

**Minutes of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee held hybrid,  
Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023, 10:00am.**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Keith Evans (Chair), Wyn Evans, Gwyn Wigley Evans, Rhodri Evans.

**PRESENT VIRTUALLY:** Endaf Edwards, Chris James, Caryl Roberts, Marc Davies.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member.

Councillors Matthew Vaux, Wyn Thomas, Cabinet Members.

**NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY:** Councillor Gareth Lloyd.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Elizabeth Upcott, Corporate Manager, Alun Williams, Corporate Lead Officer, Diana Davies, Corporate Manager, Tim Bray, Civil Contingencies and Community Safety Partnership Manager, Harry Dimmack, Governance Officer, Lisa Evans, Standards and Scrutiny Officer, Dwywen Jones, Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Carol Jones and Llinos Thomas, Translators.

(10:00am –12:00pm)

**1 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Councillor Rhodri Evans took the opportunity to congratulate the Chairman, Councillor Keith Evans, for being elected as Vice-Chair of the Council in the Full Council meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The Chairman also congratulated Councillor Maldwyn Lewis who was elected as Chairman at the same meeting.

Councillors Geraint Wyn Hughes and Ceris Jones apologised for being unable to attend the meeting.

Elin Prysor, Corporate Lead Officer, apologised for her inability to attend the meeting.

**2 Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations)**  
**Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011**

Councillor Rhodri Evans disclosed a personal interest in relation to agenda item 4, Ceredigion Local Well-being Plan.

### **3 CYSUR/CWMPAS quarterly report**

Members considered the CYSUR/CWMPAS Combined Local Operational Group Safeguarding Report Quarter 3, between the period 1.10.2022 to 31.12.2022, 2022/23.

The Chair welcomed Elizabeth Upcott, Corporate Manager, to provide a summary of the key points, which were as follows:

Summary of Key points:

- In Quarter 3, there was an increase in the overall number of contacts/reports received regarding children/young people compared to Quarter 2-with there being 1112 contacts/reports received in Q3 compared to 1030 contacts/reports received in Q2.
- There was an increase in the overall number of contacts/reports which proceeded to actions needing to be taken under Child Protection Procedures, 193 in Q3 compared with 171 in Q2
- The percentage of reports that proceeded to a Strategy Discussion in this quarter was 17.3% compared to 16.7% in Q2.
- In Q3, 7.3% of reports proceeded to a Section 47 Enquiry compared to 8.3% in Q2. 0.97% of reports received needed to proceed to an Initial Child Protection Conference in quarter 2 compared to 1.6% in this quarter, Quarter 3. So, there was an increase in the number of contacts/reports received in Q3, which then led on to an increase in the number of strategy discussions held and an increase in the number of children who were the subject of Initial Child Protection Conferences.
- The total number of children placed on the Child Protection Register in this quarter following the Initial Child Protection Conference was 31 compared to 16 in Q2.
- The total number of children removed after Review Child Protection Conferences in this quarter were 28 compared to 13 in Quarter 2.
- The total number of Section 47 enquiries undertaken in this quarter were 81 compared to 86 in Quarter 2. 59 of those enquiries were undertaken in this quarter, jointly with the Police and 22 were undertaken as a Social Services Single Agency.
- The main category of abuse that led to a Section 47 enquiry in quarter 3 was Physical Abuse (40), sexual abuse/exploitation (15), neglect (13) and emotional abuse (9). This follows the same pattern experienced in Quarter 2.
- There were 49 children on the Child Protection Register as of the end of this quarter, compared to 46 as at the end of Quarter 2. 29 children were registered under the category of emotional/psychological abuse, in this quarter, 14 under the category of neglect and 6 under the category of both neglect and physical abuse.
- The main Risk Factors for the 49 children who were on the Children Protection Register as of the 31/12/2022, were domestic abuse, parental mental health, parental substance/alcohol misuse and parental separation.

- In terms of Adult Safeguarding, there has been a significant increase in the number of adults suspected of being at risk of abuse and/or neglect, with there being 128 adults at risk reported in this quarter compared to 113 in Q2. In particular there was a significant increase in the number of adults being reported, at risk, in the month of November (67) compared to 53 in October and 37 in December. It is not clear why there was such an increase in this particular month, but the reports relate concerns about domestic abuse.
- The most reported category of abuse this quarter again was emotional/psychological abuse, with 64 reports of adults at risk where this was the main category of abuse. Neglect was the second main category of reported abuse (51), financial abuse (42), physical abuse (33) and sexual abuse (23). This follows the pattern from the previous quarter.
- From the reports received, in relation to all categories of abuse, women are the highest reported to be most at risk, by a significant margin. However, in relation to financial abuse being the number of male and females reported to be at risk are almost equal (20 male, 22 female).
- In Quarter 3, the Police were the highest source of reporting (40) compared to Quarter 2, where it was a Provider Agency (30). In Quarter 3, the reports received by the Police were significantly higher than any other agency. The second highest being from Provider Agencies (26).

Following discussions, the following was noted:

- Further to a question regarding an increase in child protection referrals, it was agreed that the Officer would provide information on child protection referral trends pre-covid to date,
- An explanation was requested on the definition of 'financial abuse' – the Officer gave some examples of this,
- An explanation into the Child Protection referral process was requested, i.e., the steps involved in the process of placing a child on the register and taking a child from the register,
- Following a question, the Officer will raise the Committee's concerns with Education colleagues regarding the total number of children (229) who are receiving elective home education in the County.

Members agreed to note the contents of the report and the levels of activity with the Local Authority, so that governance of the Local Authority activity and its partner agencies are monitored.

#### **4 Ceredigion Local Well-being Plan and the Ceredigion Public Services Board (PSB) meetings held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

The Chair welcomed the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bryan Davies, Diana Davies and Tim Bray, Officers, to the meeting to present the Ceredigion Local Well-being Plan and the Ceredigion Public Services Board meetings held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023. Under Section 35 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Local Authorities are required to ensure their Overview and Scrutiny Committees have the power to scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the Public Services Board for the Local Authority area in the

exercise of its functions. Section 39 also states that each PSB must send a copy of its Local Well-being Plan to the Local Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Previous updates have been provided to the Coordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the process of developing the Assessment of Local Well-being and the Local Well-being Plan 2023- 2028 in Ceredigion.

Following approval of the Local Well-being Plan 2023-28 at PSB on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023, all statutory PSB organisations subsequently considered the Local Well-being plan at each of their respective Board meetings held between 22<sup>nd</sup> March and 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023. It was confirmed that through their usual governance arrangements, the Ceredigion Local Wellbeing Plan 2023-28 was approved by each of the individual statutory PSB members. Ceredigion County Council, as one of the statutory members, approved the plan at Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023, Cabinet on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and full Council on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023. The PSB met on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 to ratify the approval process of the Well-being Plan 2023-2028, this was undertaken and received unanimous agreement from all partners. It was agreed at that meeting that the Plan would be published on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, thus meeting the statutory timeline as stated in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (no later than one year after the date on which each ordinary election is held under section 26 of the Local Government Act 1972).

Committee Members were asked to consider the draft minutes of the Ceredigion PSB meeting dated 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

During discussion, the following were noted:

- Officers to report back by email on the question asked on how the 1% increase of homeowners in Ceredigion, as per the 2021 Census, compares with other Authorities,
- In response to a question regarding the NRW Climate Risk Baseline Report Officers and the Chair of this committee will raise the question at the next PSB meeting and the information will be shared with Committee Members,
- A question was asked regarding the employment figures and Economic Activity Status shown in the last Census. It was stated that these figures are continuously monitored by the PSB Poverty Sub-group and therefore the priorities within the Local Well-being Plan reflect the current situation.

Following discussion, Committee Members agreed to:

1. Note that the Ceredigion Local Well-being Plan had been approved by the Public Services Board, and,
2. Agreed to receive the draft minutes of the Ceredigion PSB meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

In order for the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Committee to carry out their role of taking an overview of the overall effectiveness of the PSB.

The Chair thanked the Officers and the Leader of the Council for attending and presenting the information at today's meeting. The Leader of the Council also thanked Committee Members for their input to the Local Wellbeing Plan during the governing process.

## **5 Serious Violence Duty**

The Chair welcomed Councillor Matthew Vaux, Cabinet Member, Diana Davies and Tim Bray, Officers, to present the report.

The Serious Violence Duty commenced on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023 and covers the requirements set out in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. This places a duty on specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. The specified authorities include Local Authorities, Local Health Boards, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Policing and the Justice Sector (Probation and Youth Offending Teams) and it is these organisations that are responsible for delivering the duty and jointly accountable for delivering the key milestones of the regional grant funding provided by the Home Office to implement the requirements of the Duty. In addition to the specified authorities, there are also relevant authorities which includes educational authorities (as well as prison and youth custody authorities). There is a requirement for these authorities to co-operate with the specified authorities as necessary, to deliver the duty and they must also be consulted by the specified authorities in the preparation of the strategy. Specified authorities must identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence (so far as it is possible to do so), and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing, and reducing serious violence in the area. The strategy should contain bespoke solutions to prevent and reduce serious violence and must be kept under review, which should be done on an annual basis and updated when necessary. Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) To inform this process, specified authorities should jointly undertake an evidence-based analysis of the causes of serious violence within their area and use this analysis to develop a local Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) which should inform the local strategy. This will include a wide range of data and as an example can include local and national crime data, census data, hospital and primary care data. From a local authority's perspective, it may also require educational data such as attendance, suspension and exclusion data and children's 2 social care data. The SNA will include a common understanding of the cohorts that are most vulnerable to serious violence and the local strategy will need to demonstrate how each area is focussing resources on the defined population most in need of support.

The Duty does not provide a definition of Serious Violence, as it is up to each area to define what serious violence is; this will be centred on local evidence-base informed by the SNA. When considering the SNA, it is clear that violence is not limited to physical violence against the person. It provides that, for the purposes of the Duty, violence includes domestic abuse, sexual offences, violence against property and threats of violence Furthermore, the Serious Violence Strategy 2018 states that Serious Violence is concerned with specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, and gun crime and areas of

criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in gangs and county lines drug dealing. It also includes emerging crime threats faced in some areas of the country such as the use of corrosive substances as a weapon.

This duty forms a new 'public health approach' to tackling Violent Crime, identifying what causes violence and find interventions that work to prevent it spreading. A 'public health' approach involves multiple public and social services working together to implement early interventions to prevent people from becoming involved in violent crime.

The Serious Violence Duty is intended to create the right conditions for authorities to collaborate and communicate regularly, using existing partnerships where possible, to share information and take effective coordinated action in their local areas. All organisations and agencies subject to the Duty will be accountable for their activity and co-operation.

Officers advised Committee Members of the current timeline which is as follows:

- 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023 – Serious Violence Duty commenced
- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 – Partnership agreement to be confirmed
- 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023 – provisional version of delivery plan and confirmation of Home Office funding usage
- 29<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023 – advanced version of delivery plan to be agreed
- 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 – Strategic Needs Assessment for Serious Violence completed
- 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 – Local Strategy completed (including final version of the delivery plan)

The Statutory Guidance document as published on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022 can be accessed on the following Website: Serious Violence Duty - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) (please note specific Guidance for Wales from pages 20 onwards).

Funding has been allocated to Dyfed Powys region by the Home Office to implement the Serious Violence Duty and as per legislation, this will be overseen by the Police and Crime Commissioner, who will also be providing support, monitoring activity and reporting to the Secretary of State.

Funding from the Home Office has been confirmed up to 2024/2025 on the following yearly allocations:

2022/2023: Labour costs £30,000 Non-labour costs: £0

2023/2024: Labour costs £180,000 Non-labour costs: £39,737.48

2024/2025: Labour costs £77,041.71 Non-labour costs: £111,655.25

At present, the resource is being allocated to increase analytical capacity within Dyfed Powys Police to prepare and deliver the regional SNA. Furthermore, it is intended that funding will be used to oversee the coordination of the delivery plan, strategy and associated workstreams within the region.

Crest Advisory has been commissioned by the Home Office to work with organisations specified in the SV Duty and local partners during 2023 to determine their readiness for the Duty and provide tailored support to develop and ensure compliance. Partners across the region, including Ceredigion County Council have attended joint meetings with the Police and Crime Commissioner and nominated SV leads from key organisations have been identified. The nominated Strategic Lead for Ceredigion County Council is Barry Rees, as CSP chair and nominated practitioners are Diana Davies (Corporate Manager for Partnerships and Performance) and Tim Bray (Partnerships and Civil Contingencies Manager).

Existing partnership arrangements can be used to deliver on this Duty as the Statutory Guidance indicates that there isn't a necessity to create new partnerships. As such, it has been agreed that the existing Serious Violence and Organised Crime (SVOC) structure, which is already established and the Regional SVOC Board is the correct platform to lead on the planning and implementation of the SV Duty requirements. The Corporate Manager for Partnerships and Performance and the Partnerships and Civil Contingencies Manager currently attend Regional SVOC meetings, and will continue to do so and report back where necessary. Furthermore, in recognition of the vital role that education has in safeguarding, it is recommended that a strategic education representative for the area be represented at meetings to discuss the SV Duty. This will assist in providing a link between the specified responsible authorities and individual institutions, the new Curriculum for Wales and the opportunities that this presents with regards supporting the well-being landscape. It is proposed that the SV Duty is presented for information to Cabinet on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

During discussion, the following was noted:

- Concern was expressed in relation to the increase in drugs and County Lines activity in the County and Committee Members agreed this should be closely monitored,
- Further to a question regarding funding allocation, the Officer confirmed that it is not yet clear what agency will be leading on sourcing additional capacity to coordinate this work. This should be confirmed by September 2023.

Following discussion, Committee Members were asked to consider the following recommendation:

- i. To note the new Serious Violence Duty and implications for Ceredigion County Council and the relevant partnerships which are attended by Ceredigion County Council representatives.

Committee Members agreed to note the new Serious Violence Duty and implications for Ceredigion County Council and the relevant partnerships which are attended by Ceredigion County Council representatives.

In order for the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Committee to understand the additional duties that Ceredigion County Council is required to respond to and consider.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and the Officers for attending and presenting the information to the Committee.

## **6 6 monthly Report on the Council's use of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) update**

The Chair welcomed Councillor Matthew Vaux, Cabinet Member, and Harry Dimmack, Governance Officer, to present the Report on the Council's use of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 to Committee Members.

A revised RIPA Policy was presented to the Committee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022, and approved by Council on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Members also received an update following an Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) inspection in the November meeting.

In addition to the amendments presented to this Committee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2022, Council also approved the addition of two further amendments to the section on the 'Procedure for Applying for a Directed Surveillance Authorisation to the RIPA Policy' (see Council report for details). These additional changes were approved in advance of the Council meeting by the Chair of this Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Committee is responsible for reviewing the Authority's use of RIPA. The most recent RIPA activity update was presented to the Committee on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022. Reports are presented on a 6 monthly basis.

Between the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023, one application for directed surveillance was submitted and approved. The authorisation was approved by magistrates on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and expired on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2023 (3 Months). A review was carried out on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023 which concluded that the authorisation should not be renewed.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023, a RIPA Update from the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) was published on CeriNet News for all Council staff. This informed staff that the Council's Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA') PART II Directed Surveillance, Covert Human Intelligence Sources and Communications Data Corporate Policy & Procedures Document ('RIPA Policy') had been updated. This update also provided an overview to staff of



the RIPA forms and guidance available on CeriNet. It is intended that 6-monthly messages will be circulated via CeriNet to ensure that any new staff are captured in order to raise awareness of the need to consider RIPA.

A quarterly newsletter has also been published by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) and is available to view on their Website. <https://www.ipco.org.uk/publications/correspondence/>

During discussion, the following was noted:

- A question was raised regarding Freedom of Information requests. The Governance Officer confirmed that the Authority would have to adhere to the Freedom of Information policy in responding to any request.

Following discussion, Members were asked to note the report.

Members agreed to note the report contents, to ensure the committee is kept up to date with the Council's use of RIPA and implementation of policies.

**7 To confirm minutes of the previous meeting and to consider any matters arising from those minutes**

The minutes of the Coordinating meeting held on the 22 March 2023 were confirmed as a true record of proceedings and there were no matters arising from those minutes.

**6 To receive an update from the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and to consider the draft Forward Work Programmes**

Each Chair (or Vice-chair in the Chair's absence), in turn gave an update on their respective Committee's Forward Work Plans.

1. Thriving Communities

The Chair provided an update in relation to the Thriving Communities future work plan.

Councillor Wyn Evans congratulated the Chair for arranging a recent meeting to discuss the Waste situation.

2. Healthier Communities

The Chair provided an update in relation to the Healthier Communities future work plan.

Members were disappointed that the report regarding TAW Recruitment//retention has been moved forward to the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 from the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 Committee meeting.

3. Learning Communities

The Chair provided an update in relation to the Learning Communities future work plan.

A Committee Member asked a question in relation to Declaration of Interest to which the Standards and Scrutiny Officer advised that the Councillor should contact the Monitoring Officer.

4. Corporate Resources

The Chair provided an update in relation to the Corporate Resources future work plan.

5. Coordinating Committee

The Chair provided an update in relation to the Coordinating Committee's future work plan.

The Medium-Term Financial Plan is currently noted to be presented to the Coordinating Committee on the 29 June 2023. The Corporate Resources Chair, Councillor Rhodri Evans, stated that the MTFP should be presented to the Corporate Resources Committee as it falls under this Committee's remit. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer stated that she had been in contact with Duncan Hall, Corporate Lead Officer. The issue is timescale for completion of reports. However, the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023 Corporate Resources Committee meeting may be a possibility.

It was suggested that every Committee should receive a report in the Autumn regarding the Budget situation so that Members can prepare for the February meetings. This would provide an opportunity to discuss where savings are likely to be providing more of a Member input as to the available options.

A Member suggested that Procurement is included on the relevant Committee's Forward Work Plan.

The Chairman thanked Committee Members, Cabinet Members, Officers for attending and closed proceedings at 12 midday.

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_