



SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 15TH JUNE 2021

SUBJECT: REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARDS - UPDATE

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND
HOUSING**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 1st December 2020 Scrutiny Committee received a further update report of the Gwent Regional Partnership Board (Appendix 1). One of the recommendations made after Members considered the report was for the Social Services Scrutiny Committee to receive ongoing regular reports on the work of the Regional Partnership Board (RPB).
- 1.2 This report is to update Members on the work and decisions taken over the last six months by the Regional Partnership Board.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Part 9 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 required local authorities and Health Boards to establish Regional Partnership Boards. RPB's were established on a Health Board footprint with seven Boards being established. The RPB for this area is titled the Gwent Regional Partnership Board.
- 2.2 Since their inception in 2016 the RPB have become increasingly influential in developing integrated health and social care services across the region. The Board has also been recipient of significant amounts of grant funding from Welsh Government (WG) to support, develop and transform integrated services across health and social care.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members note the content of the report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 As previously stated, the RPB is becoming increasingly influential in shaping health

and social care services, not just in Caerphilly CBC but across Wales. There is also reference in this report to the Welsh Government consultation on rebalancing care and support in Wales and this has the potential to further increase the influence of the RPB.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 The RPB has met on several occasions since the report to Scrutiny Committee in December 2020, with meetings considering a number of key issues including;

- The continued impact of the Coronavirus outbreak across partner agencies.
- The continuation of the Transformation Grant and Integrated Care Funding in to 21/22.
- Responding to the proposals relating to the RPB in Welsh Governments White Paper on rebalancing care and support in Wales.

5.2 Unsurprisingly, there has remained a continued focus on the Coronavirus pandemic. Whilst the “second wave” had a greater impact on the NHS and social care services than the first wave we are now seeing a return to some kind of normality in terms of requests for services and the number of assessments being undertaken. Despite this, we are very mindful that the current positive position in terms of infection rates and deaths could change very quickly, with the subsequent impact on front line service delivery.

5.3 As the NHS begins to move away from a coronavirus focus its attention will inevitably turn to deal with the back logs and waiting lists for people requiring other forms of treatment. As this work gathers pace the pressure on social services departments to discharge people from hospital in a safe and timely way will increase significantly. This is going to put pressure on some of our community services particularly in relation to domiciliary care Community resource teams and occupational therapy services.

5.4 Previous reports to Scrutiny Committee on the work of the RPB have referred to the grant funding allocated to the Board by Welsh Government mainly in the form of Transformation Grant monies and monies made available via the Integrated Care Fund (ICF). At all RPB meetings, finance reports are received, completed by NHS finance staff (Health Boards have always been the “bankers” for grant monies received by the RPB).

5.5 In terms of the Transformation Grant the RPB submitted a “Gwent Transformational Offer” to Welsh Government, who subsequently awarded £13.4 million of grant funding for a two year period. This was in response to the Welsh Government ‘Healthier Wales’ initiative which allocated £100 million to transformational projects across Wales.

5.6 The Gwent Transformational Offer related to priority areas, derived from the Area Plan and the strategic directions of the Regional Partnership Board. These included:

- The development of early intervention and prevention services (Integrated Wellbeing Networks);
- The development of primary and community care services (this contract

ended is now referred to as placed based services);

- The redesign of child and adolescent emotional and mental health services (Iceberg Model);
- The development of an integrated 'Home First' prevention of admission and discharge model;
- The development of workforce planning and organisational development to underpin transformational activity.

- 5.7 The Gwent Transformation Programme has continued to make good progress, with the programmes adapting their scope and focus to ensure they are able to support the local response to COVID-19. However, during the Coronavirus pandemic some of the projects under the transformation programme had to stop, reduce their offer to the public or redirect efforts towards helping fight the Coronavirus. This has delayed the time available for these models to evidence success and for their evaluations to be completed.
- 5.8 Helpfully, Welsh Government have now confirmed funding will continue for a further transition year in its current format until March 2022. Each programme has developed a plan of work around financial sustainability, making clear the value of the programmes in line with the wider strategic improvement objectives of the Regional Partnership Board.
- 5.9 All programmes had commissioned independent evaluation of the models, with the Institute of Public Care (IPC) being successful for place based care, integrated wellbeing networks and Home First and Cedar Associates are leading the evaluation of the Iceberg model. These had started but again fell victim to the pandemic and have now been re-commenced.
- 5.10 There remains significant uncertainty around the ongoing funding of these schemes post March 2022. Discussions and representations between Regional Partnership Board members and Welsh Government are ongoing. In the event that funding does cease there are only two potential courses of action,
- The services financed by the grants cease with the corresponding loss of service provision and progress made to date.
 - The services financed by the grants are funded from the Social Services core budget, with corresponding savings made in other areas to allow this funding to continue.
- 5.11 Monthly meetings take place with health regarding the potential of ICF funding. The purpose of these meetings is to determine options that can be implemented once WG proposals are known.
- 5.12 Members will recall that on the 16th March 2021 Scrutiny Committee received a report on the Welsh Government White Paper on rebalancing care and support in Wales. Based on comments received from Scrutiny and Cabinet Members, a response to the consultation was sent to Welsh Government. The response is attached as Appendix 2 of this report.
- 5.13 Members were particularly concerned around proposals to make RPB's legal entities in their own right with ability to employ staff and commission services. Particular concern was expressed with regard to the lack of clarity on the enhanced role of the RPB and the role of Elected Members from local authorities in terms of scrutinising the role of the Board.

5.14 Given the outcome of the recent Welsh Government elections we are now awaiting the Programme for Government which should provide a guide on the priorities for Government and where their proposals around on rebalancing care and support will go next.

5.15 **Conclusion**

This report updates Members on the key issues considered by the Board since the report to committee on the 1 December 2020. Further reports will be submitted to Committee in accordance with the Forward Work Programme.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 There are no assumptions contained in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 This report is for information so the completion of an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Social Services Scrutiny Committee – 1st December 2020
Appendix 2 Response to Welsh Government White Paper on rebalancing care and support in Wales.