

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

29 JULY 2015

Present: County Councillor (Chairperson)
County Councillors

1 : CHAIRPERSON

Councillor Richard Cook was nominated as Chairperson for the Joint Committee meeting.

2: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Boyle, Chaundy, Davis, Hudson and Morgan

3 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were received from:

Councillor Sanders – Personal – arranges domiciliary care for a family member

Councillor Lomax – Personal – lives in sheltered accommodation

Councillor Gordon – Personal – Trustee of Riverside community centre.

4 : DRAFT DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Sue Lent, Cabinet Member, Children's Services & Deputy Leader, Councillor Susan Elsmore, Cabinet Member, Health, Housing and Wellbeing, and Tony Young (Director for Social Services) to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Members to make statements. Councillor Lent made a statement in which she drew Members attention to last years areas of improvement and made particular reference to reviews and performance and retention of social workers; she also noted the achievements such as timing of initial assessments, reduction in social workers case loads and successful recruitment of social workers. Going forward it was noted that progress on MASH and the strategy for disabled children was being made.

Councillor Elsmore made a statement in which she noted that there was a job to do internally with savings and efficiency; there was a balanced position on operational budgets in Adult Services. There was now a need for external focus regarding the alignment of services geographically.

The Director of Social Services introduced Members to the new Assistant Director of Social Services – Irfan Alam.

The Director provided Members with an overview of the report and explained that this was his second Annual Report and he had built in changes from the previous years report. He added that the Executive Report would be drafted after the committee meeting to include any comments from Members. It was noted that with the amount

of data from his directorate it was difficult to strike a balance between enough data in the report to show the full picture and data overload.

He added that delivery of services continues to improve in a position of increasing demand and resources, but this needed to accelerate. The performance picture was mixed and performance was not where it should be with some persistent concerns with particular performance indicators. It was noted that last year was a better year with a stronger focus on building strategic momentum; the Corporate Safeguarding Board had been established as had MASH, Preventative Strategy, Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation, Gateway Arrangements and Tendering although this list was not exhaustive.

A decision had been taken to establish a single Directorate in order to help implement the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 more effectively and to improve outcomes in relation to transitions.

The challenges were self explanatory, the first four listed in the report were the same as last year, with the top challenge becoming the overwhelming focus of the directorates work with the Act coming in in April 2016.

The report sets out the organisational context showing that finance is the key area showing an unsettled position; however he stated that he was confident there were clear and transparent plans in place now.

Lots of positive work was going on with regards to the workforce, there was still work to do on planning strategically for the future. He added that he is now Regional Director looking at skilling up the workforce for the future. Complaints were stable, although it was noted that they needed to be more coherent.

With regards to Corporate and Political Leadership and Support, the Director talked about strengthening the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and Corporate Safeguarding arrangements.

The Chairperson thanked everyone for their contribution and invited questions and comments from Members on the overall report:

- Members were concerned that the report outlined outcomes but did not explain what was hoped to be achieved by them; Members noted that they had asked for this during last years meeting. The Director explained that measuring outcomes in social services was incredibly difficult, they also have more performance indicators than other directorates, they are regarded as proxy's for outcomes, although he added that he didn't think it was adequate. He stated that the Act will develop a framework for outcomes, it wouldn't be appropriate to develop measures of outcomes of our own without being able to compare across Wales, the framework in the Act will do this though. He also added that he will try next year to show aspirations of what is and isn't achieved, although he stated that the report was not a review of the business plan.
- Members discussed key challenges and areas for improvement. The Director noted the example of Initial Assessments and Internal Services where there had been a reassuring rise, attention was still needed to sustain this though. He also noted that there was more work to be done on Prevention and Governance.

- Members asked how Cardiff compares to other local Authorities; the Director explained that he hadn't included the data set of other local Authorities as it would be too weighty, instead he had used National Performance Indicators. The Cabinet Member Health, Housing and Wellbeing added that there was a need for firm control on budget spend, there is a slow and steady pace of improvement on budget spend which needed to continue; realignment of services for services such as Prevent are starting; progress is being made on key performance indicators, direct payments and assessments but the pace of improvement needed to step up.
- Members discussed savings and asked whether officers were confident that they could be made. The Cabinet Member Health, Housing and Wellbeing stated that a balanced spend was needed, it should be looked at month on month; she stated that they are committed to achieving savings that have been identified or work going on to identify the savings in year.
- Members asked how the report addresses the areas for improvement that CSSIW put in their Annual Report 2013/14 especially with regards to adults with mental health needs. Officers stated that any recommendations were taken on board and they were happy that the report gave enough information on the CSSIW's recommendations.
- Members noted that sometimes the use of the '%' did not provide a clear picture as it would depend on how large the numbers being analysed were. Members asked that in future the figures are also provided for context.
- Members asked about the monitoring procedures for systems and processes in place dealing with areas of improvement. The Director stated that monitoring is undertaken by Scrutiny, Improvement Board, Challenge Forum, Star Chamber and Corporate Plan, so it is a multi faceted, coherent system and Scrutiny checks it is robust. Members further asked whether this was undertaken in a timely manner, Officers stated that it was a whole team effort which needed good communication, audits, examination of performance indicators and discussions within management team meetings. The Cabinet Member Health, Housing and Wellbeing added that she had recently met with Officers and Members and it was important that if things do go wrong then you apologise and ask for a review to be undertaken.
- Members asked for clarification on how the Star Chamber/Challenge Forum etc. connect together, and whether if something goes wrong, there are resources available to put things right. Members were assured that they were not just talking shops and that when issues are identified, resources are made available to address them, with the example given of the Challenge Forum through an external advisor identifying a lack of capacity to deliver change and the result being, budget made available to appoint an Assistant Director.
- Members welcomed the presentation of the report and the data being in tabular format, and asked if data had been provided where it was appropriate to provide an example, where the information was easily accessible or where Members had previously asked for it to be provided. The Director stated it was all three and hoped that it was informative and transparent. Data sets had been used that were available and were a genuine attempt to meet the aspirations of Members from last years joint scrutiny meeting, all the information was valid.

- Members considered it would be useful to include the targets that the Council delivers services against, as it would enable a trend analysis year on year. Officers agreed and said that in next years report they would try to illustrate the movement in relation to targets and performance.
- Members discussed Political Leadership and whether it was captured enough in the report; Members considered that there was no mention of Cabinet and Scrutiny in the report. The Director stated that it was the report of the Director of Social Services and that he is giving a top level review in terms of values and financial commitment, it was not a report of the Council as a whole. Members considered that the subtitle within the report could be Corporate Support instead. The Chairperson noted that the heading was provided in the statutory guidance.
- Members enquired about readiness for the Act, as they considered that the report did not capture any work being done towards this or any concerns about it. The Director considered this was a fair comment to make, he added that he was somewhat compromised by the regulations and guidance, which had been fairly late coming, but conceded that he could have enhanced the section on what was being done in readiness for the Act.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members specifically in relation to Childrens Services.

- Members sought further information on the section referencing Safeguarding Children, trafficking and radicalisation. The Director stated that there were a whole range of concerns, these issues do not sit in one directorate currently, work needed to be done on the Governance of this too. The Assistant Director added that it was an area of concern and that there was a gap of knowledge for example with female genital mutilation figures, he assured Members that it would be a priority, but it's a very recent issue and currently sits across directorates.

Members added in reference to Governance arrangements, that the Corporate plan identifies it as an issue, and that Councillor De'Ath and Martin Hamilton are responsible for the issue and Councillor De'Ath holds quarterly meetings. The Cabinet Member stated that this issue had been discussed at Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee recently and that it needs to sit with a named officer and Cabinet Member.

- Members considered that there were not many Childrens Services service users views included in the report. Officers advised that there had been a Dragons Den Style event with NYAS which had involved young people and also that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee had discussed young persons engagement. The Director added that it was quite difficult to engage young people, they are the most vulnerable people and find it hard to engage. Work was being done with Youth Council's etc., but Looked After Children (LAC) was a more difficult issue to deal with.
- Members asked about complaints that young people make and how they are addressed. Officers advised that they are spoken to and also they have independent reviewing officers if they are LAC; it was noted that complaints were reported to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and that thematic issues would be looked at.

- Members enquired about LAC being able to have regular contact with their families. Officers explained that each case was different and sometimes information cannot be shared with the children or parents cannot be contacted.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members specifically in relation to Adults Services.

- Members noted that the areas for development in Adult Services seemed to be very overarching and should have more detail and substance. The Director stated that he would address this in the report for Cabinet and for next years report.
- Members considered there should be more mention of carers and support for carers in the report. Officers explained that the section being referred to related to a customer satisfaction survey and that carers get a lot of questionnaires throughout the year, this was specifically for assessment and reviews of service users.
- Members were concerned that many of the performance indicators had declined or were below where they should be, and wondered if this was a cause for concern. The Cabinet Member stated that there was a need to speed up the pace of change and improvement, and provided her commitment that they would be in a better place next year.
- Members enquired who was in the benchmarking group. Members were advised that it was the same benchmarking group as Adults Services.
- Members were surprised that care planning was not included in the challenges listed in the report as it seemed evident from the performance information that it should be. Officers agreed that it should be referenced, regarding performance information it was noted that quarter one assessments were still not in green but were improving quarter on quarter.
- Members discussed further about outcomes and what was being done to achieve them, and linking that to information provided in tabular format.
- Members discussed remodelling of day services and the data around the issue. Members were assured that referral lists to day centre were not closed but there was a move to transitioning to new arrangements. Members were concerned that some GP's were no longer referring and asked that this be looked into.
- With reference to reablement, Members asked how people's progress was monitored when they were back to health. Officers advised that each case was very different; there was a myriad of options from requiring no further service to an ongoing care package.
- Members asked how well service users views were established. Officers advised that it was as described in the report, it was early days and not yet fully integrated; it was a critical issue and would be addressed as a priority.
- Members asked how the Joint Adult Safeguarding Board would report and whether scrutiny would be involved. The Director stated that he was new to the

Board, but he saw no reason why it couldn't go to Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

The Chairperson thanked the Cabinet Members and Officers for attending the meeting, giving their presentations/views and for answering Members questions.

AGREED – That the Chairperson writes on the Committee's behalf to the Cabinet Members to convey their comments and observations.

5 : WAY FORWARD

The meeting terminated at Time Not Specified

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr Groves

31 July 2015

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



Dear Colleague

Joint Children & Young People and Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 29 July 2015

Many thanks to you and officers for attending the above meeting for the scrutiny of the draft Director of Social Services Annual Report 2014-15. This letter captures the agreed comments, observations and recommendations of Committee Members which we trust will assist preparation of the final Report. In line with our questions at the meeting, these are split into three sections: overarching points; those that relate solely to Children's Services; and those that relate solely to Adults Services.

Overarching issues:

Overall, Members recognise the picture presented in the Report, in terms of:

- Improving performance in Children's Services, declining performance in Adult Services and the need to significantly improve performance in both areas;
- The areas identified as Future Challenges and areas for development;
- The gathering strategic momentum that underpins the reshaping of Children's Services and Adults Services with a greater emphasis on preventative services; and
- The alignment of Children's Services and Adults Services into one Directorate, with the anticipated benefits that this will bring for service users, their families and the Council.

Members are pleased to hear that the section on the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 will be strengthened before the report is submitted to Cabinet.

Members note that next year's report will be more outcome-focused and that the new performance framework being developed as part of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 will support this. In the meantime, Members recommend that the report be amended to include a statement about how the areas for development

will lead to improved performance and how many performance indicators it is expected will be improved in 2015-16 as a result of the work undertaken. This will manifest the link between this report identifying areas for improvement and improvements being made.

With regard to the processes in place to monitor the implementation of the areas for development, Members note the answers given explaining the Corporate Performance Management processes, including Star Chamber, Challenge Forum etc. However, Members believe that these will not cover all the areas for development that are detailed in this report and wish to understand how progress in delivering these will be regularly monitored; please detail these processes in the response to this letter.

With regard to the need for the report to include the following: '*Corporate and political support and scrutiny*'. Members refer to our letter from last year, (attached at Appendix D to this meeting's papers), where we noted that Tony Young committed to '*articulating more clearly the close working with Cabinet Members and the support he feels comes from the whole Council for Social Services.*' We feel that this point is still valid. The Statutory Guidance explicitly states that the report should cover '*Corporate and political support and scrutiny*' and our view is that this report does not sufficiently reflect the scrutiny that happens in Cardiff. Members feel that the report will be strengthened by acknowledging the role scrutiny committees are playing and recommend that this is done; there are ample examples of scrutiny providing support to drive improvement in Social Services and across the Corporate body and one cited at the meeting, but not alluded to in the report, is our joint Inquiry into tackling human trafficking.

Finally, in order to make the Report more robust and accessible, in terms of grammar and syntax changes required, Members recommend:

- Page 7 – correcting the use of English in the first and fourth bullet points
- Use of percentages – to also include actual numbers in brackets, so that readers can understand the scale of performance change e.g. page 23 references changes in performance for housing looked after children and it would be clearer for a reader if actual numbers were also provided.
- Graphs/ Tables – amend to include target lines, so that readers can easily see whether performance is on track or adrift from performance targets.

Children's Services:

Members note that, when asked to identify the significant challenges facing Children's Services, Tony Young listed the following:

- Performance in relation to Initial Assessments
- Performance in relation to Children being seen by Social Workers
- The need to increase preventative work
- The need to strengthen governance arrangements.

Members asked several questions regarding Safeguarding. Members were pleased to hear officers recognise the need to improve performance in this area, especially given the new legislation in place on these matters, but were concerned that little progress seems to have been made on this (in Social Services) over the year, with regard to Female Genital Mutilation, Honour-Based Violence, Forced Marriage, Human Trafficking and Radicalisation. Members were disappointed that officers appeared unaware of which Cabinet Member and senior officer are leading work on these issues. As clarified at the meeting by ourselves, the Cabinet Member is Cllr De'Ath and the senior officer is Martin Hamilton. Members note the commitment of officers to attend Cllr De'Ath's recently established working group re Human Trafficking.

Members were also keen to understand the processes in place to hear from children that receive social services and are pleased to hear the intention to hold a Listening Event, in recognition of the success of the one previously held by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee. Members were also pleased to hear the commitment to use complaints as a learning opportunity and to report complaints via the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee. Members would like to receive details of the changes to policy and/ or practice that have happened as a consequence of using complaints as a learning opportunity and request that examples be provided in the response to this letter if possible or in future performance reports to the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee if more time is needed to furnish the information.

Members were pleased to hear Tony Young acknowledge that the wording for the area for development, 'Ensure no further growth in the number of children entering the looked after system' (listed on p40) is too strong and recommend that the wording will be amended prior to the report being taken to Cabinet.

Adult Services:

Members note that, when asked to identify the significant challenges facing Adults Services, Tony Young listed the following:

- The need for effective budgetary control
- The need to increase preventative services
- The need to improve performance re: Carer's Assessments; Delayed Transfer of Care; and Direct Payments.

Members recommend that the Future Challenges for Adults Services be amended to include the need to improve performance in the care planning pathway, given that there has been underperformance in this area for 2014/15, and note Tony Young's commitment to do this.

Members welcome Tony Young's commitment to bring the Annual Report of the Cardiff and Vale Safeguarding Adults Board 2014/15 to the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee and ask that he liaise with scrutiny services to ensure that this is programmed appropriately.

Members were pleased to hear Tony Young agree to expand the area for development 'improve collaborative working with partners' (listed on page 38) to make it clearer which partners are covered by this and with what intent. Members believe that a similar approach is needed for other Adult Services areas for development, as currently three or four areas for development are repeated across several sections and they are very general in nature. Members therefore recommend that the Adult Services areas for development are amended to articulate the specific improvements that are proposed for each area they relate to.

Members asked several questions relating to the number of people receiving Adult Services and have the following points to make in relation to this:

- Please provide a breakdown to show the services received by the 7,626 people cited as receiving support (second paragraph, page 31) and, subsequently, improve the wording of this section of the report.
- Note Councillor Elsmore's statement that referrals to day centres are taking place and the referral process has not been closed
- Note Councillor Elsmore's commitment to liaise with officers to ensure that G.P. surgeries are aware that the referral process has not been closed, given Councillor Murphy's point that surgeries in his ward are not referring as they believe the referral process has stopped.
- Note the answers from officers that, where a client has been reabled to the point of no longer requiring social services, the route back to social services if their condition deteriorates relies on them being referred by their G.P., a community group or family member.

Members will explore the issues relating to day centres when carrying out pre-decision scrutiny of the proposed day opportunity strategy, currently scheduled for October 2015.

With regard to the questions asked about whether carer's views are sought on mental health services, Members wish to highlight the recent scrutiny research report (re mental health service users and carers) that has been sent to Councillor Elsmore and officers; we hope that this is of use to you.

Finally, Members plan to scrutinise several of the areas detailed in the Report during 2015-16 and we look forward to seeing the improvements detailed in this report, including those flowing from establishing one social services directorate. On a separate note, Members are pleased to note Irfan Alam has accepted the role of Assistant Director, Children' Services and wish him well in this post.

This letter requires a response as it contains the following recommendations and requests:

- Recommend that the report be amended to include a statement about how the areas for development will lead to improved performance and how many performance indicators it is expected will be improved in 2015-16 as a result of the work undertaken.
- Recommend that the Future Challenges for Adults Services be amended to include the need to improve performance in the care planning pathway, given that there has been underperformance in this area for 2014/15, and note Tony Young's commitment to do this.
- Recommend that the role scrutiny committees are playing in supporting improvement in social services is acknowledged and detailed in the report.
- Recommend that the Adult Services areas for development are amended to articulate the specific improvements that are proposed for each area they relate to.
- Use of percentages – recommend that also include actual numbers in brackets, so that readers can understand the scale of performance change
- Graphs/ Tables – recommend amend to include target lines, so that readers can easily see whether performance is on track or adrift from performance targets.
- Page 7 – recommend that correct the use of English in the first and fourth bullet points.
- P31 –recommend that the wording of the second paragraph be improved to make it clearer what support is provided to the 7,626 people cited in this paragraph.
- P38 – recommend that expand the area for development 'Improve collaborative working with partners'.
- P40 - recommend that the wording will be amended regarding 'Ensure no further growth in the number of children entering the looked after system'
- Request details of how progress in delivering the areas for development will be regularly monitored.
- Request a breakdown to show the services received by the 7,626 people cited as receiving support (second paragraph, page 31)
- Request details of the changes to policy and/ or practice that have happened as a consequence of using complaints as a learning opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Cook', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Joint Children and Young People and Community & Adult Services
Scrutiny Committee

Cc: Tony Young Irfan Alam Sarah McGill Stuart Young
Kim Brown Amanda Stokes Melanie Jackson Claire Deguara
Jo Watkins

Bernard McDonald – Area Manager Cardiff, CSSIW