

Committee: **Social Services Scrutiny Committee**
 Date of meeting: **22nd April 2021**
 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)
x	x	13.04.21			22.04.21	FWP 2021/22		

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 5 months by the Regional Partnership Board, developed under statutory guidance Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act) since the last report presented to Social Services Scrutiny Committee on the 5th November 2020.

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 has 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 3 occasions since the last report to Scrutiny Committee on the 5th November 2020. There were a number of areas which have occupied the Regional Partnership Board at these meetings. Firstly, the continued response to the Coronavirus outbreak across partner agencies and the effect on services. Secondly, the reallocation of underspend for 2020/21 and the continuation of the Integrated Care Revenue and Capital Funds. Thirdly, 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'. Finally, it had considered the Integrated Winter Plan for 2020/21.
- 2.7 At each of the Regional Partnership Board meetings we have we have received updates on the hospital and community position on the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, and more recently the progress on the vaccination programme being rolled out. This included feedback from the Citizen Panel on some of the issues that had been raised with them concerning access to healthcare. The Board have been reassured that although the pandemic has been worse second time round the hospital capacity and support in the community has just been able to cope with the second wave locally and regionally which was very much due to collaborative working by all partners.
- 2.8 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 were subject of a report to Social Services Scrutiny Committee on December 2020 meeting and we will bring a more detailed report back to this Committee once the new cycle of meetings has been arranged.
- 2.9 Across all revenue funding streams, slippage has arisen late in the financial year mostly related to the difficulty in recruiting staff and commissioning additional beds mainly as a result of COVID-19. The slippage position stood at £903,000 at the end of February 2021, however £645,000 spend had been identified. Significant engagement has been undertaken across the partnership to ensure full utilisation of our regional allocations. An investment appraisal was developed to utilise this funding and approved by Regional Partnership Board at its 16th March 2021 meeting.
- 2.10 There continues to be close working with partnership organisation delivering ICF capital projects. As a region we are able to fully deliver Year 3 of our Capital Investment Plan, albeit delivery timeframes have slipped due to the impact of the pandemic on procurement and contracting. Our own proposal for Augusta House is one such project that has slipped and is now likely to be completed hopefully by the end of 2021.
- 2.11 The Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) funding will no longer be provided via the ICF governance mechanism and has therefore been removed from the guidance and allocation letter. Alternative funding has been identified within the final year of Transformation Funding, and an indicative award provided to the region of £520,000. A regional proposal

has been submitted to Welsh Government by the regional WCCIS board, and we are currently awaiting the outcome of the Welsh Government consideration.

- 2.12 The £2million previously utilised for WCCIS implementation within the ICF revenue funding stream has been repurposed for a new priority area 'Safe accommodation for children with complex, high end emotional and behavioural needs'. This priority area has been introduced in direct response to the Children's Commissioner for Wales' report, No Wrong Door and in line with current Ministerial priorities.
- 2.13 Welsh Government are currently holding this funding centrally and are inviting expressions of interest from Regions. Clear expectations have been set by Welsh Government on the requirement to fully meet the brief of this new priority, for which they only expect to fund between two and three initiatives across Wales as pump-priming for the 2021-22 period.
- 2.14 In response to this priority area, and the invitation for applications, a regional proposal to develop a children's residential home at Windmill Farm, Newport was submitted to Welsh Government on 10th February 2021. This is an integrated model of delivery using ICF Capital. The proposal also sets out the opportunity of exploring joint commissioning methodologies for a wider cohort of children with complex needs. A response is awaited from Welsh Government on our bid as I write this report.
- 2.15 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'.
- 2.16 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.

- 2.17 The Gwent Transformation Programme has continued to make good progress, with the programmes adapting their scope and focus to ensure they are able to support the local response to COVID-19. However, during the Coronavirus pandemic some of the projects under the transformation programme had to stop, reduce their offer to the public or redirect towards helping fight the Coronavirus. This has delayed the time available for these models to evidence success and for their evaluations to be completed.
- 2.18 Welsh Government have now confirmed funding will continue for a further transition year in its current format until March 2022, each programme has developed a 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.
- 2.19 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 Home first and Cedar Associates are leading the evaluation of the ICEBERG model. These had started but again fell victim to the pandemic and have now been restarted.
- 2.20 The programme has been awarded £8,313,131 for 2021/22. Sustainability will be the primary focus in the final year, bringing together successful elements alongside successful ICF programmes, to create a framework of services within a model of 'Place Based Care'.
- 2.21 All four programmes, have embedded well and the evaluation reports demonstrate both financial efficiencies and improved wellbeing outcomes for citizens have been achieved. The Integrated wellbeing networks have been at the forefront of the community response to COVID, cementing their role and value in supporting community resilience and wellbeing. The team have supported vulnerable people, shielding and isolating and the wellbeing champions role has been evidenced as making an important positive impact.
- 2.22 Place Based Care has delivered over 400 Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings, made 420 post discharge contacts, seen an increase in referrals to community connectors, been able to evidence likely early impact on reducing emergency admissions and supported an increase in use of Information Advice and Assistance Services. Home First has delivered an effective admissions avoidance services across Nevill Hall and the Royal Gwent Hospital. The service now operates at the Grange, with 63 discharges to mid-March, and across all three sites almost 4,000 since March last year.
- 2.23 The Iceberg model has received over 4000 referrals through the SPACE wellbeing service, featured on the BBC and in the Children's Commissioner's report as the leading exemplar of a 'No wrong door'

approach. It is also working to establish an approach for the 'whole schools approach' work given the devastating impact on children and young people of the pandemic.

- 2.24 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.
- 2.25 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 submitted their Winter plan to Welsh Government by the end of October 2020.
- 2.26 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

2.27 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.

2.28 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

2.29 The outlined activity is funded from a range of funding sources provided to the Health Board and Local Authority. When previously reporting back in early November 2020 there was no further funding expected. However, funding to support Discharge to Re-able and Assess (D2RA) pathways has been made available to the region via two tranches in 2020-21. The first tranche, referenced as Covid Surge/Hospital Discharge funding and a second tranche of funding referenced as Discharge to Re-able and Assess. Funding for the region within 2020-21 has totalled £3.7m.

2.30 As referenced above, some challenges have been experienced in trying to deliver the intended range of initiatives due to the workforce constraints and inability to access care home placement. Learning from this period is currently being considered in addition to the capacity constraints to enable implementation of D2RA pathways.

2.31 Funding support for 2021-22 has been made available to Regional Partnership Boards, via a Transformation Scaling Fund, providing an allocation of £1.137m. A proposal will be developed to articulate the regional plan for implementation of D2RA pathways and will be shared with the RPB virtual consideration, ahead of submission to Welsh Government by 9th April 2021.

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