

Scrutiny Report



Performance Scrutiny Committee - Partnerships

Part 1

Date: 24th July 2024

Subject Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board (APB)

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Designation:
Caroline Ryan-Phillips	Head of Prevention and Inclusion
Lisa Meredith	Substance Misuse Team Manager
Maria Evans	Substance Misuse Lead Officer – Newport City Council
Heidi Anderson	Substance Misuse Lead Officer – Torfaen County Council

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider the Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board report.
2. Determine if it wishes to make any comments to the partnership.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 The Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board (APB) is a partnership between five local authorities, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Gwent Police, Gwent Probation, and Prisons, as well as Public Health Wales (PHW) and a representative for service users and carers. Area Planning Boards (APBs) were established in 2010 as part of the new arrangements to deliver the Welsh Government Substance Misuse Strategy 'Working Together to Reduce Harm', and latterly the Substance Misuse Action Plan 2019-2022 which Welsh Government revised post Covid and request APB continue to work to.

2.2 The APB provides a range of services to support people affected by substance misuse, including:

- **Assessment and referral:** The APB commissions services to provide single points of contact for both adult and young people's services, offering assessment and referral to appropriate services.
- **Treatment and support:** The APB funds a variety of treatment and support services for people affected by substance misuse. These include counselling, group therapy, clinical services, and access to residential rehabilitation.
- **Prevention and early intervention:** The APB supports prevention efforts through brief interventions, training, and awareness activities, particularly for young people.
- **Family support:** The APB commissioned services include support for families affected by a loved one's substance use through the Gwent Drug and Alcohol Family Service.

Previous Consideration of this item

This will be the Committee's first consideration of the report.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

3.1 The following are attached for the Committee's Consideration:

Appendix A - Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board report

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

4.1 **Role of the Committee**

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

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- **Consider the report upon the Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board**
 - **Assess and make comment on:**
 - The progress being made by the Gwent Substance Misuse Area Planning Board in partnership working;
 - How effectively the Services worked together to date;
 - What mitigating actions have been put in place to address risks;
 - What barriers are there to achieving outcomes.
 - **In drawing its conclusions, the Committee should assess:**
 - What was the overall conclusion on the information contained within the report?
 - Is the Committee satisfied that it has had all of the relevant information to base a conclusion on the report?
 - Does the Committee wish to make any comments upon the report?

Suggested Lines of Enquiry

4.2 In considering the report, the Committee may wish to explore some of the following areas of focus:

- How effective has the regional Area Planning Board (APB) approach been in improving substance misuse services across Gwent compared to the previous individual Community Safety Partnership model?
- How is the APB addressing the specific needs of diverse groups, such as LGBTQ+ individuals, ethnic minorities, or older adults with substance misuse issues?
- How is the effectiveness of the Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS) and N-Gage children's service being measured and evaluated?
- What mechanisms are in place for service users to provide feedback, and how is this feedback incorporated into service improvements?
- How is lived experience being incorporated into service planning and delivery?
- What plans are in place to sustain and develop services if Welsh Government funding levels change in the future?
- What prevention and early intervention strategies are being implemented, particularly for young people at risk of substance misuse?

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act

4.3 The Committee's consideration of the report should consider how working in partnership is maximising its contribution to the five ways of working. The following are examples of the types of questions to consider:

5 Ways of Working	Types of Questions to consider:
Long-term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.	What long-term trends will impact upon service outcomes?
	How will changes in long term needs impact upon outcomes in the future?
Prevention Prevent problems occurring or getting worse.	What issues are facing service users at the moment?
	How are Services addressing these issues to prevent a future problem?
Integration Considering how public bodies' wellbeing objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.	Are there any other organisations providing similar / complementary services?
	How do the Services' performance in the Plans impact upon the services of other public bodies and their objectives?
Collaboration Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the organisation itself).	Who has the Service been working with to deliver outcomes?
	How are the Services using knowledge / information / good practice of others to inform / influence outcomes?
Involvement	How have Services sought the views of those who are impacted by service delivery?

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area, which the body serves.

How have Services taken into account diverse communities in decision-making?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Supporting Information

Guidance for Local Authority Scrutiny Committees on the scrutiny of Public Services Boards issued by Welsh Government in August 2017:

- 5.1 The Characteristics of Effective Partnership Scrutiny set out in the Guidance for Local Authority Scrutiny Committees on the scrutiny of Public Services Boards issued by Welsh Government in August 2017 can equally be applied to the scrutiny of other Partnerships and states that:

“Research into the practice of collaborative or joint scrutiny in England and Wales identifies that arrangements are effective when they demonstrate the following characteristics:

Characteristics of effective partnership scrutiny:

- Scrutiny regards itself as a form of ‘critical friendship with positive intent’ in which scrutiny practitioners act as advocates for the success of joint working.
- Collaborative performance is evaluated from the citizen’s perspective.
- Strong efforts are made to understand the complexity of partnership arrangements and to facilitate learning about the culture and assumptions of different organizations.
- Scrutiny creates positive expectations by focussing on issues regarded as useful to the partnership or where there is consensus that ‘things need to change’.
- Scrutiny demonstrates intellectual independence and investigative rigour in all of its activities.
- Scrutiny demonstrates a positive impact by developing clear, timely, evidence-based recommendations aimed at enhancing collaborative performance.
- Scrutiny critically evaluates its own performance utilising partnership perspectives.

(For Members’ information, a link to the full Welsh Government Guidance is included in Section 7 of this report in the Background Papers.)

6 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

6.1 The report links with the Wellbeing-being Objectives and Aims of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027;

Well-being Objective	1 – Economy, Education and Skills	2 – Newport's Environment and Infrastructure	3 – Preventative and Equitable Community and Social Care	4 – An Inclusive, Fair and Sustainable Council
Aims:	Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.	A city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future.	Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do.	Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core.

6.2 The Gwent Substance Misuse Service Area Planning Board report has strong links with Wellbeing Objective 3.

7. Background Papers

- [Guidance for Local Authority Scrutiny Committees on the scrutiny of Public Services Boards](#) (Issued by Welsh Government August 2017)
- [The Essentials – Well-being of Future Generation \(Wales\) Act](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2022-2027](#)
- [Welsh Government Substance Misuse Strategy 'Working Together to Reduce Harm'](#)

Report Completed: 24 July 2024