



City and County of Swansea

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

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday, 28 October 2020 at 4.00 pm

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

**Councillor(s)**

C Anderson  
K M Griffiths  
D W W Thomas

**Councillor(s)**

A M Day  
Y V Jardine  
E T Kirchner

**Councillor(s)**

M Durke  
S M Jones  
W G Lewis

**Other Attendees**

Elliott King Cabinet Member - Children Services

**Officer(s)**

Julie Davies Head of Child & Family Services  
David Howes Director of Social Services  
Simon Jones Social Services Strategy and Performance Improvement Officer  
Liz Jordan Scrutiny Officer

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**1 Confirmation of Convener**

Paxton Hood-Williams was confirmed as Convener of the Panel.

**2 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

Disclosures of interest – Mike Durke

**3 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips**

No declarations were made.

**4 Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

The Panel agreed the minutes of the meeting on 16 September 2020 as an accurate record of the meeting.

**5 Public Question Time**

No questions were submitted by members of the public.

## **6 Wales Audit Office: Follow up Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements - Children, in Swansea Council**

Simon Jones, Social Services Strategy and Performance Improvement Officer briefed the Panel on the WAO report recommendations and the actions being taken to address the recommendations.

### Discussion Points:

- Panel queried the link with Education in terms of safeguarding. Informed pandemic has accelerated improving relationship with Education. The Departments are meeting on a weekly basis to prioritise the children they are most worried about to ensure they are safe.
- In terms of the action plan, a timeline has been scheduled for the first few items only. Impact of the pandemic has meant concentrating on managing the short-term crisis. Some work has had to be delayed but the Corporate Safeguarding Group will be maintaining oversight of the programme, as well as ensuring they keep children and adults safe in the meantime. Any suggestions from the Panel can be directed to the Corporate Safeguarding Group.
- Clarification that there is a Corporate Safeguarding Group that has oversight of corporate safeguarding work. There is also a Regional Safeguarding Board, which is the overarching board for the area. Suggested Panel receive update from Regional Safeguarding Board to formally feedback on how regional arrangements are working. Panel agreed to add this to next year's work programme.
- In respect of DBS, under proposals for improvement, informed Audit Committee has been looking if appropriate arrangements are in place for DBS checks. They have major concerns and a report is coming back to the Audit Committee in next few months.
- Panel raised queries about how often DBS checks are required, if they are undertaken before staff start and how many each person is supposed to have. If panel members have any outstanding issues they want assurance on, they should put together a list and feed them into the Audit Committee.
- Head of Democratic Services has circulated a link to Councillors to complete safeguarding training. Suggestion this should be completed by all Councillors, to set an example to the rest of the Council.
- Clarity sought by Panel regarding collaboration around CFS and AS in terms of domestic abuse. (agreed later in meeting to include in a work programme item.)
- Panel endorsed conclusions and actions set out in the report.

### Actions:

- Add to work programme for next municipal year 'Update from Regional Safeguarding Board on how regional arrangements are working'.
- Compile list of any outstanding issues regarding DBS checks and feed into Audit Committee.

## **7 Child and Family Services Work Programme 2020-21**

The Panel considered the draft work programme and agreed the following actions:

- Item on *WAO: Tackling Violence Against Women, Domestic* is to include a briefing on the increase in domestic violence over the pandemic and a breakdown of collaboration between CFS and AS in terms of domestic abuse. AS panel members to be invited for this item.
- Meeting to be arranged between Cabinet Member, Head of Service and Panel Convener to discuss scheduling of future items and the effect of the pandemic going forward, to help shape future work programme.
- Chairs of the AS panel and CFS panel to look at work plans to identify opportunities for any items to go to joint meetings.

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm