



HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 4TH DECEMBER 2012

**SUBJECT: SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL SERVICES : WLGA/ADSS CYMRU
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the responsibility of the Local Authority in scrutinising the significant implications of the Local Government Implementation Plan for Sustainable Social Services.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 'Sustainable Social Services for Wales – the Local Government Implementation Plan' (hereto known as 'the Plan') (Appendix 1) was submitted to the Welsh Government in October 2012. It sets out the broad vision and commitments of local government for the reform and transformation of social services in Wales. The Plan has secured political and professional endorsement via the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Association of Directors of Social Services Wales (ADSS Cymru).
- 2.2 The Plan sets out clear and measurable actions, aligned with each of the core objectives of Sustainable Social Services and supporting themes identified by the Welsh Government in its 'White Paper' of 2011. These are:
- ✓ A strong voice and real control for citizens
 - ✓ A new accord for social services – political leadership
 - ✓ A new accord for social services – commissioning
 - ✓ Improvement
 - ✓ A strong and professional delivery team
 - ✓ A stronger framework for safeguarding
- 2.3 A key challenge for the Council is to deliver effective preventative services that maintain and enhance the wellbeing of people. The Plan rightly places the service user/citizen at the heart of all service planning and provision.
- 2.4 The planned introduction of new legislation (Social Services & Wellbeing Bill), together with significant service transformation, and national policy trends, will all signal changes in the landscape. This report examines local strategy, policy, legal, and finance and resource contexts, along with timelines. This will help inform the development of a work programme (2012-13) for the Scrutiny Committee and support crucial decisions to be made.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The impact of the Plan will cover several areas of the Council's responsibility including social care, housing, and education. Each area would be responsible for the successful delivery of the Plan.
- 3.2 The Health, Social Care & Well-being strategy which drives core partnership objectives shall prioritise issues requiring the most attention whilst avoiding pitfalls of trying to take action on everything at once. The focus is on aligning the strategy to key priorities arising from the Plan whilst continuing to support adults, children and families in vulnerable situations.
- 3.3 The Welsh Government's 2010 Commissioning Guidance Framework highlights the importance of commissioning of social care given its significant impact on people's lives. Scrutiny has a clear role to play to ensure a strategic overview of the commissioning cycle in steering future service development in line with the Plan whilst not losing sight of what's happening on the ground. Rigorous analysis of population needs and available resources will allow a broad picture of the service to be achieved, and provides an opportunity for service users to become the central focus of the exercise.
- 3.4 The National Assembly for Wales' Social Services & Wellbeing (draft) Bill is expected to be published in January 2013 for a full public consultation. This is a major piece of legislation and the proposed Act will have major implications for Welsh councils. During the period of consultation, all Local Authorities will engage with the Welsh Government to influence and support the development of subsequent Regulations/Guidance on important key issues. We know that there will be several "game changers" including eligibility and assessment, safeguarding, and outcome measures. The Scrutiny Committee will have the opportunity to comment on the proposed Bill at a future meeting.
- 3.5 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 has resulted in significant changes to the way local authorities manage and strengthen their democratic functions. There is a significant opportunity for the Scrutiny Committee to enhance its existing overview role in light of commitments in the Plan and proposed new legislation.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Local Government Implementation Plan reflects a joined-up approach ensuring that there is stronger and shared responsibility across the whole of Local Government and with other strategic partners such as the NHS, third and private sectors. Delivery of the Plan will be the core business of WLGA, ADSS Cymru, Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) and the Regional Collaboratives in Wales.
- 4.2 The Plan is shaped around core principles and values or 'game changers' which will drive the transformational change in social services and promote community cohesion. These are:
 - Engaging with users and carers to co-design services that satisfies their social care needs.
 - Ensuring an 'outcomes' based approach so that strategic social care and well-being objectives are attained.
 - Developing preventative strategies and service models which support individuals to be less reliant on ongoing care.
 - Developing models of integrated care across councils and the NHS which deliver improved outcomes for users and makes financial and business sense.
 - Avoiding retrenchment.
 - Ensuring effective engagement with service users, user advocates, carers, policy makers and professional care providers to ensure that they are involved and consulted when developing achievable (yet challenging) service specifications tailored to meet the needs of individuals in vulnerable situations.
 - Ensuring the better protection of children and safeguarding of adults.

- 4.3 There is an agreed contribution that will be made by Local Government alongside the contributions of the Welsh Government committed in those areas where they will be leading change.
- 4.4 Robust governance arrangements are in place to ensure accountability and keep track of progress. All agencies will report into the Local Government Implementation Board which has the right levels of seniority to cement the unity of purpose, ensure coherence and overcome any differences of professional view and approach.
- 4.5 The Plan is consistent with current national and local policy frameworks although the work programme will necessarily be subject to continual refinement and updating.
- 4.6 The Plan recognises the benefit of advocacy groups and local community enterprises in supporting and delivering maximum value to our citizens. Key areas to be addressed through community benefits are employment, training, education, supporting community projects and the local supply chain.
- 4.7 In light of our commitments in the Plan, crucial decisions will be made by the Local Authority such as:
- Determine where to continue to invest, disinvest or decommission in current services, where new services will need to be developed or procured, and where existing services will need to be reconfigured or re-organised to operate.
 - Consider the resource and risk management implications of the changes.
 - Ensure that the Local Authority and its partners will proceed with a plan for change that is realistic and sustainable in the long term.
 - Ensure that the workforce is fit to deliver the changes.
 - Ensure that service users are safeguarded.
 - Provide a rationale and business case behind proposed changes within the context of current budgetary pressures.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A key to committing to the Plan is to understand the aspirations of local people, and to ensure that we capture and retain our legacy of knowledge, expertise, learning and success of delivering high quality care to the community. The Plan recognises that community engagement would need to be given significant consideration particularly in the delivery of innovative joined up working. With a greater focus on community inspired preventative strategies we would plan to meet some of the needs and expectations of local people, particularly for those individuals who are vulnerable and more reliant on social care and health services.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Meeting the costs of the transformation changes in the Plan will be difficult in the current economic climate. ADSS Cymru and WLGA concerns are backed up by a recent report commissioned by the WLGA with the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) "Local Government Expenditure in Wales : Recent Trends and Future Pressures". The report sets out the demographic challenge for social care in the next ten year, the scale and size of which will fundamentally question our current assumptions on the resource base required to take the service forward. The report emphasises the need for careful prioritisation and targeting of transformational activity, and accordingly, we need to optimise our current resources and adopt a risk-based approach when delivering our commitments to the Plan.
- 6.2 ADSS Cymru secured £500K from the Welsh Government to support some of the activities identified in the Plan. The allocations are as follows:

- £150k – to support the strategic collaboration between Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent
- £30k – development of an all Wales approach to IT
- £220k – development of the new LSCBs, support to the new adult integration boards, and development of integrated care models
- £100k – support ADSS Cymru leadership capacity

6.3 Regional collaboratives have been invited to bid for the £220K allocation, and all development work needs to be completed by 31st March 2013.

6.4 There are real fears that the proposed welfare reform changes is likely to have an impact on health and social care demand, and this may need to be the subject of a local Impact Assessment to determine potential challenges. WLGA and ADSS Cymru are working on a Wales wide assessment that will inform local assessments.

6.5 At a local level, we are moving to ensure that local financial arrangements that enable annual savings through better efficiencies are deliverable, although it is recognised that further work is still required on the financial aspects of delivering the Plan.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There will be an element of costs to re-training staff to shift away from the mindset that more hours of intervention will lead to better care, towards developing outcome focused skills to supporting individuals on care pathways that promote recovery and greater independence.

7.2 Direct Payments are a method for local authorities to pay individuals directly so that they might purchase their own care. With a greater emphasis on enabling individuals to make their own decisions, there may be a corresponding increase in demand for Direct Payments. Staff need to be appropriately trained to deliver this service.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 Extensive consultation was undertaken by WLGA and ADSS Cymru in producing the plan.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That the Scrutiny Committee note the information set out in this report and identify specific areas it would wish to examine in further detail at future meetings.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To enable the Scrutiny Committee to reflect on the key implications of the Plan for Local Government and to provide an opportunity for more detailed discussion.

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Background Papers: WLGA & Institute for Fiscal Studies – “Local Government Expenditure in Wales : Recent Trends and Future Pressures”

Appendices:
 Appendix 1 Sustainable Social Services for Wales: Local Government Implementation Plan