

**SUBJECT: GWENT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD (RPB) AREA PLAN AND  
RPB ANNUAL REPORT 23/24**

**MEETING:** Council meeting

**DATE:** 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:** Regional Report (Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Newport, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly)

**1. PURPOSE:**

To update Members on the work of the Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) in fulfilling local authority statutory duties required under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, presenting the:

- Regional Area Plan 2023-2027, and
- RPB Annual report 2023/2024

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1. Council to consider the joint commitments within the Area Plan.
- 2.2. Ensure that Members have the opportunity to review the RPB Annual Report and progress made against the objectives; and provide any feedback/comments.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014) places a statutory duty on local authorities and health boards to prepare a regional Area Plan, following the publication of the region's population needs assessment (PNA) and Market Stability Report (MSR). The Gwent PNA was previously signed off by MCC members during Autumn 2022 and a commitment was made to share the Gwent Area Plan with MCC members, to set out how regional priorities are to be delivered in partnership.

3.1 The ***Gwent Area Plan 2023-2027 (appendix 1)*** has been completed and signed off by the Gwent Regional Partnership Board. An Area Plan summary has also been included as ***appendix 2***. The plan has been developed in partnership with Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, and Torfaen local authorities, and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Third Sector partners and the Regional Partnership Team. The Area Plan sets out the actions required to achieve the priorities identified in the PNA, by our partners and citizens, and closely aligns and share similar principles of working to the Public Service Board (PSB) and Well-being Plan. The Area Plan is reviewed annually to ensure we are meeting the needs of our communities.

3.2 The progress against delivery of key objectives in the Area Plan, is monitored through the **RPB Annual Report (Appendix 3)** which considers specifically the priority groups set out in the PNA and cross cutting themes. Key developments have also been set out in **appendix 4**.

Following the publication of the regional Population Needs Assessment (PNA) report each local authority and health board are required to prepare and publish an Area Plan setting out the range and level of services they propose to provide in response to the PNA core themes, which are:

- Children & Young People
- Older People, including People with Dementia
- Health & Physical Disabilities including Sensory Loss & Impairment
- Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health
- Learning Disabilities
- Autism and Neurodevelopmental Conditions
- Unpaid Carers
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence

3.1 Core themes are not addressed in isolation and there is an element of cross cutting working, in addition to the above including:

- A resilient skilled and integrated health and social care workforce
- Housing needs
- Rebalancing health and social care including social value
- Substance misuse
- Adult protection, child protection and safeguarding
- Transforming children's services and removing profit from the care of looked after children
- Tackling loneliness and isolation

3.2 Area plans must include the specific services planned in response to each core theme identified in the population assessment. As part of this, area plans must include:

- The actions partners will take in relation to the priority areas of integration for Regional Partnership Board
- Administer and monitor Welsh Government grant funding e.g. Integrated Care Fund.
- The instances and details of pooled funds to be established in response to the population assessment.
- How services will be procured or arranged to be delivered, including by alternative delivery models.
- Details of the preventative services that will be provided or arranged.
- Actions being taken in relation to the provision of information, advice, and assistance services
- Actions required to deliver services through the medium of Welsh

A section of the Area Plan is monitored at each Strategic Partnership that sits within the RPB governance structure, to monitor progress; with an annual review report by the RPB via an Annual Report which is submitted to Welsh Government. (**Appendix 2**)

The regional Area Plan has been developed with ABUHB and Integrated Service Partnership Board (ISPB) leads to ensure alignment with the Monmouthshire ISPB Plan. The RPB will work closely with the 5 ISPBs across the region to ensure plans are delivered in collaboration, resources maximised, and duplication is avoided. ISPB plans have to demonstrate alignment to the RPB population needs assessment, and the regional strategic partnerships will define integrated models of care, and work with the ISPBs to make an

assessment of how close they are to delivering those models, identify gaps and what can be addressed through the local Neighbourhood Care Networks. The RPB and Strategic Partnerships will identify specific actions within the Area Plan that are best delivered at the ISPB level and form part of a place-based care model. A copy of the Monmouthshire ISPB plan is published alongside the Area Plan <https://www.gwentrpb.wales/area-plan>

### **3.3 Conclusion**

This is the second Area Plan for Gwent (following the inaugural plan in 2017) where we will continue to develop on work already underway and address the care and support needs reflected in the most recent PNA. The Area Plan also links to Monmouthshire County Councils Improvement Plan and will align and complement other strategic plans such as the Public Service Board (PSB) Wellbeing Plans to avoid duplication and ensure national cross cutting priorities can be delivered.

The Area Plan will also set out high level actions to support winter planning and use of Welsh Government grants such as Regional Integration Fund; and members are asked to take note of any future implications to winter planning arrangements and tapering of funding.

## **4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION**

Promoting equalities is a fundamental requirement of the Social Services and (Wales) Wellbeing Act 2014 and integral to the development of the Area Plan. An equality impact assessment was developed under the Population Needs Assessment and linked to the Public Service Boards (PSB) Wellbeing Assessment. Further monitoring and review will be ensured, during the lifetime of the Area Plan.

## **5. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The Area Plan progress is evaluated annually via the RPB annual report to highlight key milestones and achievements made.

## **6. REASONS:**

The Regional Partnership Board complies to the Social Services and Wellbeing Wales Act to improve the wellbeing of the population and improve how health and social care services are delivered.

## **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no direct financial implications related to this report. However, there are considerable Welsh Government grant funding streams supporting projects and staff across health and social care in Monmouthshire; and grant requirements and implications will need to be monitored closely.

## **8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 No implications. Officers from the Gwent Regional Partnership Team have been working closely with Council's Corporate Policy Unit who have played a key part in ensuring the

alignment of both the regional Area Plan and Well-being Plan required under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and Well-being of Future Generations Act respectively.

## 8. CONSULTEES:

Cllr Ian Chandler – Cabinet member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services.

Jane Rodgers – Strategic Director of Social Care and Health, Monmouthshire.

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Population Needs Assessment 2022/2023:



PNA English.pdf



PNA Welsh.pdf

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- Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act [social-services-and-well-being-wales-act-2014-the-essentials.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)
  - [Overview of the Social services and well-being... | Social Care Wales](#)
  - [Regional Partnership Boards \(RPBs\) | GOV.WALES](#)

### Appendices:

Appendix 1: Regional Area Plan 2023-2027



Area Plan.pdf

### Appendix 2: Area Plan Summary





Welsh Government Core Theme	Outcome Priority
Children and Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To improve outcomes for children and young people with complex needs through earlier intervention, community-based support, and placements closer to home.</li><li>To ensure good mental health and emotional wellbeing for children and young people through effective partnership working especially mitigating long term impact of Covid-19 pandemic.</li></ul>


<b>Older People including Dementia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve emotional wellbeing for older people by reducing loneliness and social isolation with earlier intervention and community resilience.</li> <li>• To improve outcomes for people living with dementia and their carers. To support older people to live, or return following a period of hospitalisation, to their own homes and communities through early intervention, integrated care models and a whole system approach.</li> <li>• To mitigate the long-term impact of Covid-19 pandemic through, especially reducing waiting lists and times to access support, appointments, and medical procedures</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Physical Disabilities including people with sensory impairment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support disabled people, including sensory impairment, through an all-age approach to live independently in appropriate accommodation and access community-based services, including transport.</li> <li>• Ensure people are supported through access to accurate information, assistance and 'rehabilitation' where required.</li> <li>• Improve transition across all age groups and support services.</li> <li>• Ensure people are supported through access to accurate accessible information, assistance and 'rehabilitation' where required.</li> </ul>
<b>People with a Learning Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support people with learning disabilities to live independently with access to early intervention services in the community; and greater public awareness and understanding of people with learning disabilities needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase understanding and awareness of mental health amongst the public, to reduce stigma and help people to seek support earlier.</li> <li>• We need to improve emotional well-being and mental health for adults and children through timely early intervention and community support.</li> </ul>
<b>Carers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support unpaid carers to care through flexible respite, access to accurate information, peer to peer support, effective care planning and through increased public understanding.</li> <li>• Improve well-being of young carers and young adult carers and mitigate against long-term impacts</li> </ul>
<b>Autism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide more timely diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and access to support services and information.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A multi-agency partnership approach to ensure appropriate housing and accommodation for older people and vulnerable citizens.</li> <li>• To ensure effective use of Disabled Facilities Grants and appropriate partnership support and available resources.</li> <li>• Homelessness requiring a collaborative response from public services and partners, especially the non-use of B&amp;B accommodation for young people, and through prevention and early intervention.</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3: RPB Annual Report 2023/24



## Appendix 4: Key Developments over the last Year

	<p><b>Carers Annual Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects were developed to support carers with hospital discharge across the region, with <b>1,626</b> carers accessing support.</li> <li>• <b>226</b> individuals received a small grant between April and June 2024.</li> <li>• The Young Carers in Schools Programme extended its remit to offer support to schools for transition days.</li> <li>• <b>3,145</b> carers received a short break from their caring role, supporting wellbeing and positive caring relationships.</li> <li>• Projects delivered community support, providing information, advice, and assistance (IAA), activities, individual and peer support to <b>3,389</b> carers.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Dewis figures:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed views of resources have increased by <b>2,728</b>. This is the number of times someone has searched for something on Dewis and then clicked to find more information.</li> <li>• In March 2022 there was <b>31,227</b> clicks and in March 2023 there was <b>40,795</b> expired resources have reduced from <b>966</b> to <b>852</b> showing that currency of the directory is improving.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Dementia Friendly Gwent Network</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are now over <b>270</b> multi agency networks members, including both paid professionals, volunteers, carers, and people living with dementia.</li> <li>• <b>55</b> network members joined us for the 2023 Dementia Friendly Gwent coffee morning, to celebrate the hard work of organisations across Gwent.</li> <li>• <b>4,305</b> Dementia Friends have been made across <b>152</b> sessions during 2023 – 2024, to help raise awareness and understanding across the region.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Citizen Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since it's relaunch, we have expanded the Gwent Citizen Network to over <b>100</b> members.</li> <li>• A Gwent wide Coproduction and Engagement event, <b>'Decisions Made Together: Inclusion and Experience'</b> was attended by over <b>150</b> professionals and citizens.</li> <li>• Coproduction Luncheons are taking place across Gwent to enable us to connect and engage with citizens to influence and support development of our strategic priorities and service delivery.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Workforce &amp; College Consortium:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A regional work placement scheme was launched in September 2022, to support students to apply for local authority work placements and to support social care teams to adequately prepare to accept these placements.</li> <li>• <b>92</b> work placement applications were received for the 2023/24 academic year, with a total of <b>30</b> work placements facilitated by LA social care teams. Future efforts will focus on converting placements to paid work opportunities. The RPB have continued to engage with members of Coleg Gwent to promote careers across health and social care and how to design course content to promote the sector.</li> </ul> <p><b>Access to Medicine Course</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been a continued shortage of Welsh students seeking to pursue a career in medicine, particularly those</li> </ul>

	<p>from socially disadvantaged areas. Developed with Professor Paul Edwards (ABUHB) this course, prepares local students for a Medical Pathway Degree and is designed to support talented individuals who have traditionally faced barriers in entering the field of medicine, <b><i>it is the first of its kind in Wales.</i></b></p> <p>The first cohort of students were recruited in September 2023, and it is anticipated that the course will expand in the new academic year.</p> <p><b>Clinical Placement Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initially launched in September 2022 this initiative provides second-year students with <b>100</b> hours of clinical placement in hospital settings such as The Royal Gwent, Nevill Hall, and Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr. Building on this success the program has been expanded to include placements at The Grange university hospital and Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan. <b>38</b> students across Coleg Gwent have secured placements this year. <b>2</b> students have recently secured substantive posts as Healthcare Support Workers within the health board. The remaining <b>36</b> students are currently on track to complete their qualifications this year and are poised to advance into university or employment within the sector.</li> </ul> <p><b>Micro Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following an initial 12-month Micro Care pilot in 2022-23, exploring if micro carers could support local care capacity and delivery, providing an alternative to traditional domiciliary care provision, Micro Care Monmouthshire continues to support local citizens to become self-employed care workers. There is a total of <b>25</b> micro carers on Monmouthshire’s Micro Care Directory to date. Further funding for the development of a digital, self-service portal via the Regional Innovation Co-ordination (RIC) Hub has also been secured.</li> <li>Implementation of the portal spanned from January - April 2024 and includes features to ensure training compliance, document collection, and secure data handling. The portal will help to streamline the onboarding process, providing an easy access platform that will help the protect future resilience and longevity.</li> <li>Recognising the need for region-specific solutions, the Gwent Regional Partnership Team established a Micro Care Community of Practice in Wales in July 2023. The bi-monthly meetings aim to address barriers specific to Wales and foster the growth of micro care services.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>AskSARA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AskSARA All metrics (users, new users, sessions, reports, bounce rate) have increased. The user/report percentage and bounce rate remain at very positive levels, indicating users are interacting well with the site. Good variety of referral sources. <b>90%</b> of users would recommend AskSARA, <b>71%</b> were helped to find a solution or equipment.</li> </ul>

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