



# Complete Agenda

Democratic Services  
Swyddfa'r Cyngor  
CAERNARFON  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1SH

Meeting

**CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date and Time

**10.30 am, THURSDAY, 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2021**

NOTE: A BRIEFING SESSION WILL BE HELD FOR MEMBERS AT 10.00 am

Location

**Virtual Meeting - Zoom**

Please contact for public access

Contact Point

**Einir Rhian Davies**

**01286 679868**

**[einirrhiandavies@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:einirrhiandavies@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)**

(DISTRIBUTED 23/09/21)

# **CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **MEMBERSHIP (18)**

### **Plaid Cymru (10)**

Councillors

Menna Baines  
Annwen Daniels  
Gareth Tudor Morris Jones  
Olaf Cai Larsen  
Berwyn Parry Jones

Beca Brown  
Alan Jones Evans  
Linda Ann Jones  
Dafydd Owen  
Linda Morgan

### **Independent (5)**

Councillors

Richard Medwyn Hughes  
Beth Lawton  
Angela Russell

Eryl Jones-Williams  
Dewi Wyn Roberts

### **Llais Gwynedd (1)**

Councillor  
Anwen J. Davies

### **Individual Member (1)**

Councillor

### **Propel (1)**

Councillor Peter Read

### **Ex-officio Members**

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

### **Other Invited Members**

# **A G E N D A**

## **1. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

## **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of personal interest.

## **3. URGENT MATTERS**

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

## **4. MINUTES**

5 - 8

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on the 1st July, 2021 be signed as a true record.

## **5. ONE STOP SHOP FOR HOUSING**

9 - 11

To receive views and input from the Care Scrutiny Committee regarding the concept of establishing a One Stop Shop for Housing and to identify next steps.

## **6. GWYNEDD POPULATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

12 - 14

To submit the approach for preparing the Population Needs Assessment 2022-2027 and the Market Stability Report for scrutiny by the Committee.

## **7. THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SERVICE WITHIN THE SAFEGUARDING UNIT**

15 - 19

To provide an overview of the work of the Quality Assurance Service within the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department

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## CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 01/07/2021

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**Present:** Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams (Chair).  
Councillor Angela Russell (Vice-chair).

**Councillors:**

Beca Brown, Anwen J Davies, R Medwyn Hughes, Berwyn Parry Jones, Gareth Tudor Morris Jones, Olaf Cai Larsen, Beth Lawton, Linda Morgan, Dewi Wyn Roberts

**Officers present:**

Bethan Adams (Scrutiny Advisor), Einir Rhian Davies (Democracy Services Officer), Llywela Haf Owain (Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor), Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer), E Mererid Watt (Translator), Elin Wynne (Translator)

**Present for item 7:**

Councillor Dafydd Meurig (Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being and Link with the Health Service), Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department), Mari W Jones (Senior Manager Adults Services)

**Present for item 8:**

Councillor Dafydd Meurig (Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being and Link with the Health Service), Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department), Alun G Williams (Senior Learning Disabilities Manager - South)

**Present for item 9:**

Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department) Marian P Hughes (Head of Children and Supporting Families Department), Catrin Thomas (Assistant Head Supporting Families).

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

**RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams as Chair of this Committee for 2021/22.

**2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

**RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Angela Russell as Vice-chair of this Committee for 2021/22.

The former Chair, the former Vice-chair, Members of the Committee and the officers were thanked for their hard work.

**3. APOLOGIES**

Councillor Menna Baines, Councillor Anwen Daniels, Councillor Linda Jones, Councillor Dafydd Owen and A Morwena Edwards

**4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor Dewi Roberts, on item 7 as a member of his family worked in this field. The member was of the opinion that it was not a prejudicial interest, and he did not withdraw from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

Councillors O Cai Larsen and Berwyn Parry Jones as they were Board Members of Adra. The members were of the opinion that it was not a prejudicial interest, and they did not withdraw from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

**5. URGENT ITEMS**

None to note.

**6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 18 March, 2021 as a true record.

**7. SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH DEMENTIA IN GWYNEDD**

The Cabinet Member provided an update on the support available to individuals and the dementia condition in Gwynedd, highlighting that it was an extremely busy time. It was highlighted that the number of dementia diagnoses was increasing and although Covid had been a challenging time, it was explained that the developmental work had continued.

The Senior Adults Services Manager added that the Covid period had forced the Department to revise how they offer the service to ensure that they complied with Covid regulations, along with offering the essential services to individuals. It was confirmed that the Population Needs Assessment was in the pipeline and it would give the Department greater understanding of the needs and the provision that will be needed locally for years to come.

It was confirmed that the next steps will be to revise the work plans that include the work that has been done by Dementia Actif, the support work and the work to adapt Council homes. Concerns were highlighted about core funding that would ensure that it would be possible to fund the work in future.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions, and the responses were noted as follows:

In terms of staff availability and suitability, it was confirmed that employing suitable staff with the correct skills was a challenge, but that the Council was making a substantial effort to attract suitable staff by developing an appropriate training programme. It was noted that there had been an increase in the number of staff being employed in the field, but there was a need to continue to attract staff to the field for any developments in the future.

In terms of the availability of specialist residential beds for individuals with Dementia, it was explained that most of the Council home beds were full and there were waiting lists. Due to Covid restrictions, there had been a delay in opening a specialist dementia unit with 8 beds at one of the homes with the hope that it would be possible to open the unit gradually soon.

In discussing financial matters, it was explained that the Department was taking advantage of every possible opportunity for money from various sources. Concerns about long-term funding were highlighted as Government grants tended to be for 2- or 3-year periods.

It was noted that it was a difficult situation when individuals had to move from the area to receive service. The Senior Adults Services Manager confirmed that the Department was in the process of completing a section of work on out of county placements which highlighted where individuals were moving to receive care. This could be because there was no suitable provision available locally or down to personal choice.

In terms of Council plans to increase specialist Dementia Units in Gwynedd, it was confirmed that there were plans to expand, along with other similar schemes in the private sector. Dyffryn Nantlle Hub Scheme and the Penrhos Site were highlighted as future schemes emphasising that there was a need to address other areas also. It was explained that the Service would continue to work on progressive schemes and revise the investment programme within 12-18 months.

**RESOLVED:** To accept and note the report that gave an update and overview of what is in progress to support individuals living with Dementia in Gwynedd.

## **8. HOUSING PROVISION IN THE COMMUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES**

Submitted - the report of the Cabinet Member who confirmed that the aim of the Service was to assist individuals with learning disabilities to live as independently as possible. It was explained that research had been undertaken which had anticipated additional demand for housing and support during the coming years. It was confirmed there was a comprehensive work programme in place which included a lot of joint working to deal with the numbers needing support.

the Senior Learning Disabilities Manager referred to the housing crisis and the challenges this posed for individuals who wished to live independently. It was explained that Covid had highlighted the need for housing provision and that the Department was looking to put steps in place to address the need. Reference was made to the system for prioritising the needs of individuals emphasising that the situation was always changing.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions, and the responses were noted as follows:

There was reference to the prioritisation system which existed across the County identifying priorities as

'Red' - homeless or needing a house immediately, certainly in the next two years

'Amber' - living with parents/carers, or in a house, and needing a suitable house in the medium term, the next 3-5 years

'Green' - need to prepare for the time when a house will be needed in the long-term (5+ years).

It was confirmed there was good collaboration between the Council and Housing Associations, especially Adra and Cynefin, although Gwynedd was prepared to go it alone, such as the house buying schemes that were already in the pipeline.

It was explained that further work was needed to look at the extent to which anticipating an individual's needs was considered in terms of housing options, to band individuals more fairly. It was further reported that some tracking work was being done, from 15 to 16 years old only noting the need to carry out further work with a younger age range.

In terms of the concern about the lack of bungalows in the context of the Social Grant of £9 million, it was noted that discussions had commenced, but needed developing further.

A comment was accepted that the report did not include a target date against the action steps and it was agreed that a timetable would be established.

In response to the above-mentioned points, the Head of Service reported there was a good relationship with the Housing Associations and that their input in the Strategy reflected the demand in the needs assessment.

To close, the Cabinet Member confirmed that there was good collaboration with others but that the needs of every individual was different and that the desire and the willingness was there to do what was needed. He noted the intention to turn this into an Action Plan and thanked the committee for its support in moving to the next steps.

**RESOLVED:** To accept and note the content of the report as well as stating support to include a programme and the next steps for the Learning Disabilities Service to ensure enough provision of suitable housing in the community for individuals with Learning Disabilities and to consider the challenges.

## **9. DRAFT SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22**

Submitted – the draft work programme deriving from the workshop held, confirming that it was possible to amend it as time progressed.

**RESOLVED:** To adopt the scrutiny work programme 2021/22.

The meeting commenced at 10:30 and concluded at 12:40

**CHAIR**

# Agenda Item 5

## REPORT TO THE CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date:</b>	September 30 2021
<b>Title:</b>	<i>Siop Un Stop</i> Housing
<b>Purpose:</b>	To receive views and input from the Care Scrutiny Committee regarding the concept of establishing a One Stop Shop for Housing and to identify next steps.
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Head of Housing and Property – Carys Fon Williams
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr. Craig ab Iago

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### Introduction/Background

1. The Council's Housing Action Plan (*Cynllun Gweithredu Tai*), agreed on 15 December 2020, outlines the Authority's vision to address the shortage of a suitable number of homes available to local people in Gwynedd. The CGT will invest £77 million in 33 projects over the next 6 years. The scheme is now up and running and several workstreams are currently underway.
2. The Plan was developed after input was received from the Care Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 30 January 2020 prior to the proposed spending programme being submitted for Cabinet approval.
3. One of the elements of the Plan is the establishment of a One Stop Shop for Housing for which £480k has been earmarked. Establishing a single access point for Gwynedd residents to access specialist help with their housing requirements will be an innovative element of the Housing Action Plan. At present, an individual may have to seek assistance from several different Council departments or from a number of external bodies. The procedure therefore requires the individual to understand any complexity associated with the process.
4. The purpose of this report is to update the Care Scrutiny Committee on the work being undertaken to develop a more effective service for Gwynedd residents regarding their interaction with the Council in the area of housing. In addition, it seeks to consult the Committee for its views before further work is undertaken on service development.

### The rationale together with the current position

5. The One Stop Shop is designed to respond to the challenges faced by residents when submitting housing related applications. There is considerable variation in the type of calls received by the service. This ranges from general enquiries; applications to go on the housing register; adaptations for disabled people; homelessness support; complaints about landlords; any grants for empty homes and energy saving advice. In addition, individuals contact the Council to receive an update on an application or to notify a change in their housing needs.
6. Residents also make housing enquiries relating to services that are not directly under the control of the Council, although these services feed into or run in parallel with Council services.



For example, Tai Teg provides information and support on Affordable Housing schemes in the County on behalf of Gwynedd Council. Clearly, should people contact the Council, we are keen to ensure that all sources of information and advice are available to them.

7. As councillors for your communities, Care Scrutiny Committee members will be aware that some residents who contact the Council are in a vulnerable position. Our aim, therefore, is to simplify the number of ways a customer can contact us to ensure that they reach the right service the first time, regardless of whether the enquiry was online, face-to-face or over the phone. The aim will be to improve our efficiency whilst delivering services.
8. Current enquiries received by the Housing and Property Department go either to Galw Gwynedd or directly to the services. Although many units work closely together, situations arise where an individual may require assistance from more than one unit or department.
9. Creating a single source of information will be a priority to facilitate the individual's experience when contacting the Council with housing enquiries. For example, an individual applying to the Housing Options Team may also need help from the Homelessness Unit. However, directing an individual to more than one place may add to an individual's stress. In addition, a situation may arise where officers may not be aware who has dealt with the enquiry and what advice has already been offered to the individual. The One Stop Shop will keep the relevant information in one place.
10. At present, the other Housing Support Grant (HSG) Teams in North Wales have established Single Pathway (or SPOA) processes for Housing Assistance services - Gwynedd is the only exception. In general, the main purpose of the Grant is to prevent homelessness and to assist people to maintain their tenancy. As part of Gwynedd Council's TSG Programme for 2021/22, an allocation of uncommitted expenditure has been earmarked to consider establishing a similar framework in Gwynedd. Although there are differences in how each Authority has set up this service, the main role of the Pathway is to check the suitability of applications for Housing Support Grant services and to refer the individual to the most appropriate provider. The Single Pathway usually takes no responsibility for assessing the user for the support service, with responsibility remaining with the provider.
11. Therefore, it will be essential to ensure that any process of providing services through a referral system takes place alongside the establishment of a One Stop Shop and that the principle of a single access route to Gwynedd services is maintained.

### **The proposed service**

12. As part of the process of setting up a One Stop Shop, an important task will be to learn more about the customer's journey when they make an enquiry. That is, what was the customer's experience of how the Council handled the enquiry. This will include scrutiny of the number of contacts which are needed within and outside the Department, their experience along the way, and what missed opportunities may have occurred to improve the service.
13. Establishing a One Stop Shop would provide opportunities to improve the way we collect, collate and use this information to better understand our customers and their needs. We will be able to use the information to inform managers about future planning and adaptation of their provision, what additional services we could offer and in what ways could we deliver through the One Stop Shop.

14. It is expected that the establishment of a One Stop Shop will contribute to our plans to run more effective services as well as seeking opportunities to make better use of resources. This will include the consideration of technical solutions. Consistent, comprehensive and up-to-date information will need to be collected in one system to provide the relevant advice. In addition, staff roles will need to be developed and staff trained so that they can deliver the service effectively.
15. Experience shows that people often contact us with needs where different officers are responsible for providing assistance. A central point of contact would save an individual time and money and assist staff in finding solutions. Knowledge contained in the system will enable the Council to gain a better understanding of the housing needs of the people of Gwynedd and to develop high quality services for the future.
16. We have held initial discussions with some of the providers and would like to consult with our partners to ensure that everyone is aware of the intention to set up a One Stop Shop. The Department is keen to seek the Committee's views on the One Stop Shop concept and ensure that it aligns with the support offered by Housing Associations and third party providers.
17. As noted above, money has been earmarked in the Housing Action Plan for the establishment of the One Stop Shop and the Department is hoping to appoint an officer to implement any suggestions received from the Care Scrutiny Committee.

### **Next Steps**

18. The Care Scrutiny Committee's guidance is requested regarding the factors which should be considered in developing the plan for the One Stop Shop service.
19. Following feedback from the Care Scrutiny Committee, it is intended to consult partners on the potential service, including the Housing Associations, agencies in the housing field and third sector partners. All feedback received will assist the process of developing a delivery framework and the commissioning of an information management system over the next few months.

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Care Scrutiny Committee
<b>DATE</b>	30 September 2021
<b>TITLE</b>	Gwynedd Population Needs Assessment
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	Councillor Dafydd Meurig
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To submit the approach for preparing the needs assessment

## **1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To submit the approach for preparing the Population Needs Assessment 2022-2027 and the Market Stability Report for scrutiny by the committee.

## **2 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 It is necessary for local authorities and the health board in the north to produce a population needs assessment in each electoral cycle. In accordance with Section 14 of the Social Services and Well being Act (Wales) 2014, the local authority and local health board are required to work together in order to assess:
- What are the care and support needs of the local population
  - What are the support needs of carers
  - To what extent these needs are being met
  - The range and level of services needed in order to meet the care and support needs which have been identified
  - The range and level of preventative services needed
- 2.2 It is expected that the next assessment for the region will be published by 1 April 2022.
- 2.3 There is also a new statutory requirement this year for us to publish a Report on the Stability of the Market.
- 2.4 In order to ensure that the regional needs assessment reflects the care and support needs of local people, each local authority in the north is preparing a local assessment which will feed into the regional assessment. The same procedure will be followed with the report on the stability of the market.
- 2.5 The population needs assessment will demonstrate to us the needs of Gwynedd's population today as well as in the future and it will also assist in taking decisions relating the planning and provision of services in Gwynedd and in the north. It will also be a basis for local, regional and national decisions relating the funding of services. Our report on the stability of the market will also help to make sure that we have a stable market which can provide services to meet the needs of the population as they have been identified in the needs assessment.

### **3.0 APPROACH**

3.1 In order to produce a full assessment of the needs of the population, and the report on market stability, we will need to:

- engage with communities, individuals receiving services and staff
- collate data, e.g. population trends, service provision
- consider the legislative requirements and policy
- analyse the evidence
- prepare conclusions

3.2 The themes in the assessment are broad, and include the following as core matters:

- Children with disabilities or illness
- Children with experiences of care
- Children in need of care and support
- Children at risk of being taken into care
- Children with emotional and behavioural needs
- Older people
- Health
- Physical disabilities
- Learning disability
- Autism
- Mental health
- Sensory impairment
- Carers who need support
- Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

It is also necessary to give specific support to safeguarding issues, equality, the socioeconomic duty and the Welsh language.

3.2 We are working with the Council's Regeneration Team to share the work of engaging with communities, and making sure that we are making the most of evidence which is available to us regarding engagement activities which have been held by the Council, the health board and the third sector over the past few years.

3.3 We are working with officers in the Health Board and Public Health Wales in order to collate relevant data regarding the characteristics of the population and the services which they receive. We will also work with them on the analysis and the preparation of conclusions before we circulate the final assessment for consultation amongst stakeholders.

### **4.0 TIMETABLE**

4.1 It cannot be overemphasised how challenging the timetable is for all stakeholders involved in preparing the assessment and the market stability report. Providers continue to be under significant pressure as a result of the pandemic, and workers in the health board, the Council and third sector are under pressure to prioritise operational issues in order to ensure the day to day continuity of service.

4.2 We are asked to submit Gwynedd information to the regional team by the end of October, and the intention is to prioritise information from engagement activities, since the work of collating data, and its analysis and preparation of conclusions will not have been completed within the time available. The regional report will be submitted for Council approval in March 2022. Following this, we will continue with the work of assessing the needs of the population in Gwynedd, and discussions are taking place with partners to agree on the timetable of the local work.

## **5.0 RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to approve this approach and what we aim to achieve within the timetable.

# Agenda Item 7

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Care Scrutiny Committee
<b>DATE</b>	30 September 2021
<b>TITLE</b>	The Quality Assurance Service within the Safeguarding Unit
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	Councillor Dafydd Meurig
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To provide an overview of the work of the Quality Assurance Service within the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department

## 1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to offer an overview of the work of the Quality Assurance Unit within the Adults, Health and Well-being Department of Gwynedd Council. It is intended to focus on the demand and the impact of the work in the context of providing care services for vulnerable residents in the County.

## 2 INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The purpose of the Quality Assurance team is to assist residents who require care to *"live my life as I wish"*. The team has a key role in ensuring that the care that is commissioned and provided for them is of a good quality and enables residents to do so in a safe way.
- 2.2 The Team monitors and supports internal and external providers to ensure that the care is in line with the needs of the individuals within residential homes, supported housing, day care provision and domiciliary care. The Team's responsibilities also include monitoring nursing homes jointly with colleagues from the Health Board.

## 3 OVERVIEW

- 3.1 The Team was established at the end of 2016. Prior to that, there was a fundamental weakness in the Council's ability to monitor the quality of care for adults consistently and effectively. The monitoring work which happened was entirely responsive as opposed to being pro-active and preventative.
- 3.2 Currently, the Team has 3.5 Quality Assurance Officers. One of these officers has been seconded from the Department's Business Service in order to assist with the Quality Assurance work, with the Department funding it from temporary

funds. There is no funding for this post in the Safeguarding Unit's basic budget. This officer is on flexible retirement at present and will retire in December. This will leave the team with three officers (approximately 2.6 FTE).

- 3.3 Quality Assurance is a process which monitors the quality of care services against specific standards. Within the Adults Department, this must include the standards that are set out in a variety of regulations, guidelines and legislations at a national level. These guidelines and the statutory requirements are set by Welsh Government and they are monitored and enforced by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). These responsibilities cannot be ignored or neglected and there could be significant implications for providers if they fail to deliver on these measures. This could include the loss of registration and the right to work in the care field.
- 3.4 All providers commissioned by the Adults Department within the County must be monitored. This includes:
- 11 Internal Care Homes
  - 2 Learning Disabilities Homes
  - 14 Private Care Homes
  - 8 Nursing Homes
  - 9 Supported Housing Providers
  - All Domiciliary Care Providers
  - Day Care Services
- 3.5 The Team's ethos is to support providers to improve and maintain quality. While the majority of monitoring visits are unannounced, we also welcome contact from providers who express a concern about any aspect of the service and who ask for support to address this.
- 3.6 Generally, there has been no face-to-face monitoring during the Covid-19 period. During the first lockdown, a procedure of daily contact was established with the providers. This contact was crucial as the Council attempted to ensure that the providers had adequate stocks of PPE, that there were adequate numbers of staff available to maintain services and that the tests were carried out in a timely manner. Officers also supported in terms of contact with Public Health Wales, Environmental Health Officers and Care Inspectorate Wales in order to ensure that the providers were dealing with only a minimum number of calls. One very important factor from this contact was enquiring about the welfare of the manager and care staff. It was an opportunity for managers to discuss their concerns about the situation and this was of great assistance in building a relationship based on trust with the officers. We continue to see the benefits of this close relationship which developed during the first lockdown.

While there is a clear understanding of the quality assurance staff's work to monitor and maintain standards, a strong element of partnership trust has developed between the Council and the providers. We are eager to maintain and build on this as we move to a new era in terms of the arrangements and provision of care services.

- 3.7 As the restrictions have now been relaxed partly and visits to care homes and other services are permitted, quality assurance officers have restarted face-to-face monitoring in the services since June 2021. The team has already seen nearly all providers in an initial visit to explain what our intentions are; to ask what information could be provided via e-mail and to discuss whether there are any problems/concerns that had not been raised or addressed already. A monitoring visit schedule is being prepared based on this initial information with priority given to services where some problems or difficulties have become obvious.
- 3.8 Towards the end of 2020, several safeguarding reports were received claiming that suitable care was not being provided within five homes in the County. In response to this, face-to-face monitoring was undertaken and three care homes and two nursing homes within the county were placed under the Escalating Concerns procedure.
- 3.9 Owing to the monitoring work, an embargo on new placements was imposed on the five homes, and two now have a conditional embargo in terms of the number of new residents who may be admitted.
- 3.10 It is the Quality Assurance team which leads on the Escalating Concerns procedure on internal and external Adults Services on behalf of the Department and the Council. The process involves co-ordinating multi-agency meetings and decisions, producing risk assessments, corrective/developmental action plans and co-ordinating the monitoring during the process.
- 3.11 If any provision under-performs and that an embargo on admissions or placements is in place, it has a significant impact on the area teams in terms of their ability to place or use that service. It also has a significant effect on the individuals and their families as it is not always possible to place people within their preferred area or receive a specific service in their community in a timely manner. An embargo can also have a significant financial impact on business owners and it is not always possible for them to overcome these in every case. Naturally, the aim is to avoid reaching this point but if the situation arises, it is crucial that we deal with cases of escalating concerns in a timely manner and working with partners is key for continued quality assurance. The role of the Quality Assurance team and their ability to act effectively is central to achieving this.



- 3.12 Receiving the opinion of residents/service users is a key part of monitoring and we will also seek the opinion of families and staff when we monitor. We will try to have an opportunity to discuss with residents while on a monitoring visit or questionnaires will be sent out. This will allow individuals (residents, families and staff) to give anonymous observations if they so wish.
- 3.13 Owing to the number of services to be monitored and the current work-load, it is not possible for officers within the team to monitor every provider. The service has had to prioritise and, at present, there is no capacity within the team to monitor the domiciliary care and day care provision with any activity in these fields limited to emergency or responsive work only. This is not a satisfactory situation, particularly given the significant pressure on these services at present and the significant demand for more domiciliary care and the increase in respite care and day care services.
- 3.14 In recent years, the work-load has also meant that many providers could go for a period of up to two years between monitoring visits. Ideally, we should be aiming at an arrangement similar to that of Conwy Council who monitor every provision every six months. This would reduce risks of services failing significantly and of course reduce the likelihood of safeguarding concerns involving individuals receiving care.
- 3.15 It is likely that members will remember press reports about the awful situation in Winterbourne View where residents with Learning Disabilities were physically and emotionally abused. In her review of Winterbourne View Hospital (2012), Margaret Flynn notes that the authorities did not have an overview of the provision and that what was commissioned by the Health Board was not monitored in terms of the quality of care or in terms of their ability to satisfy the needs of residents. The work of the Quality Assurance team needs to ensure that the Council and its partners has the necessary current information in order to have a full overview of adults care services provision in Gwynedd.

#### **4 MOVING FORWARD**

- 4.1 The Department's vision for the future is based on being able to support and monitor provisions consistently, regularly and in a timely manner.
- 4.2 It must be ensured that we are in a position to monitor all provisions that are commissioned by the Department, as well as any other provision within the County.

- 4.3 Care Inspectorate Wales reviews the performance of local authorities as they deliver their function in the field of Social Services. Though they regulate us on our statutory duties, our Quality Assurance work intertwines in order to ensure quality within registered provisions. CIW considers that a robust quality assurance provision is an important part of local authorities' ability to be proactive in ensuring standards and safeguarding adults that are being supported.
- 4.4 A review form has been created for Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and other officers to complete when reviewing cases. This feedback is of assistance in identifying concerns sooner and then support the providers to introduce and maintain improvements.
- 4.5 Placing our loved-ones in care/nursing homes is a very difficult decision and it is essential that we as an Authority endeavour to ensure that individuals receive suitable and safe care. Reference has already been made to Winterbourne View, but that example shows the potential impact of not monitoring on the residents and their families.
- 4.6 Provisions need to be prevented from going into the Escalating Concerns procedure in order to avoid increasing pressures on services. One nursing home and two care homes have closed in the County over the past two years. It is essential to support the providers in order to ensure that there is a choice of local provision available for the residents of Gwynedd.
- 4.7 The information presented verbally at the Committee will reinforce this report in order to facilitate the Committee's consideration of the ability of the Quality Assurance team and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department to fulfil their duties effectively and in doing so safeguard and protect the interests of the residents of Gwynedd.