

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL – CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

At: Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

On: Monday, 21 August 2017

Time: 10.00 am

Convenor: Councillor Paxton Hood-Williams

Membership:

Councillors: C Anderson, M Durke, K M Griffiths, Y V Jardine, M H Jones, S M Jones, P Jones, I E Mann, A Pugh and D W W Thomas

AGENDA

Page No.

- 1 Apologies for Absence.
- 2 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.
www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests
- 3 Overview of Child and Family Services in Swansea (including key priorities and challenges and first quarter performance report)
Presentation by Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services
- 4 Role of the Panel including Terms of Reference and Draft Work Programme 1 - 6
- 5 Letters 7 - 9
 - a) Convener's letter to Cabinet Member (3 April 2017 meeting)

Next Meeting: To be confirmed



Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Tuesday, 8 August 2017

Contact: Liz Jordan 01792 637314

Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel 21 August 2017

ROLE OF THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The main aim of scrutiny is to act as a 'critical friend' to the Cabinet and other decision makers in order to promote better services, policies and decisions. Councillors involved in scrutiny will hold the Council's executive to account and examine the work of Council departments, as well as other public services.

2. Role of the Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel

- 2.1 The role of this Panel in general is to The Panel will receive and request relevant performance reports to monitor and challenge assessments on service performance and quality in respect of children's social services

On behalf of the Panel, the convener will write to the relevant Cabinet Member raising issues of concern, comments and recommendations as appropriate following Panel meetings.

Terms of Reference are attached in **Appendix 1**.

3. Membership

- 3.1 11 Councillors sit on this Panel. They are:

Paxton Hood-Williams	Yvonne Jardine
Susan Jones	Irene Mann
Kevin Griffiths	Peter Jones
Des Thomas	Cyril Anderson
Mary Jones	Mike Durke
Alyson Pugh	

4. Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel Convener

- 4.1 Scrutiny Conveners are appointed by the Scrutiny Programme Committee to lead specific activities. Paxton Hood-Williams will convene the Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel.

- 4.3 Councillors who are appointed as conveners will be responsible for ensuring that Panels are operating effectively. A role description for conveners is attached in **Appendix 2** (taken from 'New Scrutiny Arrangements' Council Report 18 October 2012)

5. The Work Programme for 2017/18

5.1 The Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel Work Programme has been developed based upon core annual items, topic suggestions received and input from the Head of Child and Family Services. This draft work programme is a basic framework that allows for further items to be added or removed based on your discussions today. It also allows for flexibility throughout the year for key items that may arise.

5.2 It is proposed that all meetings start at 10.00am with a preparation meeting at 9.30am and are held in a committee room in the Guildhall unless otherwise stated.

Meeting Date	Items to be discussed
<p>Meeting 1 Monday 21 August 2017 10am</p>	<p>Overview of Child and Family Services in Swansea (including key priorities and challenges and first quarter performance report) <i>Presentation by Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services</i></p> <p>Role of the Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel including Terms of Reference and Draft Work programme</p> <p>Letters to / from Convener</p>
<p>Meeting 2 Tues 30 October 2017 10am</p>	<p>Performance Monitoring including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • update from Barnardos • end of year comparative data • quarter 2 performance report (including adoption and YOS) <p><i>Julie Thomas, Head of Child and Family Services and Representative from Barnardos</i></p>
<p>Meeting 3 Tues 18 December 2017 10am</p>	<p>Child Disability briefing</p> <p>Advocacy update</p>
<p>Additional meeting (Jan?)</p>	<p>Commissioning review – Domestic violence hub ? Commissioning review – Under 11s and over 11s ?</p>
<p>Meeting 4 Tues 26 February 2018 10am</p>	<p>Performance Monitoring</p> <p>Prevention and Early Intervention</p>
<p>Additional meeting (Feb 17?)</p>	<p>Draft budget proposals for Child and Family Services</p>

Meeting 5 Tues 30 April 2018 10am	Performance Monitoring

6. Finding Effective Ways of Working

6.1 The panel should take the opportunity to discuss how it can work most effectively, for example in its preparation for meetings:

- Developing Questions and Questioning Strategy
- Use of short Pre-meetings / Post meetings / summing up
- Team / Inclusive Working and Communication
- Decorum at meetings
- Any other practical considerations.

Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel

Terms of Reference

1. Name:

Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel

2. Why this topic is important?

- Given the importance of, and past focus on Child & Family Services and, as it is potentially still an area of high risk, this warrants attention
- The service has made good progress but it is vital this is maintained and that further improvements are made across all areas of the service
- Continues to be an area of high demand and high spend - there are significant financial pressures in this service area
- Corporate Priority Area – Improvement Objective to ensure that people are safe, well and supported to live independently (Child & Family Services)

3. What is the purpose of the panel?

The Panel will receive and request relevant performance reports to monitor and challenge assessments on service performance and quality in respect of children's social services

On behalf of the Panel, the convener will write to the relevant Cabinet Member raising issues of concern, comments and recommendations as appropriate following Panel meetings.

4. Meetings:

The Panel will be expected to meet on an ongoing basis, 4-6 times a year.

The Panel will report periodically on progress to the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

5. Support

Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Jordan (Liz.jordan@swansea.gov.uk)
Tel: 01792 637314

Scrutiny Convener Role Description

1. General

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Convener will be responsible for a portfolio of scrutiny topics that they will manage and deliver. These topics, allocated by the Council's Scrutiny Programme Committee, will not be confined to a single subject or department. The scrutiny work led by these conveners will be done through informal task and finish groups / panels and the conveners will chair the meetings of these groups. Conveners will be accountable to the Scrutiny Programme Committee.

2. Providing leadership

- 2.1 To provide confident and effective management of the topics for which they are responsible.
- 2.2 To promote the role of scrutiny within and outside the council, liaising effectively both internally within the Council and externally with the Council's partners.
- 2.3 To contribute to the development of a balanced scrutiny work programme.
- 2.4 To ensure the programme takes account of relevant factors such as: the work programmes of the executive and other committees, strategic priorities and risks, and relevant community issues.
- 2.5 To demonstrate an objective and evidence based approach to scrutiny and to facilitate the identification of conclusions and recommendations accordingly.
- 2.6 To evaluate the impact and added value of scrutiny activity and identify areas for improvement.
- 2.7 To promote cross party working.
- 2.8 To keep any relevant deputies fully involved and informed to ensure they are able to cover the conveners' role as required

3. Managing the work programme

- 3.1 To ensure that the work programme is delivered.
- 3.2 To report on progress against the work programme to Council, and others as appropriate.
- 3.3 To liaise with officers, other members and community representatives to resource and deliver the work programme.

4 Effective meeting management

- 4.1 To set agendas containing clear objectives and outcomes for meetings.
- 4.2 To manage the progress of business at meetings, ensuring that meeting objectives are met.
- 4.3 To ensure that the necessary preparation is done beforehand.
- 4.4 To ensure that all participants have an opportunity to make an appropriate contribution

5 Community leadership

- 5.1 Where necessary to act as a focus for liaison between the council, community and external bodies in relation to the scrutiny function.
- 5.2 To build understanding and ownership of the scrutiny function within the community.
- 5.3 To involve fully external stakeholders for example, service users, expert witnesses and partners in scrutiny activity.
- 5.4 To support the involvement and development of scrutiny members
- 5.5 To encourage high performance from all scrutiny councillors in task and finish groups.
- 5.6 To assess individual and collective performance within task and finish groups and facilitate appropriate development.

6 Values

6.1 To be committed to the values of the Council and the following values in public office:

- a. Openness and transparency;
- b. Honesty and integrity;
- c. Tolerance and respect;
- d. Equality and fairness;
- e. Appreciation of cultural difference;
- f. Sustainability.



CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

Dinas A Sir Abertawe

Councillor Christine Richards
Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member,
Children and Young People

CC
Councillor Jane Harris
Chair, Corporate Parenting Board

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Llinell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref
Eich Cyf:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

01792 637491

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CFS/10

07/04/2017

Summary: This is a letter from the Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Services for Children and Young People following the meeting of the panel on 03 April 2017. It covers the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

Dear Councillor Richards,

This letter is about the April meeting of the Panel.

First of all thank you for attending this meeting and for your valuable contributions. I am also grateful for your offer to comment in writing on our letter from the March meeting.

Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014

Please pass on our thanks to Emma Curtis for her excellent presentation and to Julie Thomas for attending and for her useful contributions.

Overall we are supportive of the approach outlined in the presentation. For your reference I note here some of the issues that we raised:

- The extent to which Signs of Safety has been embedded in all practice – we are happy that this this well on the way to being achieved
- The role of partners continues to be an important issue for us – while we were unable to explore this in detail it is something we hope can be looked at by scrutiny more fully in future
- The journey from an 'eligibility' approach to an approach centred more on a conversation that includes proportionate assessment as required

Overview & Scrutiny / Trosolwg a chraffu

City and County of Swansea / Dinas a Sir Abertawe
Guildhall, Swansea, SA1 4PE / Neuadd Y Ddinas, Abertawe, SA1 4PE

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- we were pleased to hear that this Swansea way of doing things has been influential at the national level. This is a positive reflection on the work of officers in the department
- The potential negative impact on family members when children are taken into care – particularly in respect of housing costs and eligibility
- The improved approach to dealing with timescales particularly in terms of holding up work to wait for reports from relevant professionals when this is not needed
- The respective roles of children and their carers in the direct payments process
- Progress towards implementing the Welsh Community Care Information Solution

Review of the Year

This was an opportunity for the Panel to consider what had worked well over the year and what might be improved.

I am very grateful for your positive comments about the benefits that the Panel had provided to the work of Child and Family Services and our role as a critical friend.

I also welcome your suggestions about how the work might be improved in future.

Specifically we discussed the value of building closer links with the Corporate Parenting Board. As a minimum it would seem reasonable for scrutiny to receive the annual report from the Board and this would be a good opportunity to explore other potential connections. I also note your comments about the value of the Board hearing directly from young people and carers and this is something I hope scrutiny can consider as part of its work in future.

I have copied this letter to Councillor Jane Harris for her awareness as chair of the Board.

We also noted the following topics that we hope will be useful for scrutiny councillors to consider as part of their work planning after May:

- Ongoing performance monitoring of Child and Family Services
- Youth Justice – keeping track of progress
- Adoption services
- Child Disability – this is an issue that has not been covered recently by scrutiny in a significant way
- Ongoing monitoring of services for 16+

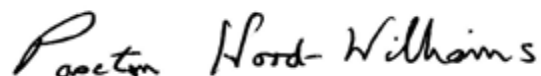
In Conclusion

As this is my final letter as Panel Convener for this Council term, I would like to place on record my thanks to you as Cabinet Member and to all of the officers from Child and Family Services who we have worked with productively over the last few years.

In addition, I would like to thank all of the scrutiny councillors who have participated in the Panel for their hard work and support as well as the officers from the Scrutiny Team as their work is invaluable in ensuring the Panel works effectively.

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your views 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 signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P'.

PAXTON HOOD-WILLIAMS
CONVENER, CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL
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