



City and County of Swansea

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

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday, 11 August 2021 at 4.00 pm

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

**Councillor(s)**

C Anderson  
S M Jones

**Councillor(s)**

K M Griffiths  
W G Lewis

**Councillor(s)**

Y V Jardine  
D W W Thomas

**Other Attendees**

Elliott King Cabinet Member - Children Services

**Officer(s)**

Chris Francis Principal Officer Commissioning and Care Services  
David Howes Director of Social Services  
Liz Jordan Scrutiny Officer  
Damian Rees Principal Officer Safeguarding & Performance

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): A M Day, M Durke and E T Kirchner  
Other Attendees: Julie Davies

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**1 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

No disclosures of interest were made.

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

No declarations were made.

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

The Panel agreed the minutes of the meeting on 22 June 2021 as an accurate record of the meeting.

**4 Public Question Time**

No questions were submitted by members of the public.

**5 Performance Monitoring**

Damian Rees, Principal Officer Safeguarding and Performance updated the Panel.

Discussion Points:

- Social Services changed over to new information system and data is not currently up to date.
- Panel raised issue of consistency of social workers to cases and queried if there is a lot of change over. Informed they are as consistent as possible given staff pressures.
- Panel felt number of re-registrations currently appears high. Officers are currently looking at this in more detail and hope to pull some common themes together.
- Panel queried why figures show 31% of statutory visits are overdue. Officers confirmed this is a recording issue. Staff are currently manually recording and tracking data and assured by managers all visits are being done.
- Panel queried how change over to new information system has impacted the Authority's ability to run the Service as they want to. Informed it has had an enormous impact but this was expected as it operates completely differently to the old PARIS system. The Service will quickly pick up the new approach. It is putting an added burden on social workers.
- Panel encouraged to keep pressure on. If Panel Members want further information, where there are gaps in the report, they should ask officers for feedback from their audit activity.
- Director stated there is some good stuff in report and gave examples. For Looked After Children population there is a sustained reduction over a number of months. Also starting to see the number of children subject to child protection plans coming down.
- Panel asked Director to pass on its compliments to the Department for the way the overall figures are improving.

**6 Verbal Update - Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Visit Full Report**

David Howes, Director of Social Services provided feedback to the Panel.

Discussion Points:

- Draft letter received by Authority. Will receive final version in due course. This will be shared with the Panel together with the full thematic report in the next few months.
- Written feedback from inspectors is consistent with verbal feedback from them following the inspection.
- The feedback is entirely consistent with the Authority's own self-assessment. This is really positive.
- Director felt there may be issues Panel want to pick up re QA on the work plan going forward.
- Inspectors had issues accessing information on the new system themselves. Department found alternative ways to provide the information so they could undertake the checks properly.
- Panel felt feedback was very positive and asked Director to take back to staff the Panel's appreciation for the work and effort they put in.

## **7 Outcome from Ty Nant Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Inspection**

Chris Francis, Principal Officer Commissioning and Care Services updated the Panel on the inspection.

Discussion Points:

- Panel felt it was a concerning document with a number of actions for the Service.
- Officers confirmed the report identified a number of issues and challenges but they were issues the Department anticipated. There were some positives identified. One of the areas for improvement is Quality Assurance.
- Officers stated that it had been a particularly challenging period for care homes but they have got to do better for the children.
- Panel queried why training was not provided online and how often supervision is undertaken. Informed supervision should be monthly for full/part timers and six weekly for flexi staff as these staff have to deal with challenging circumstances on a regular basis. Training is provided online but not the breadth of subjects required for these staff.
- Panel raised concern that it had taken CIW to highlight the problems and not management. Officers stated a lot of things highlighted in report they were aware of but the last year had been a very difficult year to implement changes as dealing with pandemic and issue with manager of home. It was planned to take forward these actions anyway but it had not been done before the CIW visit.
- Panel thanked officers for report which was not easy to present. Panel felt it was obvious officers are systematically working through the action plan and that there will now be a spotlight on Ty Nant.
- CIW will be undertaking another visit shortly. Actions to be completed by end of September. Officers confident this target will be met.
- Report to be brought back to the Panel at appropriate time to ensure going in right direction.

Actions:

- 'Ty Nant - Update on Progress with Action Plan' to be scheduled in work programme for October/November 2021.

## **8 Work Programme Timetable 2021-22**

The Panel considered the work programme.

The meeting ended at 5.45 pm