***Monthly liaison meetings between members and heads of service.***

In addition to the formal issue based meetings, working groups and Boards attended by HoS and Portfolio holders, e.g. Transformation Board, pre-scrutiny report consultations, etc. monthly liaison meetings have taken place to ensure that our Cllrs are informed and updated in respect of the current service priorities, demands and developments.*.*

These liaison meetings provide the opportunity for Cllrs. to hold more in depth discussions which enhance their knowledge of social services business, gain a better understanding of practice and processes and enables them to act as a critical friend; inputting an objective perspective, new ideas from and ensuring that the service performance and direction is engaged with and influenced by our democratically appointed Members.

**What difference has it made?**Members take the opportunity to highlight issues passed to them by their peers, that have arisen in different corporate arena’s and through their participation within local and national forums; to inform developments or to resolve concerns before they escalate.

Examples of which are; plans for provision of appropriate social housing solutions, progress in respect of apprenticeship schemes, consideration in respect of safeguarding for vulnerable groups, access to training for Cllrs to deliver upon their safeguarding responsibilities.

These meetings are both challenging and supportive, ensuring that there is shared awareness and ownership of initiatives and accountability for service development.

Open communication over complex and sometimes difficult issues serves to develop and build upon the positive relationship that exists between members and officers within Conwy. This ensures that those responsible for the social services portfolio are well informed and that social care retains the priority it requires within the Council.