



To:
Councillor Mark Child
Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

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Date 15 January 2018
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Summary: This is a letter from the Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing following the meeting of the Panel on 19 December 2017. It covers Workforce Development and Systems Support.

Dear Cllr Child

The Panel met on 19 December and looked at Workforce Development and Systems Support. We would like to thank Alex Williams and Dave Howes for attending to go through the report and answering the Panel's questions. We appreciate their 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:

We heard that from a budgetary perspective, the internal workforce in Adult Services is the highest area of spend after commissioned services.

We were informed that the whole of Social Services and integrated workforce have received high level training on the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act which came into force in April 2016 and that workforce development is a focus of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) regular inspection activity.

We heard that CSSIW recently inspected a Community Mental Health Team and were pleased to hear that informal feedback was good. The Department has agreed to circulate the formal report to the Panel once it becomes available in early 2018.

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We also heard that Adult Services is developing an overarching Practice Framework 'Doing What Matters'. This is focussed intervention looking at outcomes the individual wants to achieve. The Panel would like to receive this when it is finalised together with some case studies and also receive a presentation to a future Panel meeting.

We were pleased to hear that recruitment to certain areas such as occupational therapists and social workers is no longer a big problem for the Authority. We heard that the department supports apprenticeships and also sponsor some individuals to undertake a social services degree, although this has currently been scaled right back but can be increased if needed.

In relation to safeguarding, we heard that the Department thinks there is room for improvement in how we organise safeguarding and are proposing a more centralised approach. It is developing standards around completion of safeguarding investigations and this will be included in the performance monitoring reports provided to the Panel. The Panel supports this idea.

We also discussed Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) development and implementation and heard that this will involve practitioner time which the department thinks is manageable with the additional posts being taken on.

We heard that the Department is looking to support direct payments and a pre-paid card system will be up and running early in 2018 and that this may present opportunities for other areas of the Authority. We raised our concern about the risks associated with direct payments and individuals not using them for the right reasons.

We were informed that as part of the draft budget proposals, Cabinet is proposing an additional investment of £3.5million in Social Services to take account of inevitable budget pressures. This is welcomed but the Department will still struggle to meet its obligations.

Your Response

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

Yours sincerely



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