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Comparator / Target
Number of fitness to practise cases open	189	240	249		240 Last quarter
Number of active cases open longer than 18 months	26 (13.7%)	29 (12%)	26 (10.5%)		Less than 10%
No of final hearings held	0	4 (22 cases awaiting final FTP hearing)	4		4 Last quarter
WeCare campaign data	Social Media: Engagements =30,533 Followers = 8,939 Posts = 373	Social Media: Engagements =13,017 Followers = 9,681 Posts = 307	N/A		Baseline figures to be established for 20/21

Performance Commentary

There has been significant progress has been made in some key areas of work (workforce plans for social work, direct care and mental health, the WeCare campaign, refocus of the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP), the successful delivery of the accolades, etc). However, there has been a realisation that the pandemic is having a significant, continued impact on the sector and particularly their ability to undertake the level of engagement required on our work to ensure that it is truly co-produced with the sector for the sector. This approach has been the basis of some of our most successful work in recent years and so it has been decided to draw back engagement unless it is absolutely essential and whilst this means that work will still continue albeit in a slightly different way, a revised plan has been put in place for some of the work areas, meaning that they will undoubtedly now not complete in full until the start of the next financial year - examples being outcome focussed practice and revised timelines for all workforce plans.

An ongoing issue has been the lack of bids for tendered commissions. Whilst most tendered opportunities attract a degree of interest, there is often only 1 or two bids for the work on offer leading to a delay in project start. A case in point is the employer liaison service which has had to be re-tendered and will not be able to commence until the start of the 2021/2022 financial year. Internal conversations are to be held as to how we stimulate the market place and provide an ongoing insight into the work of Social Care Wales and therefore attract a wider range of interest for commissioned work.

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 3	QTR 4
Provide expert advice and national induction, apprenticeship and qualification frameworks for roles across the sector to ensure high quality and test models for future approaches	Equivalence of qualifications for registration as a manager agreed via induction framework. Qualification Framework updated, induction framework published. 4 employer events for Social Care and 4 for Early Years and Childcare (EYCC) ran in November, covered qualification adaptations, work placement and new level 4/5 qualifications and equivalence. Presentations recorded and on website, events evaluated and findings shared internally. Infection prevention and control training strategy out to sector for feedback, survey end date 11/12, analysis taking place of responses. EYCC All Wales Induction Framework (AWIF) workbooks are delayed with the aim of these being published in the next quarter. This activity is marked as amber for the next quarter as the Social Services Practitioner will now be developed in 2021/22 so that we can engage with the sector on its development.		
Fitness to practice service and associated hearings to support protection of the public and to support the provision of high-quality services	The number of open investigations has started to level out following the extension of the register. The number of cases waiting for a final hearing is 19. 11 of those cases waiting for a final hearing are over 18 months. There has been a slight reduction this quarter in the numbers of these cases, and there will be a further reduction over the next quarter when the backlog of hearings for some of these cases is reduced.		
Review and implement reformed Fitness to practice procedures to optimise efficiency	<p>The Fitness to practice review is due to be completed by end of January 2021. Internal workshops were held with team members in November and December 2020 on journey mapping lifecycle of a case; accessibility of processes and website pages; data capture. The data capture exercise will continue until the end of January 2021 to provide maximum information for analysis.</p> <p>This activity has been identified as amber for the next quarter as we have paused activity in relation to engaging with employers and registered persons on the development of resources to raise awareness of standards of conduct that are expected and the process and criteria for engaging with Social Care Wales when those standards have not been met. This will now be rescheduled for 2021/22.</p>		

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 3	QTR 4
Support the embedding of outcomes focused practice	<p>On-line learning networks have continued with outcomes mentors, the November event focused on reflective practice. Further network events are being arranged for Quarter 4.</p> <p>Despite current challenges the train the trainer programme has continued virtually. We have run an initial session with our managers on embedding an outcomes focused approach across our work.</p> <p>Work to inform the plan through stakeholder engagement is currently on hold. Resources to support Case Recording and Domiciliary Care managers are ready for testing by the sector. Organisations are keen to test the resources as they support the embedding of outcomes focused practice and greater consistency. Timescales for feedback on resources will be agreed with the sector as we move forward.</p> <p>To deliver a programme of on-line webinars and learning events will now be moved into next years business plan. Feedback has confirmed that the sector cannot currently prioritise events and although they are interesting and relevant currently, they need to focus on the immediate operational concerns.</p> <p>Due to the escalating issues relating to COVID-19 the joint programme has been re-scheduled with the main programme delivery moving to 21/22. This will significantly impact budget spend for 20/21 so due to the budget implications this is being predicted red for the next quarter.</p>	Yellow	Red
Establish an Employer liaison service	<p>The tender specification has needed to be revised in light of low level of submission on the last round - only one submission which was over budget.</p> <p>Plans to re-tender to take place in the new year with a revised budget but realistically this project will not commence until the new financial year. This will significantly impact budget spend for 20/21 so due to the budget implications this is being predicted red for the next quarter.</p>	Yellow	Red
Work with HEIW to develop a workforce plan for the mental health workforce	<p>Conference report being finalised to capture initial intelligence to help shape further engagement in the new year. Request for workforce data from workforce managers to help profile the mental health workforce issued and submitted by late December. Re-engagement with sector delayed until the new year to allow for conference data to be collated and analysed.</p>	Yellow	Green

Strategic risks	Inherent score	Residual score
If Welsh Government remove, or significantly reduce the funding for Level 2 apprenticeships, then it will reduce the amount of funding to support the achievement of qualifications in the sector. This will have an impact on the ability to provide learning and increase qualification levels of the workforce.	Red (20)	Yellow (10)
<p>If the qualifications are not fit for purpose, then they will not meet the requirements for high quality care and support in the social care and early years sector.</p> <p>The programme of work in relation to developing the new qualifications is complex and significant with a number of risks associated to the successful delivery of the work.</p>	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)

Priority theme 3: Social Care and Early Years Systems Leaders

Key Performance Indicators	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Comparat or / Target
Visitors to data portal	April - 4,048 May - 1,925 June - 3,928	July - 1844 Aug - 2,619 Sept - 2,244	Oct - 3,836 Nov - 3,696 Dec - 2,760		
Publish a vision for social care data	n/a	To be published in October	Published		Quarter 2
Data on national leadership programmes	n/a				Quarter 3

Performance Commentary

We are adjusting the pace of the work on our three strategic priorities with the needs of Welsh Government and the sector in mind. For children who are looked after, we continue to work with the Ministerial Advisory Group, Task and Finish Group and Welsh Government to agree Social Care Wales support in Quarter 4 and beyond. However, our work on new terms of reference for our Care & Support at Home steering group remains on hold due to the pandemic. Targetted work such as the delivery of peer support networks and leadership development, continues and indeed is expanding at sector request. Also continuing is the support to care homes around dementia and end of life which is being well received. Both theses areas are particularly developed to directly support the current crisis. To support the sector in its work with people living with dementia, we provided eight online bitesize learning sessions with 445 attendees.

There were several achievements in this quarter on data. We published the Discovery Report for the Data Strategy and initial discussions have been very positive. We launched the new Social Care Wales Population Projections Platform as a replacement for Daffodil Cymru with extensive changes and improvements, most notably in more sophisticated projections. We also issued separate Invitation to Tenders (ITTs) for the hosting of the data portal from April 2021 and for a piece of work in quarter 4 to quantify the role of the 3rd sector in delivering support and services across Wales. Following the completion of Phase 1 of the Using Evidence project, we convened working groups to explore the different needs of local authorities and the output from this will be used in the next quarter to formulate our evidence offer. We also completed key informant interviews with provider organisations to understand their needs. We started our mapping of local authorities and continued our joint development work with the DEEP programme at Swansea University. More specifically on COVID-19 resources we attended 13 different LA and provider meetings to understand the sector's use of the resources, with 178 staff in attendance. We will make recommendations for further development in the next quarter.

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 3	QTR 4
Learn from the impact evaluation of our Care and Support at Home partnership to	1) Development of draft revised terms of reference for the steering group remain on hold due to operational pressures of Covid-19. 2) Framework for change document drafted and being tested with stakeholders.		

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 3	QTR 4
outline options on how we can further support working in collaboration			
Drive national priorities with key partners to support the workforce through learning and development on how they work with people living with dementia	<p>End of life care and dementia events - online bitesize learning sessions Session 1 – 4 = 245 attendees Session 5 – 8: 200 attendees</p> <p>Resources and engagement will be completed in Q1 of new financial year</p>		
Support the progression of a Compassionate and collective leadership approach across social care and health	<p>The final draft of the principles has been delayed until January 2021 due to rising work priorities as a result of COVID-19. Given current pressures we are currently reviewing the timeliness and scoping demand for a webinar event on compassionate leadership. Internal project group meetings continue to scope the need for a ‘compassionate and collective leadership’ toolkit of learning materials.</p> <p>The work on identifying learning and themes relating to leadership and fitness to practice will be paused pending other data project work and reviewed for 2021/22. The peer support offers continue and have been well received. There are active peer support offers for domiciliary care registered managers and another for statutory Heads of Service. We have shared learning with interested parties.</p>		
Play a key role in driving the use of research and intelligence into planning and service design and delivery. (This will include listening to individuals and their carers and will also support implementation of the performance and improvement framework)	<p>Using Evidence working groups with key stakeholders to build links and develop actions plans completed in November.</p> <p>Phase 2 (engagement with providers) key informant interviews completed. Phase 2 is on now paused – plan for recommencement in Q1 (if appropriate) agreed with SCIE using an appreciative inquiry approach. Design of Phase 3 (engagement with people with lived experience) will continue in Q4.</p> <p>Planning meetings with DEEP programme lead (Swansea Uni) and development of knowledge mobilisation approaches via DEEP curriculum are underway.</p> <p>User dialogues with sector completed.</p>		

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 3	QTR 4
	Mapping and Connecting project will begin in Q4 – engagement dependent on capacity of local authorities. Activity ragged as amber due to pause with provider engagement.		

Priority 4 - Our own workforce

Key Performance Indicators	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Comparator / Target
Staff sickness levels	2.46%	2.51%	2.27%		3%
Timely laying of Statutory Annual Accounts	N/A	Laid 31 July 2020	-	-	August 2020
Internal audits receive substantial assurance	N/A	N/A	2 Moderate 1 Substantial		80%
ISO 27001 Reaccreditation awarded	Maintained	Maintained	Maintained		Maintained

Performance Commentary

We are progressing well the majority of activities that sit within this area of our Business Plan to timescales and budget. There are a couple of areas identified which are delayed due to internal capacity to deliver within the original timescales. However, we are currently identifying the key existing areas and projects from across the organisation which will be prioritised for completion during the next quarter. The key principles on prioritising work will support staff in focusing on projects which are supporting the sector in responding to COVID-19 and/or very urgent in nature, underpinning our regulatory requirements, working with existing stakeholder groups and where projects can be progressed in the background that are helping to scope our future work (for example our digital discovery work).

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 3	QTR 4
Maintain organisational compliance with statutory organisational requirements.	<p>On a quarterly basis Audit and Risk Committee receive the detail on the work that sits within this business plan activity. Work is progressing to support compliance within these areas. The amber relates to the work that we continue to progress in relation to accessibility developments needed. In particular phase 1 of the work to address amendments to our SCW on-line platform. Phase 1 of this work is due for completion (including testing) in February. Once this has been completed we will review requirements for phase 2.</p> <p>In terms of Data Protection Act 2018 we continue to monitor any data breaches to address any root cause issues. During the last quarter we have self-reported to the ICO on 2 occasions where we did not feel it met the threshold but we wanted to make the ICO aware. Learning from these incidents are followed up with the relevant teams and in-house training has been provided. All staff are currently completing the annual Data Protection on-line training. We have also sent out further</p>		

	<p>guidance to staff on cyber security and how to identify scammers. Further work on our cyber security will be followed up in Quarter 4.</p> <p>In the last quarter we have responded to HEIW's consultation on their Welsh Language Scheme and also requests from the Welsh Language Commissioner on how to manage compliance with the Standards during our virtual ways of working. We have also had an Internal Audit on our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. The final report on our compliance will be produced in January 2021 for review by our Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p>We are currently developing setting out our approach to producing our new Strategic Equalities Plan (a paper was presented to the Board in October 2020). We have established an internal working group on our equalities work. Training to staff, managers and Members on cultural awareness and diversity is being organised to take place in quarter 4 (or early Qtr 1 2021/22 dependent on availability).</p>		
Maximise our digital offer across all of our business	<p>We have continued to work on our digital discovery project to find out what our users need from our on-line services, what this means for how we work in future from an organisational and technical perspective and setting out recommendations and a road map for the future. The final report and the last Show and Tell will take place in the new year prior to consideration of the recommendations by the Executive Management Team. We are currently looking at a number of training providers who can provide on-line learning to staff to address some of the findings of the digital skills audit. A number of colleagues are attending in-house training being delivered by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) digital lead. The amber status relates to the roll out of our new Sharepoint platform. Due to in-house capacity within our teams we are looking at whether we can bring in external capacity to work with our teams on roll-out. This has led to a slippage to the project timescales which will now move into 2021/22. In line with discussions in relation to our business operations whilst working remotely EMT agreed that we should not progress with implementation of a new phone system. But that we would reconsider this position as we start to look at returning to the office in 2021/22. We continue to maintain our SCW on-line systems and ICT infrastructure.</p>		
Supporting the sector in its recovery and sustainability in	<p>Business Plan Quarter 3 progress will be considered by leadership and scrutinised by the Board in January. During these discussions priorities for delivery within the final quarter will be outlined. Any activities which will not</p>		

Appendix 2

light of COVID-19 through organisation design	be completed will be moved into 2021/22 plan. The Initial work has begun on the Business Plan framework for 2021/22. An outline framework will be presented to the Board in January 2021. The consultation on our new draft list of priorities to inform our new Strategic Plan was completed and the responses analysed by leadership team, managers and the Board in December. A paper on the revised timelines for the development of the Strategic Plan is being considered by the Board in January. We have continued to work on developing our future financial budgets and identifying areas of work which will require additional business cases and funding. As a result of this work and the revised timetable for developing our Strategic Plan work on organisational design and future road map outlining the steps required will now take place in 2021/22.		
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Strategic risks	Inherent score	Residual score
If we do not keep the sector engaged in the work of Social Care Wales then we start to lose credibility and not deliver our overall ambition, as we cannot achieve this in isolation. The sector is not engaged in our role and remit.	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)
If we do not demonstrate how we are contributing to making a positive difference to the care sector, then we will lose credibility. We are unable to manage the expectations of the sector, stakeholders (including Welsh Government) and the public.	Yellow (10)	Green (5)
If we don't have increased resources to meet what is expected from Government term of office, then we will not be able to deliver the expected standards.	Red (20)	Red (20)
If we don't manage competing Welsh Government priorities and ensure that any new work is within our scope and purpose then we could result in over committing our resources to deliver, extend our remit beyond our scope and lose our identity and unique purpose.	Red (20)	Yellow (10)
If we don't remain engaged with 'A Healthier Wales' and maintain key relationships with Welsh Government and critical stakeholders (HEIW, PHW etc) then this could impact on key deliverable priorities resulting in social care not being rebalanced within the ambition of 'A Healthier Wales' and lose confidence if we do not deliver against expectations.	Red (20)	Yellow (10)
If we are unable to reappoint our Board members who also served as Care Council Members then we will lose 3 key, experienced and knowledgeable Members from April 2021. We will not be able to fill these vacancies in a timely manner. We will have a gap at a time when we require stability, continuity and strong leadership at Board level to support the social care and early years sector responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.	Amber (12)	Amber (12)
If we are not clear on the implications of the end of the transition period on exiting the EU (Brexit) for the social care and early years sector then we will	Amber (15)	Amber (15)

Appendix 2

Strategic risks	Inherent score	Residual score
not be in a position to provide additional support and clear guidance to the sector during this period.		
If we do not respond accordingly to the COVID-19 pandemic then we will not be supporting the social care sector in helping them deliver front line care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)
If we don't support our own workforce (Social Care Wales) during this time then we will not be an effective and efficient organisation where staff health and wellbeing is at the centre of how we work.	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)
Working remotely has increased the risk of cyber fraud, hacking and scamming. Therefore, putting vulnerabilities within our IT network and opportunities for fraud.	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)

Budget Report for the period to 31 December 2020

This is the third budget monitoring quarterly report for the financial year 2020-21. The report covers income and spend for the first nine months to 31 December 2020. The report is based on a total annual budget of £22,213,000. This is financed from £20,894,000 Grant in Aid (including £209k internal carry forward), £1,180,000 registration fee income and £50,000 Apprenticeship certification income. In addition, mid-year additional funding from Welsh Government was secured totalling £89,000 in relation to the Employee Assistance Programme and Mental Health.

A high-level summary of performance for the first nine months is reported below and a more detailed analysis is also attached: -

Financial Summary to 31 December 2020

	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance	Predicted Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Income	22,213	11,243	11,255	(12)	22,207
Expenditure					
Grants Programme	11,478	4,431	4,788	357	11,351
Workforce Regulation	3,442	2,296	2,439	143	3,337
Improvement and Development inc Res and Data	3,315	1,963	2,186	223	3,142
Early Years and Childcare	356	245	251	6	356
Strategy and Business Support	3,622	2,546	2,515	(31)	3,563
Totals	22,213	11,480	12,178	698	21,749

Income Analysis

Income	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance	Predicted Income
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Grant In Aid	20,894	10,400	10,400	0	20,894
Apprenticeship Certificate Income	50	33	40	(7)	43
Registration Fee Income	1,180	809	815	(6)	1,180
Mental Health Workforce	24	0	0	0	24
EAP	65	0	0	0	65
Other Income	0	1	0	1	1
Total Income	22,213	11,243	11,255	(12)	22,207

£12k of Income has been received less than budgeted in the first nine months of the financial year with £7k of Apprenticeship Certification Income being received less than budget. The outturn projection for this budget has been reduced from £50k to £43k.

Expenditure Analysis

As at the end of December we are reporting a £698K expenditure underspend against budget. The main areas of underspend are in the Grants Programme (£357k underspend), Improvement and Development budgets (£223k underspend) and Workforce Regulation (£143k). Analysis in respect of the main headings is provided below: -

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance	Predicted Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Grants Programme					
SCWWDP	7,149	2,910	2,860	(50)	7,149
People Using Services and Carers	75	31	46	15	72
Regional Facilitation	504	504	504	-	812
Student Funding	2,392	847	967	120	2,119
PLOF	1,224	139	411	272	1,065
SfCD	11	-	-	-	11
Research	123	-	-	-	123
Sub-total	11,478	4,431	4,788	357	11,351

- The Grants Programme shows an underspend of £357k with underspends in the Student Funding (Bursaries) budget and Practice Learning Opportunity Funding (PLOF) but reduced by an overspend in the SCWWDP budget. The underspend in the Student Funding budget reflects that of the 227 bursaries available to students only 178 were awarded. Therefore, the budget outturn figure has been reduced by £273k to from £2,392k to £2,119k. In addition, due to the low number of students on the Social Work programmes the PLOF outturn has been reduced to £1,065k from £1,224k. Another contributor to the PLOF projected underspend is the decision for all Bangor University placements for the academic year 2020-21 to take place in the new financial year.
- The outturn projection for Regional Facilitation has been increased by £308k to reflect additional funding made available to the regions to fund pressures following a request for bids from all 22 Local Authority areas. Therefore, in totality it is now projected that the Grants Programme budget will be underspent by £127k at the end of the financial year.

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance	Predicted Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Workforce Regulation					
Administration	94	33	62	29	65
Hearings	600	358	360	2	600
Projects	110	11	60	49	81
Salaries	2,638	1,894	1,957	63	2,590
Sub-total	3,442	2,296	2,439	143	3,337

- The Workforce Regulation has a £143k underspend to date with underspends in all elements of the budgets. These underspends are now reflected in the projected underspends in the Workforce Regulation budget which has been reduced by a total of £105k.

Appendix 2

- The Administration budget outturn has been reduced by £29k reflecting savings in relation to primarily travel and subsistence and reduced legal costs.
- The Hearings budget of £600k was set on the basis that final hearings would not start until September 2020 and at the nine month point actual costs are in line with budget. Based on planned activity for the final quarter it is projected that this budget will now be fully spent.
- The Projects outturn projection has reduced by £29k which reflects savings in the review of FTP procedures project as only £55k of the £100k will be spent as the scope of the project will now only involve the external Fitness to Practice review. However, the savings are reduced by additional investment in the Extension of the Register project.
- The Salaries element of this budget is projected to underspend by £48k reflecting staff vacancies in the Registration department.

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance	Predicted Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Improvement and Development					
Administration	60	20	24	4	33
Intelligence and Data	135	46	97	50	156
Projects	1,354	545	747	202	1,127
Salaries	1,766	1,352	1,319	(33)	1,826
Sub-total	3,315	1,963	2,186	223	3,142

- The Improvement and Development budget is underspent by £223k primarily due to an underspend of £202k in the Projects budget due to delays in the start of some projects. It has now been decided that the start date of some projects will be paused and others where milestones will now extend into the new financial year leading to projected underspend of £227k in relation to projects.
- It is projected that both the Intelligence and Data and Salaries elements of the budget will be overspent at the end of the financial year. The Salary element is due to additional resource requirement including in respect of maternity leave.

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance	Predicted Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Early Years and Childcare					
Projects	127	73	79	6	127
Salaries	229	172	172	0	229
Sub-total	356	245	251	6	356

- The Early Years and Childcare has a small underspend of £6k at the mid-year point but is projected to break even at the end of the financial year.

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance	Predicted Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Strategy and Business Support					
Premises	617	437	449	12	606
Governance	115	65	75	10	95
Communications	103	77	89	12	98
Carreg and IT	493	393	369	(24)	525
Finance & Grant Admin	12	1	4	3	5
Human Resources	106	74	77	2	109
Projects	302	79	72	(7)	184
Salaries	1,873	1,419	1,380	(39)	1,940
Sub-total	3,622	2,546	2,515	(31)	3,563

- Strategy and Business support shows an overspend of £31k with a mixture of overspends/underspends in the individual budgets.
- It is projected that this budget in totality will be underspent by £59k at the end of the financial year primarily due to significant savings in the Projects budget but reduced by projected overspends in the CARREG and IT budget and Salaries budgets.
- The projects budget will be underspent by £122k due to less required spend in the Digital/Organisational design project budgets.
- The CARREG and IT budget will be overspent by £32k at the end of the financial year due to developmental changes to SCWonline to ensure compliance with website accessibility regulations.
- It is also anticipated that the Salaries budget will be overspent by £67k primarily due to extra costs projected in relation to maternity cover.

At the end of the financial year, we are predicting a net underspend of £458k. It is anticipated that we will draw down our Grant in Aid in full, but we will be requesting Sponsor Division that our 2% limit at the end of the financial year be increased to 4%. This will then ensure that funding can be carried forward to fund those projects that have been deferred until the new financial year or milestones have been deferred until the new financial year. In addition, it will fund the budgetary pressure in relation to placements that have been delayed into the new financial year. The carry forward will be allocated as follows: -

Description	Amount	Narrative
Practice Learning Opportunity Funding	£82k	Bangor placements deferred until the new financial year
Building resilience and wellbeing through peer support	£38k	Project deferred until the new financial year
Virtue Learning and Networks	£120k	Phase 2 of the project deferred until the new financial year
Provide national induction and qualification frameworks for roles and regulate social work training	£31k	Elements of the project deferred until the new financial year (Social Services Practitioner development of materials)

Description	Amount	Narrative
We Care campaign	£3k	Small element of the project deferred until the new financial year
Employer Liaison Service	£60k	Project deferred until the new financial year
Workforce Strategy - Direct Care Workforce	£36k	Final milestones of the project in new financial year
Outcomes focussed practice	£76k	The major element of this project deferred until the new financial year (joint pilot with health)
Compassionate and Collective Leadership	£12k	Project deferred until the new financial year
Total	£458k	

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance	Predicted Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Grants Programme					
SCWWDP	7,149	2,910	2,860	(50)	7,149
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Total Expenditure	22,213	11,480	12,178	698	21,749



CYFARFOD / MEETING	Board Meeting				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE			CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC	
	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
DYDDIAD / DATE	28.01.20				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	7				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/04	HR Report – Quarter 3 update: includes an update against the lessons learnt action plan and audit recommendations				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Rhianon Jones, HR & Wellbeing Manager				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:					
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS					
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES / BUSINESS PLAN ACTIVITY	Priority Theme 4: Enabling Social Care Wales to Deliver				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	CYMERADWYAE TH / APPROVAL	DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER	DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE	TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION	CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Members are invited to note and discuss the report.				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED	<p>Section 1 includes the dashboard included in the Board performance report highlighting key HR related indicators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sickness absence and turnover are at a healthy rate. Recruitment activity increased significantly during the quarter. 				
MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION;	<p>Section 2 provides an update against the lessons learnt action plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently on track to complete as per timescales 				

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	Section 3 provides an update against the audit recommendations. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Currently on track to complete as per timescales
ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	

HR Report – Quarter 3 update: includes an update against the lessons learnt action plan and audit recommendations

1. Background and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Highlight key HR statistics for Quarter 3 (performance dashboard).
2. Update on the HR lessons learnt action plan.

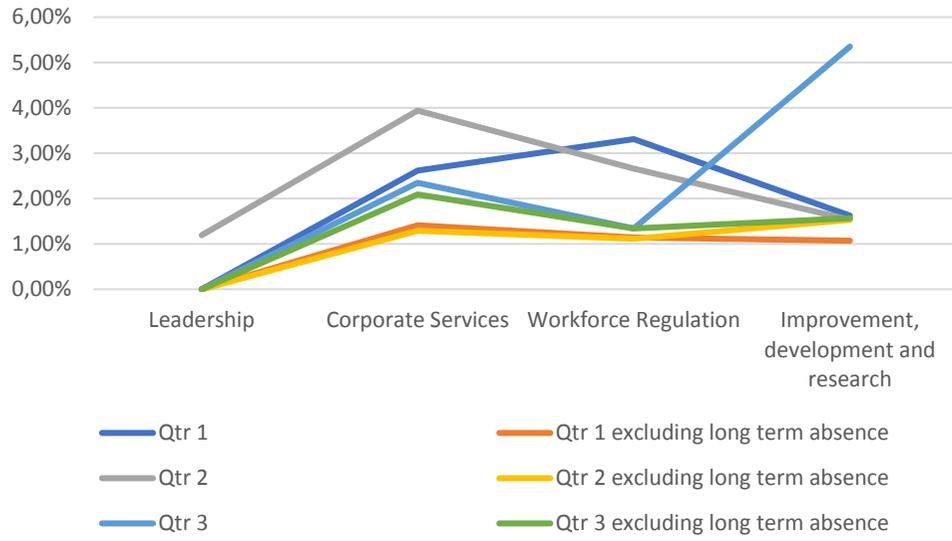
This plan was developed in response to a recent grievance case which highlighted some areas where our related policies needed to be amended and strengthened.

3. Update on actions from a recent internal audit in relation to our recruitment, starters and leavers processes.

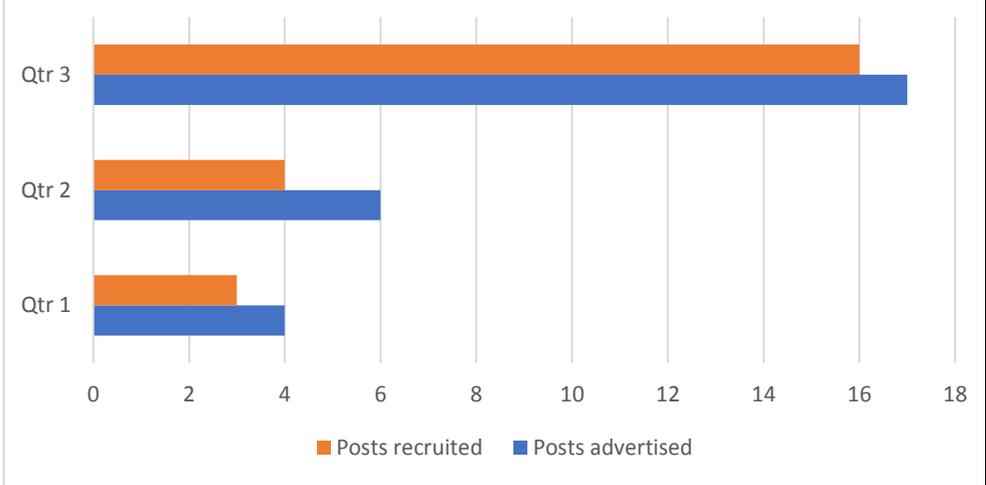
HR quarter 3: performance dashboard

Key points from quarter 3	Future focus in Quarter 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter wellbeing plan rolled out • Lessons learnt action plan developed and agreed • A significant increase of recruitment activity this quarter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR policies to be reintroduced alongside reintroduction of requirement to work contractual hours. • Developing principles on future home working policies • Continued development and roll out of the revised staff performance development framework. • Policy review schedule to be completed. • Deliver corporate learning activities in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion topics (via Diverse Cymru and Disability Wales)
<p>Staff turnover</p> <p>Quarter 1: 1.60%</p> <p>Quarter 2: 0.79%</p> <p>Quarter 3: 2.3%</p> <p>Rolling total: 5.5%</p> <p>Our target turnover rate is to remain under 15%.</p>	<p>Sickness absence figures include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 long term, ongoing, absences • 1 absence of 20 days that required a referral to our Occupational Health provider. This resulted in additional specialist equipment being purchased and a so far successful phased return to work.
<p>Staff absence: 2020 – 2021</p> <p>This gives us a rolling total of 2.27% for the year. 1.25% excluding long term absences. Which is within our <3% target</p>	<p>Recruitment: 2020 – 2021</p> <p>A significant rise in recruitment activity during Q3. See table on next page for details*</p>

Staff absence: 2020/21



Recruitment: 2020/21



The following posts have been advertised and recruited to in this quarter:

Vacancy	applications	shortlisted	interviewed	appointment internal or external
Evidence and Engagement coordinator x 3	8	6	5	3 external
Data Analyst	12	4	2	1 external
Fitness to Practise Senior Officer x 5	24	11	11	2 external, 3 internal
Engagement and Development Officer	1	0	0	Didn't appoint
Registration Quality coordinator x 3	6	5	5	3 Internal
Senior Registration Officer	5	3	3	1 Internal
Registration Team Officer	5	4	4	1 internal
Registration quality coordinator	3	3	2	1 internal
Governance Support	3	1	1	1 external

2. Lessons Learnt Action Plan

Values and behaviours

We must re-emphasise that behaviours that are not in line with our values will not be tolerated and action will be taken.

Specific actions needed	Timescale for implementation	Progress update
Dignity and Respect at Work Policy to be re-circulated to all staff with a covering message.	Light review of policy in November Policy to be recirculated by January 2021	This is an item on the people managers session scheduled for 29 January. The policy will then be recirculated to all staff with covering message
Policy and a reminder of roles and responsibilities to be an item at one of our monthly people managers workshops with a request that all managers discuss the policy with their team members at their next team meetings / one to one's.	December 2020 or January 2021 workshop	This is an item on the people managers session scheduled for 29 January. The policy will then be recirculated to all staff with covering message.
Explore further opportunities to promote and remind staff of our values. <i>We have a lead Director and Assistant Director for this work stream.</i>	February 2021	Sarah and Hywel leading a values session at people managers session on 25 February

Dignity at work policy and expectations

All allegations of potential bullying must be investigated and dealt with at the time of the incident. A culture of “putting up with unhelpful behaviours” must be challenged.

Specific actions needed	Timescale for implementation	Progress update
	By March 2021	

In our related policies, we must strengthen the requirement for all allegations to be investigated and in a timely manner.		First draft of revised policies due at EMT meeting for discussion on 1 February 2021
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PDP documentation, ownership and process

We must re-emphasise the joint ownership of the PDP process and documentation. We must ensure records of health and well-being discussions at the start of conversations are made.

We also need a process for mediation and resolution where records cannot be agreed in a timely manner.

Specific actions needed	Timescale for implementation	Progress update
<p>We are currently reviewing our PDP process. As part of the review the two recommendations will be implemented:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Strengthen the requirement to record health and wellbeing matters 2) Include a process for mediation and resolution where records cannot be agreed in a timely manner 	<p>Review to commence in November and to be completed and signed off by March 2021</p>	<p>Principles and draft revised approach is an agenda item for Leadership Team meeting 25 January.</p> <p>Staff consultation 26 Jan via SPC with feedback received by SPC meeting 17 February.</p> <p>We are on track for this to be rolled out for 2021/22</p>

Recording health & well-being related discussions

As above

HR Policies

Specific actions needed	Timescale for implementation	Progress update
<p>The following policies to be reviewed and updated in light of this case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation policy and procedures and associated documentation • Grievance Policy and procedures and associated documentation • Induction process <i>(including the need for a formal record of medical conditions / disabilities and associated reasonable adjustment action plans)</i> • Dignity and respect at work <p><i>(n/b for some of these policies, this is the first time we have been able to assess how they work in practice so inevitably changes will be needed)</i></p>	<p>Review to commence in November and to be completed and signed off by March 2021</p>	<p>On track to meet the March schedule.</p> <p>First revised drafts on EMT agenda 1 February.</p>

Payroll matters

Specific actions needed	Timescale for implementation	Progress update
<p>Include on our grievance and disciplinary policies explicit instructions in relation to how pay matters will be managed in the event of a dismissal</p>	<p>As part of policy review above</p>	<p>As above</p>

(including a formal sign off process)		
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Training

Specific actions needed	Timescale for implementation	
Mandatory Disability Awareness training to be organised for all managers	By March 2021 (within 6 months of the agreement date)	We have engaged with disability Wales to deliver this training for us and are waiting for confirmation of delivery dates between now and 31 March.
Unconscious bias training to be rolled out to all managers and staff <i>(We already have 2 e-learning packages being tested by our Equality and Diversity Group)</i>	To be rolled out in Q3, with a requirement to be completed by March 2021 at the latest.	The modules have been tested by members of our equality, diversity and inclusion working group, and will be rolled out to all staff w/c 11 January for completion by 31 March.

3. Actions identified and progress update from Internal Audit

Recruitment: Right to Work Checks – Medium Priority

 Recommendation	Priority
It is recommended that all copies of right to work checks are checked, signed and dated before the employee's start date.	Medium
Rationale	
<p>From our sample of two starters we identified that whilst both had evidence of a right to work check held on file these were not completed in advance of their employment with Social Care Wales commencing. These were undertaken one month, and three months, after the new starters start dates.</p> <p>There is a risk that HR are unable to evidence that right to work checks have been completed as required by the Home Office and could incur penalties (of up to £20,000) in the event of an illegal worker being employed.</p>	



Management Response

Responsibility/ Deadline

Accept.

These checks are usually undertaken on day 1, however in the two cases noted above these were both not actioned to our usual timescale / standard due to capacity and workload. Since then we have reviewed all new starters who have joined the organisation since and these checks have been undertaken on day 1.

We acknowledge however the potential penalties that could be accrued. We will amend our process with immediate effect to ensure that this is actioned pre-employment. This will be checked on a quarterly basis by the HR and Wellbeing Manager.

Update at 6 January 2021

Process has been amended and these are now undertaken as pre-employment checks.

HR and Wellbeing
Manager

December 2020

Leavers: Leavers Checklist – Medium Priority

	Recommendation	Priority
	<p>It is recommended that the leavers checklist is fully completed for every leaver. This includes being signed and dated by a member of the HR Team to confirm receipt, and held on file as evidence.</p>	Medium
<h3>Rationale</h3>		
<p>For one of two leavers tested, we identified that the leavers checklist was not signed and dated by a member of the HR team. In addition, the HR sections of the checklist (such as removing CiphR access) were not signed, although it's noted that we were able to confirm separately that access had indeed been removed.</p> <p>For the other leaver tested, we were not able to evidence a checklist being completed at all. This means that we were also not able to evidence confirmation that the leaver had returned SCW property, as this information forms part of the leavers checklist.</p> <p>There is a risk that all of the required processes relating to leavers may not be performed if the checklist is not used, or is not fully completed.</p>		
	Management Response	Responsibility/ Deadline
	<p>Accept.</p> <p>We are confident that the actions have been performed for the sample employees. However we acknowledge that the administrative element (signing and dating the forms) was not completed in a timely manner, including one form not being returned to HR by the line manager.</p> <p>We will amend our processes to ensure the forms are saved, signed and dated in a timely manner. We will remind line managers of their responsibilities as and when required when they have a member of staff leaving.</p> <p>Update at 6 January 2021</p> <p>Updated guidance to be issued to line managers January 2021.</p> <p>Revised HR business process also to be put in place to ensure completed forms are received, signed and saved within 1 week of employee leaving date.</p> <p>Checklists for employees who have left since the audit was undertaken have all been completed and saved.</p>	<p>HR and Wellbeing Manager</p> <p>December 2020</p>

New Starters/Leavers: Policies and Procedures – Medium Priority

	Recommendation	Priority
	<p>It is recommended that detailed policies/procedural documents are produced which cover the new starters and leavers processes. Once produced and approved (where relevant) the checklists used in the new starters and leavers processes should be reviewed to ensure that they are in line with the policy/procedural documents.</p> <p>These policies and procedures should provide detailed guidance, and timeframes, relevant to the processes for new starters and leavers from start to finish, and they should include enough detail that would allow another member of staff who is unfamiliar with these processes to undertake them correctly should the need arise due to staff absence etc.</p> <p>Guidance relating to new starters should make clear the requirements in place for checking an individual's right to work in the UK. These requirements are prescriptive, so including this detail within SCW's internal procedures and checklists would help ensure that requirements are fully met. For example, the guidance states that simply recording the date on a copy of the evidence obtained is not enough to confirm this is the date the check was undertaken. If a date is recorded on the copy document, it must be recorded that this is the date that the check was conducted.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Rationale</p>		
<p>We have identified that although there are checklists in place for new starters and leavers, these checklists lack detail in parts on key stages of the process. For example, the checklists do not currently outline the need to notify payroll of any new starters/leavers. In addition, the current 'Manager's Handbook: Your Role in Supporting Staff through our Induction Framework' policy mainly focuses on the processes around the inductions.</p> <p>There are no set timeframes in place for undertaking key processes, such as adding new starters to the HR system. For one of two new starters we tested, they were not added to the system until over a month after their start date which is not considered to be timely. Setting up new starters on relevant systems in a timely manner helps to ensure that key information relating to the individual is all sorted in one place.</p> <p>There is a risk that the correct/satisfactory processes for starters and leavers may not be followed if these are not clearly set out in policy/procedural documents.</p>		
	Management Response	Responsibility/Deadline
	<p>We accept the recommendation and will produce some additional guidance as noted above.</p> <p>Update at 6 January 2021</p> <p>New guidance and work instructions to be in place by 31 January 2021.</p>	<p>HR and Wellbeing Manager</p> <p>By March 2021</p>

New Starters: Policy Register – Low Priority

	Recommendation	Priority
	<p>It is recommended that the Manager’s Handbook: Your Role in Supporting Staff through our Induction Framework is added to the organisational policy register, to ensure that it’s kept up to date and reflective of the current processes in place.</p>	Low
<p>Rationale</p>		
<p>We have identified that the ‘Manager’s Handbook: Your Role in Supporting Staff through our Induction Framework’ document does not contain a date of last review or a date of next review, nor is it included within the organisational policy register.</p> <p>There is a risk that if procedural documents are not reviewed regularly it may not be identified where updates are required.</p>		
	Management Response	Responsibility/ Deadline
	<p>Accept the recommendation above, and we will add the handbook to our policy register.</p> <p>Update at 6 January 2021</p> <p>Handbook added to policy register.</p>	<p>HR and Wellbeing Manager</p> <p>December 2020</p>

New Starters: Probation Framework – Low Priority

	Recommendation	Priority
	<p>It is recommended that probation forms are completed for each new starter. These forms should be signed and dated by a member of the HR team to confirm receipt and held on file as evidence.</p>	Low
<h3>Rationale</h3>		
<p>We identified that for one of two new starters tested, a completed probation form was not held on file, although we note that we were able to inspect email correspondence that indicated that the probationary meeting took place.</p> <p>There is a risk that probationary periods are not signed off in a timely manner, and that members of staff do not get adequate feedback on their performance.</p>		
	Management Response	Responsibility/ Deadline
	<p>Partially accepted. This is a line manager responsibility; therefore these forms need to be signed and dated by them and not HR. We already have an automated notification process in place to alert managers as to when these are due. This is the system through which HR would 'audit' on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>We would expect managers to confirm that these have been completed (and the forms signed and dated by the employee and the line manager), and at the 26 week point we will write to the employee to confirm appointment or otherwise. A reminder will be issued out to managers who have recently recruited to posts.</p> <p>Update at 6 January 2021</p> <p>Reminder and guidance to be issued to line managers by 31 January.</p>	<p>Line managers January 2021</p>



CYFARFOD / MEETING	Board meeting				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE		CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
DYDDIAD / DATE	28.01.21				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	8				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/05	COVID-19: an overview of our response to support the sector				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Sue Evans, Chief Executive				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:	Leadership group				
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1 – High level overview of our rapid response to COVID-19 so far				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES/ BUSINESS PLAN ACTIVITY	Priority Theme 4: Enabling Social Care Wales to Deliver				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	CYMERADWYA ETH / APPROVAL	DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER	DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE	TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION	CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Board members are invited to note and discuss our rapid response to COVID-19 in relation supporting the sector and supporting the health and well-being of our own workforce so far in 2020/21.				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED	Our main aim in responding to COVID-19 is to recognise the agility and pace at which the response is needed to support the sector in line with our remit, resources (financial and staffing) and governance arrangements.				

MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION; QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	
ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	For specific pieces of work there have been separate impact assessments to support our approach.

Our response to COVID-19: so far in 2020/21

1. Context

- 1.1 The aim of this report is to bring together the work that we are progressing so far to support the sector in responding to COVID-19 and supporting the health and well-being of our own workforce during 2020/21.
- 1.2 At the start of the financial year, we re-aligned our Business Plan to take into account how we are:
- supporting the social care and early years sectors in responding to COVID-19
 - adapting our business-as-usual activities to support the sustainability of the workforce (including how we will adapt our approaches to support the current environment)
 - supporting the recovery of the sectors from COVID-19.
- 1.3 This paper is not intended to provide a performance commentary against delivery of our Remit. This is set out within our quarterly performance report against our Business Plan 2020/21 which has been discussed and scrutinised by Board on a quarterly basis during the year.
- 1.4 Appendix A provides Members with a high-level overview of how we are delivering COVID-19 rapid response initiatives to support the sector to:
- promote recognition of the workforce
 - support workforce wellbeing
 - develop digital learning and networks support/ approaches
 - support and promote the sector as a career
 - re focus (if required) financial support for training and development
 - learning from COVID-19 and sharing practice on 'What made a difference?'
 - develop COVID-19 research priorities and seek funding to deliver
 - develop one stop shop of curated expert guidance on COVID-19
 - develop and maintain business operations during COVID-19 and capture learning to inform our future operations
- 1.5 The speed, magnitude and challenge of the pandemic on the sector is not something experienced before. From the start of our response in supporting the sector and our staff we have recognised the pressing need for us to respond swiftly with an appropriate set of support measures to give the sector and our staff the support with the assistance they need. If we fail to do so, then there is a significant risk support might come too late for many.

2. Resource implications

- 2.1 The financial and staffing resources on our response to COVID-19 is included within the financial allocation of 2020/21 from Welsh Government. The performance report provides the financial allocation setting out the full costs of this work and current spend.

3. Risk considerations

- 3.1 At the start of the pandemic a separate strategic risk register was developed as part of our response to COVID-19 which was reviewed fortnightly by the Executive Management Team. Since September 2020 these risks have been included within the organisational strategic risk register. This is scrutinised by the Board and Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis.

4. Engagement

- 4.1 Throughout all our work in responding to COVID-19 we have been working in partnership with national organisations such as, but not limited to, Welsh Government, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), Public Health Wales (PHW), Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), ADSS Cymru, Health and Care Research Wales to support a national co-ordinated response to COVID-19.
- 4.2 We have continued to use our existing networks, partnerships and groups to shape, inform and influence the national response. We have also continued to work with our UK regulatory partners to share practice and keep informed of UK partners work in responding to COVID-19.

5. Impact

- 5.1 Our approach to COVID-19 is on providing a prompt response to better address the challenges being faced by the sector.

COVID-19: an overview of our response to support the sector

Promote recognition of the workforce

The care worker card was produced at the start of the pandemic (launched in May 2020) to recognise the key role care workers have in supporting individuals in every community in Wales. The card was also extended to people working in the early years sector. The card provides care workers with useful benefits such as priority access to certain retailers and additional on-line resources and programmes to support workers wellbeing. Around 30,000 workers have enrolled to date. Throughout the year we have continued to review and update the benefits attached to the card and maintain its prominence with retailers.

We are currently looking at the new version of the digital card to be launched in April 2021 (as the current card expires at the end of March 2021). We are using and designing our approach based on feedback from existing card holders, looking at additional future benefits that can be attached to the card along with how the card can be branded and designed for the care workforce in Wales.

In May 2020 children of all ages and their parents came together to say a big “Diolch” to the people that work in the early years, childcare and playwork sectors in a WeCare Wales video. As parents across the country juggle working from home with caring for their children, there is increased respect and admiration for early years, childcare and playwork employees who help our children learn, play and develop. The video was produced using the WeCareWales to give the workforce a morale boost and let them know just how much they are missed, as most settings – except those caring for children of keyworkers – remain closed.

Support workforce wellbeing

In December 2020 the Employee Assistance Programme for social care workers in the independent sector in Wales was launched. The Welsh Government is supporting the scheme with funding of up to £200,000 which was procured and is being managed through us. The scheme is available to around 55,000 social care workers in the independent sector to give greater support to protect their well-being during the pandemic. The scheme recognises the personal impact this has had on many workers and will provide more consistent support across the sector. We ran a webinar, to over 120 attendees, as part of the launch of this scheme.

This scheme builds on the well-being support already available through our website, where the Covid-19 and well-being pages have been accessed the most since the pandemic started.

We have worked in partnership with Improvement Cymru to deliver a peer support network to care home managers called the Care Home Cwtch. A review point was held and sessions have since continued with the agreement of the participants. We also launched a peer support offer for domiciliary care managers called 'A Time for You'. Feedback on the sessions held have been positive and a second cohort of further sessions has been opened up to new participants in addition to existing ones.

We continue to evaluate this approach in terms of the efficacy of a digital offer and also the impact of a peer support model.

Develop digital learning and networks support/ approaches

From April 2020 we have been running all our networks virtually to support the skills and learning of the sector. As an example, the Dementia Learning Co-ordinator Network has 76 members from health, social care and independent providers. The network has actively shared resources through COVID-19. Webinars have been held throughout to look at how dementia training and learning can be taken forward during COVID-19 and beyond. In terms of supporting the sector in embedding outcomes focused practice during this time we have been running on-line learning networks with mentors subgroup to reflect on practice opportunities and challenges during the last 6 months of embedding outcomes practice through the pandemic.

We are also developing our approach to digital learning to enable ongoing skills and learning development across the sector – to support and deliver a ‘once for Wales’ training and learning approach. We are working with a digital learning company on developing a number of pilots, using existing materials such as the principles and values module (of the induction framework) and Safeguarding training, to design the content into digital learning for the sector. This will help us in learning how we should be developing our learning content within digital service standards that meets the needs of our learners.

One of the key objectives of the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP) grant for 2021/22, includes the requirement placed on local authorities to use the funding to support the development of the necessary infrastructure, skills and knowledge required to move to digital solutions for the delivery of learning, development and qualifications. Progress on this objective will be formally received through the mid-year monitoring reports in 2021/22. We also realigned our 2020/21 financial support through SCWWDP to support Local Authorities rapid response to COVID-19.

The work on developing a digitally ready workforce is informing how we need to work in future. There has been a discovery research project looking at ways in which we can improve our on-line (and off-line) services which meets the needs of our customers. This work will form the development of our digital vision, strategy and road map on how we work in future.

Support and promote the sector as a career

Throughout the year we have been utilising and building on the WeCare Wales brand to support attraction and recruitment to the sector during this time.

In May 2020 a TV advert ran across ITV Wales, S4C and All4 featuring a carer’s poem about her job created by the WeCare Wales campaign. To help bring the carers words to life, the advert also included a collection of home-footage taken from within care homes across Wales during lockdown. The clips show how carers are going above and beyond to ensure spirits are kept high and helping residents keep in touch with loved ones by using technology.

We have been building on the WeCare Wales job portal to enhance the ease at which employers can advertise their job vacancies and people can see the vacancies available within their area. We have also developed and launched an online learning resource to help people find out whether a career in care would be right for them.

Over the next few weeks, we will be celebrating, through a TV advert, how the Early Years and Childcare workers and settings provide so many children across Wales with the best start in life.

Developing a rapid recruitment and introduction to social care training for the sector in Wales

There are growing concerns on the capacity of the social care sector in Wales as we enter 2021. In order to support services, while during the pandemic and challenges of increased demand, couple with staff absence and contact isolation, a rapid recruitment and introduction to social care is required to support additional capacity into the sector. This approach would be utilised where flexibility and mutual aid in use of current qualified and skilled staff has been exhausted, and there are significant concerns in the sustainability of services. The work will include developing a rapid recruitment and introduction to social care which will:

- Promote temporary and rapid recruitment initiative to drive interest in the sector
- Enable individuals to signal their interest in working in the sector
- Develop an introduction to social care programme which facilitates the essential training required for individuals to undertake basic social care support roles
- Delivery of an introduction to social care programme estimated to be a 3-day programme through a mix of virtual, and minimal face to face training
- Work with employers to identify the types of roles this temporary workforce could support
- Notify employers of individuals who are 'ready' for temporary basic social care support roles

A number of the building blocks required to deliver this work are already in place.

Workforce supply and shape

To respond to the initial and current need to get as many practitioners as possible on the front-line to help tackle the effects of coronavirus the temporary registration of social workers who were previously registered with us is still currently open. Uptodate figures on the numbers registered with us through the Social Care Wales (Emergency Registration of Social Workers Rules) 2020 can be found here: <https://socialcare.wales/registration/covid-19-temporary-registration-of-social-workers#section-35527-anchor>

This register was established following the passing of the UK Coronavirus Act. It is open to any social worker who has left the register in the past three years and is free

of registration fees. The closing of this register would be a Welsh Government decision.

Refocus (if required) financial support for training and development

We also developed an enhanced bursary offer for returning social work students, recognising the financial and operational challenges they have faced during the Covid-19 emergency. Each returning student received an additional £500 in their first term bursary.

Learning from COVID-19 and sharing practice on ‘What made a difference?’ – the Accolades 2020

Originally scheduled for April 2020 as an event the Accolades 2020 was held as an on-line broadcast on 10 November 2020 in response to COVID-19 environment. Around 3,000 people watched ‘live’ or have watched the recording of the broadcast with positive feedback on the organisations and individuals being recognised and celebrated for their excellent work, particularly in these extremely challenging times. Following discussions at Improvement Committee in December work will progress on how the practice from the 2020 Accolades finalists can be shared throughout 2021.

Develop COVID-19 research priorities and seek funding to deliver

The ambition to embed evidence in both practice and policy in social care and social services in Wales is a key part of the Social care research and development strategy 2018-23, and one of three major domains in Welsh Government’s Performance and Improvement Framework. COVID-19 has shone a light on the care sector and a need for change and investment. Identifying up-to-date and high-quality evidence is necessary to ensure that investment in new approaches in social work and social care practice is justified and prudent. There has also been much discussion of how the crisis has been accompanied by a shift in views, for example, on community support resilience, and social solidarity.

We are working with Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) on what good research and intelligence will be required by frontline practitioners and to identify whether and how these changes can be meaningfully embedded in the future design of care and support.

Develop one stop shop of curated expert guidance on COVID-19

From the start of the pandemic, we developed on-line resources to support the sector which cover the following topic areas:

Blogs on COVID-19

- Data and information that is reliable, useful and interesting
- Learning from webinars: the impact of COVID-19 on people affected by dementia
- Loneliness and COVID-19
- Combatting loneliness
- Communicating with the D/deaf community

Supporting staff and carers

- Recruiting staff
- Your health and well-being
- Guidance for volunteering in social care settings
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- Training modules and course for social care workers

Supporting adults and older people

- Dementia and COVID-19
- Mental capacity act and COVID-19 what's changed
- Ethical framework for adult social care during COVID-19
- Domestic violence and abuse: guidance for professionals
- Supporting people with learning disabilities
- Tips for supporting older relatives in isolation post lockdown
- Alcohol and Covid-19: messages for social workers
- Care homes: residential and nursing
- Support for homelessness and substance misuse during Covid-19
- End of life care
- Flexible use of Direct Payments during the pandemic

Supporting children and young people

- On-line safety and well-being
- Providing safe services for children and young people through the internet
- Supporting children and young people's wellbeing

We are in the process of reviewing the existing content of these resources to make sure they are as up to date as possible and continue to identify new areas of guidance required by the sector to support them in responding to the challenges they face.

Develop and deliver regulation during COVID-19

The following are changes made to our role in regulating the workforce in light of COVID-19:

1. **Social Care Workers have up to 12 months from their start date to register with us (changed from 6 months):** All workers continue to operate within the Code of Professional Practice and this risk was considered to be lower than the risk of staff having to leave the workforce. Any staff would also be operating within the framework of an employer disciplinary regime with a registered manager.
2. **Confirmed competence will be available to domiciliary care workers beyond the original date of April 2020.** We are planning to keep this as a route until we close the voluntary register of adult care home workers to support the many hybrid services which are in place.

3. **Removal of historic and current 'debtors' for failure to pay their annual fee and those registered people who do not renew their registration (lapsed registration).** A key aim of our changes was to maximise capacity in the sector, and to avoid burdening the workforce at a difficult time. We therefore suspended all removals during the onset of the pandemic. We are now moving, with good notice, to remove all lapsed registered people and historic debtors (those who were debtors before end of March 2020). A decision on those who were due to pay a fee after April 2020, which will include most Domiciliary Care Workers will be agreed in due course to implement it by end of March. This will need to be done with clarity and care.
4. **We were not closing down applications or sending final reminders to individuals or employers.** This change was to ensure it was made as easy as possible for people to return to the sector. For the current period we will be closing down applications and sending final reminders after six months, but by the end of March 2021 we will revert back to the 21-day close down process.
5. **A social worker can work in Wales if they are registered with another UK regulatory body (either on their full or temporary Register).** This change is to ensure local authorities are able to recruit and deploy social workers as quickly as possible during the pandemic.
6. **If a registered person submits 50% or more of their required 90 hours post registration training and learning (PRTL) at renewal** we will apply a recommendation to complete the remaining hours in addition to the required 90 hours in their next three-year registration period without the need for a case conference. This change was to ensure registered people were not removed unnecessarily from the register at a time of high demand for their services. We are currently undertaking a significant review of our approach to PRTL.
7. **We now enable managers to register with us** as long as they are enrolled on an appropriate qualification course, rather than only after achieving the qualification.

Regulation and Standards Committee continue to review and monitor our regulatory changes approach as a response to COVID-19.

Scheduling and holding hearings during COVID-19

Over time we have started delivering hearings remotely with Interim Suspension Orders (ISO), ISO reviews, Regulations Appeals and Fitness to Practise Hearings now all taking place. We are continuing to work on the default arrangement of remote hearings. We are not planning to return to full physical hearings, although we have arranged a registered persons hub within our 2 offices to accommodate individuals engaged in cases who cannot access suitable technology or environment.

Approval requirements for Social Work qualifying training in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic

The pandemic meant practice placements for student social workers were often unavoidably curtailed. We worked with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to find routes for students to qualify. Whilst all HEIs were supportive of a flexible approach

that allowed students to progress according to local arrangement, one HEI required students to fulfil their practice placements in the 2020/21 academic year. This presented some challenges in terms of bursary support, but we have been able to cover all additional costs. We will continue to work with HEIs to support student progression through their courses.

We have also continued to work with the sector and learning providers on adapting the approach to support vocational qualifications during this time.

Develop and maintain business operations during COVID-19 and capture learning to inform our future operations

Supporting our staff to work from home

From 23 March 2020 our entire workforce has been working remotely from their homes, and we have committed to this continuing until May 2021 at the earliest. During this time, we have conducted 2 Home Working Risk Assessments for all staff and have provided the necessary IT and office equipment to support staff in their working remotely. We have also run a number of mini staff surveys as part of a 'temperature check'. Our Staff Partnership Council have continued to meet on a monthly basis to discuss any matters being raised through to their representatives.

HR policies: current position

We have a number of policies in place to support our staff. Those listed below illustrate any changes to the 'as usual' position:

- **Sick leave and pay:** If staff are unwell and unable to work as a result of COVID-19 they will receive full pay regardless of length of service. This extends to any mental health conditions. This is a change to underlying policy whereby sick pay is linked to length of service. Sick leave has been recorded during this time but does not trigger any ill-health management processes as this is currently 'on hold' during this time (see contractual hours)
- **Annual Leave and flexi:** We are actively encouraging staff to continue to take annual leave during this period to support their wellbeing; it's important to take time away from work especially whilst working from home. For 2020/21 all excess leave up to 20 days remaining at 31 March 2021 will be carried over to next year. There have been some temporary changes to legislation allowing for employees to carry over up to 4 weeks of leave over the next 2 years.
- **Flexi:** from September 2020 we re-introduced the requirement for staff to record their flexi.
- **Contractual hours:** We recognise that staff will be working around other commitments at home during this time so are encouraging teams to adopt a more task-based approach where possible. Staff are being be paid their regular pay during this period.
- **Compassionate leave/pay:** In relation to bereavement leave and pay we will continue to be as flexible, compassionate and supportive as possible about leave and pay. The policy already allows flexibility to manage these situations on a case-by-case basis and doesn't stipulate a set number of days.

- **Volunteering policy:** an addition to support volunteering during COVID-19 for our staff was increased from 2 working days per year (pro rata), up to 8 days a month.
- **Capability policy:** this policy is 'on hold' and is not being enacted (see contractual hours)

The Executive Management Team are continuing to review the appropriateness and fairness on our approach to the above policies continuing for any further period. We need to consider whether this remains a reasonable approach, particularly given that we have flexible working policies that could support our staff to continue to work more flexibly or at reduced hours during this time. 'Managing as best we can' was always intended to be a temporary solution.

Our staff wellbeing

Staff wellbeing has been the core principle in managing business continuity and business operations whilst working remotely. This relates to supporting our employees physical and mental wellbeing whilst working remotely and continuing to live within the ever-changing pandemic and its related restrictions.

Throughout working at home, we continue to make sure that our workforce feels supported, engaged and connected and that our managers know how to spot the signs that someone is struggling, and that they feel equipped to manage this.

We have and will continue to achieve this through:

- weekly briefings and fortnightly all staff meetings with the Chief Executive
- regular team meetings and monthly departmental meetings
- promoting, sharing and signposting to good quality information and guidance
- introducing initiatives to encourage and support our employees to stay active and connected
- combatting loneliness by providing regular opportunities for our employees to connect and socialise with each other in less formal ways
- health and wellbeing initiatives
- allowing time and space and creating opportunities for our employees to have time out and exposure to daylight (winter months in particular)
- online training and learning opportunities.
- manager briefings

Capturing our learning to inform future operations

From the start of working from home we have been capturing our learning from our way of working. Based on the current feedback from staff these can be split into 5 high level themes

1. Refocusing our business priorities – and focusing on tasks needed to add value whilst also delivering 'business as usual'

2. Delivering our business plan requirements in line with our governance and accountability framework – streamlined decision making processes for a more reactive response
3. Meeting requirements set out in our Model Governance Framework in relation to Audit and Risk Committee; Internal and External Audit; Annual Governance cycle
4. Improved communication and engagement with our staff
5. Seeing technology as an enabler rather than an inhibitor – within our information governance controls

Our way of working now and in the future will take into account this learning so that we can use 'what works' in how we work.



CYFARFOD / MEETING	Board meeting				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE		CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC		
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DYDDIAD / DATE	28.01.21				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	9				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/06	Strategic Plan and Strategic Equality Plan update 2021-2026				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Sue Evans, Chief Executive				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:	Leadership group				
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1 – High level themes following consultation responses.				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES/ BUSINESS PLAN ACTIVITY	Priority Theme 4: Enabling Social Care Wales to Deliver				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	CYMERADWYA ETH / APPROVAL	DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER	DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE	TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION	CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	<p>Board members are invited to consider and approve our:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> revised approach to developing our Strategic Plan and Strategic Equality Plan and our vision and mission statements. 				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT;	Throughout the development of our future Strategic Plan workshops and discussions have been held with Managers, Leadership group, Executive Management Team and Board Members to analyse the results of work with Cordis Bright, the Grant Thornton work and the responses to our Strategic Plan consultation.				

<p>CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED</p> <p>MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION; QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER</p>	<p>The Board paper provides Members with an update on timelines and development of our strategic plan, strategic equality plan and vision and purpose statements.</p>
<p>ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS</p>	<p>We are working with a third party, independent organisation to assess the impact of our current Strategic Plan which will inform the development of our future plan.</p>

Strategic Plan and Strategic Equality Plan update 2021-2026

1. Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- provide Members with a high-level overview of the responses received following the consultation on our draft list of priorities to inform the development of our next Strategic Plan (Appendix 1)
- re-consider and approve the timetable for our Strategic plan and Strategic Equality Plan
- discuss and agree our vision and purpose statements (Appendix 2)

2. Background

2.1 In May 2020 the Board agreed a timetable to revise our Strategic Plan. It was agreed that a consultation on our draft priorities for 2021-2026 be undertaken in the Autumn with the final Strategic Plan being published in April 2021.

2.2 The consultation document was not our final Strategic Plan. The consultation phase provided the opportunity to listen, learn and inform the development of our final Strategic Plan.

2.3 The draft priorities 2021 to 2026 for consultation built on the discussions held by Board and leadership group on refining our strategy in light of COVID-19 pandemic, our learning from our first 3 years in operation and the work in measuring our impact. The aim of the consultation was to refine our vision, purpose and ambitions for the next 5 years and provide an opportunity for the workforce, employers, managers, strategic leaders and the public to shape our priorities for the next 5 years. It is important to note that our current Strategic Plan was due to come to an end in 2022.

2.4 The consultation framework document was approved by the Board in July 2020 which set out our priorities and proposals for what we want to achieve, where we suggest we focus our energies and how we want to work over the next five years to realise our vision.

3. Engagement

3.1 Appendix A provides Members with an overview of the engagement and communications that took place to support the consultation process. The consultation was open for ten weeks, with 33 organisations and individuals formally responding. However, there were a number of key organisations who, understandably, did not respond but will be key partners in the delivery of our work.

4. Resource implications

- 4.1 One of the key elements of our new Strategic Plan is to have a clear financial plan which will support how we will resource (financial and staffing) delivery of our plan over the next 5 years.
- 4.2 Whilst we have been consulting on our draft priorities for the future we have been working on future financial scenarios. In particular, we have been focusing on areas where we need to scope additional areas for possible additional funding. This work is continuing as we continue to scope out requirements from discovery phases in these areas (such as research, data and digital transformation).
- 4.3 We have also continued to work with our Welsh Government Sponsor team on the known timescales for Welsh Government budget discussions for 2021/22. Discussions with Welsh Government Sponsor will continue as we work on outlining our business plan for 2021/22, annual budget allocation and our Remit Letter.

5. Risk considerations

- 5.1 Whilst we have continued to progress the development of our future Strategic Plan, we also need to consider a number of risks over our current planning timing. These include:
- misalignment between our strategic development and the ambitions of the new Government in May. Dependent on the outcome of the elections the new programme for Government would be published in September 2021 (at the earliest)
 - the need to focus on supporting the sector during COVID-19 in terms of the current challenges of responding rapidly to the current situation
 - moving too soon could mean we fail to appreciate fundamental issues that emerge as we move to recovery
 - any strategic movement will get lost in a time when priorities are rightly elsewhere
 - lack of space and time to complete our scoping transformation work (research, data, workforce offer, digital, employer liaison, workforce strategy etc.)
 - lack of space and time to develop our thinking alongside and with the sector

6. Revised timescales

- 6.1 Based on the above risks we have revised the timetable for Members to consider and approve which is as follows:

What?	When?	Who?
Business plan 2021/22 framework	January 2021	Board to consider and approve
Business plan 2021/22	April 2021	Board to approve (subject to receipt of the Remit Letter)
Strategic Plan development (including outcomes and measures)	January – May 2021	Board development sessions to discuss refinement
Strategic Plan	July/September 2021 Likely to be September 2021 at the earliest for final approval	Board to approve prior to submission to the Minister Formal Ministerial, Welsh Government approval
Develop business cases	January – July 2021	Lead officers to develop further
Strategic financial plan	January – July 2021	Executive Management Team to approve prior to Board and Welsh Government Sponsor submission. High level strategic financial section within final Strategic Plan
Strategic Equalities Plan	October 2021	Board approve our Strategic Equality Plan

6.2 The above timeline would also have implications for the development of the Strategic Equality Plan. It is important for the Strategic Equalities Plan to align with the Strategic Plan to ensure that equality and diversity is embedded into our work. Therefore, Members are asked to approve that as part of revising the Strategic Plan timescales that we revise the consultation and subsequent publishing of our new strategic equality plan.

7. Impact

7.1 We will continue to work with Cordis Bright on evaluating the impact of our current Strategic Plan which will help inform the development of our future plan.

7.2 Members have also discussed and agreed the key principles of what we want from our next Strategic Plan. Our future Strategic Plan will:

- succinctly set out the change we want to see
- be clear in how we will directly impact these changes and where we have influence on making these changes happen
- directly link to our role as set out in legislation
- be used to support our strategic decision making process and prioritisation
- focus on the impact of our work through the lens of our 3 audience groups:
 - the social care and early years workforce;
 - social care and early years managers, leaders and owners
 - strategic leaders, stakeholders
- highlight our partnership and collaborative way of working
- set clear measures that we use to demonstrate our impact and monitor the patterns of change on an annual basis (which will be published as our impact report)
- noting that our annual business plan would then set out the road map needed to support this direction on an annual basis

7.3 Therefore, our future Strategic Plan will set out our high-level direction over the next 5 years which gives us agility, flexibility and responsiveness to the external environment. Due to the current external environment the revised timescales would provide the opportunity and capacity for us to develop a 5-year plan which meets these principles in development with the sector.

8. Vision and purpose

8.1 As part of developing our new Strategic Plan Board and building on discussions with managers, leadership group and Board Members Appendix 2 outlines draft vision and purpose statements for discussion and approval. This will then shape further developments on shaping our outcomes and measures.

High level themes following consultation responses

The responses received can be categorised under the following areas:

- Vision and purpose
- Workforce strategy
- Digital
- Recognition
- Parity of training opportunities and funding
- Partnership
- Early years
- Tone of voice
- Welsh Language

Engagement and communications plan

During the consultation period we had an engagement and communications plan. We progressed the following:

- 'Face to face' meetings were held by the Chief Executive with Strategic leaders of national organisations: This included Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW), Older People's Commissioner, Children's Commissioner, Future Generations Commissioner, Welsh Language Commissioner, Welsh NHS Confederation, Health and Care Research Wales, WLGA and Care Forum
- Using existing opportunities with management teams: this included meetings with our executive management team and key stakeholders including HEIW, ADSS Cymru, Welsh Government, CIW and Skills for Care and Development
- Promoting the consultation through our communication channels: the opportunity to be part of shaping our future direction was included twice within our e-bulletin to registered persons (over 30,000 people) and stakeholders who want to be kept informed of our work (300+ people)
- Using social media: the Chief Executive recorded a brief video clip which was shared on our social media accounts. Over 1,100 views were received of the video
- Using our existing networks and partnership meetings: corporate managers shared the opportunity to inform and respond to our consultation.
- Extended the deadline: we extended the consultation period for an additional 2 weeks so that there were 10 weeks for individuals and organisations to respond.
- Held internal consultation opportunities with our managers: this was through a workshop along with follow up opportunities to provide theirs and staff feedback on the consultation.

Vision and Purpose

Overall, the response was mainly positive. Although A number of responders noted that the 'workforce' needed to be more prominent in our vision and purpose.

Discussions at the managers workshop also highlighted the need to emphasis our 'workforce regulator' role. Some of the comments received include:

“It is absolutely correct that adults and children that rely on care services are front and centre. However, Social Care Wales as an organisation has a significant role to play in supporting the workforce and we believe the future vision should also incorporate something to reflect this.” (United Kingdom Homecare Association, UKHCA)

“The vision set out within the plan is succinct and offers a clear focus upon improving outcomes for those who rely on social care services. However, it may be helpful to refer explicitly, within the vision, to the status of Social Care Wales as the workforce regulator for the early years and social care workforce, with responsibility for maintaining and promoting high standards in the early years and social care workforce.” (Education Workforce Council, EWC)

“The vision reaffirms the intentions that lie at the heart of the SS&W Act – to enable people to live the lives that matter to them. This is both ambitious and important. The purpose does not directly flow from the vision however: a ‘trusted, skilled and valued workforce’ is not necessarily one that will achieve the ‘what matters’ outcome. The purpose would be strengthened if the link was made explicit and referenced throughout the Plan so that the connection between what you intend to do (outputs) and the impact it will have (outcomes) is clarified.”

“...suggest that the wellbeing of the workforce is referenced in the purpose so given greater emphasis. Improved wellbeing for the workforce will in turn lead to better outcomes of those being supported” (care home owner)

There was also feedback requesting more detail as to how we would achieve the vision.

“Some aspects of the plan are very high level. For example, it is not clear from the text what you intend to do to improve workforce wellbeing”. (UKHCA)

“While we feel the vision and purpose are clear to a degree, we would suggest encompassing more detail on how the upward trajectory of achieving the vision will be realised.”

“The aim of establishing an evidence and guidance one stop shop for employers and managers is welcomed, as is the ambition to promote an evidence informed approach to strategic planning and decision making. Ensuring that policy and plans are based on the best available evidence as a matter of routine will be essential to continuing to improve quality of care and ensure the effective use of resources” (NICE)

The detail of delivery will be published within our annual business plans; we will then produce and publish an annual impact report detailing our progress of our strategic plan. We will strengthen elements in the final strategy document. We will also produce an equalities strategy that will support and underpin the strategic plan.

Suggested areas to be strengthened/added

Among the consultation responses there were a number of suggested areas for strengthening and/or additions. Below are areas which were consistently mentioned in the responses as needing to be more prominent or clearer within the Strategic Plan:

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

Several responders noted there needs to be more emphasis on the workforce Strategy and how we will respond to current workforce challenges.

“Positive that this strategy references the HEIW/SCW joint workforce strategy however more explicit information on how the two strategies will interlink would be useful.”

“We would also suggest that this is an opportunity to include reference to the Joint Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care recently launched by both our organisations” (HEIW)

At the time of writing the consultation the Workforce Strategy was still in draft form but now that it has been published, we will be strengthening references to the approaches outlined in the document which will ‘deliver an inclusive, engaged, sustainable, flexible and responsive workforce to deliver excellent health and social care services.’ Areas also suggested for inclusion are below, which are aspects of the workforce strategy and will also be strengthened are as follows:

Digital transformation

“Disabled and older people – both in the workforce and those people being supported – may be more affected by issues of digital inclusion, some of your goals rely on digital solutions, adequate training support and accessibility features, or alternative ways to engage, must be available.”

“Suggest a focus on digital inequalities. This has been brought into sharp relief by the pandemic. Internet and IT access as well as digital skills is still an issue for many care workers.”

Recognition

“We would hope to see a workforce that feels well equipped to do the difficult jobs that come under social care, with registration leading to greater recognition of the value of care workers from the wider public and a sense of self-worth from workers themselves.”

“the first bullet-point in the workforce section is ‘providing professional recognition’. It is not clear how a set of qualifications will in themselves move you closer to your vision.”

Parity of training opportunities

“We would like to see an impact statement related to an (adequately funded) structured career pathway that has been given parity of recognition and reward with comparable healthcare roles.”

“You say on page 1 of your consultation document that Social Care employs 90,500 people in Wales and your annual report suggests that your training grants budget is £11.3m. By contrast Welsh Government statistics show around 82,400 people employed by the NHS in Wales and the Health Education and Improvement Wales website says it has a training budget of £196m. More than ten times more. We would urge the Welsh Government to consider this. Meanwhile, Social Care Wales could explore whether it could, in some cases, be appropriate to have some shared training between health and social care services. This could potentially be beneficial in creating greater parity and building relationships between the sectors. While there are differences between the sectors, some training might be similar and discussing differences in training sessions could potentially prove insightful.” (UKHCA)

Partnership working/ collaboration

A number of responses indicated that working in partnership was not highlighted effectively within the document. It was noted that Social Care Wales work in collaboration across the social care and early years sectors but this did not come across in the consultation document. It was suggested that the Strategic Plan highlight the important role of working in partnership and producing resources/policies in collaboration with the sector.

“ specifically underlining collaborative working as one of the key roles of Social Care Wales would ensure focus on achieving the goals and aims within the Future Generations Act and Social Services and Wellbeing Act.” (HEIW)

Therefore, as part of developing the final plan we will make sure that the way in which we work in partnership across and with the sector is strengthened throughout.

Children and early years

A couple of responses indicated that our role in relation to children, early years and childcare needs to be clearer.

“The EWC’s Chair and Chief Executive have discussed this matter with both Social Care Wales and the Welsh Government. As explained, a significant number of early years’ practitioners are already registered with the EWC and work in settings such as schools and nurseries. We believe that it is essential for there to be clarity as to whether any early years practitioner delivers education or social care and this distinction is then used in determining with which body a practitioner should be registered with (or both). As we have previously indicated, we are keen to work alongside Social Care Wales and the Welsh Government to help achieve greater clarity on this matter.” (EWC)

“I believe the strategic plan would benefit from more explicit links to individuals’ and children’s rights. All those working with children in a social care context have a duty to pay due regard to children’s rights as set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing Act. For example;

1. Employers and the social care workforce know about the codes of practice and *individuals’ rights*, and put them into practice.
2. We support the change in practice and culture that *promotes people’s rights* and puts people at the centre of their care and support planning (outcomes-focused practice).”

(Children’s Commissioner for Wales).

Tone of voice

There were a number of comments on the language used in the document. Some felt it was “quite long, wordy and full of jargon”. It probably reads a bit too much like a management consultancy document and uses phrases and language that are not accessible. Colleagues also felt the descriptions on how we will work were not easy to understand and far too ‘jargonistic’.

Other comments noted that we were not being ‘assertive’ enough in our use of language for example:

“and to strengthen the language around determination to deliver. For example, ‘will’ rather than ‘wants’ to achieve, improve and aspire to best possible outcomes.”

“The purpose statement isn’t very strong or ambitious. ‘Supporting’ isn’t a strong statement”.

Rather than using phrases such as we will try..... we will be saying we will.....Across the board in our managers workshop there were comments on the lack of ‘emotion’ or ‘human’ aspect in the document and that the Strategic Plan needs to be about people not processes.

Impact

We asked in the consultation what impact stakeholders would want to see from our work but most responses wanted us to be clearer on what we expected to see over the duration of the plan.

“The approach of outlining the impact that Social Care Wales intends to make during the plan period could potentially be improved. In particular, it would be helpful if the statements were set out so as to be more specific and measurable. This will then provide a more helpful benchmark against which the success of the strategy may be measured.”

We are continuing to work with colleagues and an independent ‘critical friend’ to refine our outcomes and impact statements. We have also begun the process of identifying measures and indicators; these will be included within the final strategic plan.

Welsh language

A number of responders welcomed our commitment to the Welsh Language and the importance it plays in delivering services across Wales. However, a few wanted us to be clearer on our responsibilities in regards to the Welsh Language and our commitment to delivering policies such as “A million Welsh Speakers” and “Mwy na Geiriau”:

“The plan does not explicitly reference Welsh language. Suggest this could be included in the social care and early year’s workforce section with an identified action/support” (HEIW)

“In terms of the vision, the desire to make the workforce more representative is particularly welcome in relation to Welsh-language. Good communication is at the heart of ‘what matters’ conversations; having the opportunity to speak with someone in one’s mother tongue and who understands one’s cultural context is really important. However, it is not clear from the Plan how you would achieve this laudable aim.” (Care home owner)

“We did not believe that the draft strategic plan in its current form reflected a sufficiently strong commitment to the Welsh language, although we should acknowledge that this could be unintentional. It does not recognize an appreciation of the statutory requirements to provide care in Welsh in many cases; nor does it recognize the importance of providing care in Welsh according to people's wishes.

It does not reflect the principle that providing care through the medium of Welsh can contribute to better outcomes for care recipients, an issue which is of course increasingly recognized in many national strategic policy documents. It also does not recognize the central role of the early years workforce in contributing to the Welsh Government's vision of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.” (Welsh Language Commissioner).

We will be looking at how we state quite clearly our role in relation to Welsh Language skills of the workforce with clear outcomes and measures to underpin our approach.

Equalities

A number of responders welcomed our commitment to improving representation across the workforce and a number wanted to be involved in drafting our strategic equality plan.

We received feedback through our website during the consultation period that we had not used the wording of the Equalities Act 2010 when referring to the protected characteristic in relation to gender reassignment. As soon as we were notified of this, we made the change to the on-line consultation response form – the word document was worded correctly and needed no change.

We received a number of further comments and responses to the consultation providing comments on our role in relation to Equalities. We will be using this feedback as part of drafting our revised Strategic Equality Plan.

Draft vision and purpose statements

Throughout the development of our future Strategic Plan workshops and discussions have been held with Managers, Leadership group, Executive Management Team and Board Members to analyse the results of work with Cordis Bright, the Grant Thornton work and the responses to our Strategic Plan consultation.

Based on these discussions we have focused on developing our vision and purpose statements. We have developed 2 vision and purpose statements for discussion.

	Option 1	Option 2
Our vision	Improving care in Wales through knowledge, evidence and skills	Making a positive difference for quality care and support in Wales
Our purpose	<p>We provide national leadership and expertise in social care and early years.</p> <p>We lead on developing the workforce to improve care and support in Wales.</p>	<p>We provide national leadership and expertise in social care and early years.</p> <p>We lead on care workforce regulation, development, data and evidence in Wales.</p>

Below is some further information on what a vision and purpose statement should be.

What is a vision statement?

Our vision statement outlines our goals and aspirations for the future – think “this is where we’re heading, and this is what we want to achieve”. Our vision statement should create a mental picture of a specific medium-term target and act as a source of inspiration and motivation (but in a way that bears some resemblance to reality!). It’s a bit like a guiding star and, as such, might be better described as an “aspiration statement”.

Vision statements should:

- reflect our ambition
- be bold enough
- reflect our remit
- speak to our audience
- meet expectations
- be understood

What is a purpose statement?

Our purpose **statement** sets out our purpose. This is our opportunity to say why we exist, what purpose we serve, and for whom. We're essentially answering the question "What do we do?"

It's very important to focus on the here and now in our purpose statement, and not get into where you want to be in the future.



CYFARFOD / MEETING	Board Meeting				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE		CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
DYDDIAD / DATE	28.01.21				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	11				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/07	Opportunities to Strengthen Corporate Governance Update				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Mick Giannasi, Chair				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:	Linos Bradbury, Senior Governance Officer				
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1 – Timeline for implementation Appendix 2 – Progress against implementation				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES / BUSINESS PLAN ACTIVITY	Priority theme 4: Enabling Social Care Wales to deliver				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	CYMERADWYA ETH / APPROVAL	DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER	DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE	TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION	CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Board members are invited to discuss and note the progress made against the timeline of implementation of opportunities to strengthen corporate governance.				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED	Since the April 2020 Board meeting where members agreed, in principle, to progress a series of proposals for strengthening the organisation's corporate governance arrangements (appendix 1) the Chair and Senior Governance Officer have been working on taking forward the proposals and the table in Appendix 2 provides members with an update of the progress which has been made against each proposal. The table also explains				

MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION; QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	<p>where work is in progress and highlights further work which is planned going forward. It will be seen that a number of proposals have necessarily been delayed or deferred due to the impact of COVID-19.</p>
ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	

Opportunities to Strengthen Corporate Governance Update

1. Context

- 1.1 At the April 2020 Board meeting members agreed, in principle, to progress a series of proposals for strengthening the organisation's corporate governance arrangements. The proposals, which emerged from a Board Development discussion in December 2019, are set out for reference in the Appendix 1 together with the original timeline for the implementation of the proposal which were being taken forward.
- 1.2 Since the April meeting the Chair and Senior Governance Officer have been working on taking forward the proposals and the table in Appendix 2 provides members with an update of the progress which has been made against each proposal. The table also explains where work is in progress and highlights further work which is planned going forward. It will be seen that a number of proposals have necessarily been delayed or deferred due to the impact of COVID-19.

2. Resource implications

- 2.1 There have been some resource implications in implementing the suggested improvements to date, mostly for the Corporate Governance and Strategy team. However, other teams across the organisation (e.g. the Communications team) have also supported developments where necessary within existing capacity.
- 2.2 Further developments are being phased incrementally to ensure that, as far as possible, this can be done within existing resources across the organisation. Where additional resources are required to progress specific proposals these will be referred specifically back to the Board for consideration prior to any executive action being taken.

3. Risk considerations

- 3.1 The Board considered the risks associated with these proposals at the April 2020 meeting and concluded, on the basis of a range of external and internal evidence, that the organisation's current corporate governance arrangements are robust and broadly fit for purpose.
- 3.2 That said, there is always room for improvement, and it was agreed that the proposals could further strengthen the position and should be progressed. However, they were not time critical and a measured and proportionate approach to implementation was considered to be appropriate in the circumstances. COVID-19 has subsequently re-enforced the need for a measured approach.

4. Engagement

- 4.1 All Board members and members of the Executive Management Team were involved in the development of these proposals and have been kept updated as the work has progressed.

5. Impact

- 5.1 Implementing the suggested changes will ensure that as an organisation we are constantly learning and evolving and ensure that our corporate governance is keeping the organisation safe and operating in line with the Model Governance Framework.

Summary of Proposals for Strengthening Governance / Timeline for Implementation of Proposals Being Taken Forward

Original Proposal	2020									2021			
	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
1.1 Develop a Board Assurance Framework	Yellow	Blue	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green						
1.2 Develop a more structured longer-term workplan	Brown												
1.3 Create a Chairs -Coordinating Group	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Blue	Green								
2.1 More sophisticated approach to Board Members PADR	Green												
2.2 Explore the feasibility of a structured oversight framework	Brown												
2.3 Explore the feasibility of an appropriate 'Board to Floor' process	Brown												
2.4 Consider other associate roles in business-critical areas	Brown												
3.1 Consider value of workforce representative sitting on the Board	Brown												
3.2 Develop briefing tool to raise awareness of what the Board does	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green								
3.3 Utilise rolling action logs for Board and Committees	Green												
3.4 Consider the value of taking Board meetings into the community	Yellow												
3.5 Develop Chairs Action process to provide additional safeguards	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Blue	Green								
4.1 Remuneration and Wellbeing to become ad hoc Committee	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Blue	Green								
4.2 Review mechanism for development and review of policies	Yellow												
Board Members Suggestions													
5.1 Increase opportunities for Board members to share perspectives	Green												
5.2 Regular / occasional Board meeting with HEIW / CIW	Yellow												
5.3 Summary of key meetings from Chair	Green												
5.4 Patient story at the start of a Board meeting	Yellow												
5.5 Members to be arrange 'stand-ins' Committee meetings	Green												
5.6 Informal away days for the Board	Yellow												

Key	Implementation (subject to Board approval)	Green
	Further work or research to be undertaken	Yellow
	Board to agree Terms of Reference	Blue
	Decision not to implement or to defer pending outcome of another piece of work	Brown

Strengthening Corporate Governance Action Plan – Progress Report				
Proposal		Original Priority	Current Status	Progress Update
1.1	Develop a Board Assurance Framework (BAF).	Research business case and bring proposals back to Board for further consideration.	Work in progress	The Board received a presentation from Audit Wales at the October 2019 Board development session. It was agreed that the incoming Director of Finance, Strategy and Corporate Services (DoFS&CS) would undertake further work to establish the business case for adopting a BAF alongside the development of the performance framework which will support the delivery of the revised corporate strategy. At the January Board development session, the Board will be asked to reassess its approach to both risk appetite and assessing risk. This session will provide a further opportunity to consider the benefits and implications of developing a BAF.
1.2	Develop and maintain a more structured, more systematic, longer-term workplan.	Await outcome of developments or other work.	Deferred	Board and committee workplans for 2021/22 are currently being developed through the Chair's Co-ordinating Group.
1.3	Create a Chair's Coordinating Group.	Research, develop proposal and bring back to Board for approval prior to implementation.	Completed	The Chairs Coordination Group Terms of Reference were agreed at the July Board meeting and a revised, more focussed version agreed at the October Board meeting. The Group is meeting quarterly between the Board and Committee meeting cycle with action notes shared on the portal for all Board members to view. The Group is in the early stages of its development, but members have agreed that the potential exists for this to become an increasingly valuable forum going forward, particularly in terms of co-ordinating the work of the Board and the Committees more effectively.

2.1	Adopt a more sophisticated approach to PADR for Board Members	Develop and implement.	Work in progress	This work was commenced in June 2020. A revised PADR form has been produced and a matrix was developed and agreed which aligns individual members to specific areas of the business. Work has also commenced on revising the PADR guidance booklet for members. However, this work has not been progressed in light of (i) the impact of COVID and in particular the requirement for remote working and the restrictions on travel and social contact, (ii) the enforced delay in appointing the DoFS&CS and (iii) the uncertainty which has been created by changes in Welsh Government policy around member appointments. Given that (ii) and (iii) have now been largely resolved and there is a more realistic prospect of restrictions beginning to ease in the Spring, it would appear timely now to pick this issue up again. On that basis, it is intended that revised PADR guidance and new forms will be distributed in early February and PADR meeting between the Chair and individual members will be arranged for mid-March. In the meantime, members will be asked to work in their action learning groups to develop SMART PADR objectives for discussion and agreement prior to the beginning of the 2021/22 performance year.
2.2	Explore the feasibility of a structured oversight framework	Decision taken not to progress.	Completed.	No further action required
2.3	Explore the feasibility of a sector orientated 'Board to Floor' process.	Undertake research to identify potential benefits and bring	Work in progress	This has been deferred due to the impact of COVID and in particular due to the fact that the Social Care Workforce is currently working from home. In the interim, in order to ensure that the visibility of the

		proposal back to Board for further consideration.		Board is maintained, the Chair, accompanied by other members where appropriate, has been participating in departmental and team meetings during November and December 2020. This practice will continue on a structured basis into 2021 and members will be provided with the opportunities to participate in meeting, linked to their areas of interest, as they emerge.
2.4	Consider other associate roles in business-critical areas.	Await outcome of developments or other work.	Deferred	In view of the depth and breadth of perspectives which already exist within the Board, members did not consider that it was either necessary or desirable to introduce associate members. However, it was recognised that this was something which might become more relevant as the membership of the Board changed over time. As such, this action has been deferred pending the Ministerial decision about members re-appointments.
3.1	Consider the value in inviting a workforce representative to sit on the Board.	Await outcome of developments or other work.	Deferred	The WGSBU is currently reviewing its guidance relating to the membership of the Boards of Sponsored Bodies and the requirement to appoint a workforce representative or representatives is one of the measures currently being considered. As such, this proposal has been deferred pending developments at national level. The latest update received from the WGSBU suggested that the work may be completed in the Autumn of 2021.
3.2	Develop a Board briefing tool to raise awareness of what the Board does.	Develop and implement.	Deferred	This work will need a significant input from the Communications team. It has not been progressed due to competing priorities for resources, in particular, the requirement to support the communication of COVID-19 information to the sector, the design and

				delivery social care worker card and the work required to develop and deliver the Accolades. This will be considered further as part of the business planning process for 2021-22.
3.3	Utilise rolling action logs for Board and Committees.	Develop and implement.	Completed	Rolling actions logs for Board and Committee meetings have been implemented since April 2020.
3.4	Consider the potential value of taking Board meetings out into the community.	Research to identify potential benefits and bring proposal back to Board for further consideration	Deferred	Due to impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and in particular, the shift to remote ways of working and restrictions on social contact and travel, this proposal has not been progressed. It will be considered during 2021-22 with a view to weighing up the potential benefits and resource implications of adopting a programme of community-based meetings during 2022-23.
3.5	Develop a formal Chairs Action Process to provide additional safeguard.	Research, develop proposal and bring back to Board for approval prior to implementation.	Completed	Terms of reference for the Chairs Action Process were agreed at the July Board meeting and the process will be used in future as and when required. This process was designed to be used 'in extremis' and members will be reassured that it's use has not been required thus far.
4.1	Remuneration and Wellbeing Committee to become an ad hoc Committee.	Research, develop proposal and bring back to Board for approval prior to implementation.	Completed	Revised Remuneration and Wellbeing Committee Terms of Reference were agreed at the July Board meeting. This resulted in the Committee becoming an ad hoc Committee, the membership. Of which will be fulfilled by the Chair's Co-ordinating Group. Responsibility for the oversight of HR matters has now become a Board function and the first inputs were received at the October Board meeting.
4.2	Review the existing mechanism for development	Research to identify options and bring	Deferred	This proposal has not yet been progressed, largely due to the impact of COVID. In the meantime, the DoFS&CS is undertaking a review of our existing HR

	and ongoing review of organisational policies.	proposal back to Board for consideration.		arrangements arising from the recommendations of a recent internal audit review and the wider considerations around corporate capacity and capability arising from the current strategic planning process. There is an opportunity to pick up this action in that wider piece of work. The matter is on the agenda for discussion at the January Board meeting and there will be an opportunity to discuss then.
5.1	Opportunities for Board members to share information from their perspectives	Adopt as part of current working arrangements.	Work in progress	The impact of remote working since March has restricted opportunities to do very much in this area. However, there was a discussion at the end of the October Board meeting about making better use of the time allocated at the end for reviewing the effectiveness of the meeting. One of the options discussed was the potential for sharing of learning. A meeting has been arranged to discuss this further on 19 January and an update will be provided.
5.2	Regular or occasional joint Board meeting with HEIW and potentially CIW	Develop and implement.	Work in progress	<p>An agreement in principle has been reached between Chairs and CEOs of Social Care Wales and HEIW that joint Board events will continue to support the implementation of Healthier Wales. A verbal update on the workforce strategy will be provided during the Board meeting on 28 January.</p> <p>The Chair and Executive Management Team will continue to look at relevant opportunities to strengthen working partnership at Board level with other organisations.</p>

5.3	Summary of key meetings and other events from Chair	Develop and implement.	Deferred	Prior to the onset of COVID-19, the Chair had started to circulate a weekly 'In-Touch'. However, it quickly became clear that there was limited in continuing that during 'lockdown' and publication was suspended until normality returns. In the meantime, summaries of key meetings have been provided via email where appropriate and in the early stages of the pandemic, the CEO provided regular updates for members via Zoom.
5.4	'Service user' stories at the start of a Board meeting.	Research to identify options and bring proposal back to Board for consideration.	Deferred	This has not been progressed due to the onset of COVID-19. There is still merit in pursuing this and it will be picked up when there is a return to normality. The experience from other sectors suggests that in order to do this effectively, a considerable amount of planning and resource is required.
5.5	Members to take responsibility for getting another Board member to stand in at Committee meetings.	Adopt as part of current working arrangements.	Completed	As membership of the Committees has been increased, the need for Members to a replacement if they are unable to attend no longer exists. As such the action is no longer necessary.
5.6	Arrange informal 'away day' for the Board.	Develop and implement	Deferred	This has not been progressed due to the onset of COVID-19 and in particular the restrictions on travel and social contact. There is still merit in pursuing this and it will be picked up when there is a return to normality. Provision has been built into the 2021/22 Board and Committee calendar for a 'face to face' Board development day in October 2021 which could be used for this purpose.



CYFARFOD / MEETING	Board meeting				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE			CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC	
	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
DYDDIAD / DATE	28.01.21				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	12				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/08	Board and Committee Dates for 2021-22				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Mick Giannasi, Chair				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:	Linos Bradbury, Senior Governance Officer				
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1 –Proposed meeting dates for Board, Board development sessions and Committee meetings for 2021-22 Appendix 2 – Guidance for participants in virtual meetings				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES / BUSINESS PLAN ACTIVITY	Priority Theme 4: Enabling Social Care Wales to Deliver				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	CYMERADWYA ETH / APPROVAL	DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER	DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE	TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION	CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Members are invited to consider and approve the schedule of Board and Committee meetings to be held during 2021-22.				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED					

MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION; QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	
ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	

Board and Committee Meeting Schedule for 2021-22

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This paper sets out the proposed schedule of dates for Board meetings, Board Development sessions and Committee meetings to be held during the 2021-22 financial year.
- 1.2 Members are invited to discuss, agree and approve the schedule and the general principles which underpin it.

2. Context

- 2.1 Since the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic in March 2020, all Board related business has been conducted virtually using remote technology.
- 2.2 From the various debriefs and stocktakes which have taken place, there appears to be a consensus amongst members and officers alike that this enforced change in working practices has brought substantial benefits both for the organisation and individuals, not least in terms of:
 - the overall effectiveness and succinctness of meetings;
 - reduced overall time commitment and ease of attendance;
 - reduced costs for travel and subsistence;
 - the ability to record meetings for later viewing;
 - wider benefits (e.g. environmental impact, individual quality of life, etc.)
- 2.3 A brief discussion was held at the Board Development session in November which suggested that there was an appetite to continue to optimise the benefits of virtual meetings once the 'new normality' returns. However, it was also recognised that there were times when face to face contact was both necessary and desirable, particularly in terms of building and maintaining personal and professional relationships.
- 2.4 Members asked the Chair and Board Secretary to develop a proposed schedule for 2021-22 which reflected the discussions which had taken place and to bring that to the Board for agreement.

3. Proposed Schedule

- 3.1 The proposed schedule of Board meetings, Board Development sessions and Committee meeting for 2021/22 is outlined in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The following broad principles are highlighted by way of explanation:-

3.2.1 Board meetings

It is proposed that most Board meetings will continue to be virtual. However, there will be at least one face-to-face meeting a year, that being the October Board meeting which coincides with the annual accountability review with the relevant Welsh Government Minister.

3.2.2. Board Development sessions

It is proposed that the current practice of holding shorter sessions (in the region of two hours duration) on a monthly basis will be maintained going forward. However, there will be one full day, face-to-face meeting a year which will precede the October face to face Board meeting. This will enable the Board to come together for a concentrated period of time which will provide an opportunity for activities like strategic planning, team development and face-to-face training inputs. It will also provide the opportunity for social interaction in the evening between the Board Development session and the Board meeting if members so wish.

3.2.3. Committee meetings

It is proposed that Committee meetings will generally be held virtually but there will be discretion for the Chair, in consultation with members and officers, to call a face-to-face meeting where that appears to be appropriate.

- 3.3 These broad principles are subject to the proviso that there is always the discretion for the Chair of the relevant meeting to switch from a virtual to a face-to-face format if it appears necessary or desirable to do so.
- 3.4 This might include, for example, to welcome and induct new members, to undertake training or development activities which can only be provided in-person, or to deal with significant or complex issues which require people to be in the same place in order to make effective decisions. This is not intended to be a definitive list.

4. Resource implications

- 4.1 Supporting Board and Committee meetings is a core element of the workplan of the Corporate Governance and Strategy Team and as such, there are no additional resource implications associated with these proposals.
- 4.2 The move to more virtual meetings provides the opportunity to reduce the cost of holding meetings and in particular to significantly reduce the budget for Members travel and subsistence.

4.3 As an indication of what level of savings might be achieved, the cost of travel and subsistence during 2019-20 was circa £17,500; it is anticipated that the equivalent cost for 2020-21 will be circa £1,500.

5. Risk considerations

5.1 There are clear benefits in moving to a format which optimises the potential in remote working and some of those are outlined in paragraph 2.2 above. However, there are also occasions when face to face contact is either necessary or desirable and this is reflected in the proposals which are set out in this report.

5.2 In particular, it should be recognised that the ability of the Board to make the transition from face to face to remote working over the past nine months has been built on the solid working relationships which already exist and the environment of mutual trust and respect which had already been developed between members and between members and officers.

5.3 Those relationships need to be sustained and as such, a balanced blend of remote and face to face meetings with the flexibility to respond to emerging circumstances, as set out in paragraph 4, is important.

5.4 Although there are significant benefits in the use of remote technology, there are also potential pitfalls if it is not used wisely. For that reason, a simple guide which suggests ways in which Members can optimise the benefits of remote working is attached for information at Appendix 2.

6. Engagement

6.1 Board members have been involved in discussions about the benefits and risks of a move to a more virtual format at various stages over the past nine months. This includes a structured debrief held after the first formal meeting in April 2020, regular informal debriefs at the end of individual meetings and an informal discussion at the Board Development session in November 2020.

6.2 A first draft of this paper was also shared with Members in advance of it being presented to the Board for formal consideration to enable feedback to be provided in terms of any individual needs which needed to be reflected. The feedback provided has been reflected in this paper.

Proposed Meeting Schedule 2021/22

A. Board Meetings (9:30am – 1:00pm)

29 April 2021

15 July 2021

21 October 2021 (*Face to face meeting held in Cardiff Office*)

3 February 2021

28 April 2022

B. Board Development Sessions (2 hour sessions unless stated)

22 April 2021

20 May 2021

17 June 2021

8 July 2021

16 September 2021

20 October 2021 (*Face to face meeting, Cardiff venue to be arranged, 11:00am – 4:00pm*)

18 November 2021

16 December 2021

20 January 2022

17 February 2022

24 March 2022

C. Committee Meetings

Improvement (10:00am – 1:00pm)	Audit and Risk (10:00 – 1:00pm)	Regulation and Standards (1:30pm – 4:00pm)
23 June 2021	24 June 2021	24 June 2021
22 September 2021	23 September 2021	23 September 2021
8 December 2021	9 December 2021	9 December 2021
16 March 2022	17 March 2022	17 March 2022

A Guide to Participating in Virtual Meetings

Know your tools - Make sure you understand the ins and outs of whatever video conference program you are using. A quick guide to using Zoom can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQOE>

Ensure stable connectivity - A fast and stable internet connection is essential for a fluid, efficient video conference. Slow or unreliable connectivity can disrupt the entire experience by causing visual and audio disruptions.

Test, test, test - Don't just show up at the last moment and log into your video meeting. Arrive early enough to test your settings so you don't waste time ironing out the kinks. Take a few minutes to test all of your settings and get everything set just right before your meeting kicks off.

Practice good etiquette - Poor video conferencing etiquette can be extremely disruptive. Here are some things which help meetings go smoothly:

- **Microphones** - make sure that you **mute your microphone** when you aren't speaking so that your colleagues won't have to listen to background noise;
- **Lights, camera, action** - make sure you have **good lighting** and adjust your camera angle to promote the best perspective;
- **Get involved** – if you are chairing the meeting, make it clear at the start of the meeting, how you would prefer people to indicate that they want to speak, whether that be through the chat facility or through the raising of hands physically or virtually; virtual sessions will be planned ensuring it is accessible to all;
- **Stay focused** - Make sure to give your colleagues your complete attention. Don't check emails or browse through your smartphone. You should also look into the camera instead of looking at yourself talking on the computer. This is a good way to clearly demonstrate that you are fully engaged in the meeting;
- **Find a private setting** - Try to isolate yourself away from noise and distractions. Let those in your house know you will be participating in a video conference, so you won't have any surprise interruptions. If you must join the conference in a public setting, use your mute button judiciously to prevent background noise from becoming disruptive;
- **Breakout rooms** – When using breakout rooms, ensure that you are clear on what is being asked of you from the outset. Before you start, nominate a person to feedback a summary of the key points and someone else to make more detailed notes to send to officers. If you are commenting in the chat facility, please make others are aware so that they are able to follow the discussions.