



To:
Councillor Elliott King, Cabinet Member for
Children's Services (Early Years) /
Councillor Will Evans, Cabinet Member for
Children's Services (Young People)

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Date
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21 January 2019

Summary: This is a letter from the Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Members for Children's Services following the meeting of the Panel on 18 December 2018. It covers update on Corporate Parenting Board and Performance Monitoring November 2018.

Dear Cllr King and Cllr Evans,

The Panel met on 18 December and received an update on the Corporate Parenting Board and discussed the Performance Monitoring report for November 2018.

We would like to thank Julie Thomas, Rachel Moxey, Jane Whitemore, Gemma Whyley, Owen Davies, Sue Jones of ABMU and yourselves for attending to discuss the reports and answer our 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:

Update on Corporate Parenting Board

We were given an overview of the Corporate Parenting Board by Julie Thomas and an update on progress made on the objectives in the Strategy from the lead officers. The Panel found this very interesting. However we were disappointed to see that Education and Culture and Leisure were not represented at the meeting.

We heard that corporate parents need to be reminded of how broad their responsibilities are and that there is a need to ensure that there is full buy in from partners and that officer groups meet regularly. We also heard that there is a need to

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be able to demonstrate that the work being done is making a difference to looked after children.

The Panel was very concerned about the second table on page 11 of the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report. It shows very poor education figures for Key Stage 4 in Swansea. We were informed that this was picked up in the Inspection Report and the Bright Spots Survey and is in the Action Plan. The Panel would like to invite representatives from Education to a future meeting of the Panel as educational performance figures are very concerning and in particular to explain the poor results for Key Stage 4 in Swansea.

We heard that Child and Family Services plan to track children who have done well educationally to identify what has been done for these to succeed as there is a need to try and find common strands. Education and Social Services are meeting to scope the work and then a briefing on this will be brought to a future meeting of the Panel.

The Panel feels it is very important that all governors are receiving information to help them to scrutinise schools properly. We agreed at the meeting that it would be useful for governors to know the right questions to ask at governor meetings and to ask LAC teachers and safeguarding teachers about vulnerable children in school. We agreed that Child and Family Services will think about solution focussed questions that governors can ask. We also discussed that governors need to monitor Pupil Development Grants.

The Panel would like to see historical data over 20 years to see the trends for looked after children as we feel this would be useful.

We heard that a single point of entry for Family Support Services is being piloted within the IAA team and that the results are very positive. Rachel Moxey agreed to provide the Panel with the results of the IAA pilot.

The Panel was informed that there are still issues with CAMHS but that figures are improving. We were pleased to hear this.

We have been concerned about Health's involvement for some time so were pleased to hear that Health and Social Care are working better together.

We heard that early intervention is key to improving outcomes and therefore there is a massive push for the first 1000 days.

The Panel was pleased to hear that the next Corporate Parenting Board annual report will hopefully be written collaboratively and with the involvement of children.

The Panel feel it is important to monitor progress being made by the Corporate Parenting Board and would therefore like to receive an update on an annual basis in future. We were informed that a suite of performance indicators is going to be developed for the Panel on the 8 objectives in the Strategy. Most will be reported on a quarterly basis, some annually.

Performance Monitoring

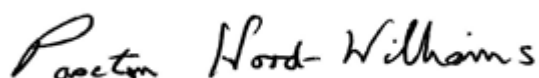
Julie Thomas went through the Performance Report for November 2018 highlighting the main points and answering the Panel's questions.

This performance report overall is one of the best the Panel has seen and we feel that the Department is going in the right direction but there are a few issues we will need to monitor closely.

Your Response

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your views and comments on any of the issues raised but please note that in this instance, a formal response is not required.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paxton Hood-Williams". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Paxton" starting with a large 'P' and the last name "Hood-Williams" following in a similar style.

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