



To:
Councillor Mark Child
Cabinet Member for Care, Health & Ageing
Well

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Date 05 March 2019
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Summary: This is a letter from the Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Care, Health and Ageing Well following the meeting of the Panel on 19 February 2019. It covers Adult Services Complaints Annual Report 2017-18, update on how Council's Policy Commitments translate to Adult Services and Performance Monitoring.

Dear Cllr Child

The Panel met on 19 February and discussed the Adult Services Complaints Annual Report for 2017-18, received an update on how the Council's policy commitments translate to Adult Services and discussed the Performance Monitoring Reports for December 2018 / January 2019. We would like to thank you, Dave Howes and Julie Nicholas-Humphreys for attending to present the items and answer the Panel's questions. We appreciate your engagement and input.

We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion, share the views of the Panel, and, where necessary, raise any issues or recommendations for your consideration and response. The main issues discussed are summarised below:

Adult Services Complaints Annual Report

We were informed that there is no link between the change in process for recording complaints and the increase in number of stage 1 complaints received and that no specific reason has been found for the increase in the number of complaints. We heard however that a lot more is being done to encourage people to make a complaint if their needs are not met and that the Authority has strengthened its advocacy arrangements for children and will be doing so for adults. We also heard that although the Authority

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has seen an increase in the number of complaints, there has not generally been an increase in the number of complaints upheld.

We were pleased to hear that the Authority has a mechanism for recording complaints against third party providers and that if any trends are identified the Director/Head of Service is informed.

We were concerned to see in the report that a high number of complaints have been upheld in community support teams. We were informed by the Director that this is a difficult area so it is not a surprise and that this is an area the Authority could learn from.

We were informed that independent investigators are chosen by the complaints officer depending on whether they have undertaken something similar previously etc and that it tends to be case led. The Panel was assured that the performance of independent investigators was monitored and investigators whose reports and decisions were found wanting by subsequent Ombudsman enquiries were unlikely to be used by the City and County.

Update on how Council's Policy Commitments Translate to Adult Services

You told us that you feel the Authority is making good progress on all of the commitments. However you think it is struggling with 2 areas in relation to Adult Services commitments. For Commitment 104, you told us that the Authority is struggling to find providers to come in and provide the service; and for Commitment 57, you believe that there will be significant growth but the Authority will struggle to place a Local Area Coordinator in every area of Swansea. The Panel expressed its concern about consistency as many LACs are funded by partners so funding is not permanent and can be removed at any time. The Panel queried why this commitment has been rated as green when you do not think we will have full coverage of LACs. You informed us that you believe the RAG rating is for progress.

Regarding Commitment 95, the Panel queried whether we are at the stage where we understand legal and financial responsibility. You stated that you feel progress has been made on some areas but not as much as you would like.

We informed you that for Commitment 102 in the report, no timeline has been stated and we therefore queried when the Charter would be completed. You confirmed that it is nearly complete but is dependent on the Public Services Board timetable.

We informed you that there are no target dates in the report. You stated that you are hopeful that all of the commitments will be completed in this electoral term (by 2022).

For Commitment 105 in the report, it states that the Workforce Development Plan will be completed by May 2019. The Panel will want to look at this later in the year.

We were informed that for Commitment 104, this is part of what you want to achieve and that the Authority will need to look at commissioning strategies to identify if enough of a different offer has been stimulated. You informed us that you would rate this as amber as some progress has been made.

Performance Monitoring Report

Long term domiciliary care – We heard that it is hoped the new commissioning arrangements will make a difference from May 2019. However you were unsure if there will be any more carers than there are now.

Review of allocated clients – You informed us that the department should be trying to make improvements across the board. We heard that all teams are improving but at different rates and that there is still a lot to do.

The Panel felt it would be more useful to have trends shown in performance reports rather than ‘spot’ figures. We would like this request to be taken back to the department.

Residential reablement – there is concern that there may be more capacity than demand for this service and the Panel will want to monitor this going forward.

Timeliness of response to safeguarding issues – The Panel is very concerned with these figures as they have drastically reduced. The Panel wish to be informed about the reason for this.

Temporary Placements – we heard about the department’s concern about the very low level of discharges to Continuing Health Care (CHC) funded placements and that you are continuing to engage with the Health Board to achieve equitable distribution of CHC funding across Western Bay. We also heard that you are relooking at the Authority’s strategy for negotiating funding of new placements with the HB. The Panel will want to monitor progress with this very closely going forward.

Your Response

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised but please provide a written response by Tuesday 26 March 2019 to the following:

1. Timeliness of response to safeguarding issues – The Panel is very concerned with these figures as they have drastically reduced. The Panel wish to be informed about the reason for this.

Yours sincerely



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