



To:
Councillor Elliott King, Cabinet Member for
Children Services (Early Years) / Councillor
Sam Pritchard, Cabinet Member for
Children Services (Young People)

Please ask for:
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Date
Dyddiad:

27 November 2019

Summary: This is a letter from the Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Members for Children Services following the meeting of the Panel on 28 October 2019. It covers progress on CAMHS, Youth Offending Service and Safe Looked After Children Reduction Strategy.

Dear Cllr King and Cllr Pritchard,

The Panel met on 28 October to receive an update on progress with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, a briefing on the Youth Offending Service and an update on the report to Welsh Government on safe Looked After Children Reduction Strategy.

We would like to thank you, Julie Thomas, Gavin Evans, Jay McGabe of the Council and Joanne Abbott-Davies of West Glamorgan University Health Board for attending and answering questions. We would also like to thank Cllr Mary Jones, who chaired the previous scrutiny inquiry into CAMHS and Cllr Jennifer Raynor for participating in the discussion. 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 Progress with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Joanne Abbott-Davies, Assistant Director of Strategy & Partnerships, West Glamorgan University Health Board presented an update on progress and answered the Panel's questions. Gavin Evans also attended for this item.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

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We were pleased to hear that Swansea's compliance with Welsh Government performance targets for CAMHS, from the point of referral, is improving and that waiting time before children and young people are referred is also getting better in Swansea.

We heard that Education and Social Services are involved in CAMHS strategic steering group and that there is a shared direction of travel. We also heard that you are trying to get to a more joined up process but it is complicated.

We were informed that there will be an integrated CAMHS service with a single point of contact and that this is planned to be in place June 2020. We were pleased to hear this.

We heard that Emotional Health and Wellbeing is aimed at primary school age but that money has been received from a grant for youths age 11 to 18. This should help children who are now in comprehensive, who went through primary and did not get picked up for CAMHS.

We heard that Transition is both - from primary into secondary, and secondary onwards and that a group meeting is being held to try and improve the transition from primary into secondary.

We heard that referrals in future will be much broader, not just through GPs (schools, other professionals etc) but there is still work to do on the new standardised process for referral. We raised the issue of alternative interventions and the need to be clear about what alternative interventions are available for individuals who do not meet the criteria for CAMHS.

We were informed that Cwm Taff provide the CAMHS service in West Glamorgan Health Board and that the Health Board buy in the service from them.

We heard that you sit on CAMHS Partnership Board and that if members inform you of any children waiting a long time for the CAMHS service, you can chase it up.

We feel that the new plans for CAMHS look good. However, there have been many issues in the past and, therefore, the Panel needs to keep monitoring it and agreed to have another update on CAMHS in 12 months.

Briefing on Youth Offending Service

Jay McCabe, Principal Officer Bays+ and Youth Justice Services, attended to update on developments since the disaggregation of Western Bay Youth Justice Service in March 2019 and the formation of Swansea Youth Justice Service in April 2019, and to answer the Panel's questions.

We were informed that the first Management Board meeting was held in July 2019; a Management Board training session was held on 30 October 2019; and the second Management Board meeting was held on 7 November 2019. We heard that in future the plan is to hold Board meeting bi-monthly and the hope is that individuals on the Board will take personal responsibility for an area.

We heard that the Youth Justice Service is now integrated with Child and Family Services in Swansea. We also heard that the Youth Justice Board will be carrying out a mock inspection in December 2019 to help review the improvement journey and make recommendations for areas of improvement before the next inspection, which will take place within 18 months from June 2019. We think that this is a very good idea.

We were pleased to hear that going forward the Department will have a much broader sense of how the service is performing (not just performance indicators).

The Panel stated that as this is a new service, we would like an update report on the Swansea Youth Offending Service in approximately 12 months to check on progress.

We were informed that Early intervention is key and that the Department is definitely seeing benefits of integrating locally. There is much more planning and joined up working between the Youth Offending Team, Children's Services, Early Intervention and Prevention etc. We were pleased to hear that many positives have been retained from the regional work.

The Cabinet Member for Education attended for this item and welcomed this report. She felt that the previous set up did not work, that members of the Board were not happy and performance indicators were too narrow.

We agreed that case studies on the service will come to the Panel in March 2020, to help members understand it better.

We heard that although there was a very bad inspection of the regional youth justice service, the recommendations are very useful for the newly formed youth justice service in Swansea. We also heard that it is very positive to see how the team have come up with solutions and developed processes.

We were informed that the Department is discussing doing qualitative as well as quantitative assessments. Historically many PIs have been performance driven but there is a need for more qualitative information to identify individuals experience and the outcomes.

Update on Report to Welsh Government on Safe LAC Reduction Strategy

Julie Thomas updated us on this issue and answered the Panel's questions.

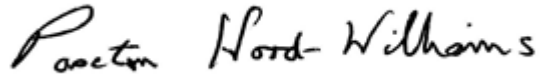
The WG priority for reducing the number of looked after children in Wales was discussed. The Panel was informed about the detail of the visit by WG officials. We heard that Swansea had received very positive feedback following their presentation, and the proposals put forward in terms of safely reducing the number of children looked after within Swansea was accepted with no additional information required. We also heard that the proposals and soft targets reflect the work that has been ongoing in Swansea for a number of years so no significant change to practice or CFS Improvement Plan was required.

The Panel acknowledges that regular reports are made available to us through reporting of CFS monthly performance report.

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, in this instance, we do not require a formal response.

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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