

Isle of Anglesey County Council

Scrutiny Report

Committee:	Corporate Scrutiny Committee
Date:	14.10.2026
Subject:	Progress Report of the Social Services Scrutiny Panel
Scrutiny Chair:	Jeff Evans

1. Who will be the portfolio holder / lead officer presenting the report?

Name	Role
Councillor Euryrn Morris	Chair of the Social Services Panel
Councillor Dyfed Wyn Jones	Children, Young People and Families Portfolio Holder
Councillor Neville Evans	Adults' Portfolio Holder
Service Office (supporting)	Role
Fon Roberts	Social Services Director

2. Why the Scrutiny Committee is being asked to consider the matter

To note progress and provide assurance.

3. Role of the Scrutiny Committee and recommendations

- ☒ For information
☐ To be noted
☒ For assurance
☐ For recommendation to the Executive

Recommendation(s): R1 To note the Social Services Panel's work during the last period.
--

4. How does the recommendation(s) contribute to the objectives of the Council's Plan?

Direct relevance to the Council Plan: 2023-2028. Social Care and Wellbeing is one of the six key strategic aims (Council Plan 2023 – 2028). Their aim is to ensure healthier and safer communities by offering a range of preventative, improvement and support services, in partnership with other stakeholders of the same mindset. The work of the Social Services Panel contributes toward this aim.
--

5. Key scrutiny themes

Key themes the Scrutiny Committee should concentrate on:

1. The effects of the Scrutiny Panel's forward work programme on the Council Plan.
2. Key areas to strengthen the Scrutiny Panel's work.
3. Effectiveness of the Fieldwork Sessions against the Scrutiny Panels outcomes.

6. Key points / summary

This progress report provides an overview of the Social Services Scrutiny Panel's work during the 2025/26 civic year.

A two year forward work programme was prepared for 2025-2027 with Members of the Panel and Officers. The Panel has two formal meetings a year, in May and November. Between these meetings, Members have the opportunity to visit a current Service and new provisions in the community.

The agenda of every meeting varies, but it usually includes a presentation on a specific theme, a development session and opportunities to report back on visits to services. The wide range of items allows the Panel to collect evidence, constructively challenge and support continuous improvement within Social Services.

The main themes, subjects and visits considered during this period are noted below as well as a summary of the evidence collected, the challenge provided by Members, the effect of scrutiny work and improvement actions noted.

1. Report on the Social Services Complaints and Comments Procedure

The Panel received a presentation by the Customer Care Managers on the Social Services Complaints and Comments Procedure for 2024/25. The themes of the complaints were considered, as well as positive feedback, lessons learnt, monitoring arrangements and training that is needed as a result of the complaints.

The Members' scrutiny work focused on the criteria for moving a complaint from Step 1 to Step 2; the relationship between the number of complaints and service users; the Council's responsibilities compared to some external agencies; complaints that happen frequently or time and time again; service user confidence in the process; analysis of patterns and themes; and tracking lessons to ensure the service is improved.

2. Care provision for older people and additional care homes

The Head of Adults Services gave a presentation on the care model for older people and the additional care homes developments on Anglesey.

The Panel challenged the community benefits of the provision, rent levels, possible financial pressure, employment opportunities, support for people with complex needs, arrangements for couples that live with dementia and the eligibility criteria.

Outcomes and Improvement Actions

- Members expressed an interest in visiting Hafan Cefni or Holyhead to see a similar provision being implemented, and arrangements are being made to arrange these visits before the next meeting that will be held at the end of November.

3. Heddfan and mental health visits

During visits with the Heddfan and Mental Health Services Team, Members received direct evidence regarding the services, the eligibility criteria, the trauma informed method, community support models and the collaboration with the Health Board and the Step by Step Care model.

- It was noted that significant space and capacity is needed in Heddfan.
- Emphasis was put on the need to support the community to reflect Heddfan's work.
- The value of the relationship between staff and the variety of activities provided with external partners.
- Members expressed an interest in engaging directly with service users in the future through community activities.

A constructive challenge was provided on key service themes, and a better understanding of the front line experience was received.

Outcomes and Improvement Actions

- It was noted that the fieldwork feedback form should be reviewed to use broader scrutiny themes and to support more open discussions, and this has now been actioned.
- The importance of noting findings after every visit, tracking matters and ensuring that improvement areas receive constant attention was emphasised.

4. Care Inspectorate Wales Report – Children and Families Service and Foster Wales Anglesey

The Director of Social Services gave two presentations summarising a positive report following a CIW inspection. One discussing the assurance inspection for the Children and Families Services, and the other looking in detail at the Fostering Wales – Anglesey team.

The Panel scrutinised the inspections findings, the implications for Social Services, and the actions that are being developed in response to the recommendations.

The scrutiny work of Members focussed on the financial pressures and the need for additional funding; the challenges in terms of recruiting and retaining staff; and training, shadowing and development arrangements for Social Services trainees within the statutory timeframe.

Outcomes and Improvement Actions

- The Members noted that both reports were positive.
- Members were keen to spend time in Services to get a better understanding of front line work, and plans are in place to arrange this for January.

5. Visits to Gors Felen and Haulfryn

During visits to Gors Felen, Llangefni and Haulfryn, Llangristiolus, Members saw firsthand the provision and support that is available to service users. In Gors Felen, the positive relationship and regular communication between the centre and Social Services was mentioned, the great facilities on site, including a new accessible garden, integrated and community methods that support individuals to maintain their independence. In Haulfryn, the importance of the provision, in terms of offering key respite care to families of children with learning disabilities was recognised.

Members scrutinised the quality of facilities and the community support that's available; the relationship between the provision and Social Services; how services support service user independence; and the need to ensure that provision is accessible and appropriate for children and young people with learning difficulties.

Outcomes and Improvement Actions

- Members thanked staff for their time and the insight provided during the visit.
- It was noted that Haulfryn is responding to a clear need to respite care and appropriate activities for children with learning difficulties.
- Members expressed an interest in revisiting Haulfryn once the site is fully operational.

6. Supported Housing (Learning Difficulties)

The Head of Adults Services gave a presentation on Supported Housing (Learning Difficulties).

Members highlighted the importance of ensure that Supported Housing services continue to meet service users' needs and support positive outcomes.

The value of working in partnership and continuously developing services was recognised, in order to respond to calls, challenges and future risks.

Members scrutinised the funding streams noted for significant improvement; the length of the current waiting list for Supported Homes on Anglesey; interim accommodation arrangements for residents whilst improvements are made; the level of contact between residents and social workers; the collaboration arrangements between Social Services and Housing Services; the key factors when choosing an appropriate location for service users; families input when choosing an appropriate residential placement; and the challenges and financial risks associated with the provision.

7. Collaborating with the Education Panel to Strengthen Accountability

The Social Services and Education Scrutiny Panel have worked in partnership to scrutinise the Corporate Safeguarding report before it's presented to the Scrutiny Committee. The Panel have met twice a year as part of this method and have continued to work in partnership. This method, on the whole, has strengthened accountability by allowing Members from both Panels to consider safeguarding matters with each other, to share information across service areas and challenge reports more robustly before they are presented to the Scrutiny Committee.

Significant attention has been given to the 'Justice Through Our Courage' report, and Members sought assurance that procedures between both services are robust.

8. Next steps

The Panel will meet again in November, where it will scrutinise on the theme of a Trauma Informed Anglesey, the 2025/26 report and comments and complaints. The meeting is also a chance for Members to report on their visits and additional care provisions, noting the main findings and any areas that need further attention.

The Panel will also review the progress and effect of its work programme to date, and consider its structure, prioritise and the option for the future. This will ensure that its work continues to focus on the most important matters to Service users, provides a constructive challenge and contributes to continues improvement and accountability within Social Services.

7. Impact assessments

7.1. Has an integrated impact assessment (consideration to equality, the socio-economic duty and the Welsh language) been completed?

☐ Yes

☒ No

If no, explain why: N/A

7.2. Possible effects on protected groups under the 2010 Equalities Act

Summarise the findings of the impact assessment. When appropriate, attach a copy. See the Guidance on Completing Scrutiny Reports on MonITor for further guidance.

7.3. Potential impacts on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage (strategic decisions)

Summarise the findings of the impact assessment. When appropriate, attach a copy. See the Guidance on Completing Scrutiny Reports on MonITor for further guidance.

7.4. Potential effects on opportunities to use Welsh and not treat the language less favourably than English

Summarise the findings of the impact assessment. When appropriate, attach a copy. See the Guidance on Completing Scrutiny Reports on MonITor for further guidance.

7.5. Possible effects on the Council's Net Zer Target

Positive / Neutral / Negative and how

8. Financial implications

None

9. Appendices

10. Report author and background papers

Angharad Hughes