



City and County of Swansea

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

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Tuesday, 12 March 2024 at 4.00 pm

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

**Councillor(s)**

L S Gibbard  
S M Jones  
M S Tribe

**Councillor(s)**

K M Griffiths  
S Joy

**Councillor(s)**

Y V Jardine  
W G Lewis

**Other Attendees**

Louise Gibbard

**Officer(s)**

Julie Davies	Head of Child & Family Services
David Howes	Director of Social Services
Liz Jordan	Scrutiny Officer
Sarah Lackenby	Head of Digital and Customer Services
Helen Williams	Principal Officer, Adolescent & Young People Services

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): V A Holland and E T Kirchner

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**1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

Chris Holley declared a personal interest.

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

No declarations were made.

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

Panel agreed the Minutes of the meeting on 23 January 2024 as an accurate record of the meeting.

**4 Public Question Time**

No questions were received.

## **5 Child and Family Services / Adult Services Complaints Annual Report 2022-23**

Louise Gibbard, Cabinet Member for Care Services and Sarah Lackenby, Head of Digital and Customer Services attended to brief the Panel and answer questions and stated that an internal audit of complaints in 2022-23 gave an overall assurance level of Substantial.

### Discussion Points:

- For both Adult Services and Child and Family Services there was a rise in stage 1 complaints mainly due to increased demand and pressure on services leading to delays.
- In Adult Services, 27% of stage 1 complaints were from one person on the same case. it is a very complex situation.
- There was a huge 128% rise in compliments for Adult Services and significant 97% rise for Child and Family Services.
- Panel asked if there is a child friendly version of a complaints policy. Cabinet Member and officers will pursue this idea with the Directorate's Children's Rights and Participation Officers.
- Panel also suggested an easy read version, which would be suitable for people with learning disabilities would be useful.

## **6 Briefing on Youth Offending Service**

Helen Williams, Principal Officer Adolescent and Young People Services and Phillipa Elliott, Youth Justice Practice Manager attended to give an overview of the Service including an update on developments and progress.

### Discussion Points:

- In terms of preventative work, funding for the Turnaround Project will cease in March 2025. The project has worked with 47 young people and is on track to meet the target of 97. The Service has tried to develop more group-based work and hopes it will be able to continue to use the interventions developed to benefit other young people.
- Panel commented that recruiting peer groups would benefit some of these children because peer group pressure is great at certain ages. Through the Participation Forum, which is being developed, there will be opportunities for doing this in a safe and supported way.
- Currently the Service has an office space in the City Centre and a youth justice centre located on an industrial estate. The hope is to have one building with office space but also space for direct work and creative work and with good travel access.
- Panel queried what sorts of work/activities the Service undertakes with young people to encourage them to stay away from court services.
- Anti-social behaviour is an issue in Swansea and the Service has a pilot project working with some local primary schools providing fun educative lessons to get the message out. Plan is to roll it out to other primary schools and to roll out a programme for comprehensive schools.

- One issue the Service continues to face with young people coming out of custody is availability of housing. Most of the Service's young people do not have the skills to live independently. There are a number of supported living providers the Authority works closely with, but availability is an issue. Panel agreed Supported Living for Young People Leaving Care is an issue they need to revisit.
- A Knife Crime Awareness Questionnaire has been developed. The purpose of the questionnaire is to gain an understanding of young people's different experiences to guide the Service's interventions.
- Panel pleased to see how the Service has recovered from the bad place it was in four or five years ago and hopes this will continue going forward.

Actions:

- Item on 'Supported Living for Young People Leaving Care' to be added to work plan for next municipal year.

## **7 Performance Monitoring**

Julie Davies, Head of Child and Family Services attended to brief the Panel on the Performance Report for January 2024 and stated the trend was as expected in the month after Christmas and New Year.

Discussion Points:

- Panel noted how some trends are trending the wrong way and agreed the Panel will need to keep an eye on this.
- Panel queried how the upper and lower confidence limits on the trend graphs are calculated. It was confirmed that they are based on historical figures. If figures stay within the bands, it is an indicator that within existing resources the Service can deliver a safe and effective service but will get fluctuations.
- Panel was really pleased to hear how the Academy is doing and thinks it is very innovative.

## **8 Work Plan 2023-24**

Panel considered the work plan and noted items for the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 5.20 pm