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## CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Committee** JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date and Time  
of Meeting** THURSDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2015, 4.00 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting,  
together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact [scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)

6 **Correspondence** (*Pages 1 - 10*)

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My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr McGarry

21 December 2015

Councillors Sue Lent & Susan Elsmore  
Cabinet Members  
c/o Room 520  
County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW



Dear Sue and Susan

**Joint Children & Young People and Community & Adult Services Scrutiny  
Committee – 17 December 2015:  
CSSIW Evaluation on Social Care in Cardiff 2014/15**

On behalf of the Members of the Children & Young People and Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committees I would like to thank you and the officers for attending our Joint Committee on 17 December 2015 to support the scrutiny of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales' evaluation of social care in Cardiff for the 2014/15 financial year.

The Joint Committee noted the positive comments from the CSSIW on the improvements already being made, particularly with regard to the educational attainment of Looked After Children, the introduction of a preventative strategy regarding Children's Services, the take-up rate of Direct Payments for Adult Services clients, the work of Community Mental Health Teams, the recruitment of permanent social workers and the work in hand on the integration of social care and health across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Members are pleased that the CSSIW has recognised these improvements, which are testament to the hard work of staff.

Members note the positive comments made by the CSSIW regarding the Director's Report submitted earlier in the year in that it provides a clear, easy to read and honest assessment of Social Services. Members also note that the CSSIW believe there to be strong corporate support for Social Services and that there is good strategic planning to ensure that the direction of travel aligns with the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014.

I have written separately to Bernard McDonald, (Area Manager for Cardiff, CSSIW) thanking him for his attendance and seeking clarification on some issues, namely: the use of comparator data by the CSSIW; and clarification on the purpose and function of the CSSIW report. I have copied both of you and the relevant officers into that letter.

## ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE

Following discussion on the issues raised in the Inspection report along with the answers to Members questions, the Joint Committee has asked me to write to you both, with the following observations, requests for information and recommendation.

Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014: Members were pleased to hear that the CSSIW believe that Cardiff Council is in a good position with regard to implementation of this Act and to hear that the Director of Social Services will provide a written briefing to our January 2016 committee meetings, with progress reports on each work stream to come each month to subsequent committee meetings.

Personal Education Plans: Members note that the new performance indicator set resulting from the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014 will be outcome focused and therefore will not include the specific measure currently collected. Members believe this measure to be of value and ask therefore to be informed about how the Directorate proposes to monitor performance in this critical area and how this will be reported.

Personal Advisors: Members note that the issue with the lack of personal advisors for children is due to problems in recruiting suitable individuals, rather than children being deemed ineligible for this service. Members share the Director of Social Services surprise that it has proved so difficult to recruit and were pleased to hear that he has asked for a further investigation into the root causes of recruitment difficulties. Members wish to have sight of this review and ask that it be sent to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Members. Members suggest that thought be given to how to support potential personal advisors by providing suitable training to enhance skills.

Enhanced Fostering Service: Members wish to remind you and officers that the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee's Performance Panel plans to undertake a deep dive into the procurement process.

Delayed Transfer Of Care: Members note that performance in this area has worsened and that the CSSIW are proposing to meet with senior officers to discuss this but that no further investigation is planned at this stage and, therefore, no report will be published.

Quality of residential care: Members are surprised and disappointed to learn that Proactis does not take account of quality during the tendering process; Members believed that it did do this. Members were pleased to hear that the Escalating Concerns Protocol is robustly applied and that CSSIW is not aware of any cases in 2014/15 where formal review proceedings needed to be initiated.

Quality of domiciliary care: Members were surprised to learn, via the CSSIW report, that three major domiciliary care providers had left the Approved Providers List. Given the impact that this type of change can potentially have on service users and their families, as well as on Council budgets, Members would like to be kept informed of these types of issues in future.

Review of older people's care packages: Members note that the decline in performance is the result of budget savings made that reduced the capacity of staff to undertake these reviews whilst also managing the need to improve performance by increasing the number of carers' assessments. Members note that officers are reviewing the allocation of resources, the skills mix required in assessment and care management with regard to the mix of social workers and social work assistants and that this review, coupled with the introduction of mobile working and scheduling, should help to rectify performance. Members also note that the Assistant Director for Adult Services is undertaking weekly monitoring of this area and will move resources across the section to tackle pinch points. Members wish to highlight that the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee's Performance Panel plans to undertake a deep dive into this area, as part of their care pathway and care management deep dive.

Direct Payments: Members note that the contract for Direct Payments provider is being reviewed and would like to receive further information on the timescales associated with this.

Early intervention and prevention: Members note the difference in opinion between the CSSIW and officers at the meeting with regard to whether there is clarity about the various responsibilities and roles for early intervention and prevention services. Members are aware that the Director for Communities, Housing and Customer Services has taken on responsibility for defined areas that were previously part of Adult Services, following the Senior Management Restructure earlier this year. Members are also aware that this Director has responsibility for a significant portion of the Organisational Development work. Members therefore seek reassurance from you regarding the clarity of the various responsibilities and roles for early intervention and prevention services. On a related point, Members wish to accept the Director of Social Services offer to provide a written response to the point regarding the long term sustainability of the Council subsidising Vaga watches.

Financial position: Members note that the CSSIW would not comment on the financial position of Social Services as this is more of a matter for the Wales Audit Office. Members note that Cabinet Members believe that the process this year with regard to proposed budget savings has benefited from an enhanced due diligence process, with more rigorous business cases and more probing regarding the deliverability and achievability of proposed savings.

Given the importance of the above and the need to ensure that these areas of improvement are appropriately addressed, Members recommend that the Directorate develops a detailed action plan to address these areas, as well as embedding the actions into a future directorate delivery plan. Members of both Scrutiny Committees would like to receive regular monitoring reports focussing on the implementation of the actions.

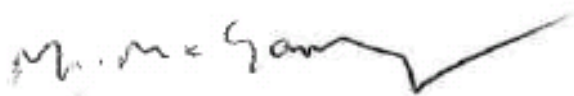
Regarding the structure of the meeting, this was clearly set out on the Agenda for the meeting and is a matter for the Committee. As you heard at the meeting, Scrutiny Committee Members supported the structure as it gave them an opportunity to question the CSSIW inspector on their report and thus receive clarification on a number of areas before asking you and officers for your response.

Members feel that it would have been helpful for the Director of Social Services to have provided an update against the areas for improvement highlighted by the CSSIW, in order that Members had an up-to-date view of the position on these. This is something we would like to happen at next year's meeting.

Finally, I look forward to hearing back from you on the following:

- Recommendation – to prepare an action plan to address the areas for improvement highlighted in the CSSIW report;
- Provision of Information – the Director of Social Services to provide a written briefing on our readiness to implement the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014 to our January 2016 committee meetings, with progress reports on each work stream to come each month to subsequent committee meetings;
- Request for information - to be informed about how the Directorate proposes to monitor performance in the critical area of Personal Education Plans for Looked After Children and to be informed how this will be reported;
- Request for information – to provide Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Members with sight of the review into recruitment of Personal Advisors;
- Request for information – to provide Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee Members with further information on the timescales associated with the review of the contract for the Adult Services Direct Payments provider;
- Request – to provide reassurance regarding the clarity of the various responsibilities and roles for early intervention and prevention services;
- Provision of Information – to provide a written response to the point regarding the long term sustainability of the Council subsidising Vaga watches.

Yours sincerely,



**COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARY M<sup>C</sup>GARRY**

**Chairperson - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

Cc: Bernard McDonald - CSSIW

Tony Young

Amanda Phillips

Irfan Alam

Kim Brown

Claire Deguara

Melanie Jackson

Paula Angel

**SWYDDFA'R DIRPRWY ARWEINYDD  
DEPUTY LEADER'S OFFICE**

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM33128

Eich Nghyf / Your Ref:

Dyddiad / Date: 27th January 2016

Councillor Mary McGarry  
Cardiff County Council  
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Annwyl / Dear Mary

**Scruinty - Joint Children & Young People And Community & Adult Services  
Scrutiny - 17 December 2015 - Cssiw Evaluation**

Thank you for your letter of 21<sup>st</sup> December following our attendance with officers to hear the presentation by CSSIW of their Annual Evaluation of Social Services 2014/15.

Please note as a preliminary that it is important to apply the correct nomenclature and that the term is 'Social Services' not as indicated in your letter 'Social Care'. Whilst this is a generic term which many of us use in a variety of settings it is in fact somewhat broader and less specific than 'social services'. This is important in the context of the report that was considered by committee because it relates to the very clearly defined statutory duties and functions of the Director of Social Services in Wales; his discharge of those specific duties in Cardiff; his Annual Report assessment of performance in relation to those duties; and the Annual Performance Evaluation by CSSIW of Social Services in Cardiff.

We very much welcome your recognition of the positive comments from CSSIW concerning improvements being made.

We note your comments concerning the committee's desire for an update against the 'Areas for Improvement' and feel that this is appropriately addressed in our response to your first recommendation as set out below.

In relation to the committee's consideration of the issues covered in the CSSIW report overall and your recommendations in particular, we would respond as follows:-

1. **Recommendation concerning an action plan.** The established practice in relation to this issue is for all 'Areas for Improvement' to be incorporated into the Directorate Business Plan for the forthcoming year where relevant. This has worked effectively in each of the last two years and CSSIW have, as reported, been satisfied that the 'Areas for Improvement' raised in the 2012/2013 and

**ATEBWCH I / PLEASE REPLY TO:**

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2013/14 evaluations were addressed satisfactorily as a result. The Director does not see value in preparing a separate action plan to deal with the 'Areas for Improvement' only, particularly when there are also parallel improvement plans in place in both adults and children's services already; taken together with the existing business plan, these plans address themselves to those issues. To prepare yet another plan that would require separate monitoring activity is simple not efficient and moreover would require additional attention and draw on already limited management capacity. We would also emphasise that the committee will also have a full opportunity to scrutinise the Directorate Business Plan and the extent to which it effectively addresses the 'Areas for Improvement' , when the Directorate Business Plan is considered by Scrutiny in March.

2. **Provision of SSWB Act Briefings** - this is agreed.
3. **Further Information - Personal Education Plans** – this is agreed.
4. **Recruitment of Personal Advisors** – further information following the investigation of this concern; this is agreed.
5. **Further Information on the Review of Direct Payments Contract** – this is agreed
6. **Request to clarify roles and responsibilities re Prevention** – this is agreed
7. **Provision of Information – Vega Watches** – this is agreed.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely



**Cllr / Cyngorydd Sue Lent**  
**Deputy Leader / Dirprwy Arweinydd**  
**Cabinet Member for Early Years,**  
**Children & Families**  
**Aelod Cabinet Dros Y Blynyddoedd Cynnar,**  
**Plant a Theuluoedd**



**Cllr / Cyngorydd Susan Elsmore**  
**Cabinet Member for Health,**  
**Housing & Wellbeing**  
**Aelod Cabinet dros lechyd, Tai a**  
**Lles**



My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr McGarry

22 December 2015

Bernard McDonald  
Area Manager - Cardiff  
CSSIW  
By Email:



Dear Bernard

**Joint Children & Young People and Community & Adult Services Scrutiny  
Committee – 17 December 2015:  
CSSIW Evaluation on Social Care in Cardiff 2014/15**

On behalf of the Members of the Children & Young People and Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committees I would like to thank you for attending our Joint Committee on 17 December 2015 to present the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales' evaluation of social care in Cardiff for the 2014/15 financial year and to answer Members' questions. I have written to Councillor Elsmore and Councillor Lent with the Joint Committee's observations, comments and recommendation and have copied you into that letter.

Members have asked that I write to you separately to seek your advice regarding the purpose and function of the CSSIW report. Members understand that the report is a performance evaluation of Cardiff Social Services in 2014/15 and looks at the position behind some of the headline indicators, in order to understand the scale and complexity of some of the issues facing Cardiff Social Services. It reflects the CSSIW's constructive approach to working with local authorities.

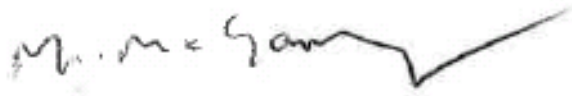
However, bearing in mind the above points, Members are concerned that the impression this report gives is that Cardiff Social Services are performing well, apart from a few areas such as Delayed Transfer of Care. This is not our Committees view having carried out regular scrutiny and looked at performance information and trends over several years. At the moment, the CSSIW report does not demonstrate that Cardiff Council, in 2014-15, was performing badly in many of the areas of Social Services measured by the all-Wales statutory performance indicators.

Members sought an explanation, at the meeting, for the lack of comparator data. Members note the answers provided but cannot square this with the work of a national inspectorate seeking to ensure that Social Services perform at a nationally agreed level. If a local authority Social Services area is under-performing against national standards, Members thought this would be highlighted in the annual performance evaluation undertaken by the CSSIW. As Members stated at the meeting, Members believe there to be a role for performance benchmarking; this

would enable comparator information to be appropriately contextualised and also enable areas of efficiency to be identified.

I look forward to hearing back from you regarding the issues raised above, at your convenience. Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary McGarry', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR MARY M<sup>C</sup>GARRY**

**Chairperson - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

Cc: Cllr Elsmore Cllr Lent  
Tony Young Amanda Phillips Irfan Alam Kim Brown  
Claire Deguara Melanie Jackson  
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15<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Cllr Mary McGarry  
Chairperson - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff CF10 4UW

Dear Cllr McGarry

Further to the joint C&YP and CASSC scrutiny committee in December, as agreed I write to update you on the situation with regard to the recruitment of Personal Advisors.

We recognise that there have been high numbers of interest, but the role of a PA is challenging – particularly as PAs have case accountability for over 18 years and the safeguarding and public protection risks related to many of the young people in this cohort mean that we need to employ competent people who come to the role with the requisite experience and skills.

We do provide induction and extensive training opportunities (2 PAs are currently seconded on to the Social Work degree course and another is due to start next year), however, it is vital that applicants have some prior experience of working with young people.

The selection and interview panel always has a young person in attendance. The young person we have recently used has extensive experience in interviewing and his view was that none of the previous cohort of applicants interviewed were suitable. His views were consistent with the two managers who were also on the panel.

We currently have 3 agency workers who are covering the vacant posts. This has enabled us to meet current levels of need and we are also in the process of shortlisting for the vacancies.

I hope this brief summary goes someway to reassure you that we are actively recruiting and will continue to do so.

**Irfan Alam**  
**Assistant Director, Childrens Services**



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