

## Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

### 1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching purpose of the panel is to: provide ongoing challenge to child and family social services performance to ensure that as the service is undergoing major change performance is maintained and that further improvements are made across all areas of the service.

### 2. Key Activities

The Panel discussed and agreed their work plan for the year in June and is currently meeting on a bi-monthly basis. Since the last update the panel has looked at the following:

- a) Performance Monitoring Report (December)
- b) Corporate Parenting Board Update (December)
- c) Draft Budget Proposals for Child and Family Services (February)
- d) Update on Impact of Prevention and Early Intervention on Child and Family Services (February)
- e) Safeguarding – Child Sexual Exploitation (is there a problem in Swansea? What is happening to prevent it? (February)
- f) Child Disability update (February)
- g) Performance Monitoring Report (April)
- h) Update on Welsh Government's Local Authority Looked After Children Reduction Expectation (April)
- i) Cabinet Member presentation and Q and A session (June)
- j) Review of the year 2018/19 (June)
- k) Performance Monitoring Report (August)
- l) Feedback on CIW Inspection Report – update on action plan (August)
- m) CIW Performance Review and Letter (August)
- n) Briefing on Youth Offending Service (October)
- o) Update on progress with CAMHS (referred from CAMHS Inquiry Panel) (October)
- p) Update on report to WG on Safe LAC Reduction Strategy (October)

### 3. Achievements / Impact

We have sent 6 letters to the Cabinet Members for Children Services since November 2018 in order to give our views, raise concerns and make recommendations, for example:

Positives:

- Corporate Parenting Board Update - Panel feels it is very important that all governors are receiving information to help them to scrutinise schools properly. It would be useful for governors to know the right questions to ask at governor meetings and to ask LAC teachers and safeguarding teachers about vulnerable children in school. Agreed that Child and Family Services will think about solution focussed questions that governors can ask.
- Corporate Parenting Board Update - Panel was informed that there are still issues with CAMHS but that figures are improving. Panel pleased to hear this.
- Corporate Parenting Board Update - Panel feels it is important to monitor progress being made by the Corporate Parenting Board and will therefore receive an update on an annual basis in future. Informed that a suite of performance indicators is going to be developed for the Panel on the 8 objectives in the Strategy. Most will be reported on a quarterly basis, some annually.
- Safeguarding: Child Sexual Exploitation - The Authority is taking a contextual safeguarding approach going forward and that as well as CSE, criminal exploitation

is also included in contextual safeguarding. Panel very pleased to hear that the Authority has successfully bid for a grant following the successful piloting of this approach in Hackney and was one of only 3 sites in the UK selected and the only one in Wales.

- Performance Monitoring – Panel asked about the scope to see reverse mentoring in Swansea and Wales particularly in courts. They heard that the Department has a mentoring scheme and senior officers still sit on some boards, including the Permanence Board, to ensure what they do is rooted in practice. Also heard that the Department has a good relationship with the courts and that only cases that need to go to court go, and therefore the number of cases going to court are reducing.

#### Issues / Concerns:

- Corporate Parenting Board Update – very concerned about some of the figures in the Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report. It shows very poor education figures for Key Stage 4 in Swansea. Panel informed that this was picked up in the Inspection Report and the Bright Spots Survey and is in the Action Plan. Panel invited representatives from Education to a future meeting of the Panel to explain the poor results for Key Stage 4 in Swansea.
- Child Disability Update - raised the issue that vocal parents often take the lead in group meetings and it is difficult to get the views of the quiet ones. Panel pleased to hear that training is now being provided and a new forum established to try and move away from this.
- Child and Family Improvement Programme for Swansea - Panel is concerned about the lack of resources to carry out these plans. Panel will be adding 'Progress on Child and Family Improvement Programme' to the Work Programme 2019/20 as they will want to monitor this.
- Cabinet Member Q&A – Panel raised the need to ensure the Council openly and honestly listens to the voice of the child, the family and the community, and that social workers need to listen to children and children need to be encouraged to speak up. We heard that in Swansea we have UNCRC that is encouraging children to speak out more. We also heard that the Department is talking to social workers all the time about how important the relationship is but there is tension to get paperwork done. Also, that it demands a cultural change and this is the direction the Council is moving in.
- Signs of Safety Metrics – Panel noted that all areas of performance for Signs of Safety are low and were informed that team meetings are going to be held to discuss the importance and impact of this. Panel heard that June is the first month of collating this data and that there are issues with recording of this work and picking up information from PARIS, however, the Department will be moving over to the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) and recording of data should improve.

#### 4. Future Work Programme

The programme for the remainder of this municipal year is as follows:

Meeting date	Item to be discussed
<b>Meeting 4</b> Wednesday 18 December 2019  10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Performance Monitoring and Update on Regional Adoption Service</b></li> <li>• <b>Corporate Parenting Board Update</b></li> </ul>

<b>Additional meeting</b> February 2020 (tbc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Draft budget proposals for Child and Family Services</b></li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 5</b> Monday 24 February 2020  4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Progress on Child and Family Improvement Programme</b></li> <li>• <b>Safeguarding (County Lines and Child Sexual Exploitation)</b></li> <li>• <b>Briefing on Carer Assessments (including young carers)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 6</b> Monday 27 April 2020  4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Performance Monitoring</b></li> <li>• <b>Child Disability Update</b></li> <li>• <b>CFS Complaints Annual Report 2018-19 (tbc)</b>  Julie Nicholas-Humphries, Corporate Complaints Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 4</b> Wednesday 18 December 2019  10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Performance Monitoring and Update on Regional Adoption Service</b></li> <li>• <b>Corporate Parenting Board Update</b></li> </ul>

## 5. Action for the Scrutiny Programme Committee

None.