



City and County of Swansea

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

Committee Room 5 - Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 30 April 2018 at 4.00 pm

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

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
Y V Jardine
D W W Thomas

Councillor(s)

M Durke
S M Jones

Councillor(s)

K M Griffiths
A Pugh

Officer(s)

Owen Davies
Val Jones

Performance Manager, Social Services
Regional Adoption Manager, Western Bay Adoption Service

Liz Jordan
Andrew Taylor
Julie Thomas

Scrutiny Officer
Corporate Complaints Manager
Head of Child & Family Services

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P K Jones and I E Mann

1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Disclosures of interest – Mike Durke and Alyson Pugh

2 Notes of meeting on 26 February 2018

The Panel agreed the notes as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 Public Question Time

No questions were asked.

4 Child and Family Services Complaints Annual Report 2016-17

Andrew Taylor, Corporate Complaints Manager went through the report, highlighting the main issues and answering questions.

Discussion points:

- Good working relationship between Complaints team, Head of Child and Family Services and officers in Social Services.

- Only 3 complaints went for investigation at stage 2 of the complaints process in 2016/17
- There were no findings of maladministration by the Ombudsman in relation to Swansea Children's Services in 2016/17
- A number of compliments were received in relation to Children's Services during the period and individual staff members have been made aware of the compliments concerning them.
- The Panel and Head of Child and Family Services thanked the Corporate Complaints Manager for all his hard work over the years and wished him well in his new role.

5 Performance Monitoring

Val Jones, Adoption Manager went through the report on Life Journey Materials which was brought to the Panel following a query from the Corporate Parenting Board.

Discussion points:

- The quantity and quality of LJM is a concern but it is expected to improve with the implementation of the LJM Framework from April.
- Panel concerned that this is an additional task for social workers to do when they already have a very heavy workload. Head of Service confirmed they have always had responsibility for doing this but there is a need to ensure they have manageable caseloads so they have the capacity to do it.
- All regions in Wales shared practice and worked together to produce the Framework.
- Final report for inspection of the adoption service has been received.

Action:

- Add report on Inspection of the Adoption Service to work programme in August 2018.

Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services and Owen Davies, Performance Manager went through the Performance Reports for March 2018 and Quarter 4 and answered the Panel's questions.

Discussion points:

- Redesign of Supportive Care has been launched. As part of this a number of cases have been closed and cases have come down to below 1600. Department feels it is well placed to increase and improve the quality of work.
- There will be new Welsh Government KPIs in 2019/20 for Adult Services and Child and Family Services
- Front Door - The number of repeat referrals during the month has increased.

- The number of assessments carried out within 10 days has markedly increased during the month and is on target. The number of assessments carried out in 42 days has improved but is still below target
- No timescales yet for moving over to new management information system (Welsh Community Care Information System) instead of PARIS. Panel feels encouraged that the development is being led by the front line in Local Authorities instead of the Welsh Government to produce the parameters for the new system.
- Department will be tracking what happens with early help services from June 2018 and will be able to report on this within this financial year.
- It was emphasised that it is not just about early intervention it's about early identification and the department has to be able to work with Early Help around this with routes into early help services.
- Child Protection - Panel concerned that percentage of children on Child Protection Register that have been registered previously is high although it has come down slightly. Panel informed that children are not coming back for the same reason but that there is a need to monitor this closely.
- Children leaving care – information will be included in next performance monitoring report on destination of people leaving care when they reach 18 years of age
- Western Bay Justice Board – representative to be asked to come and present to the Panel once end of year figures are available.

Actions:

- Add presentation from Western Bay Justice Board to work programme for 2018/19

Owen Davies presented a report on 'Thematic Analysis of children becoming looked after'. In 2017/18 there was an increase of 8.24% in numbers of Looked After Children in Swansea. The Department did not expect such a dramatic rise in such a short space of time and therefore a thematic review was undertaken to give a better understanding of some of the factors involved in increasing the numbers and to allow them to plan and deliver services more effectively.

Discussion points:

- There are issues around the amount of influence the court can have in the work of social services
- Department has already started to implement some of the things mentioned in the report that will make a difference
- Panel felt that this is an excellent piece of work
- It is really important to get all services involved at a community level – integration of services – there is only so much CFS can do and only so much the Council can do. This is the only way we can be sustainable going forward.

6 Review of the year and plan for next 12 months in Child and Family Services Scrutiny

Panel had insufficient time to undertake the review of the year.

Actions:

- Add Review of the year to the work programme for the next meeting in June 2018
- Panel members to let Convener know if there are any items that need to be included in the work programme for 2018/19.

The meeting ended at 6.25 pm