

Pencadlys Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe Headquarters

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Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg ac yn y Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

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Our Ref/Ein Cyf: AD/JAD/tr

Date: 24th May 2019

Councillor Mary Jones
Convener
Public Services Board Scrutiny Performance Panel

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Dear Mary,

Public Services Board Performance Panel

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Scrutiny Panel on 3rd April 2019, and I apologise that my response has missed your deadline. I have always placed great store on the importance and value of scrutiny and welcome appearing before your panel. Thank you also for your letter of the 24th April 2019 regarding the Early Years Objective and Governance of the Public Services Board.

Regarding the discussion about making Public Services Boards (PSBs) regional I can confirm that there are no imminent plans for this to happen. By way of explanation this is because according to the Welsh Government statute, mergers of PSBs can happen, but they cannot then be disaggregated again. As a result it has been agreed that rather than merge PSBs, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot PSBs will work together on a number of objectives to improve effectiveness and reduce duplication. In both the Early Years and Working with Nature wellbeing work streams joint work is being developed between the two PSBs and where appropriate reporting into the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board, (what was previously the Western Bay Regional Partnership Board.)

With regards to the governance review of Swansea PSB, as I reported to the Scrutiny Panel, this has been focusing on reviewing the PSB governance arrangements with a view to simplifying and streamlining these, making them more effective and allowing them to focus on delivering the Well-being Objectives laid down in the PSB's Well-being Plan. I set up the Governance Review in the autumn of 2018 with the report received and agreed by the PSB Core Group on 11th April 2019. As part of this the objectives have been reviewed



and the aims for these re-evaluated to ensure that they are SMART as well as the leads revised as appropriate. As part of this, individual organisations are also clarifying and aligning their governance arrangements to fit with the findings of the review. For example, Swansea Bay University Health Board is restructuring its governance to have more effective scrutiny of the various partnerships it participates in.

In respect of the specific questions you raised:

1. We know that Flying Start and the 30 Hour Free Childcare Scheme are not a result of the PSB and pre-date the work of the PSB. Can you explain how this links to the work of the PSB and therefore be claimed as a success under the PSB objectives?

Whilst these initiatives were established prior to the PSB's work, the focus of the Early Years work stream and the wide range of partners involved has ensured that the benefits of these schemes can be more broadly approached and linked to other related work which would otherwise not have been connected. Specifically the Early Years work in Swansea has invested in up-skilling the Early Years workforce, replicating the Flying Start approach on a proportionate basis according to the need beyond the defined geographical areas for this initiative. It will also enable us to identify gaps in provision and opportunities to access additional investment in order to enhance services to achieve readiness for birth, nursery and school.

2. The voluntary sector contributes greatly to Early Years work; can you confirm which voluntary agencies are represented on the Early Years Strategy Group?

I accept that this has been a gap in the partnership previously and one that has been identified as a priority in the joint work currently being undertaken by Swansea and Neath Port Talbot PSBs' Early Years work. When the Swansea Early Years Strategy Group was established, representation was sought from stakeholders at a strategic level and therefore the Director of Swansea Council for Voluntary Services was invited to join the group, and she acted as a conduit to the wider sector. Several subgroups exist under the Strategy Group and at these a number of voluntary organisations have participated, including Mudiad Meithrin, Early Years Wales, Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Clubs, Pacey Cymru, Action for Children and Menter Iaith Abertawe. However, as I pointed out, this is an area where we recognise that the Third Sector should and must be actively involved, as their contribution is essential.

3. Regarding the First 1000 Days Conference in November 2017, were any voluntary sector agencies involved?

I have have been informed that this very successful conference had attendance from a broad spectrum of stakeholders including the following voluntary sector organisations: SCVS, Barnardos, Action for Children, Swansea Environmental forum, Faith in Families.



4. Can you confirm how the voluntary sector have been involved with the GP Early Years Workers?

I hope the presentation to the Scrutiny Panel demonstrated the valuable contribution of this work. This role often acts as a catalyst for social prescribing and signposting and so has relied on the voluntary sector support which is available to meet the needs of individuals identified and supported by this service. An example would be the links with SNAP and other additional / specialist needs services to support children with additional / complex needs, recognising the value of their knowledge, skills and expertise in supporting these children and families.

I hope that my response helps the panel with its work and if you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



ANDREW DAVIES
CHAIRMAN

