

Annual Report and Accounts 2024-2025

Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016

Annual Report and Accounts of Social Care Wales prepared pursuant to Schedule 2, Part 6 Paragraph 16(1-3) of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, for the year ended 31 March 2025 together with the Report of the Auditor General for Wales thereon and laid before Senedd Cymru pursuant to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act Schedule 2, Part 6 Paragraph 16(4).

Contact details

Social Care Wales
South Gate House
Wood Street
Cardiff CF10 1EW

Tel: 0300 3033 444
Minicom: 029 2078 0680
Email: info@socialcare.wales

socialcare.wales

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Performance report

Overview

Statement from the Accounting Officer

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

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

- invested over £13.2m in Training support and other long term funding schemes for the development of the social care workforce
- grew the workforce register to over 64,000 individuals allowing us to publish detailed data on social care workers in Wales
- investigated serious issues of concern in our role as regulator, removing 40 people from the sector
- continued to champion and deliver the 10-year strategy for health and social care, in partnership with Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW)
- launched Ymlaen, a sector-wide strategy for innovation, research and improvement
- repeated our UK-first survey of the social care workforce
- invested in a programme of work to transform our services for individuals who are registered with us.

People working in social care, early years and childcare go above and beyond to deliver services that improve outcomes for the people of Wales. Supporting individuals and families in every community, the social care sector protects children, adults and older adults and helps them to do what matters to them.

An estimated 84,134 people work in the social care sector in Wales with around 17,500 more people working in the early years and childcare sector. Daily there will be around 140,000 children and adults receiving care and support services across Wales with a further 78,000 children using early years and childcare services in Wales.

We must also continue to support the workforce to be motivated, engaged and valued with the capacity, competence and confidence to meet the needs of the people of Wales. Whilst supporting the sectors during these challenging times we have continued to support approaches to transform care and support in Wales, as set out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) and Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Acts. We have continued to work with others to develop and plan the future development of social care and early years to support implementation of the Welsh Government priorities for example in "A Healthier Wales" and "10-year Childcare, Play and Early Years" workforce plan.

Working with others is central to how we work, and partnership has been at the heart of the delivery of our business plan in 2024-25. We are committed to working with partners to positively influence the social care and early years services to improve outcomes for children, adults, families and unpaid carers who rely on care and support. Much of our work is produced in partnership across public, private and third sector organisations throughout Wales.

We want to continue our journey to embed a culture of active engagement across all our work so we can respond to the changing needs of the social care and early years sectors. We're committed to listening and responding to the views and needs of adults and children who use care and support, their families and those working in the sector to inform our work, by working with national umbrella organisations, commissioners and providers to capture those views.

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

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

On 29 July I became the Chief Executive following the retirement of Sue Evans. As the Chief Executive I am signing off these accounts as the Accounting Officer.

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

Sarah McCarty

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 28 July 2025

Role of Social Care Wales: who we are



Vision and purpose



Key issues and risks that we face

Information about our risk management and the main risks we face is provided in the Governance Statement on page 33.

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

- recruitment and retention in the social care and early years sector
- cost of living and other increases (such as employer NI contributions) which reduce resource capacity in a market based primarily on public funding
- fair pay for the social care and early years sector, noting the work underway in Wales and in the UK
- remaining in a period of financial constraint for public services
- the continued growth in demand for social care
- the uncertain policy landscape, with Senedd elections in 2026
- the social care and early years sector response to climate emergency
- access to learning and apprenticeships
- immigration rules
- relationship between social care and health.

Performance analysis

Our annual [Business Plan for 2024-25](#) sets out our strategic outcomes, along with our high-level activities and achievement measures. Throughout the year, we provided quarterly reports about the progress we were making on these activities against our strategic outcomes to our Executive Management Team, and these are scrutinised by our Board and the Welsh Government.

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

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

We want the social care, early years and childcare workforce to be motivated, engaged and valued, with the capacity, competence and confidence to meet the care and support needs of the people of Wales. But the social care, early years and childcare sector continues to face major workforce and sector wide challenges. It's difficult to attract people into the sector, recruit enough staff and retain the existing workforce.

Social care, early years and childcare services are committed to supporting what matters to children, adults, their families and carers across every community in Wales. The delivery of health and social care to the people of Wales is entirely dependent on our workforce. The well-being of the workforce is incredibly important, both for people providing and using care and support. Compassionate and high-quality care is delivered best by individuals who are positive about their role and the organisation they work in. We're committed to supporting the sector and want well-being at the heart of our plans for the workforce.

As a national leadership organisation, we have continued to work with national organisations throughout the year to influence national policy development and in responding to the challenges facing social care and early years. We have a number of long-term strategies and programmes of work (5-10 years) looking at making a positive change to long term challenges in the sector. This report focusses on activities that have been achieved during 2024-25 to support those programmes of work.

You will find more detail on our work on www.socialcare.wales

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

Working together for a healthier Wales: our workforce strategy for health and social care

We, alongside Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW), published the priorities for the second phase of [‘A Healthier Wales: Our Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care’](#).

These priorities are outlined in the joint plan [“Working Together”](#) which aligns to the [Social Care Workforce Delivery Plan 2024 to 2027](#) and Welsh Government’s [National Workforce Implementation Plan: Addressing NHS Wales Workforce Challenges](#). Social Care Wales and HEIW both remain committed to the joint delivery of the [strategic mental health workforce plan](#).

New plan to address social care workforce challenges

We launched the [Social care workforce delivery plan 2024 to 2027](#). The delivery plan sets out the social care actions for [A Healthier Wales: Our Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care](#) to 2027, which was launched in 2020 and sets out our aims for the workforce over 10 years.

The delivery plan builds on the workforce strategy’s progress since 2020. It includes actions based on the feedback we heard during our engagement work, consultation and the workforce survey. This ambitious delivery plan, co chaired with Welsh Government and governed by a sector representative stakeholder group. It will allow us to continue working together, both in the short and long term, on what needs to be done to tackle workforce challenges and support the workforce and their well-being while they provide quality support.

Have Your Say 2024: Survey results

In October 2024 we published the results of our [2024 ‘Have Your Say’ survey](#). Between January and February 2024, 5,024 people from a range of job roles across social care took part in our annual workforce survey. The total number of responses to the survey was made up of 3,307 care workers, 838 social workers, 461 managers and 418 other job roles. We asked social care workers to tell us about their health and well-being, pay and conditions, and what they like about working in the sector. The full report is available in both [PDF](#) and [Microsoft Word](#) formats. We also produced a short report which provides a summary of the findings which can be downloaded as a [PDF](#) or [Microsoft Word](#) document. Short reports are also available for the following three job groups:

- [care workers](#)
- [social workers](#)
- [managers](#).

We launched the 2025 survey in January 2025 and will publish findings in October.

Developing Wellbeing initiatives

We are committed to improving the well-being of the workforce which is a key aim of the joint health and social care workforce strategy. This year, over 570 people attended our workshops, training and events, including over 300 attending our Wellbeing Week events that included topics such as feeling psychologically safe at work: making sure workplace policies support well-being and speaking up safely.

We presented at a number of roadshows and events, including managers, employers, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and health colleagues to raise awareness of our work. We had 4,764 visits across our webpages and now have over 200 members on our wellbeing network, who regularly receive information from us on workforce wellbeing.

Resources for employers with staff who are new to working in social care in Wales

In March we published new guidance and resources for employers to help their staff who are new to working in social care in Wales. We know that up until recently, larger numbers of people were moving to Wales to provide vital care and support to the people who live here. Many people in Wales rely on this care and support, and we welcome and appreciate these experienced workers.

This new guide includes videos about social care in Wales, information about the Welsh language and culture, and resources to support staff wellbeing.

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

Provide leadership and influence stakeholder groups

Throughout the year we continued to provide leadership and influence at a wide range of national stakeholder groups. For example, we have been actively supporting the Welsh Government's development of the Fair Work Forum's Pay and Progression Framework (Real living Wage). We will be reviewing our stakeholder and network responsibilities during 2025-26 to make sure we continue to champion the social care and early years sector in national policy and decision-making groups.

Social care Accolades 2024

The Accolades are our awards that recognise, celebrate and share the excellent work that's happening across social care and childcare, play and early years in Wales. The Accolades are our way of shining a light on that invaluable work and those inspirational people who make it happen – and crucially, to say thank you to them for all that they do.

Caring in Welsh award 2024 - workers providing excellent care and support in Welsh

The Caring in Welsh award recognises and celebrates workers who make a positive difference to people's lives by providing care and support through the medium of Welsh. For people who choose to speak Welsh, getting care and support from someone who can speak their language is an important part of receiving dignified, high-quality care. The award not only showcased those workers who are providing excellent care through the medium of Welsh. But that it also raised awareness of the need for more people who can speak the language to work in care.

Social Work Week 2025

Between 17 and 21 March 2025 we celebrated Social Work Week. It gave us the chance to mark the excellent work being carried out across the country and thank hard-working social work professionals. Every day throughout Wales, social work professionals show their dedication to supporting and empowering people who are experiencing complex challenges and may be at higher risk of harm. The events of the week focused on three main themes:

1. strengthening our professional relationships
2. maintaining our social work identity
3. supporting our well-being at work.

Developing our service to support employers

During the year we have continued to develop our service to support employers. Through this service we've directly supported 176 individuals from 124 organisations. This has been via a range of events, both in person and online. The feedback received has told us that individuals found these sessions useful and would recommend them to colleagues. Working with employment agencies we've asked employers what would be helpful to them and will look to deliver on some of this in 2025-26 so we can ensure that our work has a continued impact on the employers we work with.

Workforce Insight Series – briefings that highlight the voice of social care workers

We created our first annual set of written briefings, which summarise and highlight key information about the social care workforce in Wales. The aim of the briefings is to help policy makers, employers and partners plan and make informed decisions.

We explored two areas to support the development of an engaged, motivated and healthy workforce.

- Improving terms and conditions for the social care workforce in Wales
- Valuing social care work.

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

WeCare Wales

The primary role and focus of WeCare Wales is to raise the positive profile and awareness of social work, social care, childcare, play and early years. This year we have a wide range of campaigns highlighting; Childcare, Play and Early Years; Home Care & Reablement; Residential childcare, Volunteering, and Social Work. We also supported National Apprenticeship week and looked to widen further awareness of caring roles through the first WeCare Wales community badge with Girlguiding Cymru. During the national Eisteddfod, WeCare Wales focussed on the importance and value of the Welsh language in care:

“Speaking in someone’s first language fosters a deeper emotional connection, which is especially important in care settings where empathy and understanding are key.”

Eisteddfod visitor

During the year there have been over 67,000 visitors to the WeCare Wales website and over 222,000 website views; social media channels have had 154,000 engagements; 3,629 jobs have been promoted on the jobs portal and 10,098 click through to vacancies have been made. Across the social media channels we have seen over 150,000 engagements with posts shared and a following growing to over 10,000.

Introduction training programmes

We run Introduction to social care training and Introduction to childcare training programmes. These aim to support raising awareness to the social care and childcare sectors and help advise people on beginning their career in either social care or childcare including making connections to employers where vacancies exist.

During 2024-25, 1,266 individuals completed one of the programmes: in addition to 3,054 young people attending college programmes.

A new guide to improve recruitment and retention in social care

We published a new guide that aims to support social care employers in Wales to improve recruitment and retention. The guide is free and includes advice about things like how best to attract people to work in the sector and make staff feel valued once they’ve joined.

We created the guide as part of a wider piece of research that explored how we can address the [workforce challenges facing social care in Wales](#).

New video resources to help build a better understanding of social care in Wales

With more than 75 job roles existing in social care and the sector employing tens of thousands of professionals it can sometimes be hard to explain the term ‘social care’ as our sector covers so many areas and activities. That’s why we created two short and simple videos to help explain what ‘social care’ really means. These can be used to raise awareness of the sector and the value it plays within our communities.

Provide financial support for Social Work students

Through the Social Work bursary, we supported 118 new students to receive a bursary in 2024-25. This is in addition to 218 renewing students attending courses in 2024-25.

We published a [new report](#) on the experience and voice of learners on regulated social work courses, showing us how we can better quality assure social work courses in Wales.

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

To protect the public, maintain professional standards and uphold public confidence in the social care profession, we need our rules for Registration, Fitness to Practice and Hearings to be fit for purpose. We therefore monitor them regularly and self assess against the Professional Standards Authority's 'Standards of Good Regulation'. This is to ensure that they reflect our objectives, legal and societal changes and the growth in our Register. We updated seven sets of rules in 2024 and worked with the Welsh Government to make refinements to our legal framework to help us better protect the public and maintain standards in social care.

Maintain an accurate Register of social care workers

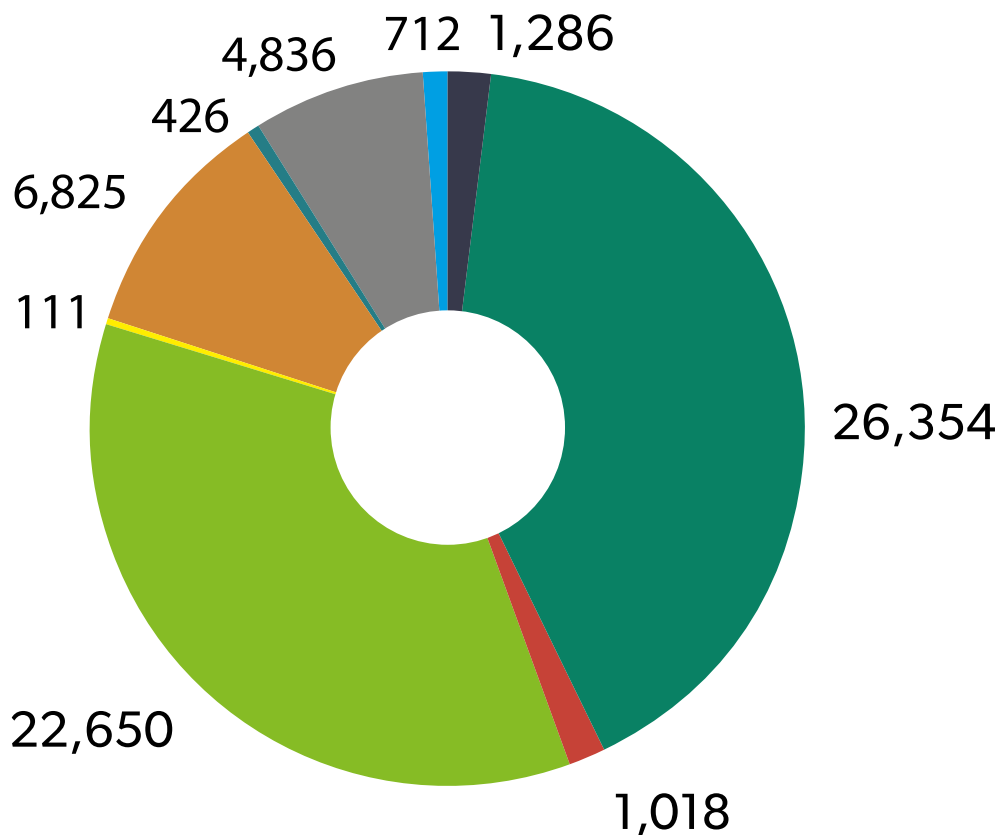
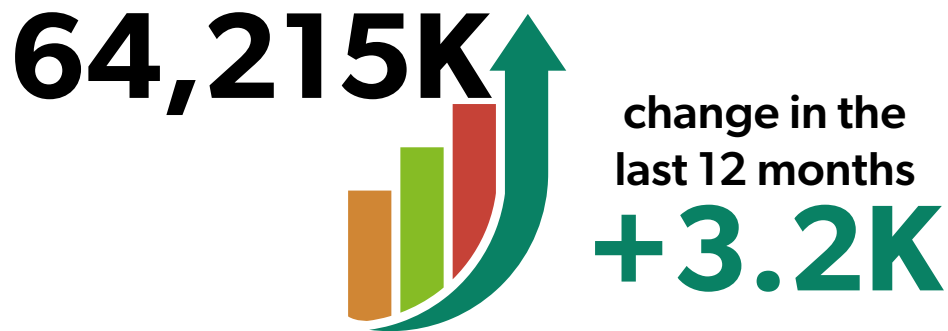
Registration is part of our ongoing commitment to continuously protect the public whilst developing the social care workforce and raise the status of workers. We recognise the need to make sure we have a sufficient workforce that is ready to meet new challenges, with the right skills and confidence to practice. Our Register continues to grow and at the end of March 2025 numbers over 64,000 individuals. This means that most of the social care workforce in Wales will be regulated.

Registration of Special School Residential Managers became mandatory on the 1 April. All four services now have a registered manager. The Register opened for Special School Residential Workers on 1 April, with registration becoming mandatory by 30 September 2026.

Registered Workforce statistics

Workforce headlines

Total number of registered workers



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

Fitness to Practice

A central part of our regulatory function is to make sure that those providing social care are competent and safe to practice. This requires an effective and efficient Fitness to Practice (FtP) process.

During 2024-25 we received 746 referrals and 323 of these referrals were opened as cases and 219 hearings held. In total we removed 40 people from the Register for fitness to practice reasons, 36 of these were removed at a fitness to practice hearing and 4 were removed by agreement. This ensured that these individuals could no longer work in our sector.

Between November 2024 and January 2025, we ran a recruitment campaign for new panel members and by the end of March had recruited 85 new lay members and social care members.

The [Codes of Professional Practice](#) is a set of rules, or standards, care professionals must work to help keep individuals using care and support safe and well.

We're currently making changes to our codes of practice because they were last updated in 2017, and since then the number of care workers we register has grown from 11,000 to more than 60,000 people. In 2023-24 we spoke to more than 300 people who work in care in Wales to find out what they think about our codes of practice. They told us they wanted us to make them shorter and simpler, so our care workers could better understand what they're expected to do, and individuals using care and support and their families can know what to expect from care workers.

Based on this feedback we asked people who work in the sector, our partners, people receiving care and support, unpaid carers, the public and anyone else who's interested to tell us what they think about our changes to the codes of practice.

We will be analysing the results of the consultation and will be making the changes to the Codes for a relaunch of the updated Codes in 2026.

Consultation on [practice guidance](#)

As we're updating our Codes of Professional Practice for social care workers and employers to make sure they're as clear and easy to use as possible we are also improving and updating the practice guidance associated with the Codes. We'll be organising a series of engagement events in May 2025 to progress this work further.

During 2024-5 we also worked with representatives from the social care sector to develop a new layout for the website that registered people use for their accounts. It's now easier for people to use, especially if you're using a mobile phone.

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

Investing in the workforce

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

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

During the year we have processed 4,244 apprenticeship certificates, all certified within 10 working days.

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

During the year we've continued to provide support to employers and learning providers with the ongoing implementation of the health and social care and early years induction framework and qualifications. This has included running extensive employer and practitioner engagement sessions, attended by over 1,450 people. As part of our continuous improvement, we also launched a new qualification chatbot. The aim of the chatbot is to help users navigate the qualification requirements and processes for their roles.

We also launched a new [induction framework for early years and childcare managers](#) based on Welsh Government's vision for a highly skilled, professional childcare workforce. The framework is a resource for supporting continuing professional development (CPD). To continue to support individuals gain practice qualifications we created new [Guidance](#) to help managers support night residential child care workers studying for the Level 3 Health and Social Care: Practice (Children and Young People) qualification.

A [Qualification Equivalency Assessment \(QEA\)](#) process has also been established to provide a robust, consistent, and fair process for people who wish to work in Wales but hold qualifications that are not specified in our [qualification framework](#) as recommended or required for practice and/or registration.

Review of the National Occupational Standards for Health & Social Care (HSC) and Early Years and Childcare (EYCC).

National Occupational Standards (NOS) are benchmarks of good practice. They describe what employees in any occupation should be able to do, the standard they should achieve and the knowledge and understanding they need when carrying out a function in the workplace.

We are currently part of a UK partnership working group established to review a total of 212 NOS across HSC and EYCC, the new suite of NOS will be confirmed in December 2025.

New Group B training resource available

To coincide with national safeguarding week we published a new training pack for people in Group B of the *National safeguarding training, learning and development standards* to help trainers to make sure their training is high-quality and consistent.

Supporting More than Just Words

We want to help give people working in social care the confidence to meet the Welsh language needs of the people they support. A bilingual workforce means individuals can express themselves in their language of choice, which lets us get to the 'heart of the matter' more effectively and comfortably.

In March 2025 we ran our first Welsh language in social care conference, on the theme of 'Language, dignity and care'. to celebrate inspirational work, share good practice, hear about the resources, and support available for services to provide excellent social care through the medium of Welsh. We continued to build Welsh Language course for social care workers with the Foundation, the second module in the course, is ready for learners to complete.

It focuses on the Welsh words and phrases workers are most likely to need when they're communicating with the people they support. The Foundation module builds on the Entry (Mynediad) level module and teaches all the basic patterns of the Welsh language. 687 individuals are registered on the Camau course.

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

New training resource for leading quality with strengths-based practice

We created a new video resource which explains how people in registered settings can improve quality using strengths-based practice. It's suitable for anyone who works in a registered setting. It will help Responsible Individuals, registered managers, and supervisors to meet their statutory duties and make sure citizens get better outcomes.

Compassionate leadership

This year we developed and delivered our Introduction to Compassionate Leadership sessions, delivered both online and in person to over 300 people. Over 99% of those who provided feedback said they learned something they could use in the workplace, with over 180 examples given.

'I would recommend this session to all the social care workforce, thank you'.

Leadership development programmes

We delivered bespoke sessions to several local authorities and a range of social care employers. We attended end of cohort sessions for post-qualifying social work leadership programmes, Team Managers Development Programme (TMDP) and Middle Managers Development Programme (MMDP), where we heard positive feedback and the vast majority recommending the programmes to others. A total of 32 students passed TMDP this year (2 cohorts) and 13 passed MMDP, with positive feedback across both programmes.

Leading in the right way: introducing our new compassionate leadership content

In June we published new guidance which explains what compassionate leadership is, and how you can use the principles to help create a positive culture with leaders – even if people aren't in a management role.

Support the transformation of Children's Services with partners

We've delivered learning opportunities to support workforce development and therapeutic approaches. We've been testing, with 3 local authority teams, a PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy) team learning offer.

Following the initial therapeutic consultation feedback included the following, 'the session is really insightful linking the childrens behaviours to past trauma.'

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

Ymlaen - the new research, innovation and improvement strategy

We launched Ymlaen, our new research, innovation and improvement strategy. The aim of the strategy is to create a culture where evidence plays a central role in the delivery of social care, and where people feel supported and inspired to try new things.

Together with our partners, we want to create inclusive and accessible environments where research and evidence help to guide and inspire decision-making at all levels. We want people leading, developing and delivering social care to feel confident using evidence and innovation to make a positive difference to care and support in Wales.

The Insight Collective - our new research, data, innovation and improvement service for social care

We launched a new research, data, innovation and improvement service for social care called the Insight Collective. Through this service we'll provide access to the latest research and data, guidance on training, opportunities to work together, and advice on the available support.

Snapshot of the social care workforce in Wales

We asked local authorities and independent service providers to send us data on their workforce numbers and characteristics as part of our annual workforce data collection and publish a report about the results. We also use the data to produce related articles and content about different aspects of our findings through the National Social Care Data Portal for Wales.

A report recommending steps to improve social care data maturity

We published a report which has outlined steps that should be taken to support local authorities in Wales to improve their readiness to make best use of the data it holds.

The research found that data was widely considered a core priority for local authorities, while most have robust data collection processes in place and use data to influence policymaking. But the report also identified areas for improvement. These include a need to increase skills and resources to make the most of social care data, making data systems more user-friendly and compatible, and making sure data is shared effectively with other organisations.

A new resource to help find, gather, share and use evidence

In September we launched a guide, previously hosted on the DEEP website, to help the social care workforce meet the reporting requirements of the Performance Improvement Framework for Social Services.

Setting research priorities - transitions from children's to adults' social care support

We ran a research priority-setting exercise to know more about the barriers, problems and uncertainties created by the transition from children's to adults' social care support. This meant working with children, young people and younger adults accessing care and support, their families and carers, as well as other stakeholders. We published our top 10 research priorities in August 2024.

Free tool to better understand digital potential

We developed a tool to give people a more complete picture of their own and their organisation's current digital skills and capabilities. The digital potential tool is free to use, and every social care provider in Wales has access to it. The tool will show people their digital strengths and areas for improvement and highlight useful resources to support their digital development. The tool will also give us a snapshot of the situation across Wales, which we'll share in a national report later in 2025.

Research, innovation and improvement skills resource

In March we launched resources to support the development of research, innovation and improvement skills across the social care workforce. From our research we learnt that there were barriers to research, innovation and improvement such as a lack of time or a perception that developing skills in these areas could be complex and difficult.

"Simple, helpful, in one place - for those who are time poor."

(Participant in user testing)

"I've had a chance to explore the site, and I have to say, it looks fantastic! The layout is clear, and the resources seem incredibly valuable."

Manager

Communities of practice

We continue to run our communities of practice. These communities bring together social care practitioners, innovators and people with lived experience to create the energy and momentum for change. The communities meet both online and in person, while members can also connect through an online platform. We have the following active communities:

1. [Place-based care community](#)
2. [New models of residential care community](#)
3. [Evidence community](#)
4. [Responsible Individuals community](#)

Free training to showcase the tools and techniques we use to support innovation in social care

We created a training programme that'll give people working in social care an overview of the innovation support we, as well as introducing a range of innovation and coaching tools people can take away to use with their own organisation.

We provide effective, high quality and sustainable services.

New Board Members

We welcomed 11 new Board members, following their appointment by the Welsh Government. Abyd Quinn-Aziz, Aaron Edwards, Einir Hinson, Mark Roderick, Sarah Zahid and Kieran Harris started their new role in April 2024 and will remain as members until March 2028.

While Dr Edwin Mutambanengwe, Katija Dew, Dr Odosamawen Progress Igbedion, Isobel Lloyd and Sue Phelps will join our Board from April 2025 until March 2029. From an initial pool of 86 applicants, they bring a wide range of skills, knowledge and experiences to the table. Some work directly in social care whilst others bring skills from business and leadership or have personal experience as users of social care services. In January 2025 the Minister for Children and Social Care also appointed Neil Ayling to our Board from April 2025 onwards.

Our new Board reflects the diversity of the communities we serve, with members from different ethnic backgrounds, gender, ages and physical abilities.

New leadership

Sue Evans CBE retired from Social Care Wales on July 26 2024. Sue Evans was our Chief Executive since 2016, helping establish the organisation, which launched in 2017, building on the firm foundations of the Care Council for Wales. Sarah McCarty was appointed our Chief Executive from 29 July 2024. Lisa Trigg was successfully appointed to the role of Director of Transformation and Workforce Development.

Our Marketing and Communications plan

We've developed and published our five-year high-level marcomms plan. The plan sets out five objectives for our marketing and communications work that we will work towards over the next five years, with the aim of achieving our vision of being bold, proactive and inclusive.

Financial and budget planning

We continued to carefully plan and monitor our financial resources, seeking to align one- and three-years forecasts.

Accommodation strategy

During the year we completed the review and reduction of our office capacity. We reduced the office capacity in our Cardiff office by 50% and relocated our North Wales office to Welsh Government offices in Llandudno Junction.

Our staff

On 31 March 2025 we had a total of 240 staff members and welcomed 12 new starters to the organisation during the year.

- 7.32% staff turnover (target to remain below 15%) – we had 17 leavers this year
- Our absence rate for this year is **3.5%** or **2.41%** if we discount Long Term Sickness absences. This equates to **7.88 days** lost per employee, or **5.41 days** excluding Long Term Sickness.
- 89% of our staff have some level of Welsh language skills
- new Job Evaluation scheme launched
- Health and Wellbeing Delivery plan developed, and implementation begun
- programme of line manager training developed and delivered
- 95% recruitment success rate
- improvement in corporate e-learning completion rates.

Cross cutting themes

Our Business Plan 2024-25 set out detail on specific topics across our work. The section below sets out what was achieved in these areas:

Future Generations

From 30 June 2024 we came under the Future Generations Act. We'll be working on developing our wellbeing objectives as part of developing our future Strategic Plan 2027 onwards. We're committed to delivering our work in line with the 7 well-being goals and 5 ways of working set out in the [Future Generations Act](#). Below we have given examples of how our work in 2024-25 with the social care and early years sector showing how we worked in line with the Act:

Long-term

Our strategic plan sets the longer-term outcomes we are aiming to achieve, whilst our annual business plan sets out the activities and outputs we are delivering to support longer term aspirations. One example relates to the delivery of actions from the [Workforce Strategy, strategic mental health workforce plan for health and social care](#), [Direct care workforce](#) and the [social work workforce plan](#), which shows how we are balancing short-term needs with the needs to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs. Other examples of how we are working to ensure a sustainable future include:

- supporting leadership and succession planning to develop future leaders in social care
- exploring the role of digital transformation in social care, to ensure services remain fit for the future
- strengthening the social care workforce to support positive outcomes for children and reduce future demand for intervention services
- considering the impact of climate change and sustainability in the sector to ensure long-term resilience
- promoting sustainable models for social care that balance immediate pressures with long-term workforce stability
- supporting the mental health and well-being of the workforce to reduce stress, burnout, and staff turnover.

Integration

An example of integration is the work we deliver with Welsh Government, [Social Care Fair Work Forum](#), Welsh Local Government Association, Association of Directors of Social Services Cymru and others to deliver Fair Work for the social care sector, which supports ambitions for a Fairer Wales. Other examples of integration include:

- ensuring our policies complement Welsh Government's A Healthier Wales strategy and broader social services priorities
- working to support the Real Living Wage in social care, supporting economic and workforce sustainability
- aligning our workforce planning strategies with partners across health, education, and the third sector to ensure a joined-up approach
- supporting safeguarding to improve the safety and well-being of those who access care and support
- developing integrated data through our Customer Relationship Management system to ensure workforce planning is informed by evidence.

Involvement

One of the ways we are improving the way we involve people is through our annual workforce survey, which is capturing feedback from the registered workforce about their well-being, their profiles, their challenges, and their aspirations. This will enable us to measure how well the social care workforce reflects the diversity of the Welsh population, provide evidence to inform attraction, recruitment, and retention activities. Other ways we are strengthening involvement include:

- engaging with individuals with lived experience of social care, particularly those from protected characteristic groups, to inform policy and decision-making
- embedding consultation and user research into our policy development, ensuring care workers, managers, and service users shape our work
- strengthening engagement with people interested in social care careers
- supporting bilingualism, ensuring Welsh speakers can contribute fully to consultations and workforce surveys
- working closely with employers and providers to ensure workforce strategies are appropriate
- seeking registered persons feedback on our services and systems.

Collaboration

Our [Ymllaen](#) strategy sets out how we will establish an approach to research, innovation and improvement that's centred on working in collaboration. Agreeing priorities together has helped us decide where we should focus our collective efforts. Other examples of collaboration include:

- our role within the Fair Work Forum, working with partners to improve pay, conditions, and career opportunities in social care
- working with education institutions to enhance training, qualifications, and career pathways
- collaborating with partners to generate evidence and insights that support workforce planning and decision-making
- supporting training and professional development, bringing together professionals from health, social care, and early years to share best practices.

Prevention

The [WeCare Wales](#) attraction campaign, the jobs portal and the support we provide to introduce people to the social care and early years sectors are a variety of ways we are looking to maintain the current workforce and attract new entrants. This is essential to ensure there is sufficient workforce to meet people's care needs and, in turn, support the well-being and independence of citizens. Other ways we are focusing on prevention include:

- promoting workforce well-being to reduce stress, improve retention, and prevent future staffing shortages
- supporting early intervention in social care by ensuring the workforce is trained to identify and address issues before they escalate
- encouraging career progression through professional development opportunities, helping to prevent workforce stagnation
- tackling inequalities in recruitment and career progression to ensure a diverse and representative workforce
- investing in leadership development to prevent future skills gaps in management and decision-making roles
- supporting the sector in adopting digital and technological innovations to improve efficiency and service delivery.

How we work

In terms of how we work we have:

- produced guidance for our staff on how to show the five ways of working through our work
- developed and strengthened our Future Generations Impact Assessment and associated guidance for staff
- showing how we are working and making decisions in line with Act through our reporting and case studies which we have used as a basis for this commentary
- worked with the Future Generations Commissioner's office on our future approach
- undertaken and submitted the Future Generations Ways of Working progress checker
- outlined the steps needed for us to implement the requirements of the Social Partnership and Procurement Act and presented the outline of these requirements to our Board in March 2025.

Iaith Gymraeg

We are working across Wales to embed the Welsh language in health and social care and early years and childcare, so that individuals can access the care that they deserve and require. Our work with the social care and early years sector is part of the Welsh Government's More than just words: Welsh language plan in health and social care and the Cymraeg 2050 strategy.

For 2024-25 we've:

- developed and promoted training resources to support the workforce in using their Welsh language skills and to support bilingual working
- developed and used case studies to share good practice
- promoted resources to support employers to assess staff's Welsh language skills based on reading, writing, speaking and understanding
- supported employers to develop Welsh language workforce plans
- developed and promoted Welsh language awareness e-learning modules to learn more about Welsh language, culture and working bilingually
- worked with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to promote a 'Level Checker' for the social care sector
- continued to develop and promote the Camau Welsh language courses specifically designed for the social care sector.

More detail on this work can be found:

<https://socialcare.wales/resources-guidance/using-welsh-at-work>

How we work

We have a Strategaeth iaith which sets out how we will work within the organisation. The aim of our Strategaeth iaith is to not only comply with the legislative requirement to provide a Welsh language service, but also to offer language choice on a routine basis to all those who contact Social Care Wales.

Our commitment to a work environment where neither Welsh or English is treated more favourably than the other is not driven by the standards but by the culture, value and leadership in our organisation shown by all staff at all levels. We provide an environment which nurtures and develops staff to learn and improve their Welsh language skills. Our annual assurance report shows what we have done in 2024-25 which can be found: <https://socialcare.wales/about-us/what-we-do>

Equality, Diversity and inclusion

We are committed to being an anti-discrimination organisation, working actively to tackle bias and barriers for those with protected characteristics.

In 2024-25 we:

- published, together with Welsh Government and NHS Wales, the first Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) social care report
<https://socialcare.wales/research-and-data/workforce-race-equality-standard>
- supported more people from ethnic minorities to become social care leaders by running expert advisory group sessions, to use what we've learned to help shape social care leadership programmes that are fair for people from ethnic minorities in Wales. This is the next step of our work to support Welsh Government's Anti-racist action plan and to develop future social care leaders in Wales. We want to make sure that any future leadership development programmes are sustainable, racially just, fair, and equitable for all future social care leaders in Wales
- developed resources for the social care and early years workforce to make sure anti-discrimination, equity, equality, accessibility and inclusion are central to their work
- promoted our well-being resources and offers, and improve access to them, to support the well-being of the social care and early years workforce.

How we work

We work to make sure equity, accessibility and inclusion is central to how we work. For our staff this means that we've:

- provided training and learning resources to increase our staff's knowledge and skills. We have provided a cultural change programme for the development of more impactful equality impact assessments.
- promoted opportunities to help us recruit a more diverse workforce
- improved how we assess the impact of our work through an improved equality impact assessment process.

More information on the detail of how we work can be found here:

<https://socialcare.wales/about-us/what-we-do>

Information Governance

As part of our improvement work we have a range of data-related projects. These include the development of a [social care data strategy](#) for Wales and activity to support the sharing and use of data in improving social care delivery, research and policy development. Alongside this the Welsh Government has an ambitious programme of work underway in health and care, guided by '[A Healthier Wales](#)'. This plan includes an action to establish a [National Data Resource](#) (NDR) which allows large scale information to be shared securely and appropriately. The [Digital Strategy for Wales](#) also makes reference to a [Data Promise](#) for health and care in Wales that sets out how these services will use the data they collect when providing health and care to deliver high-quality, integrated services.

We want a joined up health and social care data landscape that provides useful and consistent data to key organisations in health and care. We want to continue looking at ways we can collectively improve the way we use social care data in Wales, including how that data is shared. In 2024-25 we've:

- supported all local authorities in Wales to understand how they can make best use of the data that's collected, processed and shared as part of their delivery of social care.

- updated the [data portal](#) and associated resources with a new look and more features to support people in their work
- been looking at the [digital maturity of social care](#) to focus more closely on the skills and capacity in social care to make the best use of digital solutions and technologies
- worked with Local Authorities to support them in using the Information Governance Gateway which will provide clear guidance and forms to support them in managing Information Governance.

More information on this work can be found:

<https://socialcare.wales/research-and-data/data-maturity-assessment>

How we work

We've a responsibility to make sure that we have the right standards and ways of working to support how we manage the information resource and products (data, information, and knowledge) that we have to do our work. We take seriously our responsibility to comply with relevant information governance legislation, including the Data Protection Act 2018. To build on how we work, in 2024-25, we've:

- continued to provide training, awareness and guidance to staff on how we manage data securely
- maintained external accreditations with ISO27001 on information security and Cyber Essentials Plus
- taken forward actions, recommendations and learning from Information Governance incidents and audits
- taken forward actions to make sure we are working in line with good legislation and good practice.

Our 2030 net zero (decarbonisation)

We've developed our 2030 net zero carbon action plan to identify how we can minimise our carbon footprint. We are also supporting Welsh Government to realise its 'Social care decarbonisation route map towards net zero by 2030.

How we work

In how we work we've:

- developed our carbon footprint reporting to assess our impact and areas for future carbon reduction activity and adaption in support of achieving our carbon reduction plan
- made sure at Board and senior leadership we're prioritising consideration of the impact of our activities on the environment
- realised our accommodation review which will reduce our associated carbon footprint
- explored further the environmental policies of our suppliers within our procurement activities
- be transparent in our reporting providing an annual report on our progress
- continued to embed our approach to environmental, social and governance within our procurement activities through a revised procurement strategy.

More information on our work in this area can be found:

<https://socialcare.wales/about-us/our-outcomes/our-commitment-to-becoming-carbon-net-zero-by-2030>

Our approach for 2025-26

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

We'll continue to prioritise activities that support our 8 national outcomes with a particular focus on delivering our three key priorities:

1. Workforce strategy
2. Ymlaen
3. Regulation for Improvement

Our Business Plan 2025-27 will set out the detail of our work. You'll be able to find out more about our work and the impact of our work through our annual impact report for 2024-25 which will be on our website: <https://socialcare.wales/about-us>

Accountability Report

Corporate Governance Report

Directors Report

History and Statutory Background

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

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

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

The Chief Executive and Accounting Officer in the financial year until 26 July 2024 was Sue Evans. Sarah McCarty was the Chief Executive from 29 July 2024.

Social Care Wales Board Members

At 31 March 2025 there were fifteen members including the Chair who have been appointed by the Minister for Health and Social Services. Six members term ended on the 31 March 2025.

Members serving 1 April 2024 to 31 March 25

Members

Mick Giannasi - Chair (term ending 31 July 2027)

Aaron Edwards (term ending 31 March 2028)

Abigail Harris (term ended 31 March 2025)

Abyd Quinn Aziz (term ending 31 March 2028)

Carl Cooper (term ended 31 March 2025)

Einir Hinson (term ending 31 March 2028)

Emma Britton (term ended 31 March 2025)

Grace Quantock (term ended 31 March 2025)

Helen Mary Jones (term ending 30 April 2026)

Joanne Kember (term ended 31 March 2025)

Kieran Harris (term ending 31 March 2028)

Mark Roderick (term ending 31 March 2028)

Sarah Zahid (term ending 31 March 2028)

Simon Burch (term ended 31 March 2025)

Trystan Pritchard (term ending 30 June 2027)

In addition there are two further independent members who were appointed on the 1 March 2023 with their term ending on the 31 March 2027. They are Abhisek Vyas who is the Cyber Security Lead and Heikki Doyle the Finance Lead.

A register of the declared interests of members is available on our website, <https://socialcare.wales/>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sarah McCarty

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 28 July 2025

Governance statement

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

Our governance statement sets out what structures, processes, policies and systems we have in place. It will give you an account of corporate governance and risk management, alongside a description of the strategic risks we faced in 2024-25.

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

This governance statement sets out:

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

Our organisation

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

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

This is my first governance statement as the Accounting Officer following the retirement of my predecessor, Sue Evans, in July 2024. I undertook accounting officer training in December 2024 to prepare me for this new role.

My governance statement is written in the context of our [5 year strategy 2022-27](#) and our eight national outcomes. These are:

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

For each national outcome, we explain in our 5-year strategy why it is important, how we will show change, and where we will focus our energy and commitment to work with you over the next five years to realise our vision. Each year we publish an [impact report](#) on our progress against meeting these outcomes.

Our [annual business plan](#) sets out in more detail the activities we identified to support the sector and our organisation during 2024-25. This has included a focus on cross cutting themes 'equality, diversity and inclusion' across all aspects of our work, you can refer back to page 27 for our work on this as an organisation. Our performance was monitored and scrutinised by our Board and Welsh Government throughout the year, including through formal quarterly meetings.

Board listening exercise

As well as my listening exercise the Board held its annual listening exercise with staff during February and March 2025. The Chair of the Board, with a few Board members, attended departmental meetings to hold a two-way conversation with staff. The focus of the sessions this year was following a period of significant change for the organisation; a new CEO, changes in senior leadership, changes in Board membership, staff members were asked to consider:

- What things that you really value about working for Social Care Wales have been maintained or improved?
- What, if anything, have we lost or are there areas where things have gone backwards?
- What should we focus on over the next 12-18 months to make Social Care Wales an even better place to work?

The results of the listening exercise will be reported to a Board meeting early in 2025-26.

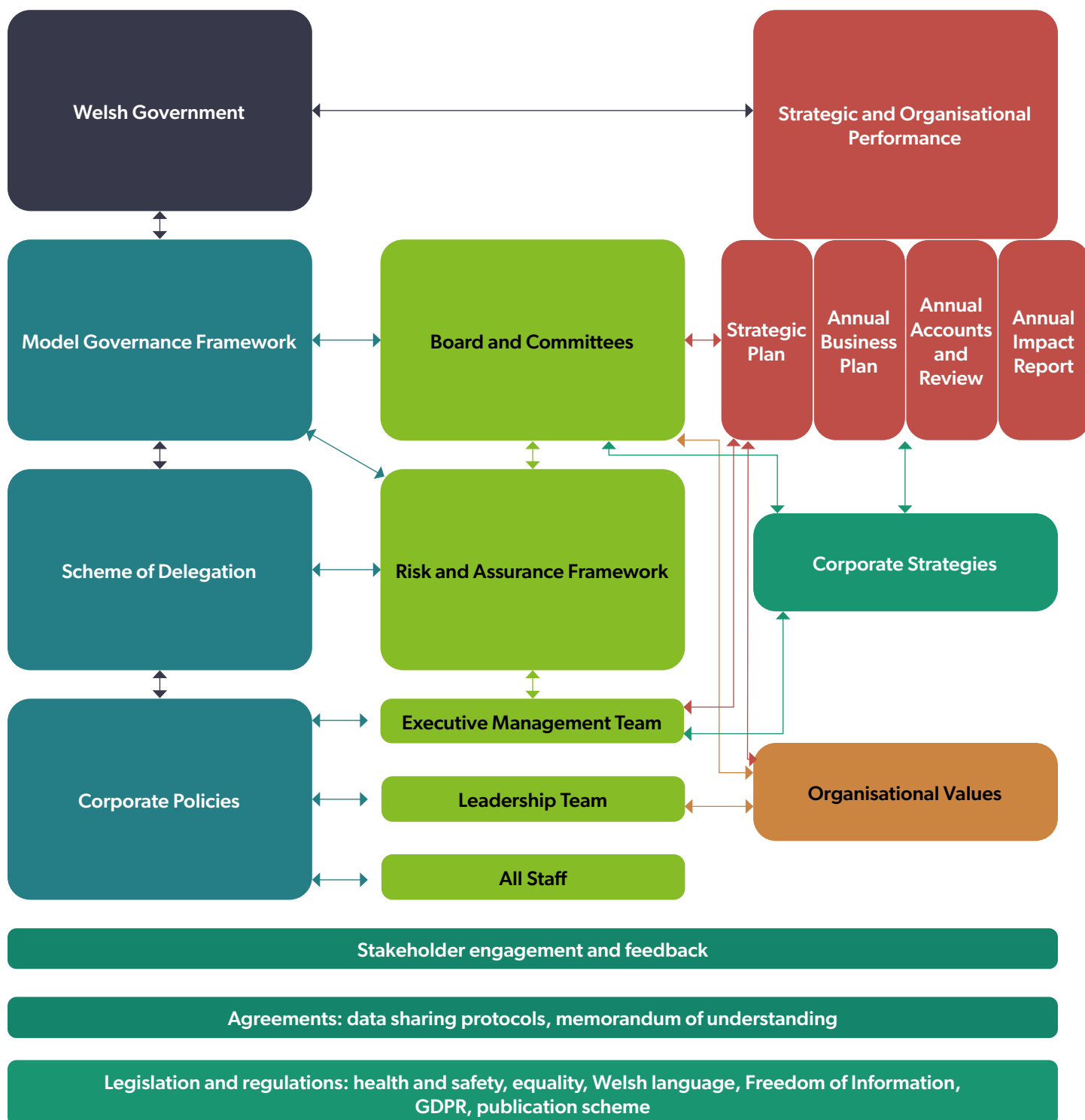
When our listening exercises have identified actions which we need to address we will build these into our organisational development plan. This will ensure we remain committed to continuous improvement.

Our governance and accountability framework

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

Over the next few pages you'll find more summary information on our governance and accountability framework, including an overview on what the Board and Committees cover.

The diagram below shows the various elements of our governance and accountability framework:

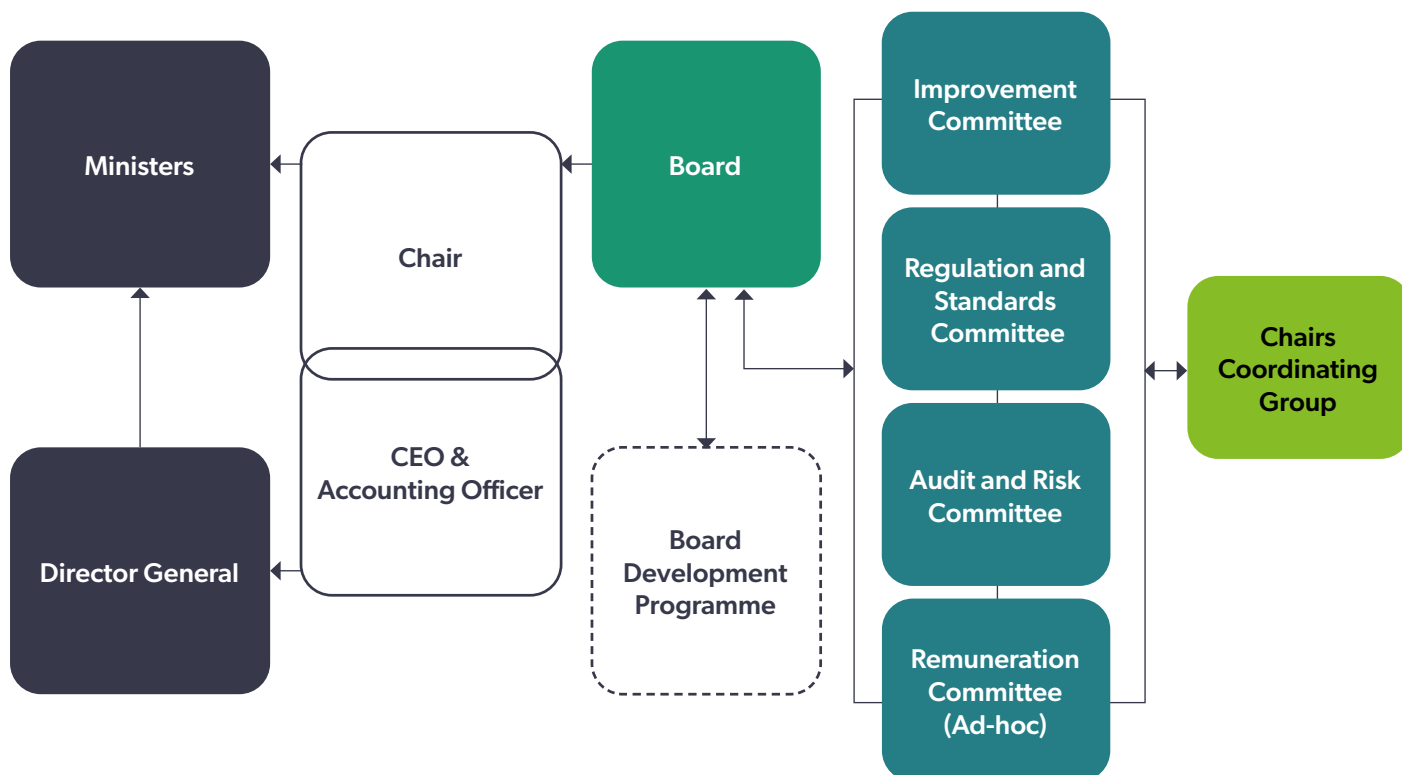


¹ Includes political, economic, social, environmental, legal, and administrative structures and processes, and other arrangements, as encapsulated in the principles define.

Accountability

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

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



To make sure we keep our accountability to Welsh Government in 2024-25:

Our Executive Management Team met with representatives from our sponsorship division at Welsh Government. These meetings took place every three months to go through our business plan performance and our budget spend to date.

- I've had regular meetings with the Chair of Social Care Wales and the Chief Social Care Officer at the Welsh Government
- the Chair and I attended our annual meeting with the Minister for Children and Social Care in October 2024
- our Board had its annual meeting with the Minister for Children and Social Care in October 2024.

Our Board and committees

Our Chair and 14 Board members are responsible for providing us with leadership and direction. Appointed by the Minister for Children and Social Care they work closely with the Executive Management Team to set our strategic and business plans, allocate our resources, and monitor our performance. Our work is scrutinised, informed and approved by the Board and its sub-committees.

Board membership

Following an extensive recruitment campaign undertaken during 2023-24 we welcomed six new Board members to the Board in April 2024. Aaron Edwards, Abyd Quinn Aziz, Einir Hinson, Kieran Harris, Mark Roderick and Sarah Zahid. [Our Board members | Social Care Wales](#).

The new members bring a wide variety of skills, knowledge and experience to the Board as well as reflecting the diversity of the communities that we serve.

I would like to thank the six Board members who left us at the end of March 2025, Abigail Harris, Dr Carl Cooper, Emma Britton, Grace Quantock, Joanne Kember and Simon Burch. All six have played a significant role in scrutinising our work and ensuring we follow good practice when it comes to our governance over the last eight years.

This diagram shows our Board and Committee structure at 31 March 2025:

Board

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

Audit and Risk Committee

Advises the Board on:

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

Improvement Committee

Advises the Board on and leads on the following strategic aims:

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

Regulation and Standards Committee

Advises the Board on and leads on the following strategic aims:

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

Remuneration and Well-being Committee

Advises the Board on:

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

The remuneration committee also have oversight of any significant employee relations issues, including those relating to employment tribunals.

If you would like to find out more about our Board, Board meetings and discussions you can find more [information on our website](#).

The Committee terms of references are reviewed on an annual basis ensuring that they are in line with our strategic and annual business plan. The Committees and their members play an important role in providing assurance to the Board by scrutinising areas of work in more depth and detail.

In addition to the formal committee structure our governance arrangements have a provision for a Chairs Action Group – this provides Board scrutiny and decision over items that are time sensitive and where a full Committee could not be convened. This approach is used sparingly, and just once in the last year. Any Chairs Action considerations are reported to the full board to ensure ongoing transparency in our decision making.

Board development and engagement

Our Board members continued their learning and development during the year. For the first time since the pandemic we took the Board out and about to 3 local authorities during the year – Flintshire, Powys and Pembrokeshire. The sessions provided valuable insight into the realities and challenges of social care delivery as well as the innovative ways in which they are looking to overcome the challenges.

In addition to the sessions with local authorities there were a series of strategic development sessions and the topics of these were:

- Induction for new Board members
- Current challenges
- Introduction to the role of audit services at Social Care Wales; internal audit overview and introduction to the Auditor General for Wales and Audit Wales
- 2024 Workforce Survey results
- Compassionate Leadership
- Pay and Progression update
- Funding pressures update
- CIW's Chief Inspector's reflections from their annual report
- Equality Impact Assessment update
- Business Plan 2025-7
- Updated Board members Advocacy role description
- Social Care Digital and Data overview
- Review of Strategic Risk Register, Risk Appetite and Horizon Scanning
- Board effectiveness 2024-25
- CEO induction reflections and next steps
- Reflections from outgoing members
- Regular updates from the CEO.

Board and committee effectiveness

One of our core values as an organisation is continuous learning. For the Board and Committees, we regularly assess the effectiveness of our policies, processes, and meetings. We have run annual Board effectiveness surveys and for the past four years we have used the same approach so that we have four years' worth of data available to identify any emerging trends.

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

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

- Managing Disagreement and How and When to Challenge Within Meetings: Enhance members' ability to manage disagreements and know when and how to challenge effectively
- Further Discussion on Consensus Decision Making: Facilitate discussions to develop a shared understanding of consensus decision-making processes
- Introducing Consent Items to Agendas: Streamline meetings by grouping routine, non-controversial items into a consent agenda for quick approval
- Drawing Out More in Public Papers the Discussions at Strategic Development Sessions: Increase transparency by detailing how discussions at Strategic Development Sessions have influenced the final papers presented at public Board meetings
- Examining Finance in More Detail: Clarify the financial responsibilities of Committees and the Board, and provide detailed financial training and analysis.

In recognition of the six new members, the Chair and Board Secretary held a feedback session on their first year and induction. Additionally, the six departing members were offered an exit interview with our HR team.

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

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

Members' attendance at Board and committees

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

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

The Standing Orders for the Board set out the expected attendance level for Board members at meetings at 60 per cent. This table shows members' attendance at Board and Committee meetings during 2024-25.

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

Name	Committee membership	Attendance at Board meetings	Attendance at Board development sessions	Attendance at Committee meetings	Overall meeting attendance (inc. Committees)	Term of appointment ends
Mick Giannasi (Chair)		5/5	11/11	-	16/16 (100%)	31.07.27
Aaron Edwards	Improvement Audit and Risk	5/5	10/11	7/8	22/24 (92%)	31.03.28
Abhishek Vyas (Independent Audit and Risk Committee member)	Audit and Risk	-	-	3/4	3/4 (75%)	31.03.27
Abigail Harris*	Improvement	3/5	7/11	1/4	11/20 (55%)	31.03.25
Abyd Quinn Aziz	Improvement Regulation and Standards (Deputy Chair)	5/5	9/11	8/8	22/24 (92%)	31.03.28
Carl Cooper	Audit and Risk (Chair) Remuneration Committee	5/5	8/11	4/7	17/23 (74%)	31.03.25
Einir Hinson	Improvement Regulation and Standards	4/5	11/11	8/8	23/24 (96%)	31.03.28
Emma Britton**	Audit and Risk (Deputy Chair); Improvement Committee	5/5	8/10	5/8	18/23 (78%)	31.03.25
Grace Quantock	Regulation and Standards (Chair); Remuneration Committee	5/5	8/10	5/7	18/22 (82%)	31.03.25
Heikki Doyle (Independent Member Audit and Risk Committee)	Audit and Risk Committee	-	-	4/4	4/4 (100%)	31.03.27
Helen Mary Jones	Audit and Risk; Improvement	4/5	8/11	7/8	19/24 (79%)	30.04.26

Name	Committee membership	Attendance at Board meetings	Attendance at Board development sessions	Attendance at Committee meetings	Overall meeting attendance (inc. Committees)	Term of appointment ends
Joanne Kember (Deputy Chair)	Regulation and Standards; Improvement; Remuneration Committee	5/5	11/11	11/11	27/27 (100%)	31.03.25
Kieran Harris	Audit and Risk Improvement	5/5	7/11	3/8	15/24 (63%)	31.03.28
Mark Roderick	Improvement; Regulation and Standards	5/5	10/11	8/8	23/24 (96%)	31.03.28
Sarah Zahid	Audit and Risk Regulation and Standards	5/5	8/11	7/8	20/24 (83%)	31.03.28
Simon Burch	Regulation and Standards Audit and Risk	5/5	10/11	5/8	20/24 (83%)	31.03.25
Trystan Pritchard	Improvement (Chair); Remuneration	5/5	7/11	6/7	18/23 (78%)	30.06.27

* Member was appointed Swansea Bay Health Board CEO in October 2024 and remained on the Board unpaid until end of March 2025.

** Reasonable adjustment in place for attendance.

Effectiveness of our governance framework

During the year I, like the previous CEO, have held regular staff briefings to share decisions made by the Board and the Executive Management Team, to update on our performance and to provide an opportunity for questions from staff members. This also provides a key opportunity to ensure staff are briefed on the needs of the social care, early years and childcare sector we are here to support.

Throughout the year I receive assurance that our business and strategic objectives are being met via internal management meetings, budget and performance reports, and project updates. I operate a 'virtual open-door policy' where any member of staff can contact me with any matter that may concern them. I also promote the Staff Partnership Council and Staff Forum as a way of making sure we clearly engage with staff about our work. The staff survey and Board listening exercise provide further opportunities for staff to identify areas of concern and improvement. The next staff survey will be undertaken in 2025.

During the year we have had 3 grievances raised through our formal procedures (2 in 2023-24) and all were investigated. Of these cases one colleague referred to employment tribunal and concluded through mediation. Board and sponsor receive a quarterly report on key HR metrics including grievances and disciplinary. Remuneration Committee will scrutinise employee relations cases where appeals need to be heard outside of the Executive or cases are referred to employment tribunals.

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

We also maintain and review registers of interest for employees and Board members to identify any potential or perceived conflict with our decision-making processes, so we can take the right action. The Register of Interest Policy was reviewed during the year and updated to reflect the most recent Cabinet Office guidance and enhanced visibility of Executive management Team interests.

Since we became Social Care Wales, in 2017, we have had a [Model Governance Framework](#) that sets out the broad framework within which we work and details the terms and conditions under which the Welsh Ministers provide Grant-In-Aid to us. We've recently received a 2024 version which we are working on with Welsh Government Sponsor Division and Public Bodies Leadership and Governance team. We'll take the updated version to a Board meeting in early 2025-26 prior to working on changes to the relevant policies.

Internal audit

The Internal audit plan has been based on a risk-based approach and was agreed by the Audit and Risk Committee. Our internal auditors submit regular reports about the adequacy and effectiveness of our systems (financial, corporate and workforce regulation) of internal control, together with recommendations for improvement. We've have been increasing the range of audits undertaken to new areas in the organisation, to provide assurance and support our continuous improvement. We consider all recommendations and develop management responses to all audit recommendations, which are scrutinised by Audit and Risk Committee. Action progress is reviewed on at least a quarterly basis and reported to audit and risk committee.

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

Work area	Level of assurance
Annual Workforce Data Collection Activity / processes	Reasonable
Assurance Review of Workforce Regulation – Education Quality Assurance	Reasonable
Data Protection	Substantial
Equality and Diversity	Substantial
Grant management – Bursaries	Substantial
Risk Management – Mitigation	Substantial
Improvement and Development – We Care Wales website; Research Support and Engagement Framework	Substantial
Governance – Data Protection – Carreg	Reasonable
Key Financial Controls	Reasonable
HR – Staff Wellbeing	Reasonable

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

Definitions of assurance level

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

External audit

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

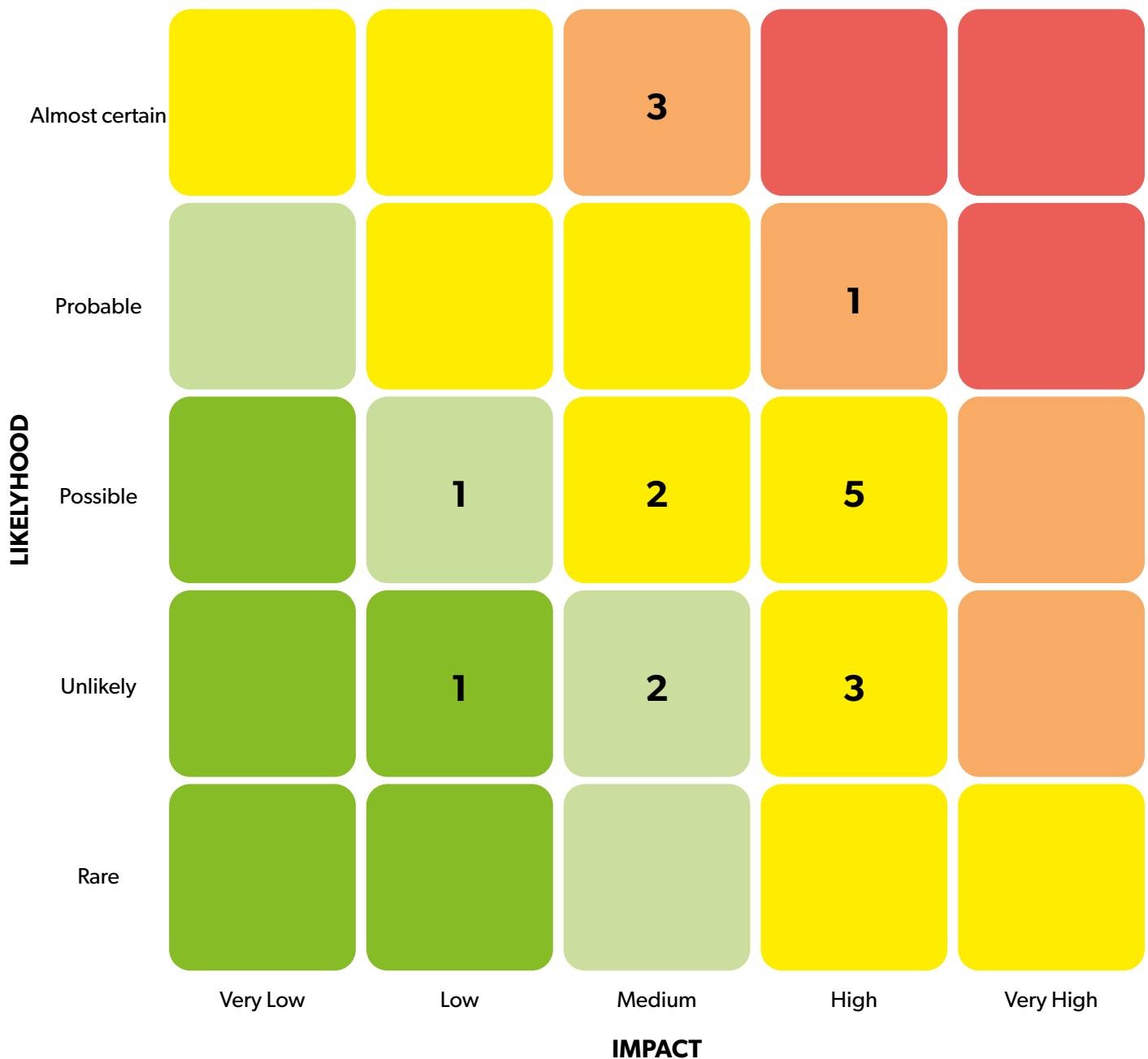
In 2023-24 one issue was identified in the External Audit Management Letter relating to our accounting treatment of some grant payments. During 2024-25 we have reviewed our grants policy to ensure treatment in line with auditors feedback.

Risk management

We continue to look and manage risk based on our Risk Management and Assurance Policy. Our positive approach to risk management means we not only look at the risk of things going wrong, but the impact of not taking opportunities or not making the most of what we do well. Our strategic risk register is reviewed at every month by our Leadership Team. This is then scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis. This is supported by operational and project risk registers. We apply a 3 lines of defence approach which seeks to mitigate and minimise risk through the identification of controls, internal review and independent third-party audit assurance.

Strategic Risk profile

A summary of our risk profile at the end of March 2025 is provided in the diagram below. These are 'heat maps' which shows the number of strategic risks and assesses levels of residual risk following the application of controls to mitigate their impact and likelihood.



Risk Assessment

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

Risk Title	2023-24 Residual Risk Score	Risk Title	2024-25 Residual Risk Score
Sector Capacity	16	Sector and Capacity Collaboration (Merged)	16
Sector Collaboration	16		
Skills & Capacity	9	Skills, Capacity, Culture and Values (Risk Title and Description Update)	9
Public Perception	12	Public Perception (Risk Description Update)	12
Welsh Government Funding and Support	16	Welsh Government Funding and Support (Risk Description Update)	12
Application of Regulatory Framework	8	Application of Regulatory Framework (Risk Description Update)	8
Workforce Retention	15	Workforce Retention (Risk Description Update)	15
Governance and Assurance	6	Governance and Assurance (Risk Description Update)	6
Interconnectivity	12	Interconnectivity (Risk Description Update)	12
Regulatory Services	20	Regulatory Services (Risk Description Update)	15

There were 3 new strategic risks added to the risk register during 2024-25 which were associated with:

Risk Title	24/25 Residual Risk Score
Financial Control Environment	6
Succession Planning	6
Marketing and Communications Playbook	12

8 Risks were closed or de-escalated from the Risk Register during 2024-25, which were associated with:

Risk Title	Closed or De-Escalated
Board Membership	Closed
Succession Planning	Closed
Wellbeing Effectiveness	De-escalated
Apprenticeships	De-escalated
COVID-19	De-escalated
Professional Development	De-escalated
Induction	De-escalated
Climate Emergency	De-escalated

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

Risk Appetite and Management

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

The Board has adopted 7 assurance areas around which to structure an assurance map. This summarises existing controls and sources of assurance and highlights any gaps relative to meeting the needs of the Board. For each assurance area, the Board has broadly defined its risk appetite using the classification recommended in the UK Government's Risk Appetite Guidance Note and considers to what extent existing controls align with that appetite. The Board reviews risk appetite on a regular basis. The most recent review was undertaken in March 2025.

Assurance area	Risk appetite to March 2025	Risk appetite revised March 2025
Financial / value for money	Cautious / Open	Cautious / Open
Governance	Minimal / Cautious	Minimal / Cautious
Policy Work	Open	Open
Reputational	Cautious	Cautious
Our people	Open	Open
Improvement	Open	Open
Regulation	Cautious	Minimal / Cautious

Information Governance and Security

We maintained our certification under ISO 27001 Information Security Management Systems throughout the year. Compliance was supported by the provision of a specialist internal audit service throughout the year. In 2024-5 we achieved an uprating of our Cyber Essentials certification to Cyber Essentials Plus.

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

During 2024-25 we recorded 40 data incidents:

2024-25	
Number of data incidents / incidents	40
Number reported to the ICO	1
Type of incident	
Errors by a third party	8
Software/server issue	1
Human error/ training and awareness issue	26
Physical	4
Cyber security inc. spam attack	1

- **1 incident was reported to the ICO, however ICO confirmed that no further action was required.** Recommendations for improvement in practice were shared with the relevant teams within the organisation
- We responded to 11 **requests under the Freedom of Information Act**, all responded to within 20 working days. The types of requests were varied this year and included requests for information regarding our workforce, IT equipment and tools, HR & Recruitment, contracts information, and information relating to the register.
- We received 16 **Subject Access Requests (SARs)** under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).
 - five of those were for information we do not hold, but in most cases, we were able to signpost to the relevant organisations
 - three SARs did not provide the additional information that we requested in order to process the request
 - Four requests were relating to Fitness to Practice (FTP) investigations. Due to this the information was shared with the data subject in line with FTP process
 - All other requests were fulfilled within the 30-day period. Some requests for information, for example copies of registration information, are not dealt with under the DPA and recorded as formal SARs as the information could be supplied quickly as opposed to waiting up to 30 days.

- We received 3 **requests for the Right to erasure** under the UK GDPR. The response was responded to in line with the policy and within one month of receipt of the request.
- We continue to look at improving our **information governance framework and DPA compliance** with our cross organisational Information Governance Group. This group looks at our compliance with ISO27001 certification, data protection legislation, accountability and alignment with Cyber (Security) Essentials. A programme of role-based training on managing data protection and information security risks was undertaken throughout the year.
- We have revised and developed a number of new policies, internal resources and staff training in relation to data protection throughout the year.

Customer Service

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

In 2024-25 we had 15 complaints under our complaints policy. The table below sets out how they were classified (Stage 1 and Stage 2) and the areas that they related to:



Audit and Risk Committee receive detail on these as part of their Compliance report on a quarterly basis.

On average we completed Stage 1 complaints within 8 working days.

On average we completed Stage 2 complaints within 19 working days.

Whistleblowing

Internal

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

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

In 2024-2025 no staff raised a concern under our Whistleblowing Policy as was the case in 2023-24.

External

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

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

For each referral received we consider the information received and in the cases of the 9 received during the year as yet no formal Fitness to Practice cases have been opened. Information has been shared with relevant organisations as necessary following the disclosures received.

Fraud

There is an expectation that organisations should have a counter fraud, bribery and corruption policy, informed by a fraud risk assessment. The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed our policy during the year and the establishment of a new fraud risk assessment process.

Sarah McCarty

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 28 July 2025

Remuneration and Staff Report

Remuneration Report

Pay Policy Statement

This is Social Care Wales's pay policy statement for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

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

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer for Social Care Wales is Sarah McCarty, the former Chief Executive Officer, Sue Evans, retired on 26th July 2024. At 31st March the Chief Executive Officer was in receipt of a salary of £138,564 per annum.

The Board

The Board comprises of 15 Board Members led by a lay Chair Mick Giannasi. All have been appointed by the Minister, through the Public Appointments process. The remuneration of the Board members is non-pensionable and is determined by Welsh Government. For enhanced transparency, the remuneration of the Chair of Social Care Wales is disclosed in this report. Board members are remunerated £282 per day and committed to two days a month.

Social Care Wales Staff

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

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

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

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

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

Senior Pay Remuneration

Officials	Salary (£000)*		Pension benefits (£)		Total (£000)	
	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25	2023-24
Chair Mick Giannasi	30-35	30-35	N/A	N/A	30-35	30-35
Chief Executive (from 29 July 2024) and Director of improvement and Development (to 28 July 2024) Sarah McCarty	125-130	100-105	73,200	31,200	200-205	130-135
Chief Executive (to 26 July 2024) Sue Evans	40-45	130-135	32,600	7,100	70-75	135-140
Director of Finance, Strategy and Corporate Services Andrew Lycett	105-110	100-105	29,300	30,700	135-140	130-135
Director of Transformation and Workforce Development (from 2 Sept 2024) Lisa Trigg	50-55	N/A	10,200	N/A	60-65	N/A
Director of Regulation David Pritchard	105-110	100-105	29,800	31,000	135-140	130-135

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pension Entitlements of Directors	Total accrued pension at 31 March 2025 £'000	Real increase in pension at 31 March 2025 £'000	Total accrued lump sum at 31 March 2025 £'000	Real increase/ (decrease) in lump sum at 31 March 2025 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2025 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2024 £'000	Real increase/ decrease in CETV in 2024-25 £'000
Chair Mick Giannasi	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Chief Executive (from 29 July 2024) and Director of improvement and Development (to 28 Jul 2024) Sarah McCarty	40.0-45.0	2.5-5.0	20.0-25.0	0.0-2.5	682	490	158
Chief Executive (to 26 July 2024)* Sue Evans	35.0-40.0	0.0-2.5	-	-	740	691	35
Director of Finance, Strategy and Corporate Services Andrew Lycett	5.0-10.0	0.0-2.5	-	-	145	105	33
Director of Transformation and Workforce Development (from 2 Sept 2024) Lisa Trigg	10.0-15.0	0.0-2.5	-	-	171	152	13
Director of Regulation David Pritchard	5.0-10.0	0.0-2.5	-	-	99	61	34

* The values are as at the date of retirement on the 26 July 2024.

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

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

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

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

The Public Services Pension Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022.

SCW is a member of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Government Pension Scheme, and, per the rules of that scheme, members do not have to be rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period. In LGPS, the McCloud remedy invoices the application of an underpin and benefits of eligible members are tested when they elect to retire. At this point, the scheme will compare the career average pension built up in the remedy period with the pension that would have been built up in the final salary scheme. If the final salary pension is higher, the difference will be added to the pension paid.

The pension figures in this table are therefore based on the service built up in the final salary scheme up to 31 March 2015 and from then, the career average schemes based on the requirements of the LGPS and guidance of the scheme actuary. In addition, if relevant the CETV values have been increased for the McCloud remedy.

Fair Pay disclosure

In 24-25 all staff including the highest paid director received a pay of award of 5%. The pay award in 23-24 was also 5% but in addition a £1,500 non consolidated payment was made to each member of staff who was in post on the 31 March 2023. However the Chief Executive and Directors were ineligible for the non consolidated payment.

Pay ratios	2024-25	2023-24
Highest Earner's Total Remuneration (£'000)	135-140	130-135
25th percentile pay ratio	4.3	4.3
Median pay ratio	3.4	3.2
75th percentile pay ratio	2.6	2.8
Range of total remuneration	£24,423-£138,564	£23,260-£131,966

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

The banded remuneration of the highest paid director in Social Care Wales in the financial year 2024-25 was £135,000-£140,000 (2023-24: £130,000-£135,000).

The remuneration used for the 25th percentile pay ratio, median and 75th percentile pay ratio were £32,061, £40,413 and £52,966 respectively. The corresponding figures in 23-24 were £30,534, £40,862 and £47,675.

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

Remuneration ranged from £24,423 to £138,564 (2023-24: £23,260 to £131,966).

Staff Report

Staff Costs	2024-25					2023-24
	Total Costs	Permanent Employed Staff	Temporary Staff And Secondees	Chair and Board members	Panel Members	Total Costs
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Salaries and Wages	10,191	9,885	74	128	104	9,274
Social Security Costs	1,069	1,065	-	3	1	969
Other pension Costs	1,504	1,504	-	-	-	1,437
Apprenticeship Levy	36	36	-	-	-	31
Sub Total	12,800	12,490	74	131	105	11,711
Add Payments in respect of inward secondments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total net costs	12,800	12,490	74	131	105	11,711

Consistent with guidance, employment costs include payments made in respect of contract staff. The total cost of salaries excluding Other Pension Costs was £11,296k (£12,800k-£1,504k) in 2024-25 in comparison to £10,274k (£11,711k-£1,437k) in 2023-24.

Other pension totalling £1,504k are the service costs (current and past) of the scheme and in addition any pension costs in relation to the increase in the holiday accrual. The £1,504k consists of actual Employer contributions based on payroll of £2,262k, but reduced by £8k in relation to the holiday pay accrual decrease. The residual difference of £750k (£830k in 2023-24) is the decreased charge which is required to be charged under International Accounting Standard (IAS 26). The decreased charge in 2024-25 relates to £750k of current service charges. In 2023-24 the £1,437k consisted of employer contributions of £2,267k but reduced by £830k as noted above.

Staff numbers - WTE	2024-25			2023-24
	Total No	Permanent No	Other No	Total No
Chief Executive and Directors	4	4	0	4
Workforce Regulation	90	90	0	90
Improvement and Development	82	82	0	74
Corporate Services and IT	53	52	1	45
Totals	229	228	1	213

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

Staff composition

As at the 31st March 2025 of the workforce of 240, 179 (75%) were women and 61 (25%) were men. In comparison as at the 31st March 2024 of the workforce of 234, 173 (74%) were women and 61 (26%) were men.

Included in these numbers are the Senior Management Team which consists of the Chief Executive and three directors. Of the Senior Management Team two were women (50%) and two were men (50%) which was the case at 31 March 2024.

Staff Composition by job family is as follows :

Staff Composition by Job Family	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
Executive Team	2	2	4	50%	50%
Senior Leadership Team	5	3	8	63%	37%
Management Team	56	18	74	76%	24%
Technical and Development Team	53	22	75	71%	29%
Support Team	63	16	79	80%	20%
Totals	179	61	240	75%	25%

Sickness absence data

The level of staff sickness during 2024-25 was 3.5 % (2023-24 was 3.6%)

Staff Policies, Equality and Diversity

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

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

We are committed to making sure equality and openness in our pay and grading arrangements. When we considered our Equal Pay report in June 2024, we found no evidence of pay discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristics. We also considered our Gender pay Gap in June 2024 which stood at 11%(median). This is in comparison to the position on June 23 when it was 11.8%(median).

Employee voice

During 2024-25 our Staff Partnership Council has had a crucial role to play in collecting and feeding back the views of staff on significant issues including the restructure and key policies. This has been achieved through regular staff forums, meeting with teams individually and producing feedback documents to HR and the Executive Management Team.

Support and wellbeing

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

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

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

Flexibility and Benefits

- 23% of our workforce worked not standard hours (less than 36 hours a week or compressed hours)
- the childcare voucher scheme has now closed to new entrants with five active members as at 31 March 2025
- all staff are able to work under a hybrid pattern of home and office locations
- we operate a cycle to work scheme and a salary sacrifice car scheme.

Expenditure on consultancy

Any Consultancy costs in relation to expert opinion obtained to assist in business decision making are included in Administration costs (Professional Fees) in the financial statements. In 2024-25 there were no Consultancy costs (23-34:0k).

Off-payroll engagements

In 2024-25 Social Care Wales has acted in accordance with Dear Accounting Officer letter 1/14 in relation to Tax Arrangements of Public Sector Appointees and no "off payroll" engagements are required to be reported.

Exit Packages

One exit package was agreed in 2024-25 and the cost of the package fell in the range of £25,000-£50,000 and is included in Salary Costs in the 24-25 financial statements. This related to a staffing matter that was identified for which due process was followed and actions taken to mitigate financial and reputational risks for Social Care Wales. There were no exit packages in 2023-24.

Accountability and Audit

Regularity of expenditure

All expenditure in 2024-25 has been dealt with in accordance with any relevant legislation, the Governance Statement agreed with Welsh Government and Managing Welsh Public Money.

Fees and Charges

Registration Fee income for the financial year 2024-25 was £2,461k (2023-24: £2,305k). As agreed by Welsh Government the fees received does not cover the full cost of registration and the excess cost is therefore funded by Grant in Aid.

Remote Contingent Liabilities

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

Long-expenditure trends

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

Sarah McCarty

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 28 July 2025

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

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of Social Care Wales for the year ended 31 March 2025 under Schedule 2 of Paragraph 6 to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

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

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

- give a true and fair view of the state of Social Care Wales's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its net expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with Welsh Ministers' directions issued under Schedule 2 of Paragraph 16 to the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

Opinion on regularity

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

Basis for opinions

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

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

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

Other information

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

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

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

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

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

Matters on which I report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

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

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

My procedures included the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Other auditor's responsibilities

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

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

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Adrian Crompton
Auditor General for Wales

Date: 28 July 2025

1 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ

Disclaimer

The maintenance and integrity of the Social Care Wales website is the responsibility of Social Care Wales. The work carried out by the auditor does not involve consideration of these matters and, accordingly, the auditors accept no responsibility for any changes that may have occurred to the Annual Accounts and Reports since they were initially presented on the website.

Financial statements

Statement of comprehensive net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025	Note	2024-25 £'000	2023-24 £'000
Expenditure			
Staff costs	15	12,800	11,711
Programme expenditure			
Training support and other long term funding schemes	4(i)	13,221	12,574
Other programme expenditure	4(ii)	3,305	4,726
Administration costs	5	1,627	2,105
Depreciation and amortisation	6,7 and 8	195	331
Pension interest charge		-	-
		31,148	31,447
Income			
Income from Activities			
Registration Fee Income		2,461	2,305
Other Income			
Apprenticeship Certification		94	76
Mental Health Workforce		419	505
National Data Resource		88	296
Life Sciences Hub		24	-
Volunteering Wales Strategic Grant (WCVA)		52	13
Digital Literacy and Maturity (WLGA)		183	-
Administrative Data Research Wales		67	67
Anti Racist Wales Action Plan		106	109
Sundry Income		17	20
Pension Interest Credit	16	10	50
		3,521	3,441
Net Expenditure		27,627	28,006
(Surplus) on disposal of lease		(1)	(7)
Interest receivable	3(i)	(27)	(27)
Interest surrenderable to the Welsh Government	3(ii)	27	27
IFRS 16 interest payable		15	12
Net expenditure after interest		27,641	28,011
Other comprehensive expenditure			
Actuarial remeasurement	16	460	1,990
Total comprehensive expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025		28,101	30,001

The notes on pages 67 to 90 form part of these accounts.

Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2025		2025		2024	
	Note	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Non-current assets:					
Pension Asset	16	-		-	
Property,plant and equipment	6	114		153	
Intangible Assets	7	21		34	
Right of Use Asset	8	416		639	
Total non-current assets			551		826
Current assets:					
Trade and other receivables	10	1,514		1,506	
Cash and cash equivalents	11	420		217	
Total current assets			1,934		1,723
Total assets			2,485		2,549
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	12	(659)		(937)	
IFRS 16 Finance lease within one year	13	(107)		(155)	
Total current liabilities			(766)		(1,092)
Total assets less					
Current liabilities			1,719		1,457
Non-current liabilities					
IFRS 16 Finance Lease	13	(290)		(486)	
Pension liabilities	16	(810)		(1,110)	
Total non-current liabilities			(1,100)		(1,596)
Assets less liabilities			619		(139)
Reserves					
General reserve			1,429		971
Pension reserve			(810)		(1,110)
Total			619		(139)

Notes on pages 67 to 90 form part of these accounts.

The financial statements on pages 63 to 64 were approved by the Board of Social Care Wales on 17 July 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:

Sarah McCarty

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Date: 28 July 2025

Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2025	Note	2024-25 £'000	2023-24 £'000
Cash flows from Operating Activities			
Net expenditure after interest		(27,641)	(28,011)
Adjustment for Depreciation and Amortisation		195	331
Adjustment for Pension finance Costs(net)		(760)	(880)
(Increase) in trade and other receivables		(8)	(728)
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other payables		(278)	645
Net cash (outflow) from operating activities		(28,492)	(28,643)
Cash flows from Investing Activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	6	(21)	(26)
Purchase of intangible assets	7	-	-
		(21)	(26)
Cash flows from Financing Activities			
Welsh Government funding (including Capital)	2	28,859	28,636
IFRS 16	13	(143)	(182)
Net financing		28,716	28,454
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period		203	(215)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	11	217	432
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	11	420	217

Notes on pages 67 to 90 form part of these accounts.

Statement of changes in taxpayers' equity for the year ended 31 March 2025	Pension reserve £'000	General reserve £'000	Restated Total £'000
Balance as at 1 April 2023	-	1,226	1,226
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity 2023-24			
Welsh Government funding		28,636	28,636
Transfer between reserves - Capital	(1,110)	1,110	-
Comprehensive expenditure for the year		(30,001)	(30,001)
Balance at 31 March 2024	(1,110)	971	(139)
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity 2024-25			
Welsh Government funding		28,859	28,859
Transfer between reserves - Capital	300	(300)	-
Comprehensive expenditure for the year		(28,101)	(28,101)
Balance at 31 March 2025	(810)	1,429	619

Notes on pages 67 to 90 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025

Statement of accounting Policies

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the 2024-25 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by the relevant authorities.

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

1(i) Accounting Convention

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

1(ii) Financing

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

1(iii) Registration Fee Income

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

1(iv) Apprenticeship Certification income

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

1(v) Training support and Other Grants

During 2024-25 Social Care Wales has made payments under the **Social Work Bursary Scheme** which is an incentive to train scheme for students enrolled on undergraduate and post-graduate social work training courses. This scheme includes payments to students of a non-income assessed bursary and an additional income assessed element for post-graduate students.

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

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

From 1 April 2017, Social Care Wales was given the responsibility for the administration of **the Social Care Wales Development programme (SCWWDP)** grant. The grant is provided to support Local Authorities to train and develop their own staff. Funding available from Social Care Wales through SCWWDP in 2024-25 provides 70% of the cost of the programme currently £7,640,051. The remaining 30% is to be funded by Local Authorities. The conditions attached to the grant are that the grant must be spent on eligible expenditure and must be spent within the financial year. Therefore, the liability for the grant is recognised once the grant offer letter has been provided. This is on the basis that at this point there are no conditions that remain within the control of Social Care Wales that limit the eligible costs being incurred.

Other grants includes:

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

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

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

During 2024-25 a small number of students terminated their training early, giving rise to a repayment of all or part of the award. The repayment due at 31 March 2025 totalled £91k (£103k: 31 March 2024) but reduced by the bad debt provision of £46k and this sum is included in Trade receivables and other current assets at note 10. It is the policy of Social Care Wales to seek full repayment of these funds.

1(vii) Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment of an individual or group value of £5,000 or more are capitalised. Property, plant and equipment have been valued at historic cost at the 31 March 2025, as in the opinion of Social Care Wales any revaluation adjustments are not material. Further to a review the threshold was amended for the financial year 2022-23 with the previous threshold being £1,000.

1(viii) Intangible Assets

Information Technology and Licence purchases of an individual value of £5,000 or more are capitalised. Information Technology and Licence costs have been valued at historic cost at the 31 March 2025, as in the opinion of Social Care Wales any revaluation adjustments are not material. Further to a review the threshold was amended for the financial year 2022-23 with the previous threshold being £1,000.

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

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

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

Depreciation and amortisation is calculated monthly and begins in the month following the month of purchase. As such, purchases made in March 2025 will not begin to depreciate/amortise until the 2025-26 financial year. The exception to this rule is accommodation refurbishment costs where the depreciation charge is calculated on a daily basis.

1(x) Right of use assets

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

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

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

Implementation and Assumptions

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

Previous treatment

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

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

Policy applicable from 1 April 2022

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

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

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

1(xi) Value Added Tax

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

1(xii) Pension Costs

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

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

1(xiii) Provisions and Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Provisions

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

Contingent Liabilities

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

Contingent Assets

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

2. Analysis of net expenditure by segment

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

3. Welsh Government funding	2024-25 £'000	2023-24 £'000
Grant in aid received from the Welsh Government	28,859	28,636
Amount credited to general reserve	28,859	28,636

As outlined in Note 1(ii) the total grants of £28,859k (2023-24: £28,636k) are now credited to the General Reserve on receipt.

3(i) Non-retainable income	2024-25 £'000	2023-24 £'000
Interest on deposit account	27	27
Total non-retainable income	27	27

3(ii) Reconciliation of cash received from non-retainable income with amounts repaid to the Welsh Government	2024-25 £'000	2023-24 £'000
Cash received (income exceeding Welsh Government threshold)	27	27
Total income repayable	27	27
Cash repayment	27	27
Due to the Welsh Government at the year end	-	-

Social Care Wales has a liability to repay the Welsh Government interest received during the year. The interest received of £27k was paid to Welsh Government.

4. Programme costs

4(i) Training support and other long term funding schemes	2024-25 £'000	2023-24 £'000
Social Work Bursary Scheme payments	2,605	2,781
Practice Learning Opportunity Funding	1,341	1,289
People using Services and Carers in Social Work Training	64	51
Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme	7,640	7,640
	11,650	11,761
Other long term funding schemes		
Grants to regions	1,571	813
Research - Social Care Institute for Excellence	-	-
	13,221	12,574

4(ii) Other programme expenditure	2024-25 £'000	2023-24 £'000
Improvement and development	2,062	3,264
Workforce regulation including regulation of social work training	1,243	1,462
	3,305	4,726

5. Administration costs	2024-25 £'000	2023-24 £'000
Chair, members, panel members and staff expenses	79	68
Other Staff Costs	199	391
Other Chair, members and panel members costs	26	10
Other premises costs	253	520
Workshops, seminars, promotions, publications	90	99
Equipment and software	611	608
Administration	74	76
External audit - audit work	26	25
Other professional fees	269	308
	1,627	2,105

6. Property, plant and equipment year ended 31 March 2025	Accommodation refurbishment £'000	Furniture and fittings £'000	Information technology £'000	Development Expenditure	Totals £'000
Cost					
At 1 April 2024	255	9	347	-	611
Additions in the period	-	-	-	21	21
Disposals in the period	(20)	(1)	(90)	-	(111)
At 31 March 2025	235	8	257	21	521
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2024	154	8	296	-	458
Charged in the year	21	-	39	-	60
Disposals in the period	(20)	(1)	(90)	-	(111)
At 31 March 2025	155	7	245		407
Net book value					
At 31 March 2025	80	1	12	21	114
At 1 April 2024	101	1	51	-	153

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

7. Intangible assets year ended 31 March 2025	Information technology £'000	Software licences £'000	Development expenditure £'000	Totals £'000
Cost				
At 1 April 2024	9	69	-	78
Additions in the period	-	-	-	-
Transfer from development	-	-	-	-
Disposals in the period	-	(8)	-	(8)
At 31 March 2025	9	61	-	70
Amortisation				
At 1 April 2024	9	35	-	44
Charged in the year	-	13	-	13
Disposals in the period	-	(8)	-	(8)
At 31 March 2025	9	40	-	49
Net book value				
At 31 March 2025	-	21	-	21
At 1 April 2024	-	34	-	34

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

8. Right of use asset 2024-25	Buildings £,000
Cost	
At 1 April 2024	794
Additions in the period	-
Disposals in the period	(154)
At 31 March 2025	640
Depreciation	
At 1 April 2024	155
Charged in the year	122
Disposals in the period	(53)
At 31 March 2025	224
Net Book Value at 31 March 2025	416

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

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

The reduction in Net Book Value in 2024-25 reflects the disposal of a right of Use Asset. A break clause in our lease at the St Asaph office allowed us to end the lease.

9. Financial Instruments

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

10. Trade receivables and other current assets at 31 March	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade receivables and accrued income		
Welsh Government	173	176
Local Authorities	149	6
Social Work Bursary Scheme debtors	45	103
Other bodies	510	708
Other receivables		
Prepayments	637	513
	1,514	1,506

Social Work Bursary Scheme debtors are repayable over more than one financial year, repayment contracts being agreed and signed by students which take account of their individual circumstances. However, for the purposes of disclosure, all balances have been included as falling due within one financial year. The total debt as at 31 March 2025 was £91k but this was reduced by the creation of a bad debt provision of £46k.

11. Cash and cash equivalents	2024-25 £'000	2023-24 £'000
Balance at 1 April	217	432
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	203	(215)
Balance at 31 March	420	217

The balances at the 1st April 2023, the 1st April 2024, and the 31st March 2025 were held at Commercial Banks.

12. Trade payables and other current liabilities at 31 March	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade payables	49	-
Other payables		
Accruals and deferred income	610	937
	659	937

13. Right of Use liability 2024-25	Buildings £,000
At 1 April 2024	641
Additions in the period	-
Disposals in the period	(102)
Repaid in the year	(157)
Interest charged	15
At 31 March 2025	397
Analysis of the expected timings of the future liabilities	
Not later than one year	107
Later than one year and not later than five years	290
Later than five years	-
Total	397

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

14. Capital Commitments

There were contracted capital commitments at 31 March 2025 of £2k not otherwise included in these financial statements (Nil at 31 March 2024).

15. Staff costs	2024-25 Total costs £'000	2023-24 Total costs £'000
Salaries and wages	10,191	9,274
Social security costs	1,069	969
Other pension Costs	1,504	1,437
Apprenticeship levy	36	31
Sub-total	12,800	11,711
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	-	-
Total net costs	12,800	11,711

16. Retirement benefit obligations

(i) Present Staff and Pensioners

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

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

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

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

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

Funding / Governance Arrangements of the LGPS

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

Assets

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

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

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

Risks associated with the Fund in relation to accounting

Asset Volatility

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

Changes in Bond Yield

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

Inflation Risk

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

Life Expectancy

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

Exiting Employers

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

Other Notes

McCloud Judgement

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

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

We have allowed for the impact of the McCloud judgement in these figures and the method used is closely aligned with the method proposed by the MCHLG (now the DLUHC) in its consultation. The McCloud liability was updated as part of the 2022 valuation and updated as at 31 March 2025 in line with the method adopted in the 2022 valuation.

Goodwin ruling

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

Virgin media judgement

In June 2023, the High Court handed down a decision (Virgin Media Ltd v NTL Pension Trustees II Limited), which was subsequently upheld by the Court of Appeal in July 2024. The ruling potentially has implications for the validity of amendments made by pension schemes, including the LGPS, which were contracted-out on a salary-related basis between 6 April 1997 and the abolition of contracting-out in 2016. The ruling related to the requirement on the trustees to obtain the scheme actuary's confirmation that a scheme continued to provide a minimum level of benefits (known as a 'reference scheme test') following certain types of rule amendments. Without this confirmation (sometimes referred to as a section 37 confirmation, by reference to section 37 of the Pension Schemes Act 1993, which sets out that scheme rules can only be altered as prescribed in the relevant regulations), the amendment may be void and ineffective.

At time of writing the government has not yet confirmed that they have been able to locate the actuarial confirmations from the Government Actuary's Department for all LGPS amendments between 1997 and 2016.

However, on the 6 June 2025 the Department for Works and Pension confirmed that they will introduce legislation to give affected pension schemes the ability to retrospectively obtain written confirmation that historic benefit changes meet the necessary standards. Scheme obligations will therefore be unaffected and therefore no allowance has been made for any liabilities.

The Employer's regular contributions to the Fund for the accounting period ending 31 March 2026 are estimated to £2.04m. The date of the last full actuarial valuation of Social Care Wales LGPS funded benefits was 31 March 2022 and the duration of liabilities is 19.5 years.

Social Care Wales is an admitted body to the Fund.

During 2022-23 discussions took place with the pension fund regarding our status as a member of the scheme. A review of the risk profile of the organisation was undertaken. A letter of comfort was provided to the trustees to support our status, a position supported by Welsh Government Public Bodies Unit. This is reflected in the significant increase in the discount rate assumed which increased from 2.7% in 31 March 2022 to 4.6% in 31 March 2023.

Key assumptions	31 March 2025 (% pa)	31 March 2024 (% pa)	31 March 2023 (% pa)
Discount rate	5.8	4.7	4.6
CPI inflation	2.5	2.6	2.6
Pension increases	2.5	2.6	2.6
Pension accounts revaluation rate	2.5	2.6	2.6
Salary increases	3.8	3.9	3.9

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

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

Mortality Assumption

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

Assumed life expectancy at age 65	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
Males		
Pensioner member aged 65 at accounting date	20.9	21.0
Active member aged 45 at accounting date	21.8	22.3
Females		
Pensioner member aged 65 at accounting date	23.7	23.8
Active member aged 45 at accounting date	24.8	25.2

Asset allocation	Value at 31 March 2025			Value at 31 March 2024
	Quoted	Unquoted	Total	
Equities	65.1%	0.0%	65.1%	65.5%
Property	6.1%	0.0%	6.1%	6.1%
Government Bonds	10.9%	0.0%	10.9%	11.5%
Corporate Bonds	14.7%	0.0%	14.7%	15.0%
Multi Asset Credit	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Cash	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	0.7%
Other	2.7%	0.0%	2.7%	1.2%
Total	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Reconciliation of funded status to the Statement of financial position	Value at 31 March 2025 (£M)	Value at 31 March 2024 (£M)
Fair value of assets	45.65	40.75
Present value of funded defined benefit obligation	(25.08)	(26.88)
Funded status	20.57	13.87
Unrecognised asset	(20.57)	(13.87)
Additional liability due to minimum funding requirement	(0.81)	(1.11)
(Liability)/Asset recognised on the SOFP	(0.81)	(1.11)

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

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

Paragraph 64 of IAS 19 as interpreted by IFRIC 14, limits the amount of net pension asset (surplus) that can be recognised on the Statement of Financial Position. Therefore the surplus of £20.57m (2023-24: £13.87m) has not been recognised as it is assumed there is no economic benefit from a refund of surplus as Social Care Wales provides a statutory service and is therefore unlikely to be able to exit the Fund. However an additional liability of £0.81m (23-24 £1.11m) has been recognised. This is in line with IFRIC 14 due to minimum funding requirements where employer deficit contributions are being made.

Amounts recognised in comprehensive net expenditure	Year ending 31 March 2025 (£M)	Year ending 31 March 2024 (£M)
Operating cost		
Current service cost ⁽¹⁾	1.51	1.43
Past service cost (incl. curtailments)	0.00	0.00
Settlement cost	0.00	0.00
Financing cost		
Interest on net defined benefit liability/(asset) before asset restriction	(0.71)	(0.49)
Interest on unrecognised asset	0.65	0.44
Interest on additional liability due to minimum funding requirement	0.05	0.00
Pension cost recognised in net expenditure	1.50	1.38
Remeasurements in other comprehensive expenditure		
Return on plan assets (in excess of)/below that recognised in net interest	1.56	(2.27)
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to change in financial assumptions	(6.62)	(0.57)
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to change in demographic assumptions	(0.23)	(0.40)
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to liability experience	0.05	0.31
Adjustment (gains)/losses due to restriction of surplus	6.05	3.81
Adjustment (gains)/losses due to minimum funding requirement	(0.35)	1.11
Total amount recognised in other comprehensive expenditure	0.46	1.99
Total amount recognised in total comprehensive expenditure	1.96	3.37
(1) Allowance for administration expenses included in current service cost (£M)	0.05	0.04

Changes to the present value of the defined benefit obligation	Year ending 31 March 2025 (£M)	Year ending 31 March 2024 (£M)
Opening defined benefit obligation	26.88	23.52
Current service cost	1.51	1.43
Interest expense on defined benefit obligation	1.31	1.12
Contributions by participants	0.67	0.59
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to changes in financial assumptions	(6.62)	(0.57)
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to changes in demographic assumptions	(0.23)	(0.40)
Actuarial (gains)/losses due to liability experience	0.05	0.31
Net benefits paid out	1.51	0.88
Past service cost (incl. curtailments)	0.00	0.00
Net increase in liabilities from disposals/acquisitions	0.00	0.00
Settlements	0.00	0.00
Closing defined benefit obligation	25.08	26.88

Changes to the fair value of assets during the year	Year ending 31 March 2025 (£M)	Year ending 31 March 2024 (£M)
Opening fair value of assets	40.75	33.14
Interest income on assets	2.02	1.61
Remeasurement gains(losses) on assets	(1.56)	2.27
Contributions by the employer	2.26	2.26
Contributions by the participants	0.67	0.59
Net benefits paid out	1.51	0.88
Net increase in assets from disposals & acquisitions	0.00	0.00
Settlements	0.00	0.00
Closing fair value of assets	45.65	40.75

Actual return on assets	Year ending 31 March 2025 (£M)	Year ending 31 March 2024 (£M)
Interest income on assets	2.02	1.61
Remeasurement gains /(losses) on assets	(1.56)	2.27
Actual return on assets	0.46	3.88

Estimated pension expense in future periods

Funded Benefits

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

Analysis of amount charged in other comprehensive expenditure on the provision of services next year	Year ending 31 March 2026 (£M)
Current service cost	0.87
Interest on net defined benefit liability	-0.01
Total estimated pension expense	0.86

Allowance for administration expenses included in the Current service cost (£M)	0.05
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Estimated pensionable payroll over the period (£M)	9.99
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Sensitivity Analysis

The approximate impact of changing the key assumptions on the present value of the funded defined benefit obligation as at 31 March 2025 and the projected service cost for the year ending 31 March 2026 is set out below.

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

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

Funded LGPS Benefits

Discount rate assumption Adjustment to discount rate	+0.1% p.a.	Base figure	-0.1% p.a.
Present value of total obligation (£M)	24.60	25.08	25.58
% change in present value of total obligation	-1.9%	-	2.0%
Projected service cost (£M)	0.82	0.87	0.93
Approximate % change in projected service cost	-6.2%	-	6.4%

Rate of general increase in salaries Adjustment to salary increase rate	+0.1% p.a.	Base figure	-0.1% p.a.
Present value of total obligation (£M)	25.13	25.08	25.03
% change in present value of total obligation	0.2%	-	-0.2%
Projected service cost (£M)	0.87	0.87	0.87
Approximate % change in projected service cost	0.0%	-	0.0%

Rate of increase to pensions in payment and deferred pensions assumption, and rate of revaluation of pension accounts assumption Adjustment to pension increase rate	+0.1% p.a.	Base figure	-0.1% p.a.
Present value of total obligation (£M)	25.53	25.08	24.65
% change in present value of total obligation	1.8%	-	-1.7%
Projected service cost (£M)	0.93	0.87	0.82
Approximate % change in projected service cost	6.4%	-	-6.2%

Post retirement mortality assumption* Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	-1 year	Base figure	+1 year
Present value of total obligation (£M)	25.63	25.08	24.53
% change in present value of total obligation	2.2%	-	-2.2%
Projected service cost (£M)	0.91	0.87	0.83
Approximate % change in projected service cost	4.2%	-	-4.2%

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

17. Provisions and Contingent Liabilities disclosed under IAS 37

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

18. Contingent Asset

At 31 March 2025 there were £33k of registration fees outstanding. Based on experience to date only after contacting the registered person we are able to substantiate whether the registered person has not paid due to leaving the sector (and the outstanding fee will not be pursued) or if it is a genuine debt in relation to an ongoing registrant.

Therefore the £33k outstanding is not treated as income in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as we are not sure of the precise economic value of this amount as on an individual basis, we will not know whether the income will materialise until contact is made and a response is received from the registered person.

19. Related Party Transactions

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

	2024-25	2023-24
Income	£29.03m	£28.81m
Expenditure	£1.11m	£0.56m
Debtor balance as at 31 March	£0.173m	£0.176m
Creditor balance as at 31 March	£0.28m	-

Social Care Wales Board Members and Staff

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

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

Income

One of our members Trystan Pritchard became Assistant Director of Strategic Partnership, Engagement and Insights at Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) from October 2024, which we provided grant funding of £419,379, in relation to the shared implementation of actions, in support of the Mental Health Workforce Plan. In addition £550 was received from Llais where Grace Quantock is Vice Chair.

Expenditure

Two members of our board were members of the Regional Partnership Boards, which received grant funding from Social Care Wales, in the form of the Regional Facilitation Grant. Members of our board were also members of Local Health Boards, which we also provided funding to.

In addition, one of our members was an associate of Practice Solutions, who we commissioned work with in 2024-25 but had no involvement in the work commissioned. The member was also acting Chief Executive Officer for Voices for Care from 22 April 2024 and Chair of Children in Wales where we had some minor transactions.

One new member is employed as a Team Manager at Conwy County Council, which we provide Practice Learning Opportunity Funding to.

Another new member was remunerated as a full time reader on the Social Work Masters Degree programme at Cardiff University (until his retirement at 31 October 2024) and an external examiner for the Social Work Degree programme at Swansea University. We provided Involving people using services and carers in social work training scheme funding in relation to the social work programmes to both universities in 2024-25.

The transactions were as follows:

Board Member	Role	Organisation	Expenditure 2024-25 (£)	Expenditure 2023-24 (£)
Mick Giannasi	Member	Powys Teaching Health Board	4,400	17,500
Carl Cooper	Chair	Powys Teaching Health Board	4,400	17,500
Carl Cooper	Chair	Powys Regional Partnership Board	52,900	52,900
Abigail Harris	Member	Cardiff & Vale Regional Partnership Board	174,696	94,844
Abigail Harris	Executive Director	Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	3,384	24,268
Abigail Harris	CEO	Swansea Bay UHB	15,500	N/A
Trystan Pritchard	Assistant Director of Strategic Partnership, Engagement and Insights	Health Education and Improvement Wales	2,379	N/A
Jane Moore	Associate	Practice Solutions	N/A	45,376
Helen Mary Jones	Associate	Practice Solutions	2,100	45,376
Helen Mary Jones	Acting CEO	Voices of Care	200	N/A
Helen Mary Jones	Chair	Children in Wales	178	N/A
Einir Hinson	Team Manager	Conwy County Council	46,368	N/A
Abyd Quinn Aziz	Full Time Reader	Cardiff University	5,100	N/A
Abyd Quinn Aziz	External Examiner	Swansea University	11,886	N/A

Please note that the payments in the table above to the Regional Partnership Boards were made to the nominated local authority, Vale of Glamorgan Council (Cardiff and Vale) and Powys County Council (Powys) in 2024-25.

The transactions with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board are the recharge of the remuneration of Abigail Harris of £3,384 for the first six months of the financial year.

The transactions with Conwy County Council included £41,700 of Practice Learning Opportunity Funding payments.

The transactions with Cardiff and Swansea University included Involving people using services and carers in social work training scheme funding of £5,000 and £9,493 respectively.

20. Third Party Assets

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

21. Events after the reporting period

There are no events after the reporting period, which require adjustment to the 31 March 2025 financial statements.

