

Committee: **Social Services Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **5th November 2020**
Report Subject: **Regional Partnership Update**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**
Report Submitted by: **Damien McCann, Corporate Director of Social Services**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
15.10.20	15.10.20	23.10.20			05.11.20			

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to update Members on the work and decisions taken over the last 9 months by the Regional Partnership Board, developed under statutory guidance Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act). A previous report had been prepared for the Social Services Scrutiny Committee of the 6th April 2020 which was subsequently cancelled because of lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The SSWB Act came into force in April 2016, Part 9 of the Act sets out statutory requirement for a Regional Partnership Board (RPB), along with the required minimum membership and a regional Citizen Panel, regional Provider Forum and regional Leadership Group (senior officer group) which have all been established.
- 2.2 The Regional Partnership Boards have been established on current local health board footprints – so the Gwent regional partnership board includes Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen local authorities.
- 2.3 The regulations also set out required membership of Regional Partnership Boards. The Executive member in each local authority, with responsibility for health and social care, sits on the Regional Partnership Board. In a similar vein, non-executive members of the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board also sit on the Regional Partnership Board.
- 2.4 The Regional Partnership Board is an advisory body, that does not take away the existing responsibilities of the individual statutory bodies, but it is expected to take oversight of and provide direction to, any areas of integrated working across health and social care.
- 2.5 Social Services Scrutiny Committee on the 13th March 2017 agreed for the Executive Member of Social Services and Director of Social Services to report

back to Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. This approach was endorsed by Executive Committee on the 15th March 2017.

2.6 The Regional Partnership Board has met on four occasions since the last report to Scrutiny Committee on the 13th January 2020. There were a number of areas which have occupied the Regional Partnership Board at these meetings. Firstly, the Coronavirus outbreak across partner agencies and the effect on services. Secondly, the continuation of the Transformational Offer beyond 2021, in response to the Welsh Government's new long term plan for health and social care 'A Healthier Wales'. Thirdly, the reallocation of underspend for 2019/20 and the continuation of the Integrated Care Revenue and Capital Funds. Finally, it had considered the Integrated Winter Plan for 2020/21.

2.7 The first meeting in May 2020 of the Regional Partnership Board very much focused on how organisations had worked collectively during the Coronavirus pandemic and what had worked well, not so well and any future lessons should we have a further wave. This included feedback from the Citizen Panel on some of the issues that had been raised with them concerning access to healthcare. The Board were reassured that the pandemic had not reached its worst case scenario regarding hospital capacity and support in the community and the system had been able to cope with the initial outbreak locally and regionally which was very much due to collaborative working by all partners.

2.8 Members may recall from previous reports that the Regional Partnership Board had successfully submitted a 'Gwent transformational offer' to Welsh Government which granted the Gwent RPB £13.4 million of new limited funding over a two-year period. Members may also recall that this was in response to 'A Healthier Wales' which set out a new £100 million transformational programme. The new transformation fund was intended to provide additional funding to catalyse 'whole system change', driven through the Regional Partnership Boards with an expectation that each region develops a 'transformational offer'.

2.9 The offer in Gwent related to four areas, derived from the priority areas within the Area Plan and the considered directions of the Regional Partnership Board. These include:

- The development of early intervention and prevention services (Integrated Wellbeing Networks);
- The development of primary and community care services (Compassionate Communities);
- The redesign of child and adolescent emotional and mental health services (Iceberg model);
- The development of an integrated 'Home First' discharge model;
- The development of workforce planning and organisational development to underpin transformational activity.

A summary of the different projects was previously provided at the 24th January 2019 and 17th October 2019 and 13th January 2020 Scrutiny Committees.

2.10

The Gwent Transformation Programme has continued to make good progress, with the programmes adapting their scope and focus to ensure they are able to support the local response to COVID-19. The transformation programme continues to deliver at pace, given the extremely short and testing time frame provided by Welsh Government of 2 years. The Board has heard that Welsh Government had agreed to roll over some of funding to allow for some of the projects to continue until March 2021 rather than finish in December 2020. However, during the Coronavirus pandemic some of the projects under the transformation programme had to stop, reduce their offer to the public or redirect towards helping fight the Coronavirus. This has delayed the time available for these models to evidence success and for their evaluations to be completed.

2.11

At the time of writing we have been told verbally by Welsh Government that transformation funding will continue for a further transition year in its current format until March 2022, each programme is developing a programme of work around financial sustainability, making clear the value of the programmes in line with the wider strategic improvement objectives of the Regional Partnership Board. To support this work, Welsh Government are working with the regions to develop Communities of Practice, to share the learning and support pan regional scaling and also economic demand and management modelling, to demonstrate where longer term system efficiencies can be secured.

2.12

All four programmes had commissioned evaluation of the models, with the Institute of Public Care being successful for place based care, integrated wellbeing networks and Homefirst and Cedar Associates are leading the evaluation of the ICEBERG model. These had started but again fell victim to the pandemic and are currently being restarted.

2.13

One of the difficulties with the Transformation funding continues to be recruitment to specialist posts, with staff reluctant to leave existing posts for a short term funded post. This has been fed back to Welsh Government and hopefully will be taken on board for future funding streams.

2.14

The Regional Partnership Board is the body who sign off and agree the Integrated Care Fund revenue and capital proposals. We do not intend to go into detail of the funding obtained and the bids made as these will be subject to a further report at the December Scrutiny Committee meeting at which point we hope to be clear about the level of funding provided to continue to deliver existing projects during the transition year of 2021/22.

2.15

During 2019/20 local authorities across Gwent had requested that any slippage funding within existing projects be used for Children with Complex Needs to meet demand for the remainder of this year. Regional Leadership Group endorsed the approach for any ICF revenue slippage to be utilised for

Children with Complex Needs. At the end of the Financial year 2019/20 an updated slippage figure of £956,000 was shared on an equal basis with all local authorities in Gwent which has resulted in an additional £191K for Blaenau Gwent.

2.16

An additional £10 million across Wales was announced by the Minister for Health and Social Services on the 24th January 2020 for Regional Partnership Boards, the Board agreed that this funding be equally split between Health and Social Services on a 50:50 basis and subsequently was shared equally between the Gwent local authorities. An additional £191K was allocated to Blaenau Gwent on top of the £133K from the Winter Plan to flexibly spot purchase step up/step down beds, to purchase additional domiciliary care packages, to purchase additional social work capacity over bank holidays and weekends and funding for hiring an additional 4x4 vehicle for adverse weather conditions. There were also some separate bids for additional health capacity locally and some Gwent wide bids for equipment e.g. single handed hoists.

2.17

Winter Planning is an integral part of the Health and Social Care system responsibility and this year's plan has been developed, in line with Welsh Government guidance, with all partners within the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) who have agreed to recommend a number of the activities in order to support patients within the Gwent area. The plan has been developed with colleagues across the Health Board and partners in Social Care, third sector and Welsh Ambulance Service. The RPB will need to sign off and agreed to submit the RPB Winter plan to the Welsh Government by the end of October 2020. At the time of writing work is being finalised before sign off and submission of the 2020/21 Winter Plan to Welsh Government.

2.18

The purpose of the plan is to demonstrate by region, the agreed partnership activity, to support the provision of care and support services during this winter period, to outline the safe and integrate management of 'winter pressures' and to provide assurance of a whole system approach to the winter period. The plan is structured around the 'Six goals' and 'Four harms' identified in the National Winter Protection plan.

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
Goal 1: Co-ordination, planning and support for high risk groups	Planning and support to help high risk or vulnerable people and their carers to remain independent at home, preventing the need for urgent care
Goal 2: Signposting, information and assistance for all	Information, advice or assistance to signpost people who want - or need - urgent support or treatment to the right place, first time.
Goal 3: Preventing admission of high risk groups	Community alternatives to attendance at an Emergency Department and/or admission to acute hospital for people who need

	urgent care but would benefit from staying at, or as close as possible, to home
Goal 4: Rapid response in crisis	The fastest and best response at times of crisis for people who are in imminent danger of loss of life; are seriously ill or injured; or in mental health crisis.
Goal 5: Great hospital care	Optimal hospital based care for people who need short term, or ongoing, assessment/treatment, where beneficial
Goal 6: Home first when ready	Capacity to ensure effective and timely discharge from hospital, when individual is ready to most appropriate location

For Members information the four harms relate to the Coronavirus pandemic these are:

- The harm of COVID-19 itself;
- The harm from overwhelming the NHS and Social Care system;
- The harm from the reduction in non COVID activity;
- The harms from wider societal actions/lockdowns.

2.19

The plan sets out a coordinated whole systems approach to the delivery of health and social care services across Gwent, in partnership with both housing and Third sector partners. It sets out the required capacity necessary to protect the system in Gwent during the winter period, within the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. It demonstrates the depth of partnership working across the Regional Partnership Board providing a clear statement of system wide activity in line with the 'Six goals' and 'Four harms'.

2.20

The outlined activity is funded from a range of funding sources provided to the Health Board and Local Authority. At the point of writing it is not expected that any further funding will be forthcoming.

2.21

One of the challenges continues to be the recruitment of medical, social care and nurse staffing to enable the increase in the Health Board's bed capacity and enhance community services. The current staffing gaps and high numbers of unfilled nursing posts presents a real risk to effective delivery of this part of the Winter Plan.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 The options for consideration are:

3.2 Option 1 – to scrutinise the report and to support the decisions of the Regional Partnership Board:

3.3 Option 2 – to scrutinise the report and propose an alternative approach to Executive Committee in relation to the options taken by Regional Partnership Board.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 The report is fulfilling our statutory functions under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 and accompanying regulations.

4.2 The report is also fulfilling a number of the Social Services aims within the Corporate Plan:

- To improve accessibility, provision of information and advice to enable people to support their own wellbeing;
- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater;
- To work with our partners including Aneurin Bevan Health Board and neighbouring authorities to deliver integrated responsive care and support;
- To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering health and social care involving key partners and our communities.

4.3 A number of the areas being progressed by the Regional Partnership Board will support us to achieve two of the Wellbeing Plan objectives:

- The best start in life for everyone;
- To encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the place that they live, learn, work and play.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

Option 1 - The Regional Partnership Board have statutory responsibilities laid out within the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 and Ministers expect to see the Regional Partnership Boards, maturing into a vehicle for more integrated commissioning, transformation and improvement across health and social care, with an emphasis on providing more care closer to home, maintaining independence and reducing unnecessary hospital admissions. Therefore, by implementing the Gwent transformation offer the Regional Partnership Board are complying with the legislation and Ministerial expectations.

Option 1 – Welsh Government have also determined that the use of the Integrated Care Capital and Revenue Fund, the new Transformational fund and any Integrated Winter Planning funding will have oversight by the Regional Partnership Board. All these funding sources are to assist with the integration of health and social care across the Gwent Regional footprint. It is essential that the Regional Partnership Board has oversight of funding

proposals and subsequent use of these funding streams, and have approved the proposals before they were submitted and agreed by Welsh Government.

Option 2 – The Regional Partnership Board are made up of a number of organisations who collectively make decision for the good of the region. If Scrutiny were to recommend alternative approaches, then it would need the support of neighbouring authorities and the health board to obtain consensus. Failure to do this would mean being in breach of legislation and could result in Welsh Government intervention. Whilst failure to comply with the requirements of the Integrated Care Capital Fund and Revenue Fund, Transformational fund and Integrated Winter Planning fund could result in the withdrawal or ability to receive funding for the Blaenau Gwent and Gwent region respectively.

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no immediate impacts on the budget, the Integrated Care Capital Fund is provided on an annual basis to fund innovative projects within Health and Social Care which has been extended for a further 12 months during a transition year. The transformation fund is to develop new models of transformation at pace and has been agreed for a further 12 months during transition as well. These are all additional funding coming into the system.

The Integrated Care Capital and Revenue Fund provides significant investment to develop a number of projects across Blaenau Gwent and Gwent as a whole and should this funding be removed at the end of the proposed transition period will have significant consequences going forward. In addition, the transformation fund is a time limited fund intended to replace or reconfigure existing services not adding an extra layer; therefore, there is an expectation that these models will be funded from core budgets going forward.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

5.3 ***Legal***

The Legal department becomes involved in considering and advising on any legal agreements before signing such as the Section 33 Agreement.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

The Gwent Transformational Team support senior officers and elected members to deliver and implement the priorities of the Regional Partnership Board. In addition, they administer the Regional Partnership Board and Leadership Group. The Gwent Transformation Team is hosted by Torfaen County Borough Council.

6. **Supporting Evidence:**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

Not applicable.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

The role of the Regional Partnership Board is to ensure more seamless provision of health and social care services across Gwent.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

The Regional Partnership Board has involvement from the third sector and representation from the Citizens Panel to ensure engagement and involvement in its direction.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The Regional Partnership Board provides the opportunity to work collectively and have a long term vision to progress integration and partnership across the Gwent region.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The Regional Partnership Board within its strategic intent statement will be considering how Health and Social Services can work together in a more preventative way.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The role the Regional Partnership Board is to work collaboratively across boundaries to benefit citizens requiring health and social care services across Gwent.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

The purpose of the Regional Partnership Board is to foster integration between Health and Social Services.

6.8 ***EqIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The monitoring arrangements for the Regional Partnership Board are through the Social Services Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Committee on a quarterly basis.

Background Documents / Electronic Links

N/A

