Gofal Cymdeithasol Cymru
Social Care Wales

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING

29 April 2021
Virtual meeting
09:30 – 13:00

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09:40	3.	Minutes of the Board meeting 28 January 2021 To endorse	SCW/21/09	3
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09:50	5.	Update from Committee Chairs To note and receive	Oral	
10:05	6.	Context setting and key messages from the Chief Executive and Directors To note and receive	Oral	
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10:20	7.	Business Plan 2021-22 Appendix 1 To consider and approve	SCW/21/11	27
10:55 – 11:05 Comfort Break				
11:05	8.	Strategic Equality Plan consultation document Appendix 1 Appendix 2 To consider and approve	SCW/21/12	68
11:30	9.	Changes to 'The Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales 2018' (The Social Work Degree Rules) Appendix 1 To consider and approve	SCW/21/13	95
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For discussion:

12:50	13.	Meeting effectiveness To discuss	Oral	

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 15 July 2021

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING

28 January 2021
Virtual Zoom meeting
09:30 - 13:45

Present:

Board Members:	**Social Care Wales Officers:**
Mick Giannasi	Sue Evans (Chief Executive Officer)
Abigail Harris	Andrew Lycett (Director of Finance, Strategy and Corporate
Carl Cooper	Services)
Damian Bridgeman	David Pritchard (Director of Regulation)
Donna Hutton	Sarah McCarty (Director of Improvement and Development)
Emma Britton	Geraint Rowlands (Assistant Director Finance & ICT)
Grace Quantock	Kate Salter (Assistant Director Corporate Services)
Jane Moore	Rhianon Jones (HR and Wellbeing Manager)
Jo Kember	Llinos Bradbury (Governance Senior Officer - minutes)
Kate Hawkins	
Peter Max	**In attendance:**
Rhian Watcyn Jones	Aled Jones, Cymen (simultaneous translation)
Simon Burch	Natalie Price
Trystan Pritchard	

Public session:

1. Welcome and Opening Comments from the Chair

i. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that this was a virtual public Board meeting with simultaneous translation available. The Chair encouraged those who were able, to contribute in Welsh.

ii. The Chair in particular offered a welcome to Rhia Jones as an observer to the meeting as part of her induction to the organisation.

2. Apologies and declarations of interest

i. Apologies were noted from Maria Battle.

ii. PM declared a new interest as a non-executive director of the Life Sciences Hub Wales, DB also noted a recent appointment as the Chair of the Institute of Directors for South Wales, both were congratulated on their recent appointments.

3. Minutes of the Board meeting 22 October 2020

i. The minutes of 22 October 2020 were discussed and **endorsed** by the Board as an accurate record of those meetings.

4. Action log and matters arising

i. Members' attention was drawn to the rolling action log which provides updates on progress which has been made against outstanding actions since the last meeting.

ii. The Chair updated the Board on the action in relation to departmental visits and noted that he has met with the Fitness to Practise team, the Registration team, the Communications team and new starters that joined the organisation during 2020. The Chair will next be meeting with the Improvement and Development department on 25 March and asked for any members who wished to join him to let him know. **ACTION**

iii. The Chair asked if there were any further updates on the work of the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) for Vulnerable Children and Young People. SMc advised that due to the upcoming Welsh Parliament elections the work of the current MAG will come to an end, but that prior to this a legacy report will be produced. Officers are working closely with the Welsh Government on some of the areas to ensure that work is still progressing in the meantime, and looking at support for the sector around masterclasses, peer learning and support. Work has also been commissioned to look at strengths based preventative approaches, alongside the current inspection by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) of local authorities. It is hoped that this will help inform the new priorities that need to be put in place when a new government is established later in the year.

iv. JM asked what is happening currently to all the workstreams within the MAG programme. SMc said that the legacy report will capture what has happened but also work that has not been able to progress as anticipated, as several workstreams will have been paused due to the current pandemic. Feedback from the sector has indicated significant pressure within children's services due to COVID-19 which was not seen during the initial period of the pandemic. Although some work is still progressing, practices are not being shared and adopted across the sector, due to the pressures currently within the sector.

v. The Chair noted that the cultural awareness training date has now been confirmed for 8 April and that action can now be closed.

vi. There were no further comments or questions on the action log.

5. Update from Committee Chairs

i. EB Chaired the December Audit and Risk Committee and provided a summary of discussions at the most recent Committee meeting. In particular, she highlighted the

reflective nature of the meeting, the changes and challenges that were seen during 2020 and a recognition of the work undertaking during a difficult year. Improvements made within the monitoring and use of the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP) were highlighted. The Committee also looked at lessons learnt from a recent grievance case from an audit and risk perspective and she wished to acknowledge the work of the HR team during the process.

ii. DB Chaired the Improvement Committee and highlighted the work undertaken by Jon Day, Assistant Director Workforce on his engagement with the workforce leads during this time as part of the SCWWDP grant. The Committee received a presentation from Lisa Trigg, Assistant Director of Research, Data and Intelligence on the research agenda with a further session scheduled to look at the review of the Research Strategy. DB also reflected on the positive Accolades event held in November and wished to thank the Communications team for their work.

iii. As Chair of the Regulation and Standards Committee, SB highlighted the benefits of a CIW co-opted member on the Committee as discussions were held on non-payment of fees and whether that could become part of inspections in future. CIW have also produced a report on the Overview of feedback from the social care sector which was collated from check-in calls with providers of services for adults and children during the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak. Sarah Harris from Kingsley Napely also joined the meeting to provide an overview of the Fitness to Practise (FtP) review they are conducting on behalf of Social Care Wales. Sarah in particular commented on the openness and engagement of staff during the process, the final report is due in February. The meeting in March will focus on how the sector has coped during the usual winter pressures alongside COVID-19. SB also welcomed Rhia to the organisation and wished Beth Calnan the best for her upcoming maternity leave.

iv. There were no comments or questions from the updates provided.

6. Business Plan: Quarter 3 progress report

i. KS outlined the purpose of the paper which was to provide the Board with updates on performance against the Business Plan at the nine-month stage. Members were reminded that the Business Plan for 2020-21 is ambitious and therefore it was important to be realistic at this stage what could be achieved during the final quarter of the current business plan. The Leadership Team has reviewed the business plan, noting the work needed to support the sector through the current pandemic, and therefore where there are activities that require engagement with the sector it is recognised that this won't be possible, and these activities will be paused and included within the Business Plan for 2021-22. The organisation's statutory work continues and there is a focus on what needs to be completed within the current financial year with the current staffing capacity.

ii. Having provided the context for the update, KS drew members' attention to priority theme 1, the social care and early years workforce. Regulatory processing targets are largely on track, with the performance commentary providing further information where activities are not on track. KS asked for any questions in relation to theme 1.

iii. CC said that it is clear that the organisation is performing well and hitting the targets set and asked what the relationship is between the business plan activities and the targets. When you look through the activities around 80% are either amber or red which doesn't seem to resonate with the targets being met. KS answered, saying that the targets can be very process driven whereas, when looking at the activity as a whole and the timeline, this is where it is felt activities are not on track for the end of March as expected. As there will be a new Business Plan from April it provides the opportunity to look at the presentation of the paper to the Board to ensure that the assurances needed are there. CC thanked KS for the response but noted that the question remained as to what the implications of not achieving the Business Plan targets are, and the effects on the Business Plan for 2021-22. The Chair added that the Business Plan for the current year has had to be transformed rapidly in response to COVID-19, with work also being undertaken on the next strategic plan. It is recognised that there is work to be done to better align the performance indicators with the targets.

iv. AL reflected that several of the performance indicators are set around internal service standards and ensuring service continuity during the current period for those on the register. Going forward there is a need to sharpen reporting on the developmental activities and the ability to distinguish between the regulatory and developmental activities. Work has concentrated on the programme boards internally and will look to strengthen the link between internal reporting to the programme boards through to the Board report. The new Business Plan will be focussed on outcomes, with some of those being longitudinal which will provide a challenge to how activities in the annual business plan related to the longer-term outcome measures.

v. JK added that it may be helpful to add additional commentary to the report on whether the target would be reached by the end of the final quarter, to aid discussion on what resources or support would be required to achieve the target. TP said that it was important to recognise how performance has improved over the quarters, whilst there is a lot of talk of "business as usual", everyone is aware that it is not actually business as it would be. Therefore, recognition should be given for the performance of teams, the way they have adapted, and the mental resilience to carry on working under the current circumstances. The performance indicators and targets may need refinement, but the teams have been achieving against the ones that have been set.

vi. TP asked for some context as to why the EU transition risk has been reduced. In response to the EU exit DP said that there were two areas of concern, one being the changes to the regulatory process and the other the impact on the sector. In terms of the regulatory process the relevant audits have been completed on the organisations processes and are confident that no significant changes are required following EU exit. There are implications for mutual recognition of qualifications which will affect some health organisations but does not create any issues for Social Care Wales. Given that there has been a deal there is not an immediate concern for the sector but work by organisations such as the NHS Confederation points to a longer-term issue of recruitment from the EU which is likely to cause concern. As an organisation communication has been focused on promoting settled status to those already working in the sector.

vii. CC asked what the likely number of adult care home workers registered would be at the end of the year as this activity is not on track to register 1,500 by the end of the year. DP responded reminding the Board that all domiciliary care workers were registered by April 2020 with the Welsh Government planning to add adult care home workers by April 2022. Engagement plans have been developed to ensure that the targets are met, however, during this year it has not been possible to engage with the adult care home workers as was done with the domiciliary care workers due to the pandemic. Some have registered and it is expected that around a third to half of the target 1,500 registered will be met by the end of March 2021. It will be difficult to build on this and ensure that everyone is registered by April 2022. DP advised that the April 2022 date for mandatory registration of adult care home workers has not yet been put into legislation, and that this is a Welsh Government decision. Conversations are expected with the Welsh Government regarding the timeline and mandatory date within the near future. There is no indication currently that the timelines will be different, but we are aware that the Welsh Government is looking across all its work in light of COVID-19. A detailed engagement plan is being shared with Welsh Government in February detailing how maximum registration can be achieved by April 2022 with options for alternatives should there be a different timeline. If April 2022 remains the deadline then investments of organisational resource and capacity will be required to achieve that deadline.

viii. SE reflected on the discussion and said that these have also been taking place internally, it is important to distinguish what is directly within the organisations control and where the role is to influence and therefore need to think about measurable ways of including milestones for those pieces of work where our role is more to influence. We are on a journey to further developing our approach to make it much more meaningful, with a need to define what is directly within our control and what we can influence.

ix. Moving onto priority theme 2, KH on the theme of digital learning asked for reassurance on the organisation appointed to lead on this activity given the current virtual working environment, and whether there had been any additional commissioning challenges during this time. KS said that the numbers of responses to commissioned work has reduced in terms of the number of suppliers, there are several reasons for this, and to provide reassurance research is being undertaken on this with more information being provided to the Audit and Risk Committee at its March meeting. Responding to the question in relation to the digital work KS said that the organisations commissioned with this work are mindful of the current situation with the sector and are using an agile approach to gain feedback to support the development of digital learning. DP added that the 2 organisations working with us on the digital work have been very strong organisations with one concentrating on discovery work and the other working on pilot areas, once this work has been completed any additional work will go to further procurement allowing time to reflect on the quality of the work provided.

x. KS shared the We Care Wales campaign current stats:

- Engagement – 19,506
- Followers – 10,158
- Posts - 421

xi. In terms of the 3rd priority theme, the social care and early years systems leaders, the Improvement Committee received the latest update on the national leadership programmes at its December meeting.

xii. Moving onto priority theme 4 and our own workforce, KS noted that the Audit and Risk Committee receives the detail on the activities included within this theme, and in particular where activities are not where they should be.

xiii. The Chair asked whether there were any questions on the detail within the performance commentary.

xiv. AH asked whether there is any evidence that people are being attracted into the social care sector from other sectors which have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 such as hospitality. SMc said that there is no formal evidence of this at the moment as there isn't currently a way of tracking through We Care where people have come from. SMc referred to the rapid recruitment project which has just started with a pilot area in south Wales to bring individuals into the sector through support by We Care and an induction training course before being passed onto employers. Work is ongoing with employability organisation as well as Careers Wales, Jobcentre Plus and specific support where people are made redundant and supported into other roles and linking those with the sector in a values-based way by using A Question of Care, which provides and assessment of an individual's values in working in the sector as providers want individuals who will stay working in the sector in the longer term. AH thanked SMc for the update and noted the continuing challenges of recruiting into the sector until the issue of fair pay is addressed.

xv. GQ asked whether there was an awareness of competition for staff between the NHS and the care sector and whether there was any horizon scanning being undertaken on the impact of long covid on the sector. SMc explained that there are a lot of discussions on the impact of long covid and the pressure on rehabilitation services and how to support the longer-term recovery of individuals. In terms of the workforce there is an impact on capacity due to staff shielding and for those individuals who will require a longer-term approach to recovery from long covid. The risk assessment tool is being used as a tool to help with supporting individuals in work, there are also ongoing discussions with the Welsh Government and health on what might be required as occupational health for the workforce in future. Through We Care we are looking to increase the diversity of the workforce and how it can be improved. GQ thanked SMc for the response and noted that as we are looking to increase the diversity of the workforce, we also need to be looking to increase the protection and parity for the workforce.

xvi. EB echoed previous comments on needing to address the pay issue within the care sector as well as competition between both sectors to attract individuals to work. EB said that there was a need to concentrate on what can be addressed and noted that the current risk assessment requirements are stopping individuals providing the care needed with an example provided of people having to wait outside buildings until the risk assessment has been completed. On a positive note, EB said that she has seen and has heard of a number of people re-joining the sector, with examples given of

qualified social workers joining as social work assistants to help during the current pandemic.

xvii. SE said that our evidence and data is used where possible to influence, SE mentioned that she has written a welcome and introductory note to the new Director for research on COVID-19, which is a Welsh government funded centre, aiming to better understand the impact of COVID-19.

xviii. The Chair provided an update against the strategic risk of member appointments at the end of March 2021. Informal feedback received has indicated that the proposal as set out by the Chair has been agreed by the Public Appointments Commissioner and the proposal will now go to the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services for agreement.

xix. GR provided the Board with an overview of the budget report and thanked KS for setting the scene in terms of work that is yet to start and work that will need to be carried over into the next financial year.

xx. GR said that there were no concerns in terms of income with the full Grant in Aid and registration income expected for 2020-21. He said the grants area is underspent as the number of bursaries allocated is lower than the number available as had previously been reported. Therefore a £400k underspend is projected in both bursaries and Practice Learning Opportunity Funding (PLOF) budget. Additional investment has been made with the regions in regard to COVID-19 response and recovery, the overall budget is therefore expected to be underspent by £127k. The Workforce Regulation budget is underspent by £143k due to savings in the admin budget. There is also an underspend in projects budget and salaries budget due to vacancies, the outturn at the end of the year is a projected £105k for this budget. It is expected that the hearings budget will be fully spent at the end of the financial year. The Improvement and Development budget is underspent by £223k and it is anticipated that this will be a £173k underspend at year end as projects are deferred into the new financial year. The Early Years and Childcare budget is in line with projection. The Strategy and Business Support budget is overspent by £31k currently but has a predicted £57k underspend at the end of the financial year.

xxi. RWJ asked given the request of a 4% carry over, how likely is this to be agreed and if agreed what assurances can be given that the money will be spent during 2021-22 and that there is capacity within the organisation to deliver on the projects that are being carried over. GR answered by saying that he is in discussions with Welsh Government finance colleagues to establish the possibility of a 4% cash carry over into 2021-22. There is a monitoring meeting with the Sponsor team on 8 February where the financial position will be discussed. In response to being able to spend the additional carry over in 2021-22 and capacity GR said that the projects have already been established with clear milestones and where commissioning is required this is taking place now and he was therefore confident that the money would be spent.

xxii. PM asked what strategic implications there are of not spending the money allocated to improvement and whether there should be more visibility at Committee of the financial position. GR said that the projects where there is underspend are those where engagement with the sector would be difficult due to COVID-19, and Welsh

Government are aware of this. SMc added that the projects being paused are those where working really closely with the sector is needed and as engagement with the sector will be difficult during the final quarter, focus therefore has turned to really urgent pieces of work or those that are COVID-19 related. Planning for next year is taking into account the work that needs to be carried over from this year as well as consideration of capacity to deliver.

xxiii. The Chair reflected that the finances of the organisation is a Board issue and although will have implications for work on a Committee level the oversight needs to remain with Board.

xxiv. AL added that whilst looking at the projects that need to be carried forward into the first quarter of the next financial year, provides staff with certainty on projects whilst waiting on confirmation of Grant in Aid allocation for 2021-22, and a strong case for the additional carry forward to Sponsor.

xxv. Members **scrutinised** and **approved** the progress against the Business Plan 2020-21 at the nine-month stage.

Meeting effectiveness

i. Following on from discussions at the previous Board meeting to ensure that the meeting effectiveness section remains relevant and renewed the Chair asked the Board members to consider one thing they wished they had said during the discussions to date and why had they not raised that point.

ii. RWJ said that she would have responded again on the capacity to undertake the work being taken into the next financial year, particularly in light of the data within item 7 and the vacancies that need to be backfilled within the organisation. The Chair asked why RWJ did not come back, she said that the discussions seemed to have moved on and could be picked up again as part of the discussion in item 7 as appropriate.

iii. KH said that the organisation has an ability to handle and cope well with new pressures referencing the rapid recruitment initiative, but she questioned whether it should be something that had more of a discussion and whether it is about influencing but not to be complacent about the difficulties affecting the sector at this time.

iv. RWJ also said that she was unsure of where questions such as progress against the Workforce Strategy and its activity could be picked up on the agenda. The Chair suggested that the updates from the CEO could be moved up the agenda to provide the strategic overview at the start of the meeting, which could provide the opportunity for such questions. It was agreed the Chairs Coordinating Group (CCG) would discuss the ordering of the agenda further **ACTION**.

v. EB also reflected that it is difficult to know whether questions will be covered at a later agenda item, she particularly wanted to know about the wellbeing of staff during the current situation and feels a sense of responsibility and noted the Board does care about the wellbeing of staff.

vi. TP added to EBs comments noting that it would be useful to see the results of the staff temperature tests to ensure that the Board's responsibility to staff is being realized.

vii. EB said that the briefings from the CEO set up at the start of the pandemic would be useful to bring back as the need for the more informal updates are still there. SE agreed to reinstate the informal briefing sessions **ACTION.**

viii. The Chair thanked the members for their contribution to the discussion and agreed for the need to think about how to set the context for the meeting and the need for the informal understanding of how things are developing through briefing sessions from the CEO.

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

i. RJ provided a summary of the 3 parts included within the paper. First, she referenced the HR statistics from quarter 3. Responding to a question in relation to what stage does a referral to occupational health happen, RJ said that it varies and is managed on a case-by-case basis, the earlier the engagement the better the outcome but sometimes they are not aware that there is an issue and therefore a need for referral.

ii. Responding to earlier comments of staff wellbeing and a reference in the paper to the winter wellbeing plan RJ said that the plan had been developed following feedback from staff on what would help them through the winter period. A range of activities have been organised and engagement with staff. The Staff Partnership Council recently ran a wellbeing forum and have provided a thorough report for the Leadership team on the findings of the conversation, with the general message being that staff are doing ok but a need not to become complacent.

iii. The second part of the report focusses on a lessons learnt action plan following a recent grievance case and is shared with the Board as assurance that lessons are being picked up and action being taken. The actions required relate to policy update, process reviews, and staff training.

iv. Part 3 focusses on recommendations following a recent internal audit on the organisations starters and leavers process with a response against each recommendation, the actions identified are on track to be implemented.

v. The Chair asked members for any questions or comments on the report.

vi. PM said that within the social care sector, employers are being asked to regularly touch base with staff whilst working at home or self-isolating and asked therefore what approach is being taken within Social Care Wales. He also asked what work is progressing on supporting disabled employees within the organisation. RJ said that in terms of engagement with employees, line managers are encouraged to engage with their staff as often as is needed and this will vary from individual to individual. Staff also have other avenues of engagement through activities arranged by the Health and Wellbeing group as well as departmental and group meetings that provide check ins

with staff. Responding to PMs second question on disability RJ said that the first stage is engaging managers in training and to see what is learnt from that which will inform future approaches to staff and working with managers in getting them more confident in asking questions in relation to disability.

vii. PM asked whether there was any data on how and frequency of managers engaging with their staff. RJ said that this data is not collected but managers are reminded regularly of the need to engage with their staff. There is also the opportunity for staff to talk to others within the organisation if there is no engagement from managers, however RJ said that she is confident that these conversations are happening from the feedback received from staff.

viii. RWJ commented that she feels confident that the actions from the internal audit are being dealt with and is on track. In relation to the lessons learnt from the grievance she was pleased to see that the lessons learnt is being taken seriously. Referring to the quarter 3 statistics where more posts were filled by internal candidates than external, she asked whether there are some posts that are advertised internally only or is it all open competition knowing that recruitment is a time-consuming issue, and whether there are streamlined processes to help with this. RJ responded saying that vacancies are advertised internally and externally at the same time unless it is a temporary role which then may only be done internally. Additional guidance on recruitment is to be sent to managers soon detailing the responsibility of the appointing manager and HR as well as streamlining the process.

ix. JM asked whether the impact of COVID-19 and how it is being managed is included within the new PDP plan and whether there is a training and development plan to help staff manage in the current circumstances. RJ said that wellbeing is an area to strengthen in the revised PDP process and ensuring that better conversation are held between managers and their staff. In response to training and development RJ said there are several webinars that are shared with staff that they can join, there is also a suite of online learning which is accessible to all staff which includes managing working from home, resilience and supporting their own wellbeing.

x. CC thanked RJ for the overview and referred to the increase of the volunteering days available to staff from 2 days a year to 8 days a month, and such an increase should be something to welcome and take pride in. He asked how many members of staff had taken up the opportunity and how many hours the organisation has contributed to volunteering. RJ said that the Executive Management Team were keen to increase the number of days given current circumstances. In terms of data on take up, information is currently anecdotal as staff have not been recording volunteering days on the HR system, RJ agreed to pick this up with managers to ensure that this is captured going forward **ACTION**.

xi. TP asked whether the temperature checks could be shared with the Board to enable them to get a feel of the discussions with staff. RJ said that she was happy to share these to provide assurance to the Board **ACTION**.

xii. SE emphasised that staff wellbeing is at the top of her agenda and that she has regular conversations with the Directors on how they and their teams are coping. Staff are reminded during the regular CEO briefings of the need to take their annual leave

and the flexible working available to them currently. There is a collective leadership responsibility within the organisation to support their teams and this is taken seriously. SE confirmed that she will think about how data can be collected in a meaningful way to provide additional assurance to the Board.

xiii. The Chair reiterated that it is the Board's responsibility to understand how the staff feel and what it is like for them. The Chair receives his assurances through regular conversations with SE, and by talking to staff through attendance at virtual team and departmental meetings over the last few months, the informal briefings with the CEO will provide this as well as a more structured approach to engagement with staff in future.

xiv. JK said that the Board should reflect on how successful the organisation has transformed to working in a completely different way and paid tribute to the way the Executive Team has conducted itself and in ensuring staff wellbeing is being maintained and therefore should be proud of how staff have been supported since March 2020. EB also echoed JKs comments and that there is no doubt that everything is being done for staff wellbeing within the organisation.

xv. Members **noted** and **discussed** the report.

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

i. SE highlighted the key areas from the report and noted that it is not a performance report but a report to capture the organisations rapid response in supporting the sector and its own staff through the ongoing pandemic.

ii. The key areas highlighted by SE from the report were:

- The range of the activities as detailed in 1.4 in the report.
- The agile response of the staff to the situation and SE wished to place on record her thanks to all staff for their efforts in supporting the sector.
- A national coordination of activities with relevant organisations such as the briefing to providers to ensure that the sector wasn't overburdened by communication.
- Sharing good practice with UK colleagues both in regulation and workforce development
- The Accolades ceremony in raising the profile of the sector
- The care worker card which was very well received
- WeCare television adverts
- Specific videos to support recruitment to the early years and childcare sector
- Our emerging Digital offer
- Peer support networks for the workforce
- SCWWDP targeted funding to support the sector
- Rapid recruitment into the sector
- Regulatory changes that have reduced expectations on the sector
- A one stop shop for expert guidance for those working in the sector
- Supporting our own staff

- Ensure that the learning is captured to take forward the positives from the situation

iii. The Chair asked for any comments or questions on the paper.

iv. DB said that there is a lot of uncertainty with regards to direct payments due to COVID-19, SE noted that DP is passing on such feedback through to the Welsh Government group which is looking specifically at Direct Payments. He asked in the new world how office space would be used moving forward. SE said that AL is looking at the office space as part of business continuity. The Permanent Secretary at a recent Welsh Government Public Leaders Forum has asked organisations with town centre offices to consider whether some facilities could be offered as a hub for other organisations to use. DB said that the Cardiff Capital Region Deal are also looking at the provision of hub style offices and DB will keep SE informed of any developments.

v. AH asked whether Social Care Wales has been asked to support the misinformation of vaccination and to support the vaccination of social care staff. SE said that messages in relation to vaccinations are promoted through briefings where possible, to ensure consistency in messaging and that she will add this as an A.O.B to a meeting with CIW later in the afternoon.

vi. AH also asked for assurances around the changes to the HR policy on annual leave and that staff are being encouraged to take their annual leave. SE said that a review of the annual leave taken had been completed. The Assistant Directors are working with their teams to remind staff of the need to take their annual leave, the number of people with a lot of days left are small in number and are actively encouraging them to reduce the days where possible. The usual policy is for the CEO to approve more than 5 days annual leave carry over. This year that has been delegated to Director with the CEO approving any carry over of 10 or more days.

vii. SB asked for reassurance regarding the flexibility and the risk management of the rapid recruitment initiative particularly from a safeguarding point of view. SMc said that safeguards for individuals recruited has been a part of the discussions on the initiative and at what points can the checks be completed. As a full DBS cannot be undertaken until someone is in full employment this responsibility will remain with employers. However, values-based assessments are undertaken before individuals commence on the training programme. The training programme is a 4-day programme that covers the key and critical issues that individuals need to be trained on and has been developed from the induction framework. When individuals have completed the training, they go through to employers to be recruited where the standard recruitment processes would be in place. Other models were looked at such as surge models, but these were felt to have more risks and employers wanted an approach where employees could be employed on a longer-term basis.

viii. KH asked whether individuals are paid to attend the training, whether expenses are paid and how accessible the training is. SMc responded noting that individuals are not paid for the training as this became complex when individuals were receiving benefits. Through employability programmes expenses are being paid. With the first cohort there is testing on potential IT access challenges as it is a 3-day digital and one day face to face programme for any digital barriers. Once proof of concept is gained

through the pilot dates are planned for a further 5 cohorts of 20 individuals and work with employers to see whether this could be mainstreamed over time, and where employers could potentially pay a joining bonus which would reimburse individuals for the training days undertaken, and as an incentive to stay.

ix. EB raised concerns from the independent sector workers of them being missed within the vaccination programme with no support from their agencies, this has been raised with BASW who responded noting that it was not anything to do with them. SE said that the vaccination rollout is an NHS responsibility, but the organisation is supporting where it can. There is a Welsh Government vaccination working group and EBs feedback will be fed into those conversations. SMc added that concerns regarding independent agency workers has already been fed into the group as this has come through as a concern a number of times and has been picked up in the guidance to health boards on the rollout of the vaccine.

x. DH asked if there was any plan to deal with those working within the social care sector who refuse to have the vaccine. DP said that Social Care Wales will not be considering refusal of the vaccine as a fitness to practise issue due to individuals' human rights to refuse the vaccine.

xi. Board members **noted** and **discussed** the rapid response to COVID-19 in relation supporting the sector and supporting the health and well-being of the organisations workforce so far in 2020/21.

9. Strategic Plan and Strategic Equality Plan update 2021-2026

i. SE introduced the paper and advised on the revised timeline due to the need to focus on learning from COVID-19, feedback needed on key pieces of discovery work and the Welsh Parliament elections in May, all of which may influence the new strategic plan. The Board is asked to approve the revised timeline for both the strategic plan and the strategic equality plan. SE also asked the Board to consider the 2 options on the vision and purpose statements included within the paper.

ii. The Chair asked the Board for comments and questions on the paper.

iii. CC said that there are still ongoing discussions on the vision statements and whether they capture what is within the organisation's remit and control and wanted assurance that the timetable will allow time to get into the detail of the outcomes, as discussion is needed before refinement and tweaking stage as noted in the timeline. SE acknowledged the struggle between having outcomes that will stretch the organisation whilst also clarifying what is within direct control and what can only be influenced, as a leadership organisation. In relation to the timetable, she said that it is ambitious however it was important to have an internal target to ensure the focus remained on this work. Board members were reminded that the current Strategic Plan is in place until the end of March 2022, so there is no risk if publication occurs after September. CC thanked SE for her response and wanted assurance that the Board's involvement in discussions around the outcomes will be at a sufficiently early stage. SE confirmed that the Board will be involved through the upcoming Board development sessions.

iv. TP asked about the Welsh language in response to comments received on the consultation and whether enough is being done in relation to Welsh language provision. SE said that there were 2 elements to Welsh language for the organisation, one being equality and ensuring no one is disadvantaged, the other element is the work to promote the Welsh language and supporting the sector to become more skilled. Based on the consultation feedback, the Leadership team have agreed to strengthen the Welsh language element of the strategy prior to publication.

v. PM said that flexibility may be needed on the timetable should the Welsh Parliament elections be delayed by up to six months, and in the context of the public finances outlook there may need to be clear narrative on what only Social Care Wales can do and prepare for not being able to do everything that we would like to do. SE said that it was helpful that the Board understands the challenge in trying to stick to a timetable but wanted a timetable in order to set out the direction of travel, and if any amendments are needed the Board will be notified and asked to agree a new timetable. A lot of work has been undertaken on discovery reports and using critical friends to help define what the organisation could be doing moving forward, SE also acknowledged that the financial uncertainty is likely to get more challenging, which necessitates a flexible approach.

vi. JK referring to the vision statements didn't feel that option 2 read very well and looking at the options as a whole prefers the vision in option 2 but the purpose as summarised in option 1 with the addition of 'developing and **regulating** the workforce'.

vii. RWJ said that she still was not clear on the audience or audiences for the vision and purpose and is asking whether it's possible that they will satisfy every audience. At the moment the vision and purpose sounds inward facing rather than outward facing as it should.

viii. JM felt that the word care is too paternalistic, as it is not just about caring but supporting individuals to lead independent good lives.

ix. The Chair summarised the discussion with a focus needed on who is the audience for this, a need to rethink the word care, ensuring that the core regulatory function of the organisation is included within the purpose. SE thanked the Board for their comments which have been similar to those that have been had as a Leadership group. SE agreed to take on board the comments received and bring back a refined version for consideration through the portal initially and further discussion at a Board development session **ACTION**.

x. Board members **considered** the revised approach to developing the strategic plan and strategic equality plan and the vision and mission statement; and **approved** the revised timeline for the revised strategic plan and strategic equality plan.

10. Business Plan 2021-22 framework

i. The Board were provided with a presentation which outlined the business plan framework for 2021-22.

ii. The approach was outlined as:

- Roll forward of current Business Plan where activities have not been completed, due to Covid.
- Update the plan on a page
  - Retain current plan themes
  - Extend current activities into 2021-22
  - Refresh activity from scoping into business
- Maintain programme boards management approach
- Remain agile and responsive, requiring flexibility

ii. DP and SMc summarised the plan on the page, the audiences and the activities within those, for both the sector and organisational development. DP in particular drew attention to the activity in relation to 'develop and deliver a workforce plan for the Liberty Protection Safeguards' as this has not received a high profile due to COVID-19 but is the replacement to the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and will have a significant impact on the sector in terms of requirements for training and accreditation.

iii. SMc noted that the slides will be uploaded onto the portal and asked members to get it touch if there are areas for further feedback or a need for clarity **ACTION**.

iv. AL emphasised that the activities within the Business Plan framework requires confirmation of budget in order to support the work on those activities. Potential risks were highlighted as being the decision by the Welsh Government to commit to the budget requested, timescales to extend the register to adult care home workers and as previously mentioned the Liberty Protection Safeguards which will require significant roll-out across the sector.

v. Other financial risks were mentioned those being the agreement to the request to carry over 4% into the next financial year and confirmation of the Grant in Aid for 2021-22.

vi. The Chair thanked the Directors for the presentation and noted that work is continuing on the Workforce Strategy with regular engagement with HEIW and the Chair and SE are meeting with their Chair and Chief Executive on the 11 February, with the 2 Boards coming together in the future to review progress with the strategic delivery of the strategy.

vii. There were no questions or comments from the Board on the framework.

viii. SE wished to thank the Board on behalf of the Executive Team for their support and flexibility through this period, as some of the work can move at a pace which can be difficult to capture in the Board and Committee papers and this is where the more informal briefing sessions will help with keeping the Board updated on developments.

ix. AL confirmed that the detailed Business Plan will be developed internally by the end of March which will come to the Board for formal approval at its April Board meeting with informal detailed discussions at the April Board development session prior to this.

x. The Board **noted** the Business Plan 2021-22 framework.

11. Opportunities to Strengthen Corporate Governance update

i. The Chair reminded the Board that an outline plan was agreed last April to strengthen the organisation's governance and an action plan was created. The paper provides an update against the proposals within the action plan and there has been incremental progress. The next focus for the Chair will be the revised PADR process and one to one meetings are being scheduled for March and further information will be sent to all Board members on the focussed approach shortly.

ii. The Chair asked if there were any questions or comments on the update provided, there were none from the Board.

iii. Board members **noted** the progress made against the timeline of implementation of opportunities to strengthen corporate governance.

12. Board and Committee meeting dates 2021-22

i. The Chair noted that the paper had already been circulated for comments. The paper presents the opportunity to learn from the experience of working remotely whilst also ensuring a balance of face-to-face meetings as appropriate.

ii. TP felt that the Board has shown it can work effectively remotely. However, this has been done due to previous relationship building through face-to-face meetings and he felt that there should be 2 face to face meetings a year.

iii. The Chair supported TPs views and suggested that the Board meeting in April 2022 becomes a face-to-face meeting with a Board development session on the previous day as there will potentially be 2 new Board members joining at the beginning of April and would provide an opportunity for face-to-face contact and team building with new members. The Board **agreed** to this proposal.

iv. CC reflected that whilst working remotely provides the opportunity for more frequent shorter meetings, this can in turn lead to more time and capacity needed to attend and support those meetings.

v. PM said that sometimes the Board development sessions are short on time and might be better scheduled for 3 hours to ensure enough time to draw everything together.

vi. The Chair also reflected on the need to think about the timings for sessions and if needed longer sessions will be scheduled and suggested that the CCG think about the schedule for the next 12 months, the number of sessions needed and the timings for those **ACTION**.

vii. EB requested that more support is also given where members are experiencing issues such as broadband capacity, which can hinder participation at meetings.

viii. AL drew members attention to an additional Audit and Risk Committee meeting that has had to be scheduled for 7 July in response to a request from Audit Wales for additional time to complete the organisations' audit following an extension of time given to NHS bodies which may impact on the timing of the audit of the organisation's annual accounts.

ix. The schedule of Board and Committee dates were **approved** subject to the amendment of a 27 & 28 April 2022 face to face Board development session and Board meeting.

13. Key messages from Chief Executive and Directors

i. All key messages had been picked up as part of the agenda and therefore there was no further update required on this agenda item.

13. Meeting effectiveness

i. For this section of the meeting the Chair asked members to consider if they were a care homeowner in north Wales or a stakeholder what would be their reflection of the Board meeting today. Recognising that this was a change to the usual questions he also encouraged Members to feedback if there were any issues with the quality of papers, timings etc.

ii. PM mentioned a WhatsApp group he is in where the concerns raised are around inconsistencies between health boards, local authorities, testing, treatment, and response time and lack of money for the additional pressures being faced currently and are feeling very pressured now. The question therefore is what the Board can do to help with consistency during this time. The Chair asked whether they would think that the discussions today were relevant and mattered to them. PM reflected that perhaps members could advocate more on the sector pressures and add to the weight of relevance.

iii. RWJ added that members are not there as representatives of certain interests but as a strategic body. The Chair confirmed that members are appointed by a Minister and therefore are representative in holding the organisation to account and corporate responsibilities.

iv. In response to being relevant, RWJ recognised that it would be difficult for someone to join the whole meeting, but rather that someone could dip in and out if there were items of direct relevance.

v. JK felt that each member does bring their experiences and knowledge into the discussions and those listening in could see how members ask questions, scrutinise and bring their relevant experiences to the meeting.

vi. EB reflected that the meeting is not accessible to those working in the sector, due to the length and the content may not grab their attention, however being a Board member EB now has more awareness of the work of Social Care Wales as someone

who works in the sector. EB also reflected that the new approach to meeting effectiveness had been beneficial and feels meaningful.

vii. JM said that it was a good question to ask and reflect upon on a regular basis but being honest, the language and tone of the discussions will not be relevant to front line social care workers as their focus is different.

vii. The Chair thanked KH for her suggestions on how to refresh this section of the meeting. KH reflected that the approach has bought more into the meeting and gaps where people would have walked away without saying certain comments have had time to reflect. She hoped that it had been refreshing and thanked the members for participating. There is a need to ensure connection with those working on the front line although not representing them, we can champion their work.

ix. The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions during the meeting.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 29 April 2021.

Actions

Item	Action	Who
Item 4 – Action log and matters arising	Board members to let the Chair know if they would like to join him at the Improvement and Development departmental meeting on 25 March.	Board members
Meeting effectiveness	Chairs Coordinating Group to discuss ordering of agenda items for the Board meeting.	Chairs Coordinating Group
	Reinstate informal CEO briefing sessions with the Board.	Llinos Bradbury
Item 7 - HR Report – Quarter 3 update	Remind managers of the need to record staff using voluntary leave on the Ciphr system to allow reporting on the use.	Rhianon Jones

	Staff temperature checks / surveys to be shared with the Board.	Rhianon Jones
Item 9 - Strategic Plan and Strategic Equality Plan update 2021-2026	Refined version of the vision and purpose statements to be uploaded onto the portal for further comments prior to a discussion at the April Board development session.	Llinos Bradbury
Item 10 - Business Plan 2021-22 framework	PowerPoint presentation to be uploaded onto the portal for further feedback or clarification.	Llinos Bradbury / Board members
Item 12 - Board and Committee meeting dates 2021-22	Chairs Coordinating Group to consider the number and timings of Board development sessions for 2021-22	Chairs Coordinating Group

Social Care Wales Board meeting actions

Rolling action Log 2021-22

Meeting date	Item	Action required	Action by	Target date	Outcome / update	Current status	Date completed
28.01.21	Item 4 – Action log and matters arising	Board members to let the Chair know if they would like to join him at the Improvement and Development departmental meeting on 25 March.	Board members	24.03.21	Peter Max and Jo Kember joined the Chair to meet Improvement and Development Colleagues. Further opportunities to be explored.	CLOSED	25.03.21
28.01.21	Meeting effectiveness	Chairs Coordinating Group to discuss ordering of agenda items for the Board meeting.	Chairs Coordinating Group	11.02.21	CCG agreed for CEO update to be placed at the beginning of the agenda to allow for setting the context for the meeting.	CLOSED	29.04.21
28.01.21	Meeting effectiveness	Reinstate informal CEO briefing sessions with the Board.	Llinos Bradbury	February 2021	Monthly informal CEO briefings scheduled up until May.	CLOSED	February 2021
28.01.21	Item 7 - HR Report – Quarter 3 update	Remind managers of the need to record staff using voluntary leave on the Ciphr system to allow reporting on the use.	Rhianon Jones	March 2021	Managers have been reminded and asked to update existing records. We will report in Q1 of 2021/22.	CLOSED	March 2021

28.01.21	Item 7 - HR Report – Quarter 3 update	Staff temperature checks / surveys to be shared with the Board.	Rhianon Jones	March 2021	A summary has been included in the end of year HR report which is on the portal.	CLOSED	April 2021
28.01.21	Item 9 - Strategic Plan and Strategic Equality Plan update 2021-2026	Refined version of the vision and purpose statements to be uploaded onto the portal for further comments prior to a discussion at the May Board development session.	Llinos Bradbury	May 2021	May Board development session will focus on the strategic plan and the vision and purpose statements as discussed at the February session.	OPEN	
28.01.21	Item 10 - Business Plan 2021-22 framework	PowerPoint presentation to be uploaded onto the portal for further feedback or clarification.	Llinos Bradbury / Board members	January 2021	Presentation uploaded onto portal, no feedback or clarification requested.	CLOSED	March 2021
28.01.21	Item 12 - Board and Committee meeting dates 2021-22	Chairs Coordinating Group to consider the number and timings of Board development sessions for 2021-22	Chairs Coordinating Group	February 2021	Monthly session felt to be right, length of sessions extended to 3hrs to ensure enough time and more opportunity for smaller breakout discussion groups.	CLOSED	February 2021

22.10.20	Item 7 - Business Plan: Quarter 2 progress report	Board to be kept updated on Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on vulnerable children and young people work	Sarah McCarty	January 2021	We understand the current Ministerial Advisory Group will come to an end shortly as it is the end of the term of Government. We are working with Government to support plans to enable improvement through masterclasses and a peer learning and support framework. We have commissioned work to help identify the key elements needed for a preventative strengths-based approach for vulnerable children and families in Wales. Further updates to be shared through business plan performance reporting.	CLOSED	March 2021
22.10.20	Item 8 - Annual Equality Report 2019-20	CCG to discuss digital inclusion as a topic for an upcoming	Mick Giannasi / Llinos Bradbury	May 2021	Board Development forward plan will be discussed at the 6 May CCG meeting	Open	

		Board Development Session			and consideration given to including a session on digital inclusion.		
22.10.20	Item 8 - Annual Equality Report 2019-20	Discuss BAME recruitment initiatives further	Abu Askira & Rhianon Jones & Emma Britton	By March 2021	Meeting currently being arranged.	Open	
22.10.20	Item 8 - Annual Equality Report 2019-20	Update on progress of completion of equality and diversity monitoring data	Rhianon Jones	By March 2021 in readiness for April 2021 reporting	Internal Equality and Diversity Group to support communication to be sent to staff in March to encourage wider completion with a view to reporting against this in April.	Open	
22.10.20	Item 9 - Equal Pay Audit 2019-20	Sharing of methodologies used to make people feel safer in declaring their characteristics	Damian Bridgeman and Rhianon Jones	March 2021	Meeting currently being arranged.	Open	
30.04.20	Item 8 – Regulation matters	Work with the FtP team to develop a criteria for when Section 160 of the Regulation and Inspection Act (RISCA) could be	Hywel Dafydd, Assistant Director Regulation	16.07.20	We are in negotiations with Welsh Government lawyers to implement section 160. Once this is achieved, we will set a criteria. The Welsh	Open	

		used more, as it gives the power to require information from persons or bodies involved in FtP cases.			Government's work on this has stalled due to Covid-19 and is therefore not see as a priority currently.		

Gofal Cymdeithasol Cymru
Social Care Wales

CYFARFOD / MEETING	**Board meeting**				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE		**CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC**		
	☐		☒		
DYDDIAD / DATE	**29.04.21**				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	**7**				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/11	**Draft Business Plan 2021/22**				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Sue Evans, Chief Executive				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:	Leadership team				
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1: Draft Business Plan 2021/22				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES/ BUSINES PLAN ACTIVITY	The Business Plan 2021/22 provides the focus, detail and financial allocations for our work in 2021/22. This is the basis on which we will be reporting on our progress for scrutiny by the Board and Welsh Government on a quarterly basis during the year.				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	**CYMERADWYAETH / APPROVAL**	**DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER**	**DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE**	**TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION**	**CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE**
	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Board are asked to **discuss** and **approve** the draft Business Plan for 2021/22 (subject to any amendments following discussions at the Board).				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED	The impact of Covid required us to re-think our approach for our Business Plan last year. For this year, 2021/22, we have and will continue to constantly review our work to ensure that it is focussed on the areas that remain affected by the pandemic. Due to the current landscape and the constantly changing situation regarding Covid we have set out an ambitious				

MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION; QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	programme of work for delivery in 21/22. This is based on our Remit Letter's strategic objectives and the Grant-in-Aid funding which was received on 25 March 2021 by the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services. Our broad remit ensures that we are able to provide the social care and early years sector with the support it needs to continue to deal with the current situation regarding Covid and the significant guidance and ongoing support the sector will need once the pandemic is over. These difficult times will continue to challenge our social care and early years sector as we move to the next phase towards recovery and sustainability. Therefore, our focus for delivery during 21/22 will be in three areas: 1. Maintaining and adapting our core activities in light of Covid 2. Supporting the recovery of the social care and early years sector 3. Leading on the sustainability of the sector As we continue to respond to the ever-changing situation the Business Plan is a fluid document which will change during the course of the year, subject to external factors such as Senedd elections, Welsh Government directives and/or learning from delivering our work. A final bilingual version of the Business Plan 2021/22 will be submitted to Welsh Government following the election period for formal approval in line with our Model Governance framework.
ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	For specific pieces of work there will be separate impact assessments to support our approach.

Supporting recovery and improvement in social care and early years in Wales: Our Business Plan 2021/22

(cover page to be added)

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Context

Care matters to us all. It touches us all at some point in our lives. It is important that children and adults in communities in every part of Wales can rely on high quality social care and childcare to help them live the lives that matter to them.

A strong social care and early years system in Wales ensures that we are able to reduce the impact of disadvantage through poverty, neglect, illness or disability. These disadvantages often lead to health inequalities and poorer prospects for children reaching their potential or for adults achieving a fulfilled life. Such inequalities have been starkly exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social care workers play a vital role in caring for adults, children, their families and carers in our communities. Social care workers help people 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, which we saw in particular during the pandemic.

The adult social care sectors provide a critical contribution to economic prosperity in Wales. According to 2018 statistics, adult social care contributes £1.2 billion directly to the economy in Wales every year and £2.2 billion overall, when suppliers and their employees are factored in.

Social care for adults and children employs 90,500 people in Wales making it the seventh largest contributor to the Welsh economy. It is made up of a wide range of small, medium and large organisations directly providing work for many, and enabling others to pursue education or work opportunities while their loved ones are supported. The childcare sector also plays a critical role in Wales' economic and social development, employing 17,000 people and generating an estimated £1.2bn in income per year.

The current pandemic has shown, if any further evidence was needed, how crucial the social care and early years workforces are to the well-being of people of all ages in communities across Wales. As these workers have risen to meet the enormous challenges of COVID-19, through their commitment and professionalism, there is a need for us to look at how we can provide support to both sectors in their recovery and sustainability.

The past year has been the most challenging for social care and early years in living memory. The response from our workforce, managers and leaders has been astonishing. We hope that the vaccination programme allows some easing of the health emergency, but we recognise that for social care and early years, many challenges have only just begun. Suppressed demand for services, economic uncertainty and the long-term effects on workforce retention and morale are likely to ask serious questions of our sectors going forward. Supporting recovery from the pandemic is the first and most important foundation of this plan.

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The COVID-19 pandemic has also demonstrated the structural inequalities in our society. Alongside important social movements such as Black Lives Matters, we have seen a fundamental shift in our understanding of how inequality, discrimination and exclusion are in-built into our world. We recognise that this is an unparalleled opportunity to change these realities. But only through action. We can no longer rely on a passive approach to ensuring children and adults are able to live their lives free from discrimination.

Children and adults, their families and carers will continue to rely on the care, kindness and skill of the social care and early years workforce over the challenging period ahead.

At Social Care Wales, we will continue to do all we can for the workforce, their employers, and strategic leaders during this difficult time and help them focus on caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. We are the national leadership organisation in Wales for social care workforce regulation, service improvement, research and data, and workforce development for the social care and early years sector. Everything we do is focused on making a positive difference for high quality care and support in Wales. Our programme of work for 2021/22 will be seen through this lens.

During this year our work will build on our work with the sector and the evidence we have gathered, especially during the pandemic. We will continue to adapt our approach to regulation, focus on workforce well-being, develop the workforce, provide strategic and practical support for those delivering services and build on a stronger role for research and evidence. The provision of social care and early years services will continue to change, due to the impact of COVID-19. We will continue to listen to the workforce, employers and strategic leaders to recognise these challenges and opportunities and what we can do to support the sector to recover and stabilise for the short, medium and longer term.

As a national leadership organisation working with others is how we operate, and partnership will be at the heart of the delivery of this business plan. We want to continue our journey to embed a culture of people and stakeholders being involved across our work. This will include having meaningful conversations with the people affected by our work, finding out what matters to them, and reflecting their views before decisions are reached. We are committed to 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. This approach includes the design, delivery and governance of our work in setting and promoting high standards of practice and training.

These will be difficult times which will continue to challenge our social care and early years sector. We have built up strong partnerships over the last couple of years which helps us to work together with the workforce, for the workforce to deal with this situation together as we move to the next phase towards recovery and sustainability.

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Our work in 2021/22 – 2021 to support recovery and improvement in social care and early years in Wales

Foundation of our work

Our work continues to build on the legislative framework and ethos of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and our Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022. At our core we will continue to:

- set standards for the care and support workforce, making them accountable for their work
- develop the social care and early years workforce so they have the knowledge, skills to protect, empower and support children and adults
- work with others to improve services for areas agreed as a national priority
- set priorities for research get evidence of what works well
- share good practice with the workforce, managers and strategic leaders
- provide information for the public and organisations

Our approach for 2021/22

Due to the current landscape and the constantly changing situation regarding Covid we have set out an ambitious programme of work for delivery in 2021/22. This is based on our Remit Letter's strategic objectives and the Grant-in-Aid funding which was received on 25 March 2021 by the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services.

Our broad remit ensures that we are able to provide the social care and early years sector with the support it needs to continue to deal with the current situation regarding Covid and the significant guidance and ongoing support the sector will need once the pandemic is over. These difficult times will continue to challenge our social care and early years sector as we move to the next phase towards recovery and sustainability. For this year, 2021/22, we have and will continue to constantly review our work to ensure that it is focussed on the areas that remain affected by the pandemic.

Therefore, our focus for delivery during 2021/22 will be in three areas:

1. Maintaining and adapting our core activities in light of Covid
2. Supporting the recovery of the social care and early years sector
3. Leading the sustainability of the sector

We will focus on our ambitions to:

- empower the workforce to achieve the best person centred care
- enhance the provision of services through managers, leaders and owners
- enable strategic leaders with evidence and skills to improve planning, service development and quality

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- ensure continuous improvement of how we do our work to be an effective and efficient Welsh public service organisation

The Business Plan has been structured around our key customers, in order that they are supported to provide the best possible care, what matters to adults, children and their families and carers in our communities and what leaders need to support them in the recovery from Covid and to support the sustainability of the social care and early years workforce for the future.

The following pages provides an overview on what our focus will be in 2021/22. As we continue to respond to the ever-changing situation the Business Plan is a dynamic document which will change during the course of the year, subject to external factors such as Senedd elections, Welsh Government directives and/or learning from delivering our work.

Annex A sets out in more detail our activities. We are held to account and scrutinised on our delivery and progress on these activities by the Board of Social Care Wales and Welsh Government.

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Our plan on a page 2021 – 2022:

	Maintain and adapt our core activities in light of Covid	Support the recovery of the social care and early years sector	Lead sustainability of the sector
Empowering the workforce to achieve the best person-centred care	• Quality practice through professional regulation and CPD support • Maintain an accurate Register and extend registration to new groups • Fitness to practice service and associated hearings support protection of the public • Financial support for training and development	• Promote recognition of the workforce as part of our wider workforce offer • Develop digital learning to support national consistency on standards for safeguarding, dementia, induction, outcomes, infection prevention and control, and supporting digital confidence • Prioritise wellbeing for the workforce during the pandemic, including managing an Employee Assistance Programme for the non-statutory sector	• Support the early years and childcare workforce including future registration options • Support national approaches for workforce wellbeing
Enhancing the provision of services through managers, leaders and owners	• Regulate social work training • Maintain and develop induction, apprenticeships and qualification frameworks • Drive the shift to outcomes focused practice • Share good practice and launch Accolades 2022	• Deliver an attraction, recruitment and retention framework • Invest funding through SCWWDP in workforce development	• Continue to adapt our regulatory framework to ensure it supports improvement across the sector • Scope an employer liaison service • Reform SCWWDP to implement in 2022 • Take forward priority areas of the workforce strategy for the direct care, social work, mental health workforce
Enabling strategic leaders with evidence and skills to improve planning , service development and quality	• With HEIW develop further priority areas of the workforce strategy • Drive and support national priorities with key partners to support care homes, children and young people, community resilience • Provide and enhance our data offer, with improved workforce data collection, to inform the design, development and delivery of services	• Develop approaches to support compassionate leadership • Lead the implementation of the Social Care Research and Development Strategy 2018-23 • Develop the skills, capabilities and connections of those using, delivering and researching care and support	• Develop the social care data portal • Support the use of evidence in strategic planning and service design • Improve how social care data is collected and used
Ensuring continuous improvement of how we do our work to be an effective and efficient Welsh public service organisation	• Ensure continuous improvement on how we work through our people plan, our 3-year ICT strategy and our communication and engagement plan • Ensure effective financial and governance controls, systems and internal controls • Maintain compliance with statutory organisational requirements	• Maintain strong governance, accountability and risk management and effective oversight arrangements	• Publish a new strategic plan • Maximise and implement our digital offer • Support the organisation in the development and sustainability of business operations

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Priority theme 1: for the social care and early years workforce

What is our ambition?

To empower the social care and early years workforce to provide the best possible care for the people, children and families they work with. For the social care and early years workforce this means that we support them to continue to provide and develop person-centred care.

What does this mean for the sector?

Social care and early years workers play a vital role in caring for and supporting adults and children, their families and carers in our communities, including our most vulnerable people. This has only been reinforced by the incredible response of the workforce to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the increase in public recognition of the social care and early years workforce we want to further build on their status and recognition. We will further develop on recent initiatives such as the care worker card to ensure the value we place on our workforce and the offer given to them is maintained and improved in the long term.

Through our work with the workforce, we will maintain our approach to professional registration, based around the standards within the professional code of practice for social care. We will continue our extension of the register to new groups of social care, including adult care home workers. We will work with the early years and childcare sector to consider how that workforce may become professionally registered with us in the future.

We will continue to build the momentum on our development of digital learning and development resources for social care workers and early years workers, to enable continuous learning. Working innovatively and using evidence, we will share practice that the workforce can use to help adults, children and their families to live the lives that matter to them. Crucially, we recognise the wellbeing of our workforce is of vital importance and we will prioritise this as part of our offer to them.

Who will we work with to deliver this ambition?

We will work with current and future registered people; Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW); Unions; Health and Wellbeing COVID-19 network; Universities and learning providers; Health and Social Care Research Wales; Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW), people who access care and support; Early years network, Digital Communities Wales, Welsh Government, National Independent Safeguarding Board

In priority theme 1 we will:

- Continue to **regulate the social care workforce**, using the Code of Professional Practice, practice guidance and a range of resources to assist those working in the sector. We will fulfil our statutory responsibilities and ensure that we maintain an accurate and transparent register of workers for the public and the sector.

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- Continue to **open the registers for adult care home workers and managers** of services beyond those already registered. We will work with Care Inspectorate Wales and the sector to promote registration, requirements and benefits of registration.

- **Review our approach and process for registered people to show their continuing professional development (CPD)** so that it enables registered people to easily access and record CPD for their role, and to engage with their ongoing CPD and the Code in a positive way.

- Deliver our **fitness to practice duties** fairly and efficiently, offering the public reassurance about the registered workforce in a transparent and timely way.

- Continue to research and develop the proposals for **future registration of the early years' workforce**, working with stakeholders across the sector.

- Provide **financial support for training and development** across the sector in Wales. We aim to ensure 100% of eligible social work students will receive a bursary. We will continue to provide advice and guidance on qualification and apprenticeships certification.

- Continue to manage the process for **issuing Apprenticeship Certificates**, through the Apprenticeship Certification Wales (ACW), to help check evidence to make sure it meets the required standards.

- Design and launch a **digital Care Worker Card** to offer recognition to the social care and early years workforce. We will ensure the card is available to all, including early years' workers, with a target of 30,000 active cards during the year. Alongside we will work with commercial and public sector bodies to maximise the benefits available to card holders and promote those benefits across our digital platforms.

- Build on our training and learning remit, focusing on digital transformation to work together with the social care and early years workforce, employers and our partners to understand their needs and to develop digital access and the digital capability of the social care and early years workforce, particularly through the development of training and learning. We will be developing **digital learning resources** during the year to support the workforce on:

    - Developing and reviewing **Safeguarding training standards and materials**
    - Developing and implement a digital **All Wales Induction Framework focusing first on the Principles and Values** module of learning
    - Learning and training resources to **support the workforce who provide care for people with dementia**
    - Training resources and materials to **support the workforce on outcomes focused practice**
    - Developing digital learning modules and resources to support the social care and early years workforce in **using and improving their digital skills**

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    - Working with HEIW to develop **digital training and learning to support the All-Wales Infection Prevention and Control training, learning and development framework.**

- Beyond the immediate challenges of the pandemic, and using a survey of the workforce this spring, **introduce a health and wellbeing framework**. This will take account of other offers including a staff governance framework, approaches to engagement with the social care sector and the delivery of peer networks. This will build upon the proposals within the Workforce Strategy developed in partnership by Social Care Wales and Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW).

- We will continue to manage the **Employee Assistance Programme scheme,** which is available to around 55,000 social care workers in the independent sector. Welsh Government are supporting the scheme, which recognises the personal impact this has had on many workers and will provide more consistent support across the independent sector. This service is in place until November 2021 and options for a continued service are taking place

- Working in partnership with health colleagues, we will respond directly to the experience and lessons of COVID-19 to **prioritise the wellbeing of the social care workforce**. We will continually update online resources for employers and staff, facilitate peer support networks as well as working with the Welsh Government to develop access to other materials at all levels of need. We will continue to review requirements to support the wellbeing of the workforce as we progress and hear from the sector on the impact of COVID-19.

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Priority theme 2: for social care and early years managers, leaders and owners

What is our ambition?

We aim to enhance the provision of quality services for people, children and families by supporting social care and early years managers, organisational service leaders and owners. Our ambition is a compassionate, efficient and effective approach to the delivery of care that focusses on what matters to people, families and carers.

What does this mean for the sector?

The wealth of intelligence generated through developing the health and social care workforce strategy indicated the challenges facing the sector: recovering from the pandemic will only serve to have accentuated and exacerbated these challenges. Strong and robust leadership and management is critical, and we are committed to exploring the actions in the strategy to support operational leaders and managers.

Several key initiatives are underway and the next year will see us building on those, including rolling out an attraction, recruitment and retention framework. This will use the strong foundations and learning from the WeCare Wales campaign, with a focus on strengthening approaches within the sector on values-based recruitment and a national programme of rapid recruitment. Significant work has been undertaken in the last couple of years around working in collaboration to develop a fit-for-purpose suite of qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks. We will continue to help the sector with implementing the qualifications at all levels including induction and assessment.

The Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP) provides investment in the development of the workforce and we will undertake a full review to ensure that value is maximised and targeted to current and future needs. In partnership with the sector, we will develop workforce plans for the direct care workforce, mental health workforce and social work.

We recognise the role that regulation plays in the social care sector now and in the future as we further extend the register over the next two years. We will review our regulatory approach so that we are continually improving the experience and benefits that registration offers.

The pandemic has reaffirmed the central role of employers and managers in the development of our workforce. We will therefore scope an ‘Employer Liaison Service’ which will seek to reflect what the sector expects of us, exploring how to strengthen our partnerships with those managing front line services. This may range from simple administrative queries on registration through to tailored support for improving services to those receiving care.

Who will we work with to deliver this ambition?

Key partners we will work with to deliver our work with this year include social care and early years employers, Registered Managers, Care Inspectorate Wales, ADSS Cymru, Responsible Individuals and their networks, other regulatory organisations

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across Wales and the UK, National Provider Forum, SCWWDP regional partnerships, learning providers, Early years managers, Trade Unions, Welsh Government, Careers Wales.

In priority theme 2 we will:

- **Review and improve how we regulate to support the sector**. We will learn from the recommendations following our Fitness to Practise review to provide additional support and guidance to people involved in the process. We will review all of our regulation activities in light of the supportive changes made during COVID-19 and, where appropriate, we will seek to amend our rules to allow the sector to operate as speedily and effectively as possible.

- Continue to **regulate social work training in Wales**, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. We will work flexibly with Higher Education to ensure the continued availability of high-quality social work graduates for Wales. We will respond to the impact of COVID-19 on current students, and any impact that the pandemic may have on future recruitment onto courses.

- Continue our significant role providing expert advice and developing **qualification and apprenticeship frameworks across the sector**. We will update the qualifications frameworks for both social care and early years and work with key partners in adapting qualification delivery. By the end of 2022 we will have finalised the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) framework, agreed a delivery model for Social Services Practitioners and published the evaluation report on the joint pilot of the All-Wales Induction Framework (AWIF). These frameworks provide the foundation of the skilled workforce that has met the challenge of the pandemic, and we will continue to promote them and their associated resources throughout the year.

- Develop and implement **induction frameworks for social care managers and early years managers**. These will include the knowledge, understanding and practice which should be demonstrated over time, by managers. We will develop guidance, progress logs, workbooks, resources and a glossary to help managers in implementing these Induction Frameworks.

- We will deliver on **an attraction, recruitment, retention framework for social care, early years and childcare**. The framework will focus on values-based practice, a national rapid recruitment programme, build on the successful WeCare Wales campaign and WeCare Wales ambassadors. The aim is to support consistency to the work carried out across Wales in regard to attracting recruiting and retaining the workforce. It will also support the sector in thinking collectively what the priority areas of focus are and the best way of delivering (i.e., locally, regionally or nationally). Through collating key activity, the framework will help clarify which partners are required in the development and the delivery of the elements within.

- Develop options for the development of an **Employer Liaison Service.** Employers are fundamental to a successful workforce, particularly as the sector will continue to recover following COVID-19. We will work with employers to

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understand their expectations of the services we need to deliver to support them as employers and their workforce - including worker registration, learning from regulatory cases, identifying pressures and priorities, working in collaboration and helping shape improvement. Following engagement during the spring and autumn, a fully costed and scoped model will be developed during the financial year.

- Drive the **strategic prioritisation of embedding outcome-focused, strengths-based practice** in social care with a range of activities including peer learning networks, training, resources and a national learning event at the end of the year to share outcomes focused approaches in adult services. We will support a cultural shift across health and social care by piloting a strategic programme in balancing rights and responsibilities, which will be tested and evaluated with multidisciplinary team/s. We will evaluate and learn from this programme to consider how the offer could be delivered in other areas of Wales.

- Continue to provide significant funds to the sector for training and development, through management and administration of the **Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP),** ensuring it can respond to the changing needs of the sector during the year and beyond. Six monthly and year end reports will be produced to ensure money is used to respond positively to the opportunities and challenges for the sector during and beyond COVID-19.

- **Review the SCWWDP grant funding**, including the regional facilitation grant, in line with the findings and recommendations of the workforce strategy, intelligence from Covid and lessons learnt. We have significant experience and expertise in working in partnership to develop solutions and already have strong connection and networks established with all regions and individual LA training managers. This will provide a sustainable structure and longevity for the grant so that the future design and delivery meets the needs of the sector.

- Learning from COVID-19 and recognising the changed context it has meant for the sector, we will **prioritise high-impact elements of the sector's Workforce Strategy**, developed jointly with HEIW. We will deliver:

    - A fully costed workforce plan for the direct care workforce by March
    - A fully costed workforce plan for the mental health workforce in conjunction with health colleagues, by March
    - A fully costed workforce plan for the social work profession by December, alongside a revised post-qualification framework

- Develop a workforce plan including the development of a learning and development framework to support the implementation of the new Liberty Protection Standards that will replace the existing Deprivation of Liberty Standards in April 2022. The impact on the costs associated in taking forward a learning and development framework will be discussed with Welsh Government in terms of our role and funding as this is currently outside out our current financial allocations for 2021/22.

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- Continue to promote good practice across the sector through the winners of the 2020 National Accolades and **launch the 2022 National Accolades** at the National Social Care Conference in September.

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Priority theme 3: for strategic leaders and stakeholders

What is our ambition?

Our ambition is that strategic leaders can access the data, evidence and skills to enable the transformation of social care. As the lead agency in Wales for social care workforce regulation, service improvement, research and data, and workforce development we are uniquely placed to bring together and provide the intelligence and evidence to support strategic transformation of services.

What does this mean for the sector?

The ambition of the workforce strategy is to make sure that, by 2030, we have the right number of engaged, motivated and valued people, including volunteers and carers, able to deliver flexible and responsive health and social care that meets the needs of the people of Wales. Among the issues that mattered most to the leaders is to have a well-aligned seamless service between health and social care. During the year we will continue to work in partnership across the social care and health system to outline what is needed, outside of what has already begun, if we want this ambition to be realised.

Key to delivering sustained improvement and change is effective and collective strategic leadership across the statutory, independent and voluntary sectors in Wales. We will work across Wales to support transformation, often acting as a critical, but supportive, friend to those responsible for strategic decisions. We will work to provide good evidence to underpin change. This evidence will be from formal research, data and intelligence, as well as from the wisdom and experiences of the workforce, people, children and their families who use social care services. It will also include the data that we hold, from our Register, to support improvement across the services that children and adults receive in Wales.

The priorities from our shared Social Care Research and Development Strategy gives us a unique opportunity for transformational change in how we collect, manage, store, analyse and use social care data, as well as information from other sources such as health, to achieve this. Better use of data will help us provide higher quality, dignified care and support for the people of Wales. All around us, a new information revolution is underway. Driven by advances in technology, the volume of available data is growing fast. The COVID-19 public health crisis has shone a light on the importance of public data and official statistics and the role they play in helping us understand the world. In Wales we have a chance to demonstrate what a data-rich nation can achieve for its citizens, with social care playing a critical role.

Our key programmes link directly to the front line of services and are underpinned by the need to see people and communities retained at the heart of all planning and care arrangements. We will continue work on the development and wellbeing of children and young people, people in care homes and embedding community resilience during the recovery stages of COVID-19.

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Who will we work with to deliver this ambition?

Key collaborators for this plan are: HEIW, Welsh Government, employers, ADSS Cymru, WCVA, Care Forum, Workforce Managers, Wales Centre for Public Policy, Public Health Wales, Wales Centre for Social Care Research, Improvement Cymru, CIW, local authorities, independent and third sector, providers, policymakers and researchers, Health Technology Wales, the Life Sciences Hub, Regional Partnership Boards, Audit Wales.

In priority theme 3 we will:

- Work in partnership with HEIW to **develop implementation plans for to support the strategic direction of the joint health and social care workforce strategy**. By the end of the year there will be clear delivery plans costed and developed, following engagement with the sector which will set out an overall direction of travel for the workforce strategy.

- Work with Care Inspectorate Wales and Improvement Cymru to scope work needed for **care homes** in the immediate and longer-term future as part supporting the recovery of the sector.

- Support the social care sector by providing essential resources to meet the needs of the sector and to support them in practicing **compassionate leadership** in their response to the crisis through learning, national programmes, peer network support and the development of a 'Framework for Action for Leadership in Social Care'

- Take forward the learning from the impact evaluation of our Care and Support at Home partnership to outline options on how we can further work in collaboration. With a particular focus on **community resilience** looking at specific projects across Wales to generate evidence and share learning.

- Support and enable strategic leaders in discussions regarding future proposals of an all-Wales approach to **improving outcomes for children and young people**. Providing learning and evidence to influence future planning to improve outcomes.

- Oversee and enable the implementation of the **Social Care Research and Development Strategy 2018-23** with stakeholders. Providing the strategic direction, frameworks and approaches for the new data and evidence offers.

- Develop the **skills, capabilities and connections of those using, delivering and researching care and support in Wales**, to access and make use of high-quality evidence and knowledge. We will set out our evidence offer with a clear programme of how we will support the increase of capacity required to support the Research Strategy.

- Develop and launch a refreshed **data portal and projections platform** enabling improved access to data and insights which will enable local authorities and Regional Partnership Boards to understand their local population needs.

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- **Publish a data strategy road map** setting out milestones and actions to support the vision from the Statement of Strategic Intent which sets out the new vision to improve how social care data is collected and used to benefit people needing care and support in Wales.

- Build on our **workforce data collection system and the workforce data** we publish to improve how we collect, share and visualise the data received from Local Authorities.

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Priority theme 4: Our organisation

What is our ambition?

We will be an effective Welsh public service organisation. We're committed to:

- being a truly bilingual organisation
- valuing diversity and improving opportunity for all
- involving the people of Wales in how we work
- listening and responding to feedback
- setting high standards of customer service
- publishing and accessing information
- improving our own performance.

What does this mean for the sector?

To be an effective organisation, we must understand and help to meet the challenges and opportunities faced by the people who work in the social care and early years sectors. As we begin to emerge from the biggest public health emergency of recent years, we recognise that our offer to our customers must change. We will work with our customers to make sure our services meet our customers' changing needs. We will use feedback to challenge and shape our business, projects and strategies.

Our digital services and way of working will make it easy for people to interact with us. We will link in with national and governmental led digital standards. This work will deliver to our customers new ways of learning, sharing, and contributing.

During the year we will continue to develop our 5-year plan to make sure it is clear to people inside and outside of the organisation what we want to achieve and how we will do it. We will make sure we have the right information to help us assess how well we are doing in delivering these plans. As a Welsh public sector organisation, we recognise the importance of services that are well-governed and effectively monitored.

We will create an environment where our people feel supported. Our staff will have space to try out new ideas that speak to our values. Staff will feel comfortable to challenge the status quo and not do things because ‘that is the way we have always’ done things. Our culture will be seen in everything that we do. We will empower our people to thrive at work, retaining and building a talented workforce to meet our business needs.

Who will we work with to deliver this ambition?

Welsh Government, the workforce, managers, leaders, owners, strategic leaders and stakeholders, Trade Unions, Wales Co-operative Centre, Digital Communities Wales, CIW, Government Digital Service, Digital and Innovation for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies, UK Healthcare Regulators, Academi Wales

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In priority theme 4 we will:

- Continue to refine and deliver our **communication and engagement strategy** reflecting the lessons and impact of COVID-19 and supporting the achievement of business plan commitments.

- Continue to revise and **implement our ICT strategy**, reflecting the impact of COVID-19 and new ways of working. We will continue to make sure that our information technology remains effective in supporting our people to do their jobs.

- Continue to **implement key priorities of our People Plan**. We will also embed the requirements of the Welsh Government's Race Equality Action plan into our people policies, including the disability confident scheme. We will continue to support our colleagues through the challenges of Covid and beyond in terms of business delivery, well-being and regular communications.

- Ensure **effective financial and governance controls and systems**. We will lay our accounts by August, aim to have 80% of internal audit achieve substantial rating and a 2% cash balance achieved at the end of the financial year, with a 4% balance monthly.

- Ensure strong governance and accountability arrangements through the **effective management of the Board and Committees**. This will mean Board and Committees are making all the decisions as delegated to them, Board members continue their development using scheduled board development sessions and 100% of meetings held in line with Standing Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation. We will be recruiting new Board Members during the year. We will be working with the Public Bodies Unit in Welsh Government to promote and increase the diversity of our Board Membership.

- Maintain **organisational compliance with statutory organisational requirements** so that no compliance notices are received from relevant compliance regulators

- Publish our **annual business plan** in May. This will show what we are doing during the year to meet the requirements set out by Welsh Government Ministers through our annual Remit Letter. We will continue to develop our **5-year strategic plan** and publish our **Strategic Equalities plan**.

- Take forward a **transformation programme of our digital services**. Using external expertise, and in partnership with others, we will work at pace to deliver our services externally and internally digitally. We will research the digital competency and capability of our audiences and develop solutions that meet their needs.

- Work to **maintain continuity of our business operations,** helping and supporting the wellbeing of colleagues to work from home, capturing the learning to inform and set out our future way of working.

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How we work

Our Values

It is important that, as a public leadership organisation, we demonstrate our values in the way we work with people to realise our vision.

Respect everyone: we see people as individuals and treat everyone with dignity and respect
Professional approach: we act responsibly and in the right way, holding each other to account
Always learning: we believe in improving ourselves and supporting others to be the best that they can be
Involve people: we encourage and enable everyone to work together

Given the situation we all find ourselves in, our focus is to help frontline workers; managers, owners and strategic leaders to focus on supporting the recovery of the sector.

Our principles on how we work remain, but our approaches continue to be adapted to reflect and respond to the ever-changing context, listening and responding to feedback:

Our corporate governance arrangements

"Governance comprises the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved"[1]

We have a Board of Members comprising of people from interests across the social care and wider Welsh population. Members are appointed by the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services. As at 1 April 2021 we have 14 Board Members with Mick Giannasi, a layperson, as the Chair. The Social Care Board Members are:

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

Further information on the background of Board Members can be found on these pages of our website: https://socialcare.wales/our-board-members along with how the Board works: https://socialcare.wales/about-us/our-board

The Board sets direction and scrutinises the delivery of the organisation to make sure that we are achieving our strategic direction in providing the social care and early years sector with the support it needs to continue to deal with the current situation regarding COVID-19 and the significant guidance and ongoing support the sectors will need once the pandemic is over. The Board meets in public, at least every quarter, to make sure that there is a transparency about our governance and that people are at the heart of the decision-making process.

We have effective arrangements in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control. We have an Audit and Risk Committee which advises the Board and the Accounting Officer on the strategic processes for risk, internal control and governance, and the Statutory Annual Accounts including the Governance Statement. As part of our internal controls to underpin effective corporate governance, we have a strategic risk register which we review and update regularly during the year.

As a Welsh Government Sponsored Body, we work in line with our Model Governance Framework, Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders. During the year we will continue to improve on our governance arrangements to reflect the work of the organisation in supporting the sector. We will continue to work within governance frameworks, working in partnership with other public bodies and continue benchmarking our performance against other relevant organisations. During the year, with Welsh Government's Public Bodies Unit, we will be recruiting new Board Members to increase diversity on the Board to a wider audience, specifically with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

[1] [1] 'International framework: good governance in the public sector', Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the International Federation of Accountants, July 2014

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Our financial allocations 2021-22

Our Remit Letter and Grant In Aid

In the planning period leading up to the establishment of Social Care Wales estimates for extending the reach of registration across the social care workforce were made. These additional costs were estimated assuming significant efficiencies, when compared to other UK regulators, to be in the order of £2.6 million per annum over the first four years.

Since 2017 the registered workforce has grown from approximately 11,000 to 30,000 as at March 2021 (increase of 173%) and is planned to expand to 51,000 (increase of 363%) by October 2022. The widening of the scope of our remit activities was not subject to any costings at this time. The Grant In Aid received by Social Care Wales in 2019/20 was £19.398 million. This was increased in 2020/21 by £1.2 million to £21.598 million in recognition of the requirements to support the extension of the register for domiciliary care workers.

In June 2020 we shared our strategic ambitions with Welsh Government. This included a request for additional funding to support the continued growth of the regulatory function and to deliver activities to support the sector to recover from COVID-19 and Ministerial priorities.

Our Remit Letter for 2021/22 emphasises us as ‘the lead agency in Wales for social care workforce regulation, service improvement, research and data, and workforce development’. It outlines our key strategic objectives for the year and will require us to commit all of the resources at our disposal. This was supported by the Welsh Government Budget which stated that “We will invest an additional £2m in Social Care Wales which will continue the expansion of the professional registration of the social care workforce and provide ongoing support for the stabilisation and recovery of the sector through delivery of the Workforce Strategy”.

Our future ability to meet Ministerial priorities are dependent upon the maintenance of this increased funding baseline, alongside further growth to support the extension of the register.

Based on our Remit Letter 2021/22 the chart below shows our financial expenditure allocations for 2021-22 on a continuing basis.

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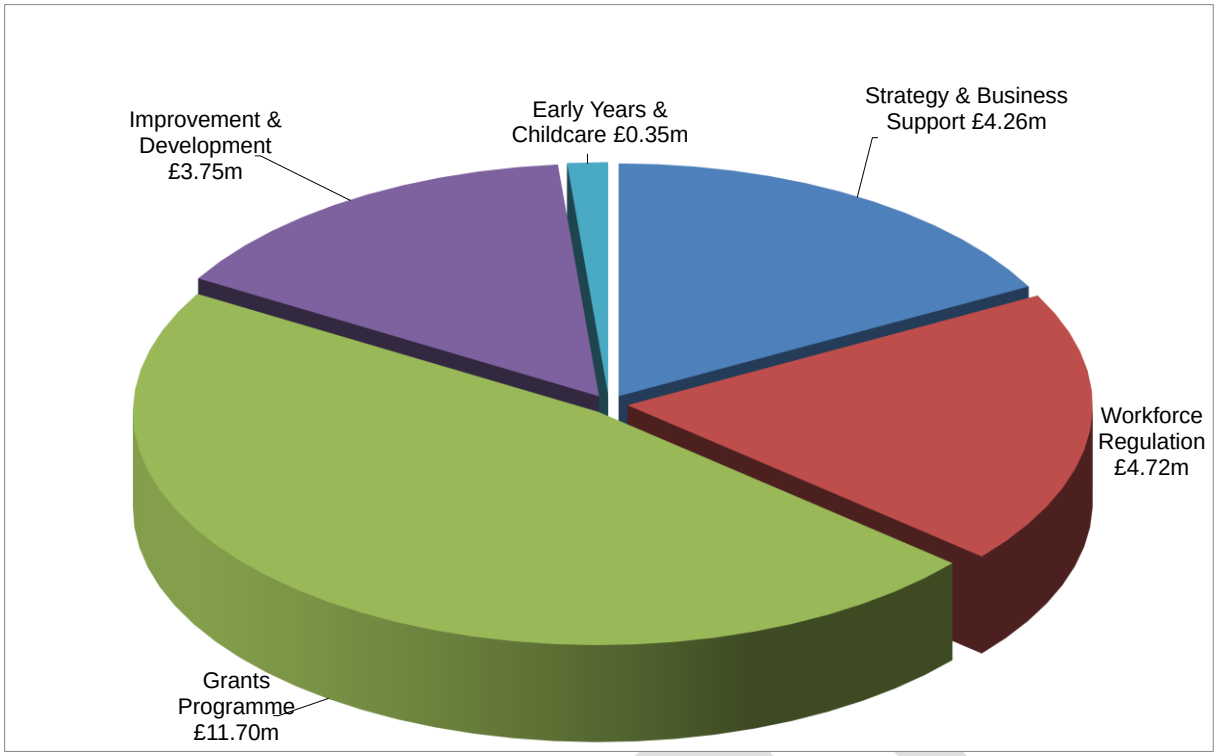

The total spend of £24.78m in 2021/22 is based on the following income budget allocations:

- Grant in Aid consisting of £22.50m with an additional £0.35m in relation to Early Years and Childcare leading to total Grant in Aid funding to be received of £22.85m
- An additional £0.06m to be received from Welsh Government in relation to Workforce Strategy Mental Health work
- Included in revenue is also an internal carry forward of £0.41m reflecting the underspend in 20/21
- Budgeted income from registrants of £1.4m reflecting new fee levels for 21/22. With the deadline for the registration of adult care home workers now extended to 30 September 2022 the budget is based on income from only a further thousand adult care home workers registering before 31 March 2022
- £0.06m in relation to Apprenticeship Certification Income

Analysis of this high-level expenditure budget forecast totalling £24.78m is as follows:

- Grants programme of £11.70m which includes £7.15m for the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP), £3.64m for other Social Care Workforce National Training Programmes including Social Work Bursaries and Practice Placement funding and includes £0.78m of grants for our regional facilitation work with the sector.

- Workforce regulation budget of £4.72m representing the salary costs of £3.07m in respect of the regulation directorate, its direct running costs totalling £1.26m and costs of £0.39m in relation to project work. A significant proportion of the

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running costs will be for costs associated with our fitness to practise and hearings panel functions. The total budget has increased by £1.29m in comparison to 2020-21 reflecting primarily increased staffing and hearings costs due to the increase of numbers on the register.

- Improvement and development budget of £3.75m which includes salary costs of £2.52m with the majority of the balance of the budget funding our project and commissioned work intended to support best practise and knowledge within the sector. The budget also includes the costs of running the data and research functions.

- Strategy and business support budget of £4.26m which represents premises and office facilities costs, all costs of running our support functions and all Board costs. The salary cost included in this budget is £2.46m with the premises and office budget being a cost of £0.64m.

- The Early years and childcare costs are Salaries costs of £0.25m but includes £0.1m for project and engagement work.

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Business Plan 2021/22 activities in detail

(This part of the plan remains open to ongoing refinement as discussions with partners continues)

Priority theme 1: for the social care and early years workforce

What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
Maintain an accurate Register of social care workers	1) 90% of applications processed within 5 days; 2) Number of outstanding applications - less than 600 open applications at any one time	Reported quarterly	Registered workforce and their employers, Welsh Government, Care Inspectorate Wales
Extend the Register to adult care home workers and other managers groups	1) Numbers of the new groups on the Register 2) Employer engagement and feedback	Reported quarterly	Social care workforce and their employers, Welsh Government, Care Inspectorate Wales
Implement a revised CPD offer for registered people	Revised approach to CPD scoped, phased and tested. Resources developed for the workforce, employers and managers about the importance of CPD and the Code and their role in supporting ongoing learning in line with the Employer's Code	March 2022	IT providers, BASW, CFW, ADSS Cymru, Universities, Registered Persons, Trade Unions, Other Health and Social Care regulators.
Undertake investigations of allegations against social care registered professionals	1. Number of fitness to practise cases open; 2. Number of active cases open longer than 18 months less than 10%;	On-going and progress will be reported quarterly	Employers, Police, HEIs, CIW, Local Authority Safeguarding, NISCC, NMC, DBS, SSCC, Social Work England
Panel hearings held in accordance with the Rules	1. 100% of hearings held in accordance with the Rules; 2. number of appeals lodged to CST and % upheld	On-going and progress will be reported quarterly	Welsh Government, Panel members, unions, our legal advisers, registered persons/applicants
Support the early years and childcare workforce including future registration options	1) Recommendations on the extension of the Social Care wales register to include Early Years and Childcare workers submitted to Welsh Government	March 2022	Welsh Government, CIW, CWLWM, Local Authorities, Responsible Individuals/Managers of settings

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What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
Provide financial support for social work students (bursaries)	100% of eligible students receive a bursary with a placement provided	Reported quarterly	HEI programmes; Local Authorities; Students
Manage the process for issuing Apprenticeship Certificates through the Apprenticeship Certification Wales (ACW)		Reported quarterly	Apprenticeship Certification Wales, Learning providers, learners
Provide recognition for the workforce through a Care Worker Card	1. New digital card launched 2. Feedback from users on benefits 3. Review, scope and implement requirements for 22/23 card	1. April 2021 2. September 2021 3. In place for 22/23	Welsh Government, CIW, employers, providers of benefits and suppliers of other potential solutions
Develop and review Safeguarding training standards and materials	1. Prototype digital Safeguarding training 2. Work with the national, multi-agency group on developing a set of nationally agreed standards for Safeguarding training (for completion in 2022). 3. Scope options on accreditation of the All-Wales Basic Safeguarding Awareness Pack 4. Review and update our existing on-line Safeguarding materials 5. Safeguarding standards consultation published	1. June 2021 2. meeting monthly 3. July 2021 4. 4. Reported quarterly 5. March 2022	National Independent Safeguarding Board, Welsh Government, Regional Safeguarding Boards
Develop and implement a digital all Wales Induction Framework for the social care and EYCC workforce	1. Principles and values modules for social care 2. P and V and safeguarding EYCC	1. October 2021 2. March 2022	
Develop learning and training in dementia care	1. Digital dementia reablement resource, with HEIW, launched 2. Good Work conference in partnership with WSSCR 3. Support package to help with self-assessment and gaps in knowledge developed (linked to the Good Work	1. TBC 2. September 3. December	Dementia Learning and Development (DLDG), Welsh Government Dementia Oversight or Implementation and Impact Group (DOIIG), Welsh Government, Improvement Cymru, Alzheimer's Society

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What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
	Learning and Development Framework for Dementia) 4. Review and update our existing on-line dementia materials and resources	 4. March 2022	
Develop training resources and materials to support the workforce in embedding outcomes focused practice (See other activities in other audiences for the remaining outcomes work)	1. Case recording guidance launched 2. outcomes focused case recording launched resources development to support workforce engagement with people with cognitive impairment 3. develop an e-learning module to support outcomes focused practice 4. co-ordinate a national learning event to share outcomes focused approach in adult services	September December TBC March 2022	CIW, WCCIS, Welsh Government, Local Authorities, Children's and Adults service providers, CAFCASS
Develop digital learning modules and resources to support the social care and early years workforce in using and improving their digital skills	1. With Digital Communities Wales (DCW) access to their "lending library" promoted to the EYCC sector 2. With DCW develop digital induction modules for the social care workforce 3. Implement a learning experience system which meets users and business needs	TBC	Digital Communities Wales, training managers, early years network
Develop digital training and learning to support Levels 1 – 3 of the 'All Wales Infection Prevention and Control Training, Learning and Development Framework'	Framework published and resources promoted	TBC	HEIW,
Introduce a health and wellbeing framework in line with the learning of the workforce strategy	1. Expectations of the sector as to the contents of a health and wellbeing framework scoped 2. A health and well-being survey completed 3. Development and testing of a staff governance framework developed and tested 4. Recommendations as to the future work programme based on the findings of the	1. July 2021 2. June 2021 3. July 2021 4. August 2021	Welsh Government Employer representatives e.g., ADSS Cymru, Care Forum, UKHCA, and other key partners such as CIW, HEIW

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What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
	scoping exercise and health and well-being survey		
Manage the Employee Assistance Programme for social care workers in the independent sector	Monitoring and reporting of uptake of the service	Reported quarterly up to December	Welsh Government, ADSS Cymru, Care Providers, Care Forum Wales, UKHCA, Unions
In partnership with health, support national approaches and response to Workforce Wellbeing	1. Continued delivery of facilitated peer support networks 2. web-based resources updated 3. With sector partners, and the national Wellbeing Network, guidance developed on feedback from sector		ADSS Cymru, Care Forum, UKHCA, CIW, HEIW, Welsh Government

Draft

Priority theme 2: for social care and early years managers, leaders and owners

What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
Review and improve how we regulate	1. An analysis of our metrics from pre RISCA implementation up until the start of this reform process. This report will serve as a baseline to measure the impact of our reforms 2. Implementation of recommendations following Fitness to Practice review 3. Guidance issued to support registered workers 4. Review of system of allocation of SW places to HEIs 5. Study of impact of Covid on current group of Social Work students	March 2022	Welsh Government, UK regulatory organisations, regulation stakeholder group, HEIs, Employers, Registered People, Lawyers, other Regulators, Unions, representative organisations such as Care Forum Wales
Regulate social work training	1. Completion of 2020/21 annual monitoring. 2. Annual Report on QA activity for this period 3. Agree QA approach for 21/22 and communicate it to programme partnerships	Reported quarterly	HEI programme partnerships
Maintain and develop qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks for the social care and early years sector	1. Best practice networks and masterclasses held for social care and early years 2. Best practice guide published 3. Work with key partners on adapting qualification delivery 4. Qualifications framework updated with new early years and childcare qualifications 5. Relevant networks supported for maintenance of the Apprenticeship frameworks 6. Social Services Practitioner delivery model for qualification developed	1. Reported quarterly 2. June 3. Reported quarterly 4. September 5. Reported quarterly 6. March 2022	Qualifications Wales, HEIW, Consortium, Employers; learning providers, schools, C&G/WJEC, LA training managers, service regulators. Hywel Dda University Health Board, Careers Wales, Regional Partnerships, Director of Nursing, Director of Pembrokeshire Social Services.

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	7. IAA competency framework finalised 8. IAA resource published 9. Publish SCIE evaluation report on the Hywel Dda pilot on the joint induction framework	7. March 2022 8. May 9. September	
Develop and implement induction frameworks and guidance for: • Social care managers • Early years managers	1. Social Care Manager induction framework launched 2. Review and update on-line guidance and resources for social care managers 3. First Steps in Management resource launched 4. Effective supervision launched 5. Early years managers induction framework launched 6. Supervising well and inducting well resources guidance published	1. September 2. TBC 3. May 4. May 5. March 2022 6. TBC	Employers, Early years networks, managers, AWIF Advisory Group. AWIF EYCC network, PETC network, CWLWM partners, National SSP/IAA Partnership Group
Develop work placement opportunities and guidance for social care and early years	TBC	TBC	TBC
Development of a volunteer framework for health and social care with WCVA	TBC	TBC	TBC
Deliver on an attraction, recruitment, retention framework for social care, early years and childcare	1. Programme of activities and resources rolled out on key elements of values-based recruitment 2. Roll out rapid recruitment programme across Wales 3. Care ambassadors promoted, recruited and supported 4. National attraction, recruitment and retention campaign run continuously for social care and early years throughout the	1. September – December 2. TBC 3. Progress reported quarterly 4. Campaign statistics reported quarterly	Stakeholder Advisory Group, Regional Career Connectors, Careers Wales

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	year – including launch of jobs portal, 5 TV adverts		
Introduction to Social Care (linked to the rapid recruitment programme)	TBC	TBC	TBC
Scope an Employer liaison service	Fully costed and scoped Employer Liaison Service including • Engagement with sector and intelligence gathering • Scoping of model including financial modelling	March 2022 July - September 2021 September 2021 - December	Welsh Government, CIW Employers including recruitment agencies
Support those who lead and manage on outcome focused social care practice	1. All Wales Network of Mentors (outcomes focussed practice) developed to meet virtually to discuss and share practice. 2. Outcomes focused training offer to local authorities provided. 3. Resources developed for homecare providers and launched 4. Shared training programme across Aneurin Bevan social care and health – 'Balancing rights and responsibilities – supporting a cultural shift'. 5. Financial feasibility of running second pilot site considered	1. Quarterly 2. On-going 3. September 4. March – October 5. July	Local Authorities, ASC Ltd, Care and Support at home steering group. Providers, workforce leads, HEIW, NHS Delivery Unit, Improvement Cymru, Health board
Manage and administer the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme (SCWWDP) Grant for 2021/22 SCWWDP grant and Regional Facilitation Grant	1. End of Year report 2. Mid-Year report	1. August 2022 2. November 2021	ADSS Cymru, Workforce Manager network

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Review the SCWWDP grant, including the additional funding provided for the regional facilitation grant, to align with the joint health and social care workforce strategy	1. Scope design principles to redefine the delivery of the grant 2. Hold engagement events to test and further develop design principles and explore solutions to final alignment to the workforce strategy and other key initiatives 3. Develop draft grant circular based on the findings of the engagement events 4. Endorsement from stakeholder group	October 2021 for board approval December 2021 for issue to the sector	ADSS Cymru, Local Authority Training Managers network, Workforce Manager network
Develop a workforce plan for the direct care workforce in line with themes of the workforce strategy	1. Workforce plan template developed to populate 2. Existing programmes/projects scoped on how they contribute to proposed workforce plan 3. 3 engagement events held to present finding of scoping and provide recommendations for additional programmes/projects to support workforce plan 4. Fully costed workforce plan developed	March 2022	ADSS Cymru and associated Local Authority structures, Care Providers, Care Providers member groups, Unions, Workforce managers, Learning providers
With HEIW, develop a workforce plan for the mental health workforce in line with themes of the draft workforce strategy	1. Governance group established across the two organisations 2. Workforce plan template developed to populate 3. Existing programmes/projects scoped on how they contribute to proposed workforce plan 4. Engagement events held to present finding of scoping and provide recommendations for additional programmes/projects to support workforce plan 5. Fully costed workforce plan	March 2022	HEIW, Welsh Government, ADSS Cymru, Local Authority Social Service Departments, Workforce Manager network

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Develop a workforce plan to support the implementation oof the new Liberty Protection Safeguards	1. Baseline profile for the Mental Capacity Act/Best Interest Assessor capacity and training needs undertaken 2. Workforce plan to support implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards developed (LPS) 3. Learning and development framework for the implementation of the LPS developed	1. April 2021 2. September 2021 3. September 2021	HEIW, Health Boards Welsh Government, ADSS Cymru, Local Authority Social Service Departments, Workforce Manager network
Develop a workforce plan for the Social Work workforce in line with themes of the draft workforce strategy	1. Engagement with sector in draft plan held 2. Post-qualifying framework drafted for engagement with Social Workers 3. Community of Practice for Practice Educators established to help share good practice 4. On-line guidance and resources for social workers reviewed and updated	1. May – September 2. May – September 3. Quarterly 4. TBC	ADSS Cymru, BASW, Local Authority Workforce Managers, Health, Voluntary sector providers of social work, Recruitment Agencies, Unions
Share good practice of the 2020 Accolades finalists and launch 2022 National Accolades	1. Specific project from the finalists identified and run as a pilot on how we shared good practice from Accolades finalists 2. Materials, guidance and process agreed for 2022 Accolades 3. 2022 Accolades launched at the National Social Care Conference 4. 2022 Accolades promoted 5. Good practice from the 2020 finalists shared and promoted	1. June 2. August 3. September 4. September - December 5. Reported quarterly	Welsh Government, Local Authorities, Independent and third sector employers, CIW, HEIW, Improvement Cymru, Early years networks
Supporting the sector to work bilingually	TBC	TBC	TBC

Draft

Priority theme 3: for strategic leaders and stakeholders

What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
With HEIW develop longer term plans to support implementation of the workforce strategy	1. Governance arrangements agreed on programme of work 2. Engagement with sector to inform detail implementation plans held 3. Implementation plans costed and approved 4. Delivery plans developed for 22/23	1. June 2. December 3. March 4. March	Social Care Wales and HEIW governance group, Welsh Government, sector leaders, employers, ADSS Cymru
Work with CIW and Improvement Cymru to scope work needed to support care homes (including residential learning disability services) in the immediate and longer-term future	1. Detailed work plans drawn up in partnership with other key partners 2. Proposals developed on how the work is prioritised and resourced 3. Guidance updated and issued to support care homes settings) (as an example Guidance for visitors, Restrictive practice guidance)	1. September 2. December 3. Ongoing – reported quarterly	CIW, Public Health Wales, HEIW, Learning Disability Advisory Group, Welsh Government
Develop resources to support the sector in practicing compassionate leadership	1. Online content, learning and engagement developed to 'spotlight' individual principles and themes 2. 'Framework for Action for Leadership in Social Care' developed 3. National programme framework for leadership delivered (Directors, ADs. Middle and Team Manager) 4. Data from Fitness to Practice and research used to identify learning 5. Peer network support for leadership delivered	1. On-going and reported quarterly 2. On-going and reported quarterly 3. On-going and reported quarterly 4. From September 5. On-going and reported quarterly	ADSS Cymru, HEIW WCVA, Care Forum, Workforce Managers, IPC Oxford Brookes

Draft

What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
Work with key partners to support community resilience	1. Care and support at home partnership reconvened with set of priority focus 2. Resourceful Communities Partnership supported 3. Community resilience report published 4. Framework for change applied through local deep-dive action projects in 2 or 3 locations across Wales profiles, to generate evidence, refine the framework and share learning around successes and barriers 5. Webinar events held to share learning 6. Multi-sector relationships further developed to support joint and aligned working	1. September 2. Ongoing and reported quarterly 3. June 4. December 5. December 6. Ongoing and reported quarterly	Care and support at home partnership group, Wales Centre for Public Policy, primary care, Public Health Wales, Wales Centre for Social Care Research, Wales Centre for Social Prescribing Research, WCVA, Improvement Cymru
Support the development of a future all-Wales approach to improving outcomes for children and young people	1. Effective cross-sector engagement with key stakeholders measured through engagement and feedback 2. Learning and evidence provided to influence future planning 3. Involved in developing a long-term plan for improving outcomes for children and young people	Reported quarterly	Welsh Government, ADSS Cymru, CIW, WLGA
Implementation of the Social Care Research and Development Strategy 2018-23	1. Research support and engagement framework launched 2. Evaluation process for the data and evidence offers designed 3. Innovation approach developed with social care 4. Social Care Research and Development Strategy and Evidence for Improvement revised and approved	1. June 2. September 3. December 4. March	Strategic Implementation Group, Social Care Subgroup of the NDR Programme Board, local authorities, third sector, providers, policymakers and researchers, Health Technology Wales, Supporting Adult Social Care Innovation project, the Life Sciences Hub, Regional Innovation and Improvement Coordination Hubs

Draft

What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
Develop the skills, capabilities and connections of those using, delivering and researching care and support in Wales	1. Digital and communications strategy and approach for evidence offer launched 2. Refreshed programme of work for Focus Area 4 of the Research Strategy designed 3. 4 events held for Research into Policy/Practice 4. External capacity building approach (to include DEEP curriculum) designed 5. Evidence for Improvement Draft Strategy approved 6. Evidence Allies Network launched 7. Research Support Network launched 8. Evidence Synthesis offer launched	1. June 2. June 3. Reported quarterly 4. September 5. September 6. December 7. March 8. March	Using Evidence Project Steering Group, Strategic Implementation Group,
Develop the social care data portal and projections platform	1. Discovery phase and review of current resources and user needs completed. 2. New data portal and tools developed based on user feedback.	1. June 2. September – March 2022	Data and Insight steering group, Data Portal advisory group, Welsh Government, Local Authorities, Regional Partnership Boards, ADR Wales, Audit Wales, third sector and CIW.
Improve how social care data is collected and used - work together with colleagues from across health and care sectors to build a comprehensive and inclusive social care data strategy (Implement actions identified in the Statement of Strategic Intent)	1. A road map to support the Statement of Strategic Intent published 2. Governance process for the Strategic approach to social care data established 3. Framework for data analytical skills established with health (aligned to workforce strategy) 4. Pilot project is delivered, sharing local authority adults social care services data with SAIL 5. Agreed commitment to improve data standards across local authorities in Wales 6. Charter with a list of organisations and people supporting the Strategic Statement of Intent published	1. June 2. June 3. April – December 4. June 5. Reported quarterly 6. September	Project group for delivering A strategic approach to social care data in Wales, Strategic Working Group, Social Care Subgroup, Welsh Government, health care, local authorities, independent and third sector organisations, and researchers

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What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
	7. Process established to collect citizens views on sharing social care data with organisations 8. New set of data visualisation dashboards published	7. September – March 8. September – March	
Implement a new workforce data collection system and publish workforce data	1. New data collection system launched 2. Enhanced regulation data dashboard published 3. data visuals and dashboards from collection analysed and shared 4. online data collection portal further developed based on Local Authority feedback	1. April 2. September 3. December 4. March	Welsh Government, Local Authorities, HEIW, third sector and CIW

Draft

Priority theme 4: for the Social Care Wales workforce

What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
Revise our communication and engagement strategy and develop plans to support the achievement of the business plan for 21/22	1. Strategy and plans developed 2. Surveys of stakeholder perceptions relating to awareness, understanding and support among key stakeholders held	Reported quarterly	Our staff who are involved in engagement activity and the stakeholders we will be working with
Revise and implement the 3-year ICT strategy to support the achievement of the business plan	1. Improvements to our Cyber Resilience and information governance arrangements 2. Rolling program of ICT hardware implemented	TBC	Third party ICT supplier, ICO, Welsh Government SIRO, WGSB IT network
Revise and Implement our people plan	1. Disability confident scheme embedded across our HR policies and procedures 2. Training and learning strategy developed to underpin our 5-year Strategic Plan 3. HR policies and procedures reviewed and implemented in light of our way of working (learning from Covid)	TBC	Our staff, WGSB HR network
Maintain effective financial and internal audit controls	1. Annual Accounts laid as per plan with external audit 2. Internal Audits conducted according to Internal Audit Plan 3. 2% cash balance ensured at end of financial year achieved	1. August 2021. 2. 80% of Internal Audit receive substantial rating 3. 2% cash balance achieved at the end of the financial year; 4% balance	Welsh Government, Audit Wales, Internal Audit, our staff

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What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
		achieved on a monthly basis	
Strong governance and accountability arrangements through the effective management of the Board and Committees	1. Board and Committees are making all the decisions as delegated to them. Board continues their development using scheduled board development sessions. Board approve and scrutinise work as required. 100% of meetings held in line with Standing Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation 2. Increased Board Member representation of people from ethnic minority background through the next Board recruitment in 2021/22	1. Reported quarterly 2. March 2022	Welsh Government, Audit Wales, Internal Audit, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, Public Bodies Unit, HEIW, Public Health Wales
Maintain compliance with statutory organisational requirements and organisational standards	No compliance notices received by relevant compliance regulators ISO27001 certification	Reported quarterly	Welsh Language Commissioner, Information Commissioner's Office, Equality and Human Rights Commission
Publish our annual work (business plan 2021/22), 5-year plan (a new strategic plan 2022 – 2027) and our strategic equalities plan	1. Submit Business Plan 21/22 2. Strategic Plan developed and published 3. Strategic Equalities Plan published, and indicators measured reported annually	1. May 2. September 3. TBC	Welsh Government, CIW, HEIW, WLGA, ADSS Cymru, employers, workforce
Maximise our digital offer across all of our business	1. Take forward recommendations on agreed road map 2. Build and develop our capacity and capability to embed our digital approach 3. Welsh first digital service piloted in an area of work (as a demonstrator project to learn and inform future digital developments) 4. Review implications of the work on the requirements on our ICT infrastructure		Welsh Government, HEIW, PHW, Wales Co-operative Centre, UNISON Government Digital Service (GDS), Tech Cymru, Digital Wales, Third Party IT and on-line service providers

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What we will be doing in 2021/22	Target / Indicator / Outputs	Timelines	Key partner(s)
Supporting the organisation in the recovery and sustainability of business operations	Scope requirements needed to support the organisation in the recovery and sustainability of business operations	Reported quarterly	Welsh Government; HSE; Acas, CIPD, WGSBs, researchers

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CYFARFOD / MEETING	**Board meeting**				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE			**CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC**	
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DYDDIAD / DATE	**29.04.21**				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	**8**				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/12	**Strategic Equality Plan consultation document**				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Abu Askira, Engagement and Development Manager				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:	David Pritchard, Director of Regulation Geraint Rowlands, Assistant Director Finance				
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1- Strategic Equality Plan consultation document Appendix 2 -Social Care Goals of the Welsh Governments Race Equality Action Plan				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES / BUSINES PLAN ACTIVITY	Priority Theme 4: Enabling Social Care Wales to Deliver				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	**CYMERADWYAETH / APPROVAL**	**DARAPRU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER**	**DARAPRU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE**	**TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION**	**CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE**
	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Members are asked to **consider** and, subject to risks set out below, **approve**.				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W	The Specific Equality Duties in Wales as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 places a duty on Social Care Wales to publish a Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives. Our current Plan is scheduled to run until April 2022.				

YSTYRIED **MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION; QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**	In 2020, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) recommended that all public sector bodies reviewed their Strategic Equality Plans given the lessons of the pandemic. Following engagement with people with protected characteristics, a set of 5 high level equality objectives have therefore been developed by Social Care Wales. These do not represent all our work in this area, and indeed the consultation sets out our ambition that all our work has the principles of anti-discrimination, equality, diversity and inclusion at its heart. The Welsh Government are currently consulting on their Race Equality Action Plan, with several other specific consultations to follow for others with protected characteristics. The results of the Welsh Government consultation may result in expectations for Social Care Wales and other public bodies, from late 2021 onwards. We will be responding to that consultation document. The EHRC is also due to publish a report focussing on inequalities in social care, summer 2021. We will use that report to inform our plans. The Board is recommended to approve the Social Care Wales consultation document, so that we can reflect comments received and expectations from Welsh Government, to inform our new Strategic Equality Plan, to be implemented from April 2022. We intend to consult from 1 June to 17 August 2021.
ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	The attached report covers work that we are undertaking to advance equality of opportunity and reduce discrimination for all the nine protected characteristic groups.

Strategic Equality Plan consultation document

1. Context

1.1 This report aims to update members of the forthcoming consultation on our Strategic Equality Plan objectives. The development of a new Strategic Equality Plan is driven by the need to seek alignment to the new strategic plan for Social Care Wales and to respond to the current and ongoing inequalities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.2 In October 2020, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) wrote to all listed public bodies in Wales reminding and recommending all public bodies to review their strategic equality plans in-light of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, to ensure we continue to focus on the greatest inequalities in Wales.

2. Resource implications

2.1 This work commenced in July 2020 (ahead of the notice from the EHRC) and has involved the input of a number of colleagues across the organisation, including input from our newly established equality and diversity group. Hence there have been significant elements of co-production within the organisation in developing the consultation document. More details on the steps taken to date are given below.

2.2 **Desk based review** – A review of current and emerging reports on the impact of the pandemic was our starting point to inform the development of a new plan to inform the setting and assessment of appropriate equality objectives.

2.3 The outcome of this desk-based review was a set of initial equality objectives which were the subject of internal scrutiny and review.

2.4 **Wider Engagement –** As required by the legislation and in accordance with our values of promoting equality, stakeholder engagement is critical to drafting and prioritising our equality objectives. Thus, in November 2020, we commissioned Diverse Cymru to test out our equality objectives with people who share one or more of the protected characteristics.

2.5 **Final Analysis** - At the conclusion of the engagement process by Diverse Cymru there was a review of the findings and reconsideration of the initial equality objectives. These are now presented to the Board for formal consideration and agreement for consultation.

3. Risk considerations

3.1 The Welsh Government is currently taking forward the development of high-profile action plans in equality and diversity. The first of these, the Race

Equality Action Plan (REAP), was put out to consultation in late March 2021. We are also aware of early work to develop a similar plan for LGBTQ+ citizens and expect others to follow.

3.2 The REAP is a government-wide document and contains many recommendations for public bodies, including an important section on social care. Within that section the consultation document states:

"Social Care Wales will have a key leadership role in the delivery of the goals and actions that are set out in this plan through their responsibilities for the regulation and development of the social care workforce, the improvement of care and support across Wales and for increasing public confidence in social care"

3.3 It is likely, therefore, that the new Welsh Government will wish to work with Social Care Wales on what this will mean in terms of our business plan and strategic equality plan later in 2021. The REAP goals are broad-ranging and significant and although there is partial alignment with our plans, it would mean a rethink of our work in this area.

3.4 By keeping our objectives at a high level, this will enable us to reflect on feedback to the consultation, our response to the REAP, as well as the EHRC report.

3.5 Also, we are relatively well advanced in our work to reshape our objectives, including stakeholder engagement. There is an expectation that we will be formally consulting soon to take forward new priorities.

3.6 The consultation document therefore does not seek to set out our Strategic Equality Plan, but rather to outline our proposed high level equality objectives.

3.7 Similarly, the consultation document does not include actions or metrics in order to allow the development of these, following the consultations by Social Care Wales and Welsh Government.

4. Engagement

4.1 In November 2020, we commissioned Diverse Cymru to deliver five engagement sessions with people who share one or more of the protected characteristics and/or with organisations who represent their interests. The aim of the engagement was to test out (seeking views) to inform our draft equality objectives.

4.2 Six engagement events were held (5 of the scheduled events were through the medium of English) and one event was through the medium of Welsh.

4.3 A questionnaire was also developed to ensure that those who could not take part in the facilitated events could also participate in the engagement.

Seven fully completed questionnaire responses and 2 partially completed questionnaire responses were received.

4.2 We are pleased to report that overall, most participants agreed with each of the proposed draft equality objectives and felt each of them is important.

5. Impact

5.1 This report reinforces our aim of pursuing a corporate culture of inclusion and wanting to be recognised as an organisation that takes a lead in promoting equality, challenging discrimination as well as valuing diversity and inclusion, both through our internal and external activities.

Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**
Social Care **Wales**

Our draft equality objectives for 2022 to 2027:

Becoming an anti-discrimination Wales - promoting equality, valuing diversity in social care

Have your say on what our priorities for equality, diversity and inclusion should be

Consultation closes on
TBC

Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

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

Twitter: @SocialCareWales

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Other formats: This document is available in large text, Braille and other languages, if required. You can request these by using the contact details above. This document is also available in Welsh.

Overview

We want your views and ideas about our draft equality objectives to help us develop our five-year *Strategic equality plan for 2022 to 2027*.

This consultation is part of Social Care Wales's commitment to become an organisation that actively seeks to improve the lives of those people with protected characteristics – by tackling discrimination, promoting equality and diversity, and creating a more inclusive society. We recognise our role is to be a leader in these areas in social care, and to work with others in the sector to create real and meaningful change.

We understand that anti-discrimination can never be a passive commitment. We must be honest and transparent about where we are, and what we need to do. The objectives set out in this consultation are part of that, but we will need to go further through all our work if we are to meet our and our citizens', ambitions.

How to respond

If you'd like to have your say on our proposed equality objectives, you can do so by:

- completing the online survey at: https
- completing this document and emailing it to: abubakar.askira@socialcare.wales
- requesting a discussion at one of your regular meetings.

The closing date for the consultation is **5pm, xxx**

Thank you for taking the time to tell us what you think.

Our draft equality objectives for 2022 to 2027: consultation

Foreword by our Chair and Chief Executive

Social Care Wales is developing a new Strategic Equality Plan. The new plan will provide us with an opportunity to align with, and reflect, the ambitions of our new *Strategic plan for 2022 to 2027* currently in development, as well as to respond to the current and ongoing inequalities demonstrated and exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has shown how crucial the social care and early years workforces are to the well-being of people of all ages in communities across Wales. As these workers have met the enormous challenges of the pandemic through their commitment and professionalism, there is greater recognition by the public that social care and early years workers are key workers – and not just in a time of crisis.

Sadly, the social care workforce has been profoundly affected by the pandemic. The social care workforce is among the occupational groups at highest risk of death from Covid-19, particularly care home workers and domiciliary care workers. In addition, the impact on the physical and mental health of workers has been brought to the fore, with people having to cope with new and incredibly difficult challenges.

The impact of the pandemic on older and disabled people, ethnic minorities, some women and people living in socio-economic disadvantage is a wakeup call for the public sector and society. We must make sure that our support for the Covid-19 recovery is informed by up-to-date evidence, engagement with others and by considering equality through equality impact assessments[1].

It is the pandemic that has made us focus our *Strategic equality plan* and equality objectives on tackling the inequalities exacerbated by Covid-19 and we are committed to putting equality and human rights at the centre of our decision making.

We are committed to being an anti-discrimination organisation - placing equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of all our work. Our support for the sector after Covid-19 must recognise the particular impact it has had on those with protected characteristics. However, we also recognise that in some areas we can go further and prioritise where we can make the most difference, in line with our remit and responsibilities. This consultation therefore provides information about the five areas we propose to highlight for our work on equality and diversity going forward. These high-level equality objectives have been informed by a series of engagement events with people who share one or more of the protected characteristics and we are now

[1] Rebuilding a more equal and fairer Wales: Focus on the unequal impact of the coronavirus pandemic May 2020 – Equality and Human Rights Commission

asking you to help us make sure they are setting us off in the right direction. Are we focusing on the right things? Are we being bold enough? What will be the results of our work?

We need your feedback to shape our equality priorities, so we can be confident our next five-year *Strategic equality plan* will advance equality of opportunity for social care and early years sectors.

Mick Giannasi, Chair, and Sue Evans, Chief Executive

Who are we?

.

We are the lead agency in Wales for social care workforce regulation, service improvement, research and data, and workforce development.

Our role in early years, although on a smaller scale, involves us working as a strategic partner for the Welsh Government, supporting the ongoing development, support and professionalisation of the workforce.

What do we do?

We:

- **develop the workforce** so they have the knowledge and skills to protect, empower and support those who need help and care.
- **work with others to improve services** for areas agreed as a national priority.
- **provide information** for the public, the workforce and other organisations.
- **share practice** with the workforce so they can provide the best response to meet support needs.
- **set priorities for research** to get evidence of what works well.
- **set standards** for the care and support workforce, making them accountable for their work.

We support and promote innovation, and share knowledge, practice and experiences across social care in Wales. We work with partners to make sure we can work together to improve outcomes for people and families who use care and support, as well as those who provide it. We will act as a leader, champion and voice for social care and early years, offering constructive challenge and support to professionals and providers.

Our work is underpinned by the principle that adults and children who use care and support, as well as their families and carers work together to create support that works for them. The approach is values driven and built on the principle that those who use a

service are best placed to help design it. We will do this directly in our work where appropriate, but we will also make sure we follow this approach in all our advice about evidence to the sector.

Our vision

We want to improve outcomes for children and adults who rely on good care and support, as well as their families and carers, so they can live the life that matters to them.

Our 'strategic equality plan'

We have a statutory duty to publish a strategic equality plan. The learning from this consultation will be used to develop that plan.

However, our ambition is to go beyond that plan and to embed a clear commitment to promoting equality and tacking discrimination across all our work.

Developing our equality objectives for 2022 to 2027

This consultation sets out our draft equality objectives and the outcomes we hope to achieve in response to the ongoing lessons and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our draft equality objectives have been informed by a number of evidence sources, such as:

- *Into sharp relief: inequality and the pandemic* – Welsh Parliament Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee, August 2020
- *First Minister's BAME Covid-19 Advisory Group: Report of the Socioeconomic Subgroup* – June 2020
- Equality and Human Rights Commission, *Briefing Paper 1: Rebuilding a more equal and fairer Wales: Focus on the unequal impact of the coronavirus pandemic* – May 2020
- *the equality profile of the social care workers who are registered with us*

- *Coronavirus (COVID-19) related deaths by occupation, England and Wales: deaths registered between 9 March and 28 December 2020* – Office for National Statistics

Engaging and involving people who use care and support

When we set our equality objectives, it is important we listen and reflect the views of those who share one or more of the protected characteristics. Not only because we have a legal duty to do so, but also so we can make sure our work is informed by their views and needs.

Our draft equality objectives have been informed by people who use care and support, their families, and carers. With support from Diverse Cymru, we held six engagement events in December 2020 and provided an online questionnaire in which we tested out the draft equality objectives.

We received feedback from people who represented a range of the protected characteristics.

We are indebted to those people who informed the development of our equality objectives, and all those who took the time to comment on our plans. Many people gave their time freely and willingly, and we would like to acknowledge and thank them for their contribution.

Their feedback has been invaluable in helping us make sure the equality objectives better reflect the priorities and concerns of diverse communities.

We are committed to maintaining this dialogue throughout the delivery of our commitments in the strategic equality plan.

Our organisational approach

We will take a whole-organisation approach to promoting equality and tackling discrimination. We will consider equality and diversity in all our work and expect all our staff to understand and put into practice the principles of fairness, equality and inclusion.

We will tackle discrimination on the grounds of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Our five-year *Strategic equality plan* will be used by our Board members to scrutinise our work and progress in realising our equality objectives, holding our staff to account. We will share our progress on realising our equality objectives with you on our website, and in our communication and meetings with you.

Comprehensive strategic approach

To ensure we embed equality, diversity, and inclusion across our work we will remove the artificial distinction between our work in this area and our wider activity. The ‘strategic equality plan’ will become an underlying part of our new Corporate Strategic Plan and we will also report on its delivery as part of our corporate reporting to our Board and to Welsh Government.

We will adopt our commitment to promoting equality and tackling discrimination as a central objective within our Strategic Plan.

Welsh Government leadership

We recognise that the Welsh Government is leading on the promotion of equality and the tackling of discrimination across public services. We are aware of the current consultation on a Race Equality Action Plan, which will be followed by other similar plans for those with protected characteristics.

We fully support and welcome this leadership from the Welsh Government. It sets an ambitious and timely set of markers for all of us. We will continue to shape our plans in this area to reflect that leadership, and to take forward actions that fall upon us. Our final Strategic Equality Plan will reflect that leadership as well as our own learning from working with those with protected characteristics, and this consultation.

We are also aware that the Equality and Human Rights Commission has undertaken a race inquiry into the experiences of low paid ethnic minority workers in the health and social care sectors during the pandemic. We will also look to this work to feed into our final plan.

Finally, we recognise the ground-breaking leadership of the Welsh Government in the area of socio-economic disadvantage, at a time when the Coronavirus pandemic has led to increased levels of poverty in Wales with a potential economic downturn. We are committed, though our work around greater equality, diversity, and inclusion, to support the aims of the socio-economic duty.

Our Strategic Equality Plan Objectives

In the light of the above, our purpose in this document is not to capture all our activity in this area. It is, rather, the identification of five specific areas that we will focus on during the lifetime of this strategy. These are areas that we as an organisation can play a meaningful role as the social care and early years sectors recover from the pandemic. They do not represent all our work in this area, and they do not represent the priorities for the sector as a whole. They do aim to, however, set out specific, identifiable change that we can help bring about to improve the social care and early years sectors' success in promoting equality and tackling discrimination.

These five areas are:

1. As the lead agency in Wales for developing social care data and research, we will prioritise the improvement of qualitative and quantitative data, research, evidence, analysis, intelligence and understanding to support and drive continued progress across the sector. We will use our data to better understand the characteristics of the workforce and support the sector to better reflect the population of Wales.

2. As a national body, with direct connections to the workforce through our register of social care workers, we will work with employers and strategic leaders in social care and early years to help them advance equality of opportunity for workers.

3. As the use of digital technologies becomes more widespread following the pandemic, we will develop our services and support the wider sector to recognise the importance of leaving no-one behind as working practices change.

4. As we set out in the Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy, we will support the sector so that workers have access to support for their well-being, particularly recognising the additional challenges faced by those with protected characteristics.

5. Finally, as a Welsh Government Sponsored Body, we will set out to become a leader in anti-discrimination, equality, diversity and inclusion through our Board, staff and services.

Our Objectives

The objectives that follow have been developed following conversations with people with protected characteristics.

Objective 1: Improve the use of equality data and information

What do we want to achieve?

We will improve the collection and use of data available about the social care workforce to better understand what the sector can do to achieve a diverse workforce that better reflects the communities it serves.

Why is this one of our objectives?

We want a social care workforce that is more representative of the communities it serves, particularly where there is evidence of underrepresentation. We want to work with partners to identify and address the barriers that may prevent people who share one or more of the protected characteristics from joining the social care workforce.

By working with employers to tackle attraction, recruitment and retention issues, and provide them with training, information and resources, we will improve the provision of high-quality care and support for people, children and families.

Our recent publication about the domiciliary care workforce highlights that 84 per cent are female, 96.5 per cent are white and 3.5 per cent are from an ethnic minority background. Only 10 per cent are fluent in Welsh, while 26 per cent have some Welsh language ability and 64 per cent have no Welsh language skill at all. This needs to change if we are serious about providing meaningful care and support. Providing care and support for someone is a very personal activity, and a common bond of trust, culture and language helps provide the highest quality care.

We must also consider the groups most likely to be affected by the expected rise in poverty due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These include young people, ethnic minorities, and disabled people who are already closest to the poverty line[2].

[2] *How coronavirus has affected equality and human rights* – Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2020

People who use care and support, their carers and families told us that this draft objective should also focus on making sure that people who use a variety of languages and from a variety of cultures are supported properly.

Objective 2: Equality at work

What do we want to achieve?

We will work with employers and strategic leaders in social care and early years to help them advance equality of opportunity for social care workers.

Why is this one of our objectives?

We note the evidence of racial inequality in Wales reported by ethnic minority communities with some staff in health and social care settings reporting they felt they had been treated less favourably than their white colleagues during the Coronavirus pandemic[3].
The GMB also reports that workers from an ethnic minority background remain seriously at risk at work due to the lack of comprehensive risk assessments undertaken during the pandemic.[4] We believe that social care workplaces should lead the way in terms of equality and inclusion, providing everyone the opportunity to thrive regardless of their background, identity or circumstance, to feel valued and supported at work.

Going above and beyond to support the most vulnerable in society has been a main feature displayed by the social care and early years workforce during the pandemic. The pandemic has further raised the profile of the workforce, the work they do and their value to society as key workers. However, this recognition is amidst a backdrop of treatment of social care and early years workers who are relatively low paid, with often insecure employment[5]. Security of employment and income are fundamental (amongst a number of factors) to achieving equality and fair work practices for the social care and early years workforce.

[3] *First Minister's BAME Covid-19 Advisory Group: Report of The Socioeconomic Subgroup* – June 2020

[4] *GMB Report Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Workers & Covid-19* – October 2020

[5] Fair care work. A post Covid-19 agenda for integrated employment relations in health and social care *was published yesterday by King's Business School.*

We will act as a supportive and critical friend, challenging providers and employers to make sure that any actions to address inequality and discrimination in the social care and early years workforce is based on the strongest evidence.

We will support the sector-wide ambition towards fair reward and recognition across the social care and early years workforce. This will take account of the *Report of the Fair Work Commission* (2019) and *Is Wales Fairer?* (2018).

Objective 3: Digital inclusion

What do we want to achieve?

We will actively work to ensure that equality, accessibility, and inclusion is central to our work of building a digitally ready social care and early years workforce in Wales.

Why is this one of our objectives?

The world has changed because of the pandemic. One of the most significant changes has been the rapid acceleration of the move to digital services and virtual communication. Without care, this risks extending established inequities in society.

A digitally excluded workforce means people may struggle to engage with the expansion of digital activity in the social care sector, by Social Care Wales and others, as work begins to support its recovery and sustainability. We have also seen a rapid growth in the use of digital technologies such as tablet devices to enable users of social care services to access support and advice, thus highlighting the need for us the rethink the role of digital resources in the professional assessment and provision of care going forward[6].

The ambitions of the workforce strategy *to build a digitally ready workforce* can only be attained by putting equality and accessibility at the heart of digital literacy, skills and capabilities.

During our engagement with people with protected characteristics, this issue emerged as a key area of concern for the future. We also have heard from people who use care and support, their carers and families about how they and their care workers have needed to adapt quickly to be able to assess people online during the pandemic, as they were unable to offer support face-to-face.

We will work with Digital Communities Wales to support Welsh Government's commitment to improve affordable broadband connectivity across Wales and improve digital literacy, so people can make the most of digital public services.

[6] The Road to Renewal: five priorities for health and social care- King's Fund, July 2020

Objective 4: Social care and early years and childcare workforce Wellbeing

What do we want to achieve?

We will promote and support improved access to our wellbeing support and resources.

Why is this one of our objectives?

The Covid-19 pandemic has focused attention on the pressures faced by frontline social care workers. These pressures, with the increased risk of Covid -19 infection and fear of putting family members at risk has raised concern about the increasing mental stress on the workforce[7].

The pandemic continues to impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of the workforce, with increasing sickness levels and anxiety. The social care workforce faced among the highest mortality rates by occupation during the first phase of the pandemic. The pandemic has led to a growing recognition of the importance of supporting workforce wellbeing. Social Care Wales is working with others to develop a broad and meaningful set of wellbeing support and resources which capture staff experience across different settings, professional groups and protected characteristics.

Our support for wellbeing must recognise the specific and unique challenges that are faced by those with protected characteristics. But beyond that consideration, we believe that the equality, diversity and inclusion are essential components to ensure wellbeing in our sector and therefore must be placed at the heart of our approach.

People who use care and support felt that the impact of COVID-19 on mental health and wellbeing has increased the urgency of this objective. They felt that immediate action to deliver this objective is needed by both Social Care Wales and all employers in the social care and early years sector.

Objective 5: Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion within Social Care Wales

What do we want to achieve?

[7] The Impact of COVID-19 on social care workers' workload, wellbeing and ability to provide care safely: Findings from the UK – The University of Kent, November 2020

To promote opportunities to work with us, to enable a more diverse and inclusive Board, staff team, regulatory panel members and widen our networks.

Why is this one of our objectives?
We want to lead by example. We are proud of the diversity of our Board, in terms of gender, age, disability, background and lived experiences. Yet we believe we can do more to improve the diversity of our board, as well as the membership of our regulatory panel members who consider cases of alleged misconduct by social care workers.

People who use care and support have told us that to achieve this equality objective change starts within Social Care Wales and a shift in sector culture should filter outwards by sharing good practice and influencing networks and stakeholders through positive action and communication.

We will continue to monitor our staff diversity, but beyond that we want to create an environment where staff can thrive, deliver their best work and their difference is valued. We will seek to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between colleagues, board members and all those who contribute to our work.

The Coronavirus pandemic has led to increased levels of poverty in Wales with reduced incomes and a potential economic downturn. This will have a greater impact on people already living in socio-economic disadvantage and intersect across all forms of inequality. Thus, by working strategically to achieve greater equality, diversity, and inclusion within Social Care Wales is a means to advancing the socio-economic duty and helping to reduce socio-economic disadvantage.

What next?

Now we are asking you to help us make sure our high-level equality objectives will set us off in the right direction. Are we focusing on the right things? Are we being bold enough? What will be the results of our work?

We need your feedback so that we are confident in your support in making our five-year strategic equality plan contribute to the improvements we all want.

Please complete the questionnaire below to help us move from a set of draft equality objectives priorities into a Strategic Equality Plan of action for the next five years.

About you/your organisation

Are you responding to this consultation:

a) as an individual	☐	**or**	**b) on behalf of an organisation** ☐

If as an individual, are you a/an:		**Please provide the name of the organisation below:**
Person who uses care and support	☐	
Early years worker	☐	
Social care manager	☐	
Social care worker	☐	
Social worker	☐	
Social work student	☐	
Owner of a setting providing care	☐	
Responsible individual	☐	
Employer of social care workers	☐	
Educational professional	☐	
Member of the public	☐	

Other – please describe below:

Consultation questions

We'd welcome your views about our equality objectives and would be grateful if you could take the time to answer the following questions:

1. Do you agree with our approach to incorporate our anti-discriminatory work within our corporate plan, but highlighting five areas of emphasis within the Strategic Equality Plan?			
Yes	☐	No	☐
Comments			

2. Do you think the five equality objectives set reasonable ambitions for the next five years, or should we more or less bold?			
Yes	☐	No	☐
Comments			

3. Do you have any specific comments about the individual objectives?			
Yes	☐	No	☐
Comments			

4. Do you have any suggestions as to how we should measure our impact in these five areas?	
Yes ☐	No ☐
Comments	

5. Will our equality objectives have any positive or negative impacts on groups with protected characteristics[8]?	
Yes ☐	No ☐
If yes, which protected characteristics and why?	

6. Do you think there should be other equality objectives, either instead of or in addition to the ones mentioned If so, what should those objectives be?

[8] The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Your views are important to us, so please:

- **Complete the questions online at:**

Social Care Goals of the REAP

Goals of the REAP
Goal 1: To ensure that all Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people feel confident in accessing and using social services and social care services whenever they are needed.
Goal 2: To ensure that all Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people who access social care services are provided with the highest quality support that is accessible, dignified and culturally appropriate.
Goal 3a: To ensure that all members of the social care workforce have the cultural competence to work effectively with people from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds and ensure that this support is delivered with zero tolerance of racism and any other form of discrimination or inequality.
Goal 3b :To ensure that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people experience no barriers in seeking a career or role within social care; that all Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic social care practitioners have access to the highest quality training throughout their career; and that all Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic social care practitioners are and feel safe within their workplace and have full confidence in the leadership of their organisation to operate a zero tolerance policy of anti-racism and any other form of discrimination or inequality.
Goal 4: To ensure that leaders at all levels in social care model and champion anti-racism, diversity and inclusion and deliver an anti-racist social care sector for both people who are receiving care and support and for the social care workforce.
Goal 5: To embed accountability actions and behaviours across the social care sector, including robust governance structures and clear, measurable metrics, in order to determine the impact and effectiveness of the social care sector in delivering the actions set out in this plan.
Goal 6: To improve qualitative and quantitative data, research, evidence, analysis, intelligence and understanding to support and drive continued progress, including a significant increase in the lived experience data gathered from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people.

Gofal Cymdeithasol Cymru
Social Care Wales

CYFARFOD / MEETING	**Board meeting**				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE		**CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC**		
	☐		☒		
DYDDIAD / DATE	**29.04.21**				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	**9**				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/13	**Changes to 'The Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales 2018' (The Social Work Degree Rules)**				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Hywel Dafydd, Assistant Director Regulation				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:	Jayne Cross, Regulation of Training Manager Jane Hughes, Regulation of Training Officer				
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1- The Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES / BUSINES PLAN ACTIVITY	These changes support the objective set out in s.68(2)(c) of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 – 'promoting and maintaining high standards in the training of social care workers'.				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	**CYMERADWYAETH / APPROVAL**	**DARAPRU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER**	**DARAPRU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE**	**TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION**	**CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE**
	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	The Board is asked to **approve** the proposed changes to the 'The Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales 2018' (The Social Work Degree Rules).				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED	The proposed changes to the rules are set out in Table 1, Section 2 and the Appendix.				

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

Changes to 'The Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales 2018' (The Social Work Degree Rules)

1. Context

1.1 The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 ('the Act') states that our main objective is to 'protect, promote and maintain the safety and well-being of the public in Wales'. In pursuing this objective, we are required to promote and maintain high standards in the training of social care workers and public confidence in social care workers.[1]

1.2 The Act allows us to set the qualification and training requirements for social care workers, including social workers, and the standards they must meet if they wish to be included in our register. We create rules for this purpose.[2]

1.3 We regulate social work education in Wales using the following rules:

The Framework for the Degree of Social Work (Wales) 2018: https://socialcare.wales/cms_assets/file-uploads/The-framework-for-the-degree-in-social-work-in-Wales-2018.pdf

The Approval and Inspection of Post Qualifying Courses for Social Workers (Wales) Rules 2018: https://socialcare.wales/cms_assets/file-uploads/The-Approval-and-Inspection-of-Post-Qualifying-Courses-for-Social-Workers-Wales-Rules-2018.pdf

1.4 If these rules are to work effectively for all parties, including social work students, universities and local authorities, it is essential that we keep them under review and, where appropriate, use our powers under the Act to make adjustments in response to threats, opportunities or legal changes. We may also make changes where we feel that we need to clarify a particular rule.

1.5 Any changes that we make to our rules are made with public protection in mind and with a view to promoting and maintaining high standards in the social care sector and public confidence in social care workers. We always seek the assistance of our Legal and Policy Adviser and our legal advisors and we always engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure that we have considered the implications of any proposed changes.

1.6 Whereas the Act requires us to consult the sector before making changes to our rules, consultation is not required where we are satisfied that 'the nature of the proposed changes is such that consultation would be inappropriate or disproportionate' and where we have obtained the agreement of the Welsh Ministers to proceed without consultation.[3]

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[1] The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, s68(1), s68(2)(c), s68(2)(d) - https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/2/contents/enacted

[2] The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, s84-85, s114. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/2/contents/enacted

[3] The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, s 75 - https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/2/contents/enacted

1.7 We consider that it would be inappropriate and disproportionate to consult the sector about the small number of changes that are proposed in this paper and we have secured the agreement of the Welsh Ministers to proceed without consultation.

1.8 We would like the Board to approve the changes that are described in the table in section 2 below and highlighted in The Framework for the Degree of Social Work (Wales) 2021 in the Appendix.

2. Description of changes to The Framework for the Degree of Social Work (Wales) 2018

2.1 The changes that we are proposing are set out in the table below and are highlighted in the appendix. They will lead to the rules being renamed as the 2021 rules. We would like the 2021 rules to be effective from 1 May 2021.

Table 1

Page No.	Description of change	Reason for change
Title 3	Replaces '2018' with '2021'.	Separates the two sets of rules and decisions made under them.
4	Shows the date on which the rules become effective.	Separates the 2018 and 2021 rules and any decisions made under them.
5 10	Reference to 'retained EU law' replaces reference to 'European Union Law'.	Reflects the status of EU law in the UK following the European Union Withdrawal Act 2018.
11 25 28 29 30	References to days in relation to practice learning changed to hours.	Gives students and placement partners more flexibility over how the placement is delivered, in recognition of the growth of agile working and, most importantly, the caring responsibilities of students on placements.
12	Insertion of a provision that allows Social Care Wales to make appropriate changes to the degree approval process in the event of a national crisis.	Allows Social Care Wales to take appropriate action in the event of a national crisis to minimise disruption to the delivery of social work degree programmes and the progression of social work students.
25	Changes the number of hours' experience in a relevant paid or voluntary role that applicants to the degree programme must have (455 to 360 hours). Clarifies that 'other	The change in the number of hours reflects general agreement between Social Care Wales and partner organisations that 455 hours' pre-application experience is neither necessary nor practical, especially in the current circumstances. All agreed

	relevant experience', which may be taken into account in exceptional circumstances, includes lived experience of social care.	that a requirement of 360 hours' experience is more appropriate. The change also clarifies that lived experience of social care is included in the definition of 'other relevant experience' that universities may take into account in exceptional circumstances when considering applications for the degree programme. This reflects the difficulties some applicants have faced when trying to secure the required number of hours' experience in a voluntary or paid role during the Coronavirus pandemic. It also reflects the fact that some applicants who lack the required number of hours' experience may have valuable lived experience of the care sector.

3. Resource implications

3.1 The changes that are set out in this report do not have any financial or human resource implications for Social Care Wales.

4. Risk considerations

4.1 We have considered whether there are any risks associated with the proposed changes and have focused in particular on whether there are any public protection or reputational risks. We have not identified any risks but will continue to monitor the situation.

5. Engagement

5.1 We regularly engage with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Local Authority partners and student representative groups in our regulatory role. These changes have come about in response to issues that have arisen in the context of this work. If the changes are approved, we will convey them to key stakeholders and provide support to help with implementation.

6. Impact

6.1 The proposed changes will give us the ability to respond in a more agile way to the needs of some of our key stakeholders during a national crisis such as the coronavirus pandemic.

APPENDIX 1

Gofal Cymdeithasol Cymru
Social Care Wales

The framework for the degree in social work in Wales 2021

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The Schedule – Criteria for the Approval and Quality Assurance of Degree Programmes in Social work	24

Introduction

Social Care Wales was established under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 to promote an integrated approach to social care workforce regulation, workforce development and service improvement through one organisation.

Our aim is to improve the quality of social care and support to the people of Wales. We have a particular role to play in workforce development and are responsible for assuring the quality of social work education.

Social workers in Wales have a central role to play in ensuring the social care and support needs of people are understood and met in a way that promotes their well-being and safety. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 recognises that staff and their skills are a vital resource; often they are the very best resource we have to offer people.

The professional training of social workers is therefore a key element in preparing professional, competent and confident social workers.

We support this by:

Developing the workforce: We support the workforce so they are able to work in ways that are collaborative, effective and grounded in the values of social care, and are open to new ways of working.

Leading and supporting improvement: We use information from data, research and evaluation, as well as inspection and policy, to support our work with the sector to explore and understand the models, practice and workforce skills needed to provide more effective care and support and secure improved outcomes for children and adults who rely on care and support, their families and carers.

Providing public confidence: We regulate the workforce to assure the public that those regulated workers are of good character, confident and competent to provide safe care to the people of Wales and support for their families. By establishing clear requirements for professional education and training we ensure the next generation of social workers have the knowledge, skills and values required to achieve this vision for social care in Wales.

The social work degree is the professional qualification for social workers in Wales and throughout the UK. The title is protected and only people with a recognised social work qualification can practise as a social worker.[1] Once qualified, social workers must continue to develop their practice through ongoing learning and development. We have established standards for the education and training of social workers at both qualifying and post-qualifying levels.

This document sets out the standards for the professional qualification and includes:

[1] A person can be prosecuted for misuse of the title. More information can be found at: https://socialcare.wales/resources/misuse-of-social-worker-title

- the rules governing the approval and regulation of social work qualifying programmes
- a schedule that sets out more detailed requirements for approval of programmes.

We have also published separate documents providing supplementary guidance to the rules and more detailed guidance on students' practice education.

Another separate publication on the requirements for post-qualifying training of social workers is also available.

THE APPROVAL AND INSPECTION OF DEGREE COURSES IN SOCIAL WORK (WALES) RULES 2021

Arrangement of Rules

PART I
GENERAL

1. Citation and commencement
2. Interpretation

PART II
APPROVAL OF DEGREE PROGRAMMES IN SOCIAL WORK

3. Applications for approval
4. Considerations of approval
5. Requirements for approval
6. The required standard of proficiency in relevant social work
7. Duration and lapse of approvals
8. Modifications to degree programmes

PART III
MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

9. Provision of information
10. Reviews
11. Inspectors
12. Focussed investigations
13. Inspections directed by the Inspection Committee

PART IV
REVIEW OF DECISIONS

14. Review of decisions

THE SCHEDULE

Criteria for the Approval and Quality Assurance of Degree Programmes in Social Work.

Social Care Wales in the exercise of powers conferred on it by Sections 74(1)(a) and (2)(c),114 (1)(a), (3), (6), 115 (1) and (2), of the Registration and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, and of all other powers enabling SCW in that behalf, and with the agreement of Ministers makes the following Rules:

PART I
General

1. Citation and commencement

These Rules may be cited as the Approval and Inspection of Degree Courses in Social Work (Wales) Rules 2021 and shall come into force on xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

2. Interpretation

(1) In these Rules –

"the Act" means the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016;

"assessment level" shall be construed by reference to the structure for the social work degree in Wales as outlined in appendix 1 in the supplementary guidance to the Rules;

"application" means, for the purposes of Rule 4, the application made under Rule 3 and, for the purposes of Rule 8, the application made under Rule 8(2), and "applicant" shall be construed accordingly;

"approved degree programme" means a degree programme that has been approved under these Rules;

"Benchmark Statement for Social Work" means the Subject Benchmark Statement for Social Work as amended from time to time, and published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education;

"degree programme" means a course in relevant social work for persons who wish to become social workers;

"designated senior officer" means a senior member of the staff of Social Care Wales who has been authorised by it to act as such under these Rules;

"duly authorised officer" means an officer of the staff of Social Care Wales who has been authorised by it to act as such under these Rules;

"external examiner" shall be construed in accordance with paragraph 7(2) (c) of the Schedule;

"focused investigation" means an investigation under Rule 11;

"Inspection Committee" means the Committee of Social Care Wales that has been authorised by it to act as such under Rule 13;

“institution” means, in relation to a degree programme (whether or not it is an approved degree programme), the institution that made an application for its approval under these Rules, or an institution that has inherited responsibility for an approved degree programme from another institution;

“National Occupational Standards” means the National Occupational Standards for Social Work as amended from time to time and published by Social Care Wales;

“partnership agreement” means an agreement of a type referred to in paragraph 1(1)(a) of the Schedule;

“practice assessment panel” means a panel constituted in accordance with paragraph 6(1)(f) of the Schedule;

“practice educator” means a person referred to in paragraph 6(1)(j) of the Schedule;

“practice learning” shall be construed in accordance with Rule 6(2)(j);

“programme specification” is referred to in paragraph 5(1) of the Schedule;

“quality assurance” shall be construed in accordance with paragraph 7(1) (a) of the Schedule;

“register” means the register maintained by Social Care Wales under Section 80 of the Act, and “registration” and “registered” shall be construed accordingly;

“required standard of proficiency in relevant social work” means the standard described in Rule 6;[2]

"retained EU law" shall have the meaning given in sections 2 to 4 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018;

“Review Committee” means a committee of Social Care Wales that has been authorised by it to act as such under Rule 14;

“routes” shall, in relation to a degree programme, be construed in accordance with Rule 4(7);

“Social Care Wales” means the corporate body previously called the Care Council for Wales, which was renamed 'Social Care Wales’ by Section 67(3) of the Act

“student” means, in relation to a degree programme, a student who is or (as the context requires) may be enrolled on the programme;

“student transcript” has the meaning given by paragraph 5(2)(n) of the Schedule;

“inspector” shall be construed in accordance with Rule 11.

[2] “Relevant social work” is defined by section 79(4) of the Act as social work which is required in connection with any health, education or social services provided by any person.

(2) In these Rules, a reference to –

(a) a numbered Rule is to the Rule in these Rules bearing that number;
(b) a numbered paragraph in a Rule or the Schedule is to the paragraph in that Rule or the Schedule bearing that number;
(c) a numbered sub-paragraph in a paragraph is to the sub-paragraph in that paragraph bearing that number; and
(d) the Schedule is to the Schedule to these Rules.

PART II
Approval of Degree Programmes in Social Work

3. Applications for approval

(1) An application to Social Care Wales under Section 114 (1) of the Act for the approval of a degree programme in social work must be –

(a) made in writing on a form approved by Social Care Wales;

(b) accompanied by a programme specification, a copy of the institution's partnership agreement or agreements and such other information as may be required by the form;

(c) accompanied by a fee of such reasonable amount as Social Care Wales may require; and

(d) made by an institution of a type that is referred to in s.214 (2) (a) or (b) of the Education Reform Act 1988.[3]

4. Consideration of applications

(1) An application duly made under Rule 3 for the approval of a degree programme shall be considered by a duly authorised officer of Social Care Wales. An application that has not been duly made shall not be considered.

(2) The duly authorised officer of Social Care Wales must –

(a) where he or she considers that –
(i) the requirements of Rule 5 are or (as appropriate) will be satisfied;
(ii) the programme will enable persons completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6); and
(iii) the institution will be able to comply with requirements under Rule 9; but
(iv) the programme need not be approved subject to conditions

recommend to Social Care Wales approval of the programme and notify the applicant of that fact in writing.

(b) where he or she considers that –

(i) the requirements of Rule 5 are or (as appropriate) will be satisfied;
(ii) the programme will enable persons completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6); and

[3] 1988 c.40 ("the 1988 Act"). Section 214(2)(a) of the 1988 Act refers to universities, colleges and other bodies authorised by Royal Charter or by or under an Act of Parliament to grant degrees. Section 214(2)(b) of the 1988 Act refers to bodies permitted by bodies falling within section 21(2)(a) to grant degrees on their behalf.

(iii) the institution will be able to comply with requirements under Rule 9; but
(iv) approval should be granted subject to conditions

will notify the applicant of the proposed conditions.

(c) following notification under paragraph (2)(b) and where the applicant has agreed in writing to the proposed conditions, recommend to Social Care Wales approval of the programme subject to those conditions and notify the applicant of that fact in writing;

(d) refer the application to a designated senior officer if –

(i) he or she considers that the requirements of Rule 5 are not or (as appropriate) will not be satisfied or that the programme will not enable persons completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6) or that the institution will not be able to comply with requirements under Rule 9; or
(ii) following notification under paragraph 2(b), the applicant has not agreed to the proposed conditions in writing within 15 working days of receipt of that notification.

(3) Where an application has been referred under paragraph (2) (d),

(a) if the designated senior officer considers that the requirements of Rule 5 are or (as appropriate) will be satisfied, the programme will enable persons completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6) and that the institution will be able to comply with requirements under Rule 9, he or she must recommend to Social Care Wales the programme is approved (with or without conditions as he or she thinks fit);

(b) if the designated senior officer considers that the requirements of Rule 5 are not or (as appropriate) will not be satisfied, the programme will not enable persons completing it to attain that standard (Rule 6) or that the institution will not be able to comply with requirements under Rule 9, he or she must recommend to Social Care Wales refusal to approve the programme;

(c) notify the applicant in writing of the recommendation on the application; and

(d) where the recommendation of the designated senior officer is to refuse to approve the programme or to approve it subject to conditions that have not been agreed in writing between the applicant and Social Care Wales, he or she must give his or her reasons in that notification and inform the institution of its right of review under Rule 14.

(4) A decision of a type referred to in paragraph (3)(d) –

(a) shall have effect 28 days after the day on which the applicant received notification of it if, during that period, the applicant has not referred the decision in writing to the Review Committee for consideration under Rule 14; but

(b) shall not have effect if the applicant does so refer the decision; and any other decision under paragraph (3) shall have effect as soon as it is made.

(5) A duly authorised officer of Social Care Wales may at any time require the applicant to provide it with such further information as it may reasonably require for the purposes of considering an application.

(6) Any approval given under these Rules shall come into force on such day as is specified in the notification of approval given under paragraph (2) or (3) under Rule 14 (review of decisions).

(7) Where there is more than one means by which students may complete a degree programme (referred to in these Rules as "routes"):

(a) any reference in these Rules to an Officer of Social Care Wales or the Review Committee considering –

(i) that the requirements of Rule 5 are or (as appropriate) will be satisfied, is a reference to considering whether the requirements are or (as appropriate) will be satisfied in relation to each of those routes;

(ii) that the degree programme will or will not enable a person completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6), is a reference to considering whether each of those routes will or will not enable such a person to attain that standard;

(iii) that the institution will or will not be able to comply with requirements under Rule 9, is a reference to considering whether the institution will or will not be able to comply with those requirements in relation to each of those routes;

(b) any approval granted under these Rules shall only relate to such routes (if any) as were specified in the application.

5. Requirements for approval

(1) The requirements of this Rule are that:

(a) a student's successful completion of the degree programme will result in either:

(i) the grant of an award that confers upon the holder the right to the title of bachelor so long as that award may also (in accordance with the instruments relating to or regulating the applicant) take the form of an honours degree;

(ii) the grant of an award that confers upon the holder the right to the title of master; or

(iii) the grant of a Postgraduate Diploma; and

(b) the degree programme and the institution do or (as appropriate) will satisfy the criteria set out in the Schedule to these Rules.

6. The required standard of proficiency in relevant social work

(1) For the purpose of Section 63(5) of the Act, the "required standard of proficiency in relevant social work"[4] is the standard described in paragraph (2).

(2) A student completing the degree programme (whether or not he or she intends to practise as a social worker) must demonstrate by the point of final assessment that he or she:

a. demonstrated throughout the degree programme that he or she had complied with the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care published by Social Care Wales under Section 112 of Registration and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016;

b. has met the Benchmark Statements for Social Work and the National Occupational Standards for Social Work;

c. has successfully completed all elements of assessed work and has proceeded through the three levels of the degree programme as outlined in the supplementary guidance to the Rules;

d. would be able to integrate Welsh, UK and retained EU law, knowledge and research evidence about best practice and theory, related to social work, into his or her practice as a social worker;

e. would be able to integrate under the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011 into his or her practice as a social worker;

f. would understand the desirability for, and would promote in his or her practice as a social worker, the assessment of people in need of care and support and carers who need support, in their preferred language;

g. subject to any credit granted to the student in accordance with any arrangements for the accreditation of prior experience and learning, had undertaken approximately 1200 hours of academic learning, and

[4] Section 114 (5) of the Act provides that "a course must not be approved by SCW under this section unless SCW thinks that the course will enable persons completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in social care work".

that such learning has been appropriately guided, structured and assessed;

h. subject to any credit granted to the student in accordance with any arrangements for the accreditation of prior experience and learning, has successfully completed at least 1400 hours of assessed practical training in social work ("practice learning") which included;

i. at least two separate periods of practice learning;

j. one such period of practice learning involved social work with a materially different service user group to the other;

k. at least one such practice learning opportunity of not less than 560 hours was in a Local Social Services Authority and included experience of statutory social services' functions including safeguarding;

l. over the 1400 hours he or she demonstrated:
   i. they understand the professional role in relation to safeguarding children and adults
   ii. they have the skills to contribute appropriately to safeguarding interventions;

m. has had experience of working with, and learning from other professions to support working in a multi-disciplinary context and in integrated settings at least one such period included experience of working with other professions in the delivery of a social work service;

n. where a student is also employed as a social care worker whilst undertaking the degree programme, at least one of these periods was undertaken within a setting that is materially different to the setting within which he or she is employed.

7. Duration and lapse of approvals

(1) The Approval of a degree programme given under these Rules shall cease to have effect if –
   (a) it is withdrawn under Rule 13 or 14;
   (b) the institution makes a written request to Social Care Wales for the approval to be withdrawn and Social Care Wales accedes to that request; or

(2) The Approval of a degree programme given under these Rules shall cease to have effect if during any 12-month period, no student has been enrolled on the programme except for those students already registered with the programme for whom approval will remain so long as Rule 7.1(a) does not apply.

8. Modifications to degree programmes

(1) In the event of a public health or other national crisis which has affected, is affecting or is likely to affect the delivery of social work degree programmes, Social Care Wales may make modifications to the requirements for approval of degree programmes in social work to enable student progression, where the required level of competency has been assessed and confirmed;

(2) An institution must not make any of the following modifications to a degree programme without prior consent of Social Care Wales –

(a) an alteration to the programme specification or any partnership agreement, whether in their original forms as at the date of approval of the programme or as subsequently modified under this Rule;

(b) a material reduction in the ratio of programme resources (including staffing resources, physical resources and financial resources)to students undertaking the programme (or any route of the programme), as that ratio stood at the date of approval of the programme or as it stands having been subsequently modified under this Rule;

(c) a variation in the number of students for which the programme (or any route of the programme) is designed, as that design stood at the date of approval of the programme or as it stands having been subsequently modified under this Rule.

(3) An application for consent under this Rule must be made by the institution in writing on a form approved for the purpose by Social Care Wales and include such information as may be required.

(4) An application duly made under paragraph (3) shall be considered by a duly authorised officer of Social Care Wales. An application that is not duly made shall not be considered.

(5) A duly authorised officer of Social Care Wales must –

(a) where he or she considers that the proposed modification will not call into question the ability of the programme to continue to satisfy the requirements of Rule 5 or to continue to enable persons completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work, give consent to the modification and notify the applicant of that fact in writing;

(b) where he or she considers that, if the proposed modification is implemented in an altered form, it will not call into question the matters referred to in sub-paragraph (a), notify the applicant of the proposed alteration, and, if the applicant agrees in writing to the proposed alteration, give consent to the proposed modification as altered and notify the applicant of that fact in writing;

(c) refer the application to a designated senior officer where –

(i) in a case not falling within sub-paragraph (b), he or she considers that the proposed modification will call into question the matters referred to in sub-paragraph (a); or

(ii) the applicant has not agreed to a proposed alteration under sub-paragraph (b).

(6) Where a reference has been made under paragraph 5(c), the designated senior officer must make one of the following decisions as he or she thinks fit –

(a) refuse to consent to the proposed modification;

(b) give consent without requiring either the proposed modification to be implemented in an altered form or the applicant to produce an action plan;

(c) give consent but require the proposed modification to be implemented in an altered form;

(d) give consent but require the applicant to produce and implement an action plan with a view to ensuring that the implementation of the modification does not call into question the matters referred to in paragraph (5)(a);

(e) give consent but require the proposed modification to be altered as described in sub-paragraph (c) and require the applicant to produce and implement an action plan as described in sub-paragraph (d).

(7) The designated senior officer must –

(a) notify the applicant in writing of his or her decision; and

(b) where he or she has refused to consent to the proposed modification, required the modification to be implemented in an altered form that has not been agreed in writing with the applicant or required the applicant to produce an action plan –

(i) give his or her reasons in that notification; and

(ii) inform the applicant of the right of review under paragraph (9).

(8) A duly authorised officer of Social Care Wales may require the applicant to provide it with such further information as it may reasonably require at any time for the purposes of considering an application.

(9) A decision of a type referred to in paragraph (7)(b) –

(a) shall have effect 28 days after the day on which the applicant received notification of it if, during that period, the applicant has not referred the

decision, in writing, to the Review Committee for consideration under Rule 14; but

(b) shall not have effect if the applicant does so refer the decision; and any other decision under paragraph (6) shall have effect as soon as it is made.

PART III
Monitoring and Quality Assurance

9. Provision of information

(1) An institution must provide all prospective students with information on –

(a) its student selection process and criteria;

(b) routes to successful completion of the degree programme;

(c) any arrangements it has for the accreditation of prior experience and learning;

(d) its equal opportunities policies;

(e) its arrangements for disabled students; and

(f) how the institution meets the Welsh Language Standards, the degree programme's Welsh language policy, and arrangements for students to learn and be assessed through the medium of the Welsh language

(g) the requirement for social work students to be registered with Social Care Wales.

(2) An institution must produce an annual student handbook containing current information on –

(a) the programme specification;

(b) the assessment process;

(c) complaints, termination of a student's place on the programme and appeal and whistleblowing procedures; and

(d) the provision of transcripts of student attainment and future learning needs.

(3) An institution must provide Social Care Wales with the following information in the format, on the date, in respect of the time period, and at a level of detail, specified by Social Care Wales –

(a) number of applicants for places on the degree programme;

(b) number of offers made for places on the degree programme;

(c) number of student registrations on the degree programme;

(d) number of students at each assessment level of the degree programme who have –

- been referred (that is they have been required to resubmit a piece of work for further assessment);
- been deferred;
- temporarily withdrawn from the programme;
- permanently withdrawn from the programme;
- exited the programme with a qualification;
- failed the programme.

(e) a number of students offered entrance with a credit due to accreditation of prior experience and learning;

(f) number of late-starting practice learning placements.

(4) An institution must provide Social Care Wales annually with –

(a) the current student handbook; and

(b) a report summarising the outcome of all complaints investigated in the previous year under paragraph 4(7)(a) of the Schedule.

(5) An institution must –

(a) immediately notify Social Care Wales of any matter that may reasonably call into question a student's continued registration with Social Care Wales under Section 80(1)(b) of the Act;

(b) immediately notify Social Care Wales of any student whose place on the degree programme is terminated;

(c) provide Social Care Wales with a written report of any evaluation undertaken, or action plan produced, under the arrangements referred to in paragraph 4 of the Schedule (required policies and procedures);

(d) in addition to the requirement under paragraph (4)(b) provide Social Care Wales at regular intervals with details of decisions taken under the complaints procedure required under paragraph 4(7)(a) of the Schedule;

(e) provide Social Care Wales with a copy of any report produced under paragraph 7(2)(b) (quality assurance evaluations) or 7(2)(d) (external examiners' reports) of the Schedule;

(f) provide Social Care Wales with a copy of any action plan produced under paragraph 7(2)(f) of the Schedule.

(6) An institution must provide Social Care Wales with such other information as it may reasonably require for the purpose of considering whether a degree programme of the institution continues to meet the requirements under this Rule and Rule 5 and whether the degree programme will continue to enable persons completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6).

10. Reviews

(1) An institution must –

(a) invite Social Care Wales to participate in any review it proposes to undertake as part of the quality assurance process required under paragraph 8 of the Schedule;

(b) where Social Care Wales is to take part in such a review, liaise with it over the timing and methodology of the review;

(c) in the case of a review under paragraph 7 of the Schedule, address in it such matters as Social Care Wales may require, and permit Social Care Wales to contribute to any report arising from a review in which it has taken part;

(d) provide Social Care Wales with any report or action plan resulting from such a review; and

(e) co-operate with Social Care Wales in any review of the degree programme that Social Care Wales decides to undertake.

11. Inspectors

(1) Social Care Wales may appoint persons (referred to in these Rules as "inspectors") to inspect any places at which or institutions by which or under whose direction –

(a) a degree programme (or part of such a programme) is, or is proposed to be, given; or

(b) any examination is, or is proposed to be, held in connection with any other relevant course (or part of such a course)[5].

(2) No inspector may act as such in relation to:

[5] Section 114 of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 provides that 'relevant course' means (a) any course for which approval by Social Care Wales has been given, or is being sought, under Section 114; or (b) any training which a person admitted to the part for social workers of the register maintained by the Social Care Wales may be required to undergo after registration

(a) any place or institution at which he or she regularly gives instruction in any subject; or

(b) any place or institution with which the inspector has such a connection that a fair-minded observer would conclude that there would be a real possibility that he or she would be biased if he or she were to act as an inspector of the place or institution.

(3) Where Social Care Wales arranges for a place or institution to be inspected under this Rule, it must notify in writing the institution concerned of –

(a) the inspector; and

(b) the purpose of the inspection.

(4) Following an inspection, a duly authorised officer of Social Care Wales may request the inspector to provide a draft report on such matters relating to the nature and quality of –

(a) the instruction given, or to be given, and the facilities provided or to be provided, by the institution or place (including matters relating to quality assurance processes and course management) as Social Care Wales may have specified when making arrangements for the inspection or at a later date; and

(b) any examination held, or proposed to be held, in connection with any relevant course as Social Care Wales may have specified when making arrangements for the inspection or at a later date.

(5) Social Care Wales must on receipt of a draft report under paragraph (4) –

(a) send a copy of it to the institution; and

(b) notify the institution of a period, being not less than one month from the date of the notification, within which it may make observations on the draft report.

(6) Having taken into account any observations under paragraph (5), Social Care Wales must prepare a final report and send a copy of it to the institution.

(7) Social Care Wales must not take any action under these Rules in light of a report produced under this Rule before the end of the period specified in paragraph (5)(b).

(8) Social Care Wales may pay reasonable fees, allowances and expenses (being allowance and expenses that are similar to those payable to the staff of Social Care Wales) to inspectors who are not members of Social Care Wales's staff, taking into account the length of any inspection undertaken or to be undertaken, the time taken or likely to be taken to prepare any draft report and

the complexity of the issues to be considered or likely to be considered in connection with an inspection.

(9) Social Care Wales may treat an inspector as a member of Social Care Wales's staff for the purpose of Schedule 2 of the Act.

12. Focused investigations

(1) Subject to paragraph (2), Social Care Wales may undertake an investigation (referred to in these Rules as a "focused investigation") into an approved degree programme in any of the following cases –

(a) where it is of the opinion that the programme or the institution may no longer satisfy the requirements of Rule 5 or the degree programme may no longer allow persons completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work;

(b) where it is of the opinion that the programme is not being provided in compliance with any condition of its approval;

(c) where it is of the opinion that the institution has failed to seek consent to modify as required under Rule 8(1);

(d) where it is of the opinion that the institution has failed to implement a modification in a form altered under Rule 8 (or, on review, under Rule 14);

(e) where it is of the opinion that the institution has failed to implement an action plan required under Rule 8 (or, on review, under Rule 14);

(f) where it is of the opinion that the institution has failed to comply with any requirement under Rule 9;

(g) where it is of the opinion that the institution has failed to comply with any requirement under Rule 10.

(2) Social Care Wales must not proceed with a focused investigation unless:

(a) within thirty days of its decision to undertake the investigation, it has given the institution concerned written notice of that fact; and

(b) that notice specifies the reasons for the decision, the procedure that the investigation is intended to follow (including whether it is intended to involve scrutiny of documentation and interviews with persons connected with the degree programme) and the timescale over which it is intended to take place.

(3) The institution concerned must assist Social Care Wales in the conduct of the investigation.

(4) Following completion of the investigation, a duly authorised officer of Social Care Wales must –

(a) compile a report of the investigation including the reason why it was undertaken, its conduct and its findings;

(b) express in the report his or her opinion as to at least one of the following:

(i) whether or not the degree programme and the institution satisfy the requirements of Rule 5;

(ii) whether or not the programme will allow persons completing it to attain the required standards of proficiency in relevant social work;

(iii) whether or not the programme is being provided in accordance with any condition of its approval; and

(c) provide the institution with a copy of the report.

(5) Where the duly authorised officer expresses a negative option under sub-paragraph (4)(b), a designated senior officer of Social Care Wales must consider the matters raised by the report in accordance with paragraph (6).

(6) The designated senior officer must –

(a) invite observations from the institution concerned about the report;

(b) having taken those observations into account, make his or her own finding about the matter or matters in respect of which the duly authorised officer expressed a negative opinion (and for the purposes of these Rules, where his or her finding concurs with that opinion the programme is referred to as being “in breach”); and

(c) inform the institution of those findings in writing.

(7) Where the degree programme is in breach, the designated senior officer may, in any of the following circumstances, recommend to the Inspection Committee that an inspection should take place under Rule 13 –

(a) where he or she has been unable to agree an action plan with the institution to remedy the breach;

(b) where he or she is of the opinion that the institution has failed to implement such an action plan within a timescale specified by the officer;

(c) where he or she is of the opinion that it would not be possible to remedy the breach within an acceptable timescale;

(d) where he or she is of the opinion that the institution failed to assist the duly authorised officer of Social Care Wales in the conduct of a focused investigation,

and where the officer has so recommended, he or she must notify the institution of that fact and his or her reasons for referral.

13. Inspections directed by the Inspection Committee

(1) The circumstances in which an inspection of an approved degree programme may be undertaken under this Rule are as follows –

(a) following a recommendation under Rule 12(7);

(b) where on more than one occasion a focused investigation has resulted in a finding under Rule 12(6)(b) that a programme is in breach;

(c) where the Inspection Committee is of the opinion that there has been a failure to comply with a requirement imposed under paragraph (3)(b)(ii) or Rule 14(1)(c) (reviews of decisions);

(d) where the Inspection Committee is of the opinion that there is a real risk that the degree programme would not enable a person completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work.

(2) The Inspection Committee shall –

(a) have the function of deciding whether or not an inspection is to take place;

(b) if it decides that an inspection is to take place –

(i) notify the institution in writing of its decision specifying its reasons, the procedure the inspection is intended to follow and the timescale over which it is intended to take place; and

(ii) appoint a sub-committee to carry out the inspection, and require that sub-committee to report to it on the inspection;

(iii) the sub-committee must have at least two members (including at least one officer of Social Care Wales), and may include persons appointed under Rule 11

(iv) no member of a sub-committee appointed may also take part in the proceedings of the inspection committee.

(c) following receipt of the sub-committee's report –

(i) provide the institution with a copy; and

(ii) notify the institution of the period, being not less than one month from the date on which the institution received the copy, within which it may submit observations to the Inspection Committee on the report.

(3) Where an inspection has taken place, the Inspection Committee must –

(a) decide, having taken into account the report of the sub-committee and any observations of the institution under paragraph (2)(c), whether, in its opinion, the degree programme and the institution is or is not meeting the requirements of Rule 5, whether the programme will or will not enable persons completing it to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work and whether it is or is not being carried on in accordance with any condition of its approval; and

(b) where the committee is of a negative opinion about any of the matters mentioned in sub-paragraph (a), either –

(i) withdraw the approval of the degree programme granted under these Rules; or

(ii) impose requirements as to the future conduct of the degree programme.

(4) The Inspection Committee must notify the institution in writing of a decision under paragraph (3), together with its reasons and a statement setting out the institution's right of review under Rule 14.

(5) Where the Inspection Committee makes a decision under paragraph (3)(b), the decision shall –

(i) have effect 28 days after the day on which the applicant was notified of it if, during that period, the applicant has not referred the decision, in writing, to the Review Committee for consideration under Rule 14; but

(ii) not have effect if the applicant does so refer the decision.

PART IV
Review of Decisions

14. Review of Decisions

(1) Upon a reference duly made under Rule 4, 8 or 13, the matter in question shall be considered by a Review Committee which must in accordance with this Rule –

(a) in the case of a reference under Rule 4 (consideration of applications), make one of the decisions referred to in Rule 4(3)(a) or (b), and for the purposes of this sub-paragraph that Rule shall apply as if any reference to the designated senior officer were a reference to the Review Committee;

(b) in the case of a reference under Rule 8 (modifications to degree programmes), make one of the decisions referred to in Rule 8(5), and for the purposes of this sub-paragraph that Rule shall apply as if any reference to the designated senior officer were a reference to the Review Committee;

(c) in the case of a reference under Rule 13 (inspections), make a decision on the matters referred to in Rule 13(3)(a) and if it is of a negative opinion as to any of those matters, make one of the decisions referred to in Rule 13(3)(b), and for the purposes of this sub-paragraph that Rule shall apply as if any reference to the designated senior officer were a reference to the Review Committee.

(2) A Review Committee must –

(a) consist of a Chair and two other persons, all of whom must be members of Social Care Wales; and

(b) on a reference under Rule 13, not include any person who was a member of the Inspection Committee or subcommittee that considered the matter under that Rule.

(3) A Review Committee –

(a) must consider the review within thirty working days of the receipt by Social Care Wales of the institution's written notice referring the matter for review under this Rule, or such longer period as the committee may reasonably specify before the expiry of the thirty days just referred to;

(b) may hear oral or written submissions before making its decision; and

(c) must notify the institution concerned of its decision within five working days of the day on which it was made and provide it with written reasons for its decision within twenty working days of the day on which it was made.

Signed on behalf of Social Care Wales

Chair of Social Care Wales
25 October 2018

THE SCHEDULE
Criteria for the Approval and Quality Assurance of Degree Programmes in Social work

1. Partnership working

(1) For a programme to be approved by Social Care Wales:

(a) Evidence will be required of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) and employer(s) of social workers sharing responsibility for the development, delivery and management of a social work degree. Such evidence would include a formal partnership arrangement between at least one Director of Social Services and the HEI[6]. All such arrangements will specify the resources (including sufficient practice learning opportunities) to be provided in order to support the delivery and management of the degree programme.

(b) The institution must involve people with care and support needs and their carers, and representatives of employers of social workers in all stages of the development, management and delivery of the degree programme (including the selection and assessment of students).

(2) The degree programme may also enter into further written partnerships with other employers of social workers in the course of their business or in the exercise of their functions.

2. Resource provision

(1) The institution must allocate sufficient resources to the degree programme to ensure that:

(a) there are sufficient qualified and experienced persons (the majority of which should be social workers) contributing to the degree programme so that all students may have sufficient guided, structured and assessed academic and practice learning[7];

(b) students are able to learn and be assessed to the same standard through the medium of the Welsh language;

(c) students have adequate access to appropriate and current learning materials;

[6] The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 Part 8 Code of Practice on the Role of the Director of Social Services (Social Services Functions) indicates: "The director should promote collaborative workforce learning through networks and relationships with other bodies. This includes working with education and training providers, such as Higher Education bodies, to ensure they are able to deliver relevant and effective training and support a competent workforce." (paragraph 75)

[7] Programmes will need to ensure they have access to personnel with appropriate expertise to deliver all aspects of the qualifying programme. Approved programmes will need to indicate the professional expertise of staff contributing to the programme, a majority of whom must be qualified and experienced social workers. It is expected as part of their continuing professional development such staff have opportunity to undertake relevant learning and development activity in order to support their currency in contemporary social work practice.

(d) students have access to a learning environment that can accommodate varied learning models and methods[8]

(e) all those people involved in the provision of the degree programme, including people with care and support needs and their carers, receive induction and ongoing training to enable them to contribute effectively to the programme and update their knowledge and skills in relation to the training of social workers.

(2) The Institution must, through its partnership agreement or agreements and otherwise, have sufficient resources to ensure that –

(a) students have sufficient practice learning opportunities for the purpose of Rule 6(2)(h); and

(b) there are sufficient practice educators to assess students in each period of practice learning.

3. Selection of students for the degree programme

(1) Before admitting an applicant to a degree programme, the institution must undertake such assessment of him or her as will allow it to be reasonably certain that[9]:

(a) the applicant has the potential to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6) upon completion of the course[10];

(b) the applicant has sufficient relevant experience of social care that they can demonstrate the values and basic skills that correspond to those generally expected of social workers;[11]

(c) the applicant has read and understood the Code of Professional Practice for Social Care issued by Social Care Wales under Section 112 of the Act;

(d) the applicant has communication and application of number skills equivalent to Level 2 or higher as specified by the Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales; and

(e) the applicant is able to understand and communicate effectively in written and spoken English or Welsh.

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[8] Approved programmes will need to be able to confirm they have access to a physical learning environment conducive to a range of teaching and learning approaches.
[9] Assessment may include a range of approaches but must include an individual interview.
[10] Approved programmes will need clear entry criteria for applicants following a range of routes into higher education. They will need to demonstrate entry requirements are sufficiently robust for the academic level of study and for the professional role.
[11] Approved programmes must set requirements for relevant experience of social care of not less than 360 hours practice in a paid or voluntary capacity, apart from in occasional and exceptional circumstances when the experience can be shown to have been met through other ways. For example, as a person with lived experience of social work/social care services.

(2) The assessment referred to in paragraph (1) must include an individual face to face interview .

(3) Before admitting an applicant to a degree programme, the institution:

(a) must satisfy itself as to an applicant's medical fitness and character in terms of their suitability to work in social work;

(b) if it is possible for a certificate to be issued to an applicant under Part V of the Police Act 1997 (criminal record certificates), must require the applicant to produce to it the most comprehensive certificate that may be issued under that Part;

(c) must satisfy itself that where the applicant is required to be registered under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the number allocated to that applicant by the Disclosure and Barring Service has been provided;

(d) must inform students who wish to become social workers of the requirement to be registered with Social Care Wales under Section 80 (1) (b) of the Act; and

(e) must satisfy itself that the student is so registered.[12]

4. Required policies and procedures

(1) The institution must have policies that meet the legal requirements of both equalities and Welsh language legislation. They must also meet the requirements of these Rules.

(2) The institution must promote and respect equal opportunities and human rights in all aspects of the delivery of the degree programme including (but not limited to):

(a) the recruitment of staff for purposes of the programme;

(b) the selection of students for the programme;

(c) the delivery of the programme;

(d) the assessment of students on the programme.

(3) The institution must use its best endeavours to protect any person connected with the delivery of the degree programme from mistreatment in any form.

[12] An approved programme must demonstrate how it will satisfy itself that students are registered and must have systems to take action against students who fail to register with Social Care Wales. For guidance on selection and Social Care Wales's registration see *Suitability for Social Work: guidance for social work programme partnerships about student social worker fitness to practise* Social Care Wales 2021

(4) The institution must set up and comply with arrangements to evaluate its compliance with its equal opportunities, anti-discriminatory practice and Welsh language policies

(5) The institution must ensure that under the arrangements mentioned in sub-paragraph 4 it will:

(a) develop and follow an action plan in any case where it is at risk of not complying with the requirements under sub-paragraph (1) or any of the responsibilities referred to in sub-paragraph (2); and

(b) audit the Welsh language skills of students and record the numbers who wish to undertake all or part of the degree programme through the medium of Welsh.

(6) The institution must set up, follow and publicise procedures for:

(a) the consideration of complaints related to the degree programme;

(b) determining the suitability of students and the termination of a student's place on the degree programme should they be found unsuitable for social work;

(c) appeals by students on the degree programme against assessment decisions made about them; and

(d) whistleblowing by students.

(7) The procedures under paragraph (6) must specify (as appropriate):

(a) the timescales within which decisions under the procedures are to be taken;

(b) the persons by whom decisions under the procedures are to be taken;

(c) the possible range of outcomes of decisions under the procedures;

(d) that written records of decisions under the procedures will be kept, including the reasons for them;

(e) that the institution is committed to taking decisions under the procedures fairly; and

(f) the process of appeal against decisions taken under the procedures.

5. Learning criteria

(1) The institution must provide Social Care Wales with a programme specification that:

(a) meets the most recent QAA's Quality Code on such specifications and which demonstrates how the degree programme will enable students to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6).

(b) will provide each student with the opportunity to develop a professional identity as a social worker through a coherent and integrated learning experience.

(2) Without prejudice to sub-paragraph (1), the institution must ensure:

(a) that each student is offered approximately 1,200 hours of guided, structured and assessed academic learning which is sufficient to provide him or her with the opportunity to meet the National Occupational Standards for Social Work;

(b) the programme content meets the requirements of the subject knowledge and subject-specific and other skills described in the Subject Benchmark Statements for Social Work;

(c) each student is offered opportunities to develop social work practice skills in both the 1,200 hours of guided, structured and assessed academic learning and through assessed practice learning opportunities as specified in the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6);

(d) at least one such practice learning opportunity of not less than 560 hours was in a Local Social Services Authority and included experience of statutory social services' functions including safeguarding;

(e) that there is provision for students to learn through the medium of the Welsh language;

(f) that learning and teaching in both the institution and practice settings reflects contemporary legislation, social policy and legislative developments relevant to Wales. This will include the active promotion of equality and human rights, including the promotion of anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice;

(g) that students can identify, understand and respond to issues relating to the statutory functions of safeguarding and protection of both children and adults at risk;

(h) that students understand research methods and can make appropriate use of research in decision making and professional judgement about practice and in the evaluation of outcomes;

(i) that students can identify, understand, and respond to issues which are specific to or characteristic of the needs of Wales, its languages, legislation, culture, geography and institutions and the distinctive position of the Welsh language;

(j) that on completion of the Degree programme, students will receive a transcript indicating their attainments and future learning needs (a "student transcript").

6. Assessment criteria

(1) The institution must, in the assessment of students, meet the following requirements –

(a) ensure that each student must satisfy the assessment criteria at each academic level of the degree programme before proceeding to the next level;

(b) without prejudice to paragraph 4(6)(c), ensure that at each assessment level, each student is assessed by an Examination Board, which shall then decide, in accordance with the structure for the social work degree whether the student has met the assessment requirements for that level;

(c) ensure that the Examination Board satisfies itself, at final assessment, each student has attained the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6);

(d) ensure that the Examination Board includes at least one external examiner, the Chair of the Practice Assessment Panel and a representative of employers of social workers;

(e) ensure that the Examination Board and Practice Assessment Panel have agreed and current terms of reference;

(f) ensure the degree programme has a Practice Assessment Panel (made up of staff of the degree programme, representatives of employers of social workers and people with care and support needs or carers) to manage the process of practice assessment at each level, moderate practice educator recommendations, and make recommendations accordingly on each student to the Examination Board;

(g) undertake an interim review with the practice educator of each student's progress during any period of assessed practice learning greater than 280 hours;

(h) have systems to identify students whose practice learning indicates that they may not be able to meet the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6) by the end of their training, and take appropriate action;

(i) ensure that the competence in social work practice of each student will be assessed in accordance with the requirements for practice learning referred to in Rule 6(2)(h);

(j) ensure that all students are assessed in each period of practice learning by a registered and experienced social worker who is, or is training to be, a qualified practice educator;

(k) ensure that where the designated practice educator is not also providing on-site, day to day management of the student that the person who holds that responsibility is provided with appropriate and timely preparation for the role;

(l) ensure that the student's practice will be assessed by a minimum of ten observations of direct work with people in need of care and support at a ratio of approximately one observation for 140 hours of practice learning. Seven of the direct observations must be made by the designated practice educator, the others by a registered social worker;

(m) ensure that the assessment of students draws on a range of assessment methods suited to the range of knowledge and skills required;

(n) ensure that there is provision for students to be assessed through the medium of the Welsh language;

(o) ensure that any arrangements for the accreditation of prior learning and experience allow for recognition of up to a maximum of 50 percent of the programme, provided all requirements are met in full[13].

7. Quality assurance criteria

(1)

(a) The institution must set up and comply with arrangements for the monitoring and review at appropriate intervals of all aspects of the degree programme (referred to in these Rules as the "quality assurance process").

(b) The quality assurance process must involve, as well as Higher Education and employer staff of the degree programme, other persons (including people with care and support needs, carers and students) connected with the delivery of the programme.

(2) Without prejudice to the general requirement in sub-paragraph (1), the institution must ensure that under the quality assurance process it will:

(a) at least annually, seek and respond to the views of students, people with care and support needs, and carers, staff involved in academic and

[13] Approved programmes should be able to show how all programme outcomes and requirements have been met in both theory and practice by the end of the programme through a mix of prior learning and programme attendance. Students cannot be exempted from meeting any programme requirement.

practice teaching and assessment, and employers of social workers about the degree programme;

(b) at least annually, evaluate in a written report the performance of the degree programme;

(c) appoint examiners who are independent of the institution (referred to in these Rule as “external examiners”) to evaluate whether students on the degree programme are likely to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6);

(d) require the external examiners to produce an annual report on the results of their evaluation under sub-paragraph (c) above;

(e) in light of a report under sub-paragraph (b) or (d), take such action as is necessary to ensure that the degree programme continues to meet the requirements of this Schedule and will continue to enable persons completing the programme to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6); and

(f) produce and implement an action plan in any case where the institution considers that the degree programme is at risk of not continuing to meet the requirements of this Schedule or of not continuing to enable persons completing the programme to attain the required standard of proficiency in relevant social work (Rule 6).

(3) The institution must provide Social Care Wales with details of a member of staff who Social Care Wales may correspond with about the operation of its quality assurance process.

Gofal Cymdeithasol Cymru
Social Care Wales

CYFARFOD / MEETING	**Board meeting**				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE		**CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC**		
	☐		☒		
DYDDIAD / DATE	**29.04.21**				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	**10**				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/14	**Information Security Management System update**				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Andrew Lycett, Director of Finance, Strategic Planning and Resources				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:					
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS					
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES / BUSINES PLAN ACTIVITY	Ensuring continuous improvement and transformation of how we deliver the work of Social Care Wales. Maintaining and adapting our core activities in light of COVID - 19. • Ensure continuous improvement on how we work through our people plan, our 3-year ICT strategy and our communication and engagement plan • Ensure effective financial and governance controls, systems and accountability • Maintain compliance with statutory organisational requirements.				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	**CYMERADWYAETH / APPROVAL**	**DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER**	**DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE**	**TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION**	**CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE**
	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Members are invited to note and **approve** that:				

	Oversight of Cyber resilience arrangements are added to the Audit and Risk Committee's delegated responsibilities and Terms of Reference are updated to reflect this change. The Chairs Co-ordinating Group **consider** and advise the Chair on future options for ensuring that cyber resilience and information systems knowledge is held within the overall skill set of the Board.
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED **MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION; QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**	Social Care Wales has **achieved recertification** for the BSI Standard: Whilst the recertification audit identified a number of non-conformities with against the standard It is important to note that at no time had the non-conformities identified resulted in a loss of personal data or systems from any cyber or system failures. A programme of continuous improvement actions is being led by the Information Governance Group to address the audit findings. The activities of the Group will be reported as well as all future received ISO audit reports by the Audit and Risk Committee if the above recommendation is agreed by Board.
ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	

Information Security Management System update

1. Context

1.1 All government bodies are required to have appropriate, effective, Information Security Management Systems (ISMS) in place.

1.2 Social Care Wales complies with this mandatory requirement through ISO 27001 certification. We are externally audited on a triennial basis against the standard with light touch external reviews in the intervening years, by the awarding body, British Standards Institution (BSI). This both maintains our certification and provides an important third level external assurance to the Board of the effectiveness of the controls and assurance framework within the area of data and systems management.

1.3 The ISO 27001 Standard specifies the requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining, and continually improving an information security management system within the context of the organisation. It also includes requirements for the assessment and treatment of information security risks tailored to the needs of the organisation.

1.4 This paper is to confirm that Social Care Wales has achieved the recertification of its ISMS following the triennial recertification visit.

1.5 The initial BSI audit took place on 3-4 February. This visit highlighted a number of non-conformities classifying five as major and five as minor. Failure to address the major non-conformities would have resulted in the loss of certification against the standard. A re-visit was undertaken on 12 April to assess the actions taken to address the major non-conformities ahead of determining whether to recertify the organisation against the Standard.

1.6 It is important to note that at no time had the non-conformities identified resulted in a loss of personal data or systems from any cyber or system failures. The observations related to wider management and assurance activities having not been fully operational.

1.7 A report was prepared for the Audit and Risk Committee on 11 March 2021 reporting the findings of the audit and an action plan to remedy the non-conformities. Item 6 of the of the Audit and Risk meeting minutes records the discussion regarding the ISMS, and is included on the board portal for information.

1.8 The Information Governance Group has been reconvened to oversee the ISMS arrangements having not met during the covid-19 pandemic, when our focus has been on business continuity and establishing new working arrangements to support operational delivery.

1.9 The findings of the external auditor (EA) and the newly commissioned internal audit (IA) service will be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee at the

June meeting. The workplan of the Information Governance Group will also be shared to provide assurance over activities intended to strengthen our ISMS. A summary of the findings by category and planned closure of issue is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

			Planned to complete by end of				
Non-Conformity Categorisation	**Issues Raised**	**Closed**	**April**	**May**	**June**	**July**	**Oct**
EA Major	5	5*					1*
EA Minor	5	2		2	1		
IA Major	0	n/a					
IA Minor	5	0		4		1	
IA Observations	14	1		8	3	1	1*

*The requirement to re-establish an ISO 27001 compliant internal audit has been achieved for the current year through a one-off contract. A procurement process will be required later in the year to establish an ongoing three-year contract for this work.

2. Resource implications

2.1 A specific ISO 27001 compliant internal audit service is required to be re-established. Based upon the costs of the single year service recently procured this is expected to be in the order of £5,000 per annum.

2.2 Costs will be incurred to introduce new software for systems issue log analysis and moving disaster recovery to the cloud. This may result in up to £15,000 additional annual cost.

2.3 Other resource implications had already been considered within the draft budget setting ahead of the BSI audit in terms of strengthening our approach to digital governance and enhancing the ICT team resources.

2.4 Further compliance costs will be incurred when Social Care Wales seeks Cyber Essentials Plus certification as part of our commitment to continuous improvement. This will follow a detailed gap analysis to be undertaken in the second quarter of 2021/22.

3. Risk considerations

3.1 The loss of certification against the ISO 27001 Standard may result in reputational damage and will reduce the level of assurance the organisation has over data and cyber management at a time where these matters are growing in profile.

3.2 There is a growing risk in the area of cyber resilience. The Audit and Risk Committee will oversee the follow up of actions resulting from the audit reports.

3.3 It is recommended that oversight of Cyber resilience arrangements are added to the Audit and Risk Committee's delegated responsibilities and Terms of Reference are updated to reflect this change.

4. Engagement

4.1 The Information Governance Group has reviewed and revised its terms of reference, widening the scope of membership to ensure all of our activities are represented.

4.2 An exercise to review our 'interested parties' to ensure that all information and data sharing relationships are duly considered is also being undertaken and will be considered at the Groups April meeting.

4.3 The Board may wish to consider future arrangements for ensuring that cyber resilience and information systems knowledge is held within the overall skill set of the Board.

5. Impact

5.1 The maintenance of a resilient and effective ISMS is essential for the protection of our systems and data. It is a key part of the overall control environment operated within Social Care Wales and in maintaining public confidence and meeting our legal obligations.

Gofal Cymdeithasol Cymru
Social Care Wales

CYFARFOD / MEETING	**Board meeting**				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE			**CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC**	
				√	
DYDDIAD / DATE	**29.04.21**				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	**11**				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/15	**Business Plan 2020-21: Quarter 4 update**				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Sue Evans, Chief Executive				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:					
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1 – Business Plan Progress: 12 months update – performance commentary including risks Appendix 2 – Budget Report for the period to 31 March 2021 Appendix 3 – HR end of year dashboard (supplementing Board portal paper)				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES / BUSINES PLAN ACTIVITY	All Business plan activities.				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	**CYMERADWYAETH / APPROVAL**	**DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER**	**DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE**	**TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION**	**CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE**
	×	☐	☐	☐	×
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Members are asked to **scrutinise** and **approve** the progress against the Business Plan 2020-21 at the end of year stage.				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED **MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION;**	This performance report provides an update against: • progress against all priority themes including exception reporting of amber and red activities in Appendix 1 • our financial position at 12 months in Appendix 2 • a high-level performance dashboard of our end of year HR report in Appendix 3				

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

Business Plan 2020-21: Quarter 4 update

1. Purpose of report and recommendation

1.1 This report provides Members with the quarter 4 progress against our 2020-21 business plan.

1.2 An update on progress against all priority themes is provided in appendix 1 including exception reporting of amber and red activities. Members are asked to consider and approve the progress against the Business Plan 2020-21 at the end of year stage.

1.3 Whilst significant progress has been made in the majority of business plan activities; there is a recognition that the pandemic is having a significant, continued impact on the sector.

1.4 In the January Board meeting there were a number of business plan activities at quarter 3 that were identified as carrying forward into the next financial year. The pandemic is having a significant, continued impact on the sector and particularly their ability to undertake the level of engagement required on our work to ensure that it is truly co-produced with the sector for the sector. This approach has been the basis of some of our most successful work in recent years and so it was decided to draw back engagement unless it is absolutely essential. Therefore, these activities are still highlighted as amber so that these can be carried forward into the Business Plan 21/22 which is being discussed at the Board meeting.

2. Context

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

3. Performance against business plan as at twelve months

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

	Activities	On track	Requires additional support	Major concerns	To start
Business plan targets	52	39	13	0	-
% as at 12 months		**75%**	**25%**	**0%**	**-**

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

Strategic Plan and discussions that have been had with the Board during development sessions.

3.3 The risks identified within the performance reporting continue in line with our current risk management policy. The Strategic Risk Register is reviewed by the Executive Management Team (EMT) on a monthly basis. From 21/22 onwards the performance reporting will reflect the changes to our approach to risk management follow a review of our policy in quarter 1 in 21/22.

4. Role of the Board

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

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

4.2 Throughout the year the Board have received quarterly performance reporting on the progress of delivery against our Business Plan 21/22. As this is the end of the year report some questions for the Board to consider:

- To what extent does the narrative provide you with an indication of progress as at the end of the year?
- What implications does this have on the business plan 21/22?
- Are there particular areas which Members would like to highlight for inclusion within our performance commentary which is included within our Statutory Annual Accounts for 20/21?

Business Plan 2020-21 - Quarter 4 update

1. What is in this report?

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

It is set out to include:

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

   Risk scoring:

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

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

6. Our budget position as at the end of March 2021
7. A high-level overview of our end of year HR report for 20/21

Priority theme 1 - Social Care and Early Years Workforce

Performance Indicators	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Comparator / Target
Processing times of applications*	68%	88%	92%	92%	90% within 5 days
Number of outstanding applications	1494	704	507	539	Less than 600 open at any one time
Eligible students receive a bursary with a placement provided	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%	100%
No. enrolled for the digital version of the Social Care Worker card	28,450	29,852	31,257	31,257	30,000 by year end

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

Performance Commentary

Most activities are green at the end of the financial year with those rated amber having clear reasons for why they have not progressed as anticipated. Most activities have delivered the outputs envisaged at the start of the planning process, whilst others will continue as activities as part of next year's business plan.

We need to keep an eye on the timely completion of the safeguarding materials, as we are also reporting to the All Wales Procedures Board against progress.

We continue to be pleased with the sector response to the peer support arrangements in place and further development of this area of work is being considered by 21/22 with a request for additional internal capacity in position. We are negotiating that the lead of the Public Health Wales (PHW) /Improvement Cymru Cwtch programme be transferred to Social Care Wales which will allow for better alignment across the peer support offer.

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 4
Extend professional registration to adult care home workers and new managers	We are still not communicating the registration message, but the project concept form has been signed off, with the Project Initiation document (PID) drafted and awaiting EMT approval. We will be reviewing our COVID measures this month with a decision required on when they may be amended/ended. The status of this activity remains as amber as we are not on track to register 1,500 adult care home workers in year one. We are around half way there with 772 adult care home workers registered.	
Provide recognition for the workforce	We came very close to being able to launch the Care Worker Card before the end of March, with all communications materials prepared and agreed. However,	

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 4
through a Social Care Card	the March launch was dependent on all the development work to Carreg being done to time and then being able to test the whole sign-up system rigorously enough to be confident that everything would work as it should. In the end, the launch had to be postponed, as there was not enough time to do the necessary testing and analyze the feedback. The RAG status is therefore amber but it is highly likely that the card can be launched before the end of April, as testing has been arranged internally and externally. Feedback from the testing should come back in time to make any revisions to the IT system and communications o make an April launch possible. Messages have already been given to the sector that the validity of the current card has been extended by a month to the end of April.	
Develop a digital learning and network approach to enable ongoing skills and learning development - to be piloted in key areas of demand including: dementia; safeguarding procedures; peer networks;LINs; national learning programmes	• Safeguarding animation nearing completion. • Safeguarding e learning modules are on track for completion in June • Principles and Values work is continuing and due for completion in October • Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) modules being developed to create a suite of IPC resources in partnership with HEIW. • Progressing the scoping of a possible digital learning management system to ensure any solution meets short- and long-term needs.	
Develop and embed evidence informed practice and approaches	Mapping and Connecting Project underway (mapping local authority research and evidence resources and activity), 15 local authorities engaged with so far. Design of topic guide for connecting with academics and research centers completed - to commence in Q1. Development of the Developing Evidence Enriched Practice (DEEP) curriculum content and collaboration with key academics continues. Development of long-term evidence offer completed - implementation from 2021-22 onwards. Activity marked amber due to decision about our future digital platforms - delivering a digital solution to support our evidence and data offer now included in 2021/22 Business Plan.	

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

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

Key Performance Indicators	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Comparator / Target
Number of fitness to practise cases open	189	240	249	257	249 Last quarter
Number of active cases open longer than 18 months	26 (13.7%)	29 (12%)	26 (10.5%)	30 (11.7%)	Less than 10%
No of final hearings held	0	4 (22 cases awaiting final FTP hearing)	**4**	14	4 Last quarter
WeCare campaign data	Social Media: Engagements =30,533 Followers = 8,939 Posts = 373	Social Media: Engagements =13,017 Followers = 9,681 Posts = 307	Engagements = 5,387 Followers = 4,738 Website visitors = 39,547 Jobs portal visitors = 25,373	Engagements = 3,541 Followers = 5,430 Website visitors = 78,938 Jobs portal visitors = 46,393	Baseline figures to be established for 20/21

Performance Commentary

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

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

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 4
Provide expert advice and national induction, apprenticeship and qualification frameworks for roles across the sector to ensure high quality and test models for future approaches	Social Services Practitioner delivery model - work delayed as a result of Local Authority capacity reduced from COVID-19. Monthly workshops held for employers on new All Wales Induction Framework for social care managers. Early years and childcare induction framework workbooks published. Rapid Recruitment pilot initiated, Introduction to Social Care Course delivered to 3 cohorts of learners. Webinars delivered to groups of employers, employability schemes and local authorities. Learning providers supported via on-line workshops and master classes.	
Fitness to practice service and associated hearings to support protection of the public and to support the provision of high-quality services	The number of open investigations increased across this quarter by around 10% but has dropped back to an increase of 9 cases on the previous quarter. The number of open cases waiting for a hearing is 9 - all are over 18 months with one part heard and due to be re-scheduled. This is 30% of the total of cases over 18 months.	
Support the embedding of outcomes focused practice	This activity is amber due to the underspend in the budget which is being carried forward into 21/22. Feedback from the practitioners is that the national mentors network has really supported their practice during the pandemic. The train the trainer programme has adapted. On-line delivery of collaborative communications skills programme has provided significant ‘shadowing’ opportunities for trainers to develop their skills. A resource for domiciliary care managers and case recording has been completed and both had a soft launch at the National Commissioning Board domiciliary care celebration event. It is being tested with providers. The joint strategic programme balancing risks, rights and responsibilities started in March 21 with senior managers from Aneurin Bevan health board and the Gwent Local Authorities. The programme will continue in 21/22.	

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 4
Learning from COVID-19 and sharing practice that 'what makes a difference'	Activity has been marked as amber as we have pared back our original plans for this quarter due to both internal and external pressures related to the pandemic. We are preparing material for one Accolade winner (Baby in Mind), as well as guidance on how to scope evidence on a new or promising practice for future work. We are now focusing on planning activity for 21/22 which draws on the learning from this year and the new Evidence Offer.	
To take forward some priority areas of the workforce strategy including: refocussing SCWWDP	All grant applications have been approved but are yet to be formally issued to the regions due to a delay in agreeing the funding levels within the grant. Regions are aware of this delay and the fact that the levels they have applied for are indicative at this stage until receipt of the formal grant offer letter External commissioned provider selected to undertake the review of SCWWDP in 21/22.	Amber for the SCWWDP grant issue but green for the SCWWDP review

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

Priority theme 3: Social Care and Early Years Systems Leaders

Key Performance Indicators	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Comparator / Target
Visitors to data portal	April - 4,048 May - 1,925 June - 3,928	July - 1844 Aug - 2,619 Sept - 2,244	Oct - 3,836 Nov - 3,696 Dec - 2,760	Jan - 4,206 Feb - 5,569 March - 3,776	
Publish a vision for social care data	n/a	To be published in October	Published		Quarter 2
Data on national leadership programmes	n/a	n/a	n/a	An annual update will be available from the end of June '21 once the returns have been received	Annual update 2019-2020

Performance Commentary

The highlight for data was the publication of the Statement of Strategic Intent for Social Care Data in Wales by the Deputy Minister, following consultation with a range of stakeholders. Work on a roadmap and on progressing five quick wins for the data strategy also progressed and is due for completion in quarter 1 of 21/22. We completed the procurement process to appoint a new supplier to host and develop the data portal and projections platform from 2021/22 onwards. We have completed the design of a new approach to collect social care workforce data from Local Authorities and commissioned services which will be launched in the new financial year.

Development meetings with Welsh Government regarding the Performance and Improvement Framework continued in this quarter. We also published the results of our project with Health and Care Research Wales to develop research priorities for care for older people. We also produced an interim report on the Research Strategy for our Improvement Committee in February.

The future direction of the Care and Support at Home programme still needs to be confirmed and we await conversations with Welsh Government colleagues as to how support for this part of the sector is to be managed in the next 12 months. In the meantime Community Resilience progresses well as part of the programme.

Our work in supporting Welsh Government's work on the improving outcomes for vulnerable children and their families is progressing well and will run to end of May '21. The main driver currently is to complete the 30 or so sector leader interviews on vision and direction for the support for vulnerable children and their families. This will be considered further once a new administration is in place. The lead for the work on masterclasses has been transferred to Cascade as it compliments their existing programme of work.

The Health and Social Care Compassionate Leadership Principles are now jointly published on both HEIW and our websites.

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 4
Learn from the impact evaluation of our Care and Support at Home partnership to outline options on how we can further support working in collaboration	1) A task and finish group drafted recommendations for a steering group aims, purpose and activities. Further progress was halted in autumn 2020 due to operational pressures of partners due to the pandemic. Progressing the work will be considered in late spring. 2) Final report and framework developed; Resourceful Communities Partnership group has agreed terms of reference and growing cross-sector membership	
Drive national priorities with key partners to support the workforce through learning and development on how they work with people living with dementia	We have delayed the publication of the dementia reablement resource as this is part of the next phase of the digital learning work. Evaluation of the Ask us About Dementia pilot has begun, with Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Cymru undertaking the initial interviews and focus groups. We have been an active partner with the Get There Together project. The project has produced video resources to help people with dementia feel confident to get back out into the community. This has now been published and received national media attention. We reviewed our COVID-19 specific resources to ensure they are up to date with a small focus group.	
Play a key role in driving the use of research and intelligence into planning and service design and delivery. (This will include listening to individuals and their carers and will also support implementation of the performance and improvement framework)	Findings from this project have informed next year's activities, as part of our 'Understanding Evidence' and 'Research and 'Data – Strategy and Leadership'. The Using Evidence Steering Group met in this quarter. Development meetings with Welsh Government regarding the Performance Improvement Framework continue. Activity ragged as amber due to pause with provider engagement which is due to recommence in the first quarter of the next financial year.	

Priority 4 - Our own workforce

Key Performance Indicators	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	Comparator / Target
Staff sickness levels	2.46%	2.51%	2.27%	2.38%	3%
Timely laying of Statutory Annual Accounts	N/A	Laid 31 July 2020	-	-	August 2020
Internal audits receive substantial assurance	N/A	N/A	2 Moderate 1 Substantial	4 moderate 3 substantial	80%
ISO 27001 Reaccreditation awarded	Maintained	Maintained	Maintained	Maintained 5 Major and 5 minor non-conformities.	Maintained

Performance Commentary
The majority of activities relating to this priority theme have been progressed in line with expected timescales and budget. The one activity which requires additional development relates to the continuation of our ISO27001 accreditation. There is a separate paper for the Board which sets out the detail of this work and the progress made to address the non-conformities identified through the accreditation process in January. Audit and Risk Committee in February had a detailed paper and discussion on this work and the steps that were being taken in February and March to address non-conformities raised.

Business plan activity	Narrative	QTR 4
Ensure continuous improvement on how we work through revising and implementing the 3 year ICT strategy to support the achievement of the business plan	ISO 27001 3 year audit carried out in Cardiff with 5 Major and 5 minor non-conformities. A further audit will be carried out at the start of April 2021 to review progress on addressing the non-conformities. The board will receive a paper on this area of work in the April Board meeting which will contain further detail and progress.	

Strategic risks	Inherent score	Residual score
If we do not keep the sector engaged in the work of Social Care Wales then we start to lose credibility and not deliver our overall ambition, as we cannot achieve this in isolation. The sector is not engaged in our role and remit.	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)

Appendix 2

Strategic risks	Inherent score	Residual score
If we do not demonstrate how we are contributing to making a positive difference to the care sector, then we will lose credibility. We are unable to manage the expectations of the sector, stakeholders (including Welsh Government) and the public.	Yellow (10)	Green (5)
If we don't manage competing Welsh Government priorities and ensure that any new work is within our scope and purpose then we could result in over committing our resources to deliver, extend our remit beyond our scope and lose our identity and unique purpose.	Red (20)	Yellow (10)
If we don't remain engaged with 'A Healthier Wales' and maintain key relationships with Welsh Government and critical stakeholders (HEIW, PHW etc) then this could impact on key deliverable priorities resulting in social care not being rebalanced within the ambition of 'A Healthier Wales' and lose confidence if we do not deliver against expectations.	Red (20)	Yellow (10)
If we are unable to reappoint our Board members who also served as Care Council Members then we will lose 3 key, experienced and knowledgeable Members from April 2021. We will not be able to fill these vacancies in a timely manner. We will have a gap at a time when we require stability, continuity and strong leadership at Board level to support the social care and early years sector responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.	Amber (12)	Amber (12)
If we are not clear on the implications of the end of the transition period on exiting the EU (Brexit) for the social care and early years sector then we will not be in a position to provide additional support and clear guidance to the sector during this period.	Amber 15)	Amber (15)
If we do not respond accordingly to the COVID-19 pandemic then we will not be supporting the social care sector in helping them deliver front line care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)
If we don't support our own workforce (Social Care Wales) during this time then we will not be an effective and efficient organisation where staff health and wellbeing is at the centre of how we work.	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)
Working remotely has increased the risk of cyber fraud, hacking and scamming. Therefore, putting vulnerabilities within our IT network and opportunities for fraud.	Amber (15)	Yellow (10)

Appendix 2

Budget Report for the period to 31 March 2021

This is the final budget monitoring quarterly report for the financial year 2020-21. The report covers income and spend for the full financial year to 31 March 2021.The report is based on a total annual budget of £22,213,000. This is financed from £20,894,000 Grant in Aid (including £209k internal carry forward), £1,180,000 registration fee income and £50,000 Apprenticeship certification income. In addition, mid-year additional funding from Welsh Government was secured totalling £89,000 in relation to the Employee Assistance Programme and Mental Health.

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

Financial Summary to 31 March 2021

	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Income	22,213	22,203	22,213	(10)
Expenditure				
Grants Programme	11,478	11,239	11,478	239
Workforce Regulation	3,442	3,278	3,442	164
Improvement and Development inc Res and Data	3,315	3,199	3,315	116
Early Years and Childcare	356	360	356	(4)
Strategy and Business Support	3,622	3,711	3,622	(89)
Totals	**22,213**	**21,787**	**22,213**	**426**

Income Analysis

Income	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Grant In Aid	20,894	20,914	20,894	20
Apprenticeship Certificate Income	50	42	50	(8)
Registration Fee Income	1,180	1,155	1,180	(25)
Mental Health Workforce	24	24	24	-
EAP	65	62	65	(2)
Other Income	0	6	0	6
Total Income	**22,213**	**22,203**	**22,213**	**(10)**

£10k of Income has been received less than budgeted for the financial year with main contributor being Registration Fees being lower than budget by £25k.

Expenditure Analysis

As at the end of financial year there was an underspend of £426k against budget. The main areas of underspend are in the Grants Programme (£239k), Workforce Regulation(£164k) and Improvement and Development(£116k) budgets but reduced by an overspend of £89k in the Strategy and Business Support Budget. Analysis in respect of the main headings is provided below: -

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Grants Programme				
SCWWDP	7,149	7,149	7,149	-
People Using Services and Carers	75	66	75	9
Regional Facilitation	504	809	504	(305)
Student Funding	2,392	2,112	2,392	280
PLOF	1,224	990	1,224	234
SfCD	11	13	11	(2)
Research	123	99	123	24
Sub-total	**11,478**	**11,239**	**11,478**	**239**

- The Grants Programme shows an underspend of £239k with underspends in the Student Funding (Bursaries) budget and Practice Learning Opportunity Funding (PLOF) but reduced by an overspend in the Regional Facilitation Grant budget. The underspend in the Student Funding budget reflects that of the 227 bursaries available to students only 178 were initially awarded. In addition, due to the low number of students on the Social Work programmes the PLOF budget was underspent by £234k. Another contributor to the PLOF underspend was the decision for all Bangor University placements for the academic year 2020-21 to take place in the new financial year and some of the Cardiff Met/Bridgend and Glyndwr placements to be deferred to the new financial year.

- The Regional Facilitation Grant budget was overspent by £305k and reflects additional funding made available to the regions to fund pressures following a request for bids from all 22 Local Authority areas.

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Workforce Regulation				
Administration	94	68	94	26
Hearings	600	539	600	61
Projects	110	61	110	49
Salaries	2,638	2,609	2,638	29
Sub-total	**3,442**	**3,278**	**3,442**	**164**

- The Workforce Regulation has a £164k underspend with underspends in all elements of the budgets.

- The Administration budget outturn was underspent by £26k reflecting savings in relation to primarily travel and subsistence and reduced legal costs.

- The Hearings budget of £600k was set on the basis that final hearings would not start until September 2020 and was underspent by £61k. Costs would have been closer to budget but one five-day hearing involving two registrants was deferred until May 2021.

- The Projects budget was underspent by £49k and reflects savings in the review of Fitness to Practice procedures project as only £55k of the £100k was spent as the scope of the project only included the external Fitness to Practice review.

- The Salaries element of this budget was underspent by £29k reflecting staff vacancies in the Registration department but reduced by the allocation to Regulation in relation to a significant increase in the holiday pay accrual accounting adjustment at the end of the financial year and its allocation of the £100k lump deficit payment made into the pension scheme.

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Improvement and Development				
Administration	60	31	60	29
Intelligence and Data	135	161	135	(25)
Projects	1,353	1,124	1,353	230
Salaries	1,766	1,883	1,766	(117)
Sub-total	**3,315**	**3,199**	**3,315**	**116**

- The Improvement and Development budget was underspent by £116k primarily due to an underspend of £230k in the Projects budget due to delays in the start of some projects. It was decided in January that the start date of some projects would be paused and others where milestones would extend into the new financial year.

- However, there is an overspend in the Salary element of the budget due to additional resource requirement in respect of maternity leave and the allocation to Improvement and Development of the increase in the holiday pay accrual and the pension lump sum payment.

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Early Years and Childcare				
Projects	127	131	127	(4)
Salaries	229	229	229	0
Sub-total	**356**	**360**	**356**	**(4)**

- The Early Years and Childcare has a small overspend of £4k at the end of the financial year due to overspend in the projects element of the budget.

Strategy and Business Support				
Premises	617	587	617	30
Governance	115	86	115	29
Communications	103	107	103	(4)
Carreg and IT	493	609	493	(116)
Finance & Grant Admin	12	1	12	11
Human Resources	106	117	106	(11)
Projects	303	211	303	92
Salaries	1,873	1,992	1,873	(119)
Sub-total	**3,622**	**3,711**	**3,622**	**(89)**

- Strategy and Business support shows an overspend of £89k with a mixture of overspends/underspends in the individual budgets.

- The projects budget was underspent by £92k due to less required spend in the Digital/ Organisational design project budgets.

- The CARREG and IT budget was overspent by £116k at the end of the financial year primarily due to developmental changes to SCWonline to ensure compliance with website accessibility regulations.

- The Salaries budget was overspent by £119k due to extra costs in relation to maternity cover and again the allocation of the increased holiday pay accrual and pension lump sum payment.

At the end of the financial year income was greater than expenditure by £416k but despite this underspend we were still able to meet our 2% cash balance at the end of the financial year through good cash management. It is now planned to make an internal carry forward of £410k into the 21-22 budget which will assist in funding the budgetary pressure in relation to placements that have been delayed into the new financial year and projects that have been deferred.

Financial Summary to 31 March 2021

Income	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
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Other Income	0	6	0	6
Total Income	**22,213**	**22,203**	**22,213**	**(10)**

Expenditure	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Variance
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Research	123	99	123	24
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Sub-total	**3,442**	**3,278**	**3,442**	**164**
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Projects	303	211	303	92
Salaries	1,873	1,992	1,873	(119)
Sub-total	**3,622**	**3,711**	**3,622**	**(89)**
Total Expenditure	**22,213**	**21,787**	**22,213**	**426**

Appendix 3

HR year end performance dashboard: high level summary of the HR end of year report

Staff turnover	**Staff absence**
Turnover rate for the year is 5.32% (7 leavers this year) Our target turnover rate is to remain under 15%.	Our sickness absence rate for the year is 2.38% overall and 0.85% without long term sickness absence. Covid related absence accounts for 11% of our staff absence rate
Recruitment	**Policies reviewed**
31 posts advertised across the year, with a spike of 17 posts recruited in quarter 3. 30 of those posts were filled, with application numbers ranging between 1 and 24. New guidance was issued to recruiting managers, and all interviews have been held through Zoom.	• Probation Policy • Grievance Policy • Disciplinary Policy • Performance Management and Development Policy Throughout the course of the year we have also been reviewing our HR policies in relation to leave, flexible working and volunteering policy to support the wellbeing of our staff in responding to Covid and working remotely.
Leadership and Management Development	**Employee engagement**
13 managers, and 2 aspiring managers, have signed up to our Thrive leadership and management programmes – which have been procured and delivered as a collaborative project between ourselves, Sport Wales, HEFCW and Qualifications Wales.	**100%** of respondents to our most recent staff survey held in March said that they were very satisfied (94%) or satisfied (6%) with our response to Covid-19 and their safety to date. The survey results give us reassurance that our staff have been satisfied with our response to date and have been appreciative of the support and guidance provided by the organisation, with many of the additional survey comments received reflecting this.

Gofal Cymdeithasol Cymru
Social Care Wales

CYFARFOD / MEETING	**Board meeting**				
	PREIFAT / PRIVATE		**CYHOEDDUS / PUBLIC**		
	☐		☒		
DYDDIAD / DATE	**29.04.21**				
EITEM AGENDA AGENDA ITEM	**12**				
TEITL / TITLE SCW/21/16	**Board effectiveness report**				
AWDUR / AUTHOR	Llinos Bradbury, Senior Governance Officer				
CYFRANIADAU GAN/ CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:					
PAPURAU CEFNOGOL / SUPPORTING PAPERS	Appendix 1 – Questionnaire results				
GWEITHGAREDD CYNLLUN BUSNES / BUSINES PLAN ACTIVITY	Priority Theme 4: Enabling Social Care Wales to Deliver				
GWEITHRED / ACTION REQUIRED	**CYMERADWYAETH / APPROVAL**	**DARPARU LLYW / PROVIDE A STEER**	**DARPARU SICRWYDD / PROVIDE ASSURANCE**	**TRAFODAETH / DISCUSSION**	**CRAFFU / SCRUTINISE**
	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
ARGYMHELLIAD / RECOMMENDATION	Board members are invited to: **Discuss** and **consider** the results of the questionnaire				
PRIF BWYNTIAU; MATERION ALLWEDDOL I DYNNU SYLW ATYNT; CWESTIYNAU I'W YSTYRIED	The majority of responses were either agree or strongly agree with a few disagrees and strongly disagree, where it might be useful for the Board to reflect on the answers to these particular questions. Not all members have responded to the questionnaire therefore it will be important at the meeting to ensure that the responses reflect the whole Board.				

MAIN POINTS; KEY ISSUES TO DRAW TO ATTENTION; QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	Questions for members to consider following the results: From reading the results what would be your priority as part of a continuous improvement plan for the Board going forward?
ASESIADAU EFFAITH / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	No impact assessments have been undertaken on this yet, depending on the outcome of the discussions on the results then impact assessments may be required.

Board effectiveness report

1. Context

1.1 This report provides the Board members with the results of the Board effectiveness questionnaire.

1.2 In line with good governance practice the Board should assess its effectiveness annually. The Board last completed this survey in June 2019 to cover 2019-20. The results being considered today reflect the 2020-21 cycle of meetings. The questions asked have been kept the same as those asked in 2019-20 in order to provide comparative data.

1.3 During March 2021, all Board members were asked to complete a wide-ranging questionnaire to inform actions for continuous improvement. The survey questions related to the following key areas:

- Objectives, strategy and remit
- Relationships with key stakeholders
- Performance and risk management
- The Boardroom
- Suggestions for improving Board effectiveness

1.4 11 completed responses were received from a Board of 15 Members including the Chair. The results of the questionnaire can be seen in appendix 1.

2. Resource implications

2.1 The main resource implication for this effectiveness questionnaire was the time of the Board Secretary in drawing up the questionnaire, inputting onto SurveyMonkey and analysing the results.

2.2 Any actions agreed from the results may also have an implication on the resources within the Corporate Governance and Strategy team.

3. Risk considerations

3.1 We need to ensure that we are acting upon any areas for improvement that has been identified as part of the questionnaire results to ensure that the Board is operating effectively.

4. Engagement

4.1 All Board members have been asked to respond to the questionnaire.

4.2 The Board will discuss the results of the effectiveness questionnaire and any improvements required going forward at the April Board meeting.

4.3 Following completion of the Committee effectiveness questionnaires and discussion at the March 2021 Committee meetings it was agreed that the Chairs Coordinating Group will look at future effectiveness questionnaire questions and the method in which the feedback is captured, which will include this survey.

5. Impact

5.1 The outcome of the effectiveness questionnaire will ensure that the Board is being as effective as it can be and ensuring that we are meeting our strategic objective of being an effective and transparent organisation by being accountable for our decisions.

Objectives, strategy and remit

Questions					
1	**The Board informs and influences the shaping of Social Care Wales' strategy and values, enabling Members to set the tone from the top.**				
Results					
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	(1)	**6** (6)	**4** (3)		
Comments					
Members bring a wide range of perspectives. There is constructive challenge and healthy debate. Officers actively seek members contributions and reflect them where appropriate. I think we do this well. I very much agree and appreciate the good working relationships between the board and the executive team.					
2	The Board has a clear understanding of Social Care Wales' core business, vision and its strategic direction				
Results					

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		4 **(5)**	**6** **(5)**		

Comments

Members are keen to deepen their understanding in key areas and the revised PADR process for 2021-22 may help facilitate this. It would be helpful to have more insights from stakeholders, service users and front line practitioners.

I feel new members have integrated well, contribute greatly and that even through uncertain times the board is clear on SCW's core business, vision, strategic direction and the care and support needs of the citizens of Wales are uppermost in the conversation.

3	**The Board is assured that the business plan contains appropriate stretch to deliver the strategy, and resources deployed appropriately.**

Results

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	1 **(1)**	**7** **(6)**	**2** **(3)**		

Comments

There is still a question about the ultimate impact of some areas of our work (e.g. improvement initiatives). The CORDIS-BRIGHT work will hopefully provide options to assess this in a more meaningful way.

Not quite sure what "appropriate stretch" means but we have a good grasp of the business plan.

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

We get assurance from the executive team, from audit and risk committee and the board's own scrutiny of the papers.					
4	I am clear on the main priorities of Social Care Wales and the focus of delivery for this financial year.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		5 **(7)**	**5** **(3)**		
Comments					
20 - 21 has been particularly challenging and priorities have had to change. SCW has been agile enough to do this					
5	**Board meetings encourage high quality of debate, with robust and probing questions and constructive challenge, with decisions being made on evidence and analysis.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	(1)	**6** **(5)**	**4** **(4)**		
Comments					
There is a healthy level of debate in meetings. The enforced shift to remote working has enabled meetings to continue efficiently and effectively but it has inhibited debate to a degree in that it is not as spontaneous and fewer people are able to contribute. That is more apparent in informal sessions like Board Development days. It is also more difficult to read emotions and body language. I agree this is the case and well-led by the Chair.					

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

6	**The Board responds positively and constructively to issues to enable effective decisions and implementation, and to encourage transparency.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		4 **(4)**	**6** **(6)**		
Comments					
No comments received.					
7	**Board makes decisions objectively and collaboratively based on evidence to support the delivery of our remit and feel collectively responsible for achieving our objectives.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		4 **(6)**	**6** **(4)**		
Comments					
No comments received.					
8	**I understand my role and value the contributions that each Board Member brings to Board discussions.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

		5 **(2)**	**5** **(8)**		

Comments

We have to promote the unique social care and early years perspectives in our discussions, whilst integration with health is an essential part of our remit, the health perspective and the social care perspective are not one and the same.

I very much appreciate the mix of views and experience we currently have on the board and value it.

9	I effectively represent Social Care Wales to its stakeholders and seek their feedback.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	2 **(2)**	**6** **(7)**	**3** **(1)**		

Comments

The interactions with stakeholders has been extremely limited during this year of Covid restrictions

Although I'm involved in lots of other activities, meetings & partnerships, my board membership of SCW would only be known if I proactively made it known. Occasionally I do, but I don't think the ambassador role of members has been sufficiently developed.

During 20 - 21 I don't feel that I have done this. Others may have been able to.

10	**The Board receives sufficient advice and information from Officers and, when necessary, independent reports and objective advice on which to make informed decisions.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

	1	**3** **(7)**	**7** **(3)**		

Comments

The CEO and the EMT genuinely appreciate the value of scrutiny and challenge. They respond openly and constructively to questions from Members and actively seek feedback to support their decisions. The internal and external auditors provide sound advice and are always willing to explain the judgements that they reach.

Quality papers and contributions from officers.

11	**The Board makes best use of its annual accountability meeting with the Minister by discussing its role and contribution to the delivery of the Welsh Government's vision for the social care and early years sector in Wales.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
1	**1** **(2)**	**7** **(6)**	**2** **(4)**		

Comments

I think members would sometimes appreciate more of a two way discussion with the Minister, particularly around some of the strategic challenges and barriers to progress. However, the format doesn't allow for this.

I always feel this is a rather superficial occasion and that if the Minister felt that we hadn't been contributing effectively then it would have already been raised with the Chair at accountability meetings.

This has meeting is quite staged and real 'discussion' is limited.

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

The accountability meeting is probably the most underwhelming meeting of the year. If feels staged, scripted & void of genuine encounter. As Ministers have their own priorities and interests it is not always possible to manage this to best effect but good overall.

12	The Board has defined its external stakeholders and receives assurances that Social Care Wales has the right level of contact with them in the delivery of our remit.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	(1)	**10** **(6)**	**1** **(3)**		

Comments
Social Care Wales has well defined and generally productive relationships with stakeholders. There could perhaps be a stronger focus on relationships with private providers in the sector. The involvement of key stakeholders (e.g. CIW, ADSS) adds value to Committee meetings. As above the scrutiny on this has been limited because of Covid. I am not sure SCW captures all possible stakeholders but it makes a good effort.

Performance and Risk management

Questions

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

13	**The Board continuously considers and reviews the strategic risks and internal controls in place to ensure appropriate levels of assurance.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
1		**3** **(6)**	**7** **(3)**	**(1)**	

Comments

The current risk management and internal control arrangements work well. However, the discussions taking place about some sort of assurance framework which takes a more holistic view of risk is timely.

But it is concerning that issues such as the recent cyber awareness issue can still slip beneath our radar, we don't know what we don't know.

14	**The Board receives clear and appropriate analysis and assurance on Social Care Wales' performance, including budgets, objectives, targets and scrutinises action taken in relation to under performance.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		6 **(5)**	**5** **(4)**	(1)	

Comments

The work which is currently been undertaken to align the performance assessment framework with the new business plan is timely, particularly around providing more meaningful assessment of the delivery of some of the longer term programmes.

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

15	**The Board has a clear understanding of the risk management framework which is regularly reviewed and updated.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		8 **(5)**	**3** **(4)**	(1)	

Comments

See previous comment

This is being revisited and is constantly evolving.

16	**I am individually subject to an annual performance evaluation with the Chair that measures my contribution and commitment.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		1 **(4)**	**8** **(5)**	(1)	

Comments

I hope the new approach to PADR developed for the next year will promote a more comprehensive approach to this.

17	**I use the Board portal to access information that is pertinent to delivering our objectives.**

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
1	**1** **(1)**	**6** **(6)**	**3** **(2)**	(1)	

Comments
No comments received.

18	**I receive information in sufficient time to allow for proper consideration, with scope for additional briefing if necessary.**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	
		8 **(6)**	**3** **(3)**	(1)	

Comments
The administrative support arrangements which are in place to support the Board are effective and well managed. More time would often be good when there is a lot to read and consider.

19	**I take responsibility for responding to requests for information and comments from officers and other members outside of Board and Committee meetings**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	1	**6**	**4**		

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

	(2)	**(6)**	**(1)**	(1)	
Comments					
Not really applicable.					
20	**The Board considers equality, Welsh language, our digital approach and engagement, alongside the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and the impact on individuals using care and support and their carers, as well as the workforce, when making key decisions.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		6 **(8)**	**5** **(1)**	(1)	
Comments					
No comments received.					

The Boardroom

21	**I recognise my individual and collective role and have the appropriate skills and experience for that role.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		7 **(7)**	**3** **(2)**	(1)	
Comments					

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

Recently it is clear that more skills in the digital and information security areas are needed.					
22	**If I am not sure what is expected of me, I know who to speak to within the organisation to ask further questions.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	1	**4** **(5)**	**5** **(4)**	(1)	
Comments					
No comments received.					
23	**I have the right tools to carry out the role.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
1	**1** **(1)**	**6** **(6)**	**2** **(2)**	1	
Comments					
see comment above. Not quite sure what "tools" are being referred to here - technology? I find the portal challenging to navigate and have some issues in engaging in online virtual meetings, due to technology not being robust enough and a slow broadband connection.					

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

24	**I behave in line with the values of the organisation and feel able to challenge, and be challenged, if our behaviours are not in line with these values.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		3 **(2)**	**7** **(7)**	(1)	
Comments					
No comments received.					
25	**The Chair's leadership style and tone promotes effective decision making and constructive debate and ensures that the Board works as a team.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	1	**2** **(2)**	**6** **(6)**	(2)	
Comments					
Very much appreciate the Chair's leadership and support.					
26	**The Chair and the Chief Executive work well together and their individual roles and responsibilities are clear to the Board.**				

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		4 **(4)**	**6** **(5)**	(1)	
Comments					
No comments received.					
27	**I actively contribute in Board and Committee meetings and prepare in advance for each meeting.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		(4)	**9** **(5)**	(1)	
Comments					
No comments received.					
28	**The Board has open channels of communication with the Executive Management Team and others.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		5 **(4)**	**5** **(5)**	(1)	

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

Comments					
Very much appreciate the good working relationships between the EMT and the board, committees and others.					
29	**The Board is the right size, is not over-reliant on any individual member or members and has the best mix of skills to achieve optimum effectiveness.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
1		**7** **(6)**	**2** **(3)**	(1)	
Comments					
Perhaps a bit big? Inevitably some members contribute more than others. There will be some movement in Board membership over the next 12 months which provides abs opportunity to take a considered view about the mix of skills on the Board. There is a need to further increase the diversity of the Broad, particularly in relation to ethnicity. A good mix. Can probably never be "optimum" as there is always scope for even better.					
30	**The Standing Orders for the Board are appropriate, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, ensuring that the right issues are being addressed.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		7 **(6)**	**1** **(3)**	(1)	
Comments					

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

No comments received.					
31	**The Board's Committees are properly constituted, perform** their delegated roles and report back clearly to the Board.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		5 **(5)**	**5** **(4)**	(1)	
Comments					
All of the committees are very well chaired and actively contribute the Boards work.					
32	**The frequency, timing, duration and format of Board meetings is enough to support a well-run Board.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	2	**4** **(7)**	**4** **(2)**	(1)	
Comments					
Consideration should be given to emerging guidance regarding best practice in relation to online meetings. The length of meetings can compromise the amount of discussion that can be achieved and can result in some information not being exchanged.					
33	**The agenda allows sufficient time for the discussion of substantive matters. Board discusses all of its main responsibilities.**				

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	2	**6** **(6)**	**2** **(2)**	(1)	
Comments					
Sometimes more time is needed. Perhaps it would be good for members to timetable in a 30 minute post meeting period in case more time is needed. This is easy to do for remote meetings when travel is not a constraint.					
34	**The Board balances the need to plan for the future / looking ahead whilst dealing with the current agenda of work.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
	1	**7** **(6)**	**2** **(3)**	(1)	
Comments					
35	Board papers are of sufficient quality, appropriate length, clarity and focus and received in good time to support effective Board discussions.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		4	**5**		

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

	(1)	**(6)**	**(1)**	(2)	
Comments					
Sometimes the volume of papers is quite substantial. Papers have become more focussed and it is clearer what the Board is asked to do.					
36	**The right people (officers and others) attend Board meetings and are appropriately involved in discussions.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		4 **(6)**	**6** **(3)**	(1)	
Comments					
No comments received.					
37	**The quality of minutes and management follow-up etc is good. I am kept informed of material matters between meetings as necessary.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		3 **(5)**	**7** **(4)**	(1)	
Comments					
This has improved this year because of the regular updates from Sue.					

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

38	I have received proper induction on appointment and on-going training is available to meet development needs or any knowledge and experience needed for the role.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		6 **(2)**	**3** **(7)**	(1)	
Comments					
No comments received.					
39	**I contribute to Seminars, to ensure I keep abreast of policy and practice and to enhance the development of the Board.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response
		5 **(3)**	**3** **(6)**	(1)	
Comments					
No comments received.					
40	**I receive appropriate support / assistance from the Board Secretary and her team outside Board meetings.**				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Did not answer	Change from 2019-20 response

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

		3 **(4)**	**7** **(5)**	(1)	
Comments					
No comments received.					

Improving effectiveness

41	**Please provide your top 3 suggestions for improving the Board's effectiveness in the next 12 months.**
Comments	
Keep zoom meetings fairly short. A more structure Board development programme with a better mix of business, knowledge, training and personal development inputs. The revised approach to PADR which will, if it works well, give members a specific focus on key areas of the business. A more holistic approach to identifying, evaluating and managing risk (i.e. some form of assurance framework). Meetings: members to allow 30 minutes 'extra time' in their diaries Perspective: keeping our social care and early years perspective at the front of our minds. Relevance of discussions: more often putting ourselves in the shoes of low paid members of the workforce, of service users and of carers/parents. When it is possible, meet stakeholders face to face. More time for discussion within the full board grouping. To have more access to developmental training and tools in order to increase the boards skillset. To be able to build upon our relationships in person at some point in the coming year. 1. A workshop on best practice for effective board discussion online 2. Further training in board member financial development 3. Resume the Chair's written emailed updates, when this is possible.	

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20

1. Opportunities to connect to the front line 2. More training events / opportunities 3, Ensure face to face meetings as part of a blended approach to meetings when safe to do so.

* Green figure in () are the results from 2019-20