



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Child & Family Services**

Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

Wednesday, 28 August 2019 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor P R Hood-Williams (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
D W W Thomas

Councillor(s)

M Durke
W G Lewis

Councillor(s)

P K Jones

Other Attendees

Elliott King Cabinet Member - Children Services

Officer(s)

Simon Jones Social Services Strategy and Performance Improvement Officer
Liz Jordan Scrutiny Officer
Julie Thomas Head of Child & Family Services

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): K M Griffiths, Y V Jardine and S M Jones

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

No disclosures of interest were made.

2 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips

No declarations were made.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Panel agreed the notes of the meeting on 26 June 2019 as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Public Question Time

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

5 Performance Monitoring

Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services attended to brief the Panel on the Performance Report for June 2019.

Discussion Points:

- Page 15 - Number of Missing Children – Information is going to be disaggregated to identify how many are from Swansea
- Page 16 - Looked After Children Population – Reduced in June and again in July. Re-referral rates are also going down. Significant increase in Looked After Children in last 12 months, however, looking at trends it appears to have levelled off. We are bucking the trend in Swansea. Figures going up elsewhere.
- Panel queried how many children are in residential homes in Swansea.
- Panel would like to see figures on staff absenteeism.
- Performance Report is very good. Department expects to be busier in September as schools busy and increase in activity at front door but nothing specific expected to happen in next few months.
- Page 23 - Signs of Safety Metrics – All areas of performance for Signs of Safety are low. Team meetings to be held to discuss importance and impact of this. June is first month of collating this data. Issues with recording of this work and picking up information from PARIS. Department will be moving over to Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) and recording of data should improve.
- Panel requested a glossary is attached to Performance Monitoring Report in future.
- Department has a mentoring scheme and senior officers still sit on some boards, including Permanence Board, to ensure they are rooted in practice.
- Department has good relationship with courts. Number of cases going to court are reducing.

Actions:

- Head of Service to provide figure on number of children in residential homes.
- Figures for staff absenteeism to come to next meeting in October.
- Glossary to be included with future Performance Monitoring Reports.

6 Feedback on Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection Report - Update on Action Plan

Julie Thomas updated the Panel on progress made on the five main areas for improvement identified in the CIW Inspection Report of August 2018.

Some of the timescales have slipped substantially. This is a big piece of work which requires a cultural change whilst still maintaining a safe service.

Actions:

- Head of Service to circulate newsletter to the Panel.

7 Care Inspectorate Wales Local Authority Performance Review

Simon Jones, Social Services Strategy and Performance Improvement Officer briefed the Panel on this item including an overview of the annual review of performance carried out by CIW, and the letter to the Director of Social Services which summaries the evaluation of performance of social services during 2018/19. There are new arrangements within the CIW annual performance review plan for 2019/20.

Within Child and Family Services, CIW will be piloting a joint inspection of child protection arrangements and will be focussing on following up areas for improvement following inspection, learning outcomes for children with focus on partnership working and the first point of contact service.

Discussion Points:

- As an Authority, we need to consider succession. There is some succession planning in place within Social Services and the Department is trying to future proof it to provide a stable future workforce.
- Some concern about reference to morale in Youth Offending Service in inspection report. The Swansea element of YOS is coming back to Swansea and has a new board and action plan in place. This will be an item at 28 October Panel meeting.
- Panel is happy with performance review and letter.

8 Work Programme Timetable 2019/20

The Panel considered the work programme.

A briefing on Young Carer Assessments has been added to the Work Programme for 24 February 2020.

9 Letters

Letter received and considered by the Panel.

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm