



To:
Councillor Mark Child
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and
Community Health Services

Please ask for: Scrutiny
Gofynnwch am:
Scrutiny Office 01792 637314
Line:
Llinell
Uniongyrochol:
e-Mail scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk
e-Bost:
Date 09 August 2021
Dyddiad:

BY EMAIL

cc Cabinet Members

Summary: This is a letter from the Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Community Health Services following the meeting of the Panel on 14 July 2021. It covers Performance Monitoring, Initial Feedback from Assurance Visit, Panel Review and Draft Work Programme.

Dear Cllr Child

The Panel met on 14 July to discuss the Adult Services Performance Monitoring Report for May 2021, to receive initial feedback from the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Visit and to discuss the Panel's review of the Year 2020-21 and draft Work Programme 2021-22.

We would like to thank you, Dave Howes, Amy Hawkins and Helen St John for attending to present items and answer the Panel's questions. We appreciate your engagement and input.

We are writing to you to reflect on what we learned 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:

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GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAWE, SA1 4PE
www.swansea.gov.uk / www.abertawe.gov.uk

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Performance Monitoring

We heard that this is the first report since the change of system to Wales Community Care Information System (WCCIS). There are some reporting anomalies on the new system.

We felt the community Mental Health Team will come under more and more pressure in coming months. We noted that most of the performance data is 'out of synch' due to Covid etc and queried when the Panel will have more accurate figures on the Mental Health Team. We also queried how the public could be reassured that both Health and Social Services are on top of the problem. Officers confirmed the inaccuracies are due to the new system and they are working on the performance data. We were informed that it will improve and the Panel will see a much better position when it looks at performance data next.

Officers stated work around Mental Health Teams is very much in partnership with the Health Board and Third Sector organisations. It is driven by plans around the Mental Health and Wellbeing Board and it is a regional approach. We were informed that more information on activities can be provided at a future meeting and that a public single point of access will be launched in the coming months. We felt that all Members should be sent information on the single access point, given an idea of what is available now, who they can contact and what projects are currently running. You commented that this was a very good point about all Members having a reminder about the single point of access contact point and how to refer people to it but reminded us that Members would not be able to refer individuals to specific projects themselves; it would have to be through assessment by a professional.

We felt the words 'pressure' and 'Covid', problems with staff numbers, employing staff and pressure in communities were often mentioned. Also Social Services has moved to people being looked after at home. We queried if pressures are due to Covid or because of expecting too much of people. Officers stated that there is a little bit of a legacy from people not wanting to come in. In addition, people who were working from home have now gone back to work and people are starting to say they have been suffering under pressure for 12 months and now need help. As a result, you are seeing people coming to Social Services in crisis. Therefore, officers felt the pressures are a mixture of everything.

We raised a query about Learning Disabilities and Day Services – many of carers for people with Learning Disabilities are elderly. We wanted to know how much support is being given to these carers. Officers confirmed that day services have been limited in capacity due to social distancing and only around one third of those service users who were accessing it currently are. We heard that carers assessments and direct payments are being offered and the team are trying to accommodate families with alternatives to day services.

You stated that a lot has been asked of carers who have taken on a lot more than they would have done in normal circumstances and that the Directorate has always acknowledged there would be a later demand of need when we came out of lockdown. You added that people who are struggling are coming forward now and it is important

that carers have an assessment of their needs so Social Services can work out how to support them and the people they care for.

In the report it was mentioned that there had been a significant increase in safeguarding referrals and more DOLS referrals. We queried if there was a common theme between these two and what is driving it. Officers confirmed that there is no direct link that they know of between the two. They are not sure why there is an increase but do not believe it is because of Covid and are keeping a watching brief.

Initial Feedback from CIW Assurance Visit

We received initial informal feedback on the CIW Assurance Visit and feedback on the specific inspection of Swansea's Domiciliary Care Services.

You stated that all your feedback on the Assurance Visit is speculative until the final report is received.

We heard that inspectors felt they had a good cross section of service users, carers, staff and partner agencies for the visit. We also heard from officers that they felt as a team they presented a strong collaborative strength based approach, that the feedback reflected the good work the teams are doing and that areas that need development, and that the Directorate are taking forward, are the ones the inspectors recognized also.

Officers confirmed that the final report has just been published on the Domiciliary Care Inspection that took place on 24 May 2021. We heard that inspectors had confirmed Swansea Domiciliary Care Services inspection is the most complex service that they inspect but that this will be broken down into specific service areas in future.

We heard that under areas for improvement, there were no areas for significant improvement. We also heard that there were three areas where action is needed to improve and that these will be followed up in the next inspection. Officers stated that none of the issues were unexpected and the Directorate was aware of them before the inspection.

We heard there was excellent positive feedback from staff in respect of support and training and feedback from individuals using the services was excellent.

We asked officers to take back to all staff our sincere thanks for all their hard work.

The Director stated he is hugely appreciative of the work of staff, Heads of Service and their senior management teams. He felt the workforce had properly represented all of their hard work demonstrated in the most difficult of times, which has been truly outstanding and the inspection feedback reflects this.

We queried if the Authority had thought about tangible recognition for the dedication of staff, to give proper thanks. You stated that the Authority hopes to be able to demonstrate the City's thanks to care workers and others across the City who have worked above and beyond. You stated that you do not know what the events will be.

Panel Review of the Year 2020-21 and Draft Work Programme 2021-22

Panel Members reviewed the year 2020-21 and discussed four questions. The comments are noted below for your information:

What went well?

- Identified a number of in-depth topics
- Scrutiny went well
- Presentations were good
- Staff very much on top of things despite what is happening and found time to keep Panel updated on what was happening
- Joint meetings useful in short term but would not want it as a permanent thing.

What did not go so well?

- Nothing that did not go well. Could not have asked any more of staff

Has the Panel focussed on the right things?

- Did not have a choice. Had to focus on Covid.
- Joint meetings helped with allowing staff to get on with jobs.

What have we learnt that will help us with future AS Scrutiny?

- Performance monitoring very selective in many cases. The way it is presented to the Panel is quite complicated and not timely. It is always at least a quarter behind. Due to Covid, performance data skewed so much it is not accurate or relevant. Social Services so involved with Covid and caring for people, performance monitoring has taken a backward step and rightly so. Not criticising staff in any way, their performance has been outstanding.
- When listen to initial feedback from CIW visits – What Panel has done well is to support the services, Adult and Child and Family Services. What has not happened is performance data is not relevant to what current situation is.

The Panel also discussed the draft work programme 2021-22.

We felt there is a need to have a clear understanding of what the Directorate is seeking to deliver in service terms. At the Panel meeting on 20 October 2021, service descriptors are scheduled for discussion, as well as income streams, as part of the Budget Monitoring item. We look forward to receiving this briefing.

We also noted a date was not confirmed for an item on 'Progress update on outcomes budgeting'. We felt clarity was needed on how much of the budget is to be measured in outcome terms as opposed to output terms. We were reminded by officers that a response to our last convener's letter, following the 02 June meeting, was due. In that response confirmation was expected of what the Directorate could do for the Panel this year 2021-22 in terms of an item on outcomes budgeting.

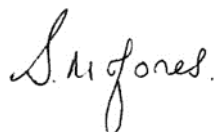
We can confirm that since the 14 July Panel meeting, your response to the convener's letter following 02 June meeting, has been received and states what you can do this year in terms of outcomes budgeting, that is 'you will incorporate relevant expenditure in addition to reporting on outputs and outcomes in performance reports' and there will be an item on outcomes of Local Area Coordination brought to the Panel.

Your Response

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your comments on any of the issues raised, but in this instance please provide a formal written response by 30 August 2021 to the following:

- Confirmation all Members will receive information about the single point of access for Mental Health Services.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. Jones".

SUSAN JONES
CONVENER, ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL
CLLR.SUSAN.JONES@SWANSEA.GOV.UK