

COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 SEPTEMBER 2019

Present: Councillor Jenkins(Chairperson)
Councillors Ahmed, Carter, Goddard, Philippa Hill-John, Lent
and McGarry

21 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Ebrahim and Gibson

22 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

23 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

24 : CARDIFF AND VALE OF GLAMORGAN REGIONAL SAFEGUARDING BOARDS ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

Members were advised that this was a briefing to Committee on the contents of the Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Annual Report 2018-19. Members were reminded that in line with the Committee's terms of reference, this item would focus on the work of the Adults Safeguarding Board.

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Susan Elsmore Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Wellbeing, Claire Marchant Director of Social Services and Co-Chair of the Board and Kate Bishop, Business Manager in Safeguarding Services. The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which she said that this was an important item and the report references the number of partners who are importantly involved. It was noted that the Social Services and Well Being Act set out statutory footing for Regional Safeguarding Board's and requires them to publish Annual Reports. There has been an increased focus on working together in the sector, work has progressed in the care provider protocols and the importance of having regional escalating concerns procedures. The Cabinet Member wished to reference the Safeguarding Awards which recognised the work of the Board, which is supported by a small business unit, hosted by Cardiff Council and managed by Kate Bishop.

Members were provided with a presentation by Kate Bishop, after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments:

Members referred to attendance figures for the Board and noted that representatives from the Ambulance and Fire Service had not attended; Members asked if substitutes were sent and if they had attended the sub-groups. Officers advised that in relation to the Fire service there had been a change in staff so there were gaps that were now being addressed; Links had been made with the Ambulance service and they

have since attended the Board. In relation to sub-groups, a piece of work was being undertaken on monitoring attendance. It was noted that not all Regional Safeguarding Boards (RSB's) publish attendances in their Annual report.

Members referred to the Audit Sub-Group figures and asked how the RSB's interpret trends etc. Officers explained that the significant increase in referrals is seen as a positive as awareness around duty to report has increased. There was useful work being done in relation to high volume referrals and what does/does not need reporting. Preventative measures were being implemented and there as a focus on Neglect/Self-Neglect.

Members noted that there were no Adult Safeguarding Orders and sought more information on this. Officers explained that this was the picture across Wales and in fact there had only ever been 2 in Wales. The Director added that this gives assurances around the exceptional powers under the Social Services Well Being Act.

Members asked if there were any BME organisations represented on the Board. Officers weren't able to answer but offered to take it to the Board as a query.

Members noted the references in the report in relation to the Children's and Adults Practice Review, Significant backlogs and that the Board had experienced difficulties in reaching Board agreement etc. and asked for more information on this. Officers explained that 3 years ago there had been a backlog due to there being just 1 business manager and no support; processes weren't as robust as they could have been and cases weren't completed in the time they would have wanted. This is no longer the case, there are very robust processes in places and all staff are on board and understand them. With reference to the Board disagreements, this was due to the knowledge and experience around the Children and Adult Practise Review, it was very new then and people had had to get to grips with it. The Director added that arrangements are now very effective, there has been a need to address historic issues and reviews, lot of work in relation to this learning was now being disseminated.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

25 : QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE 2019-20, ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES & PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES

Members were advised that this item would consider Quarter 1 Performance in two parts: Part one would consider performance from the Social Services – Adult Services Directorate and Part two would consider the relevant performance from the People & Communities Directorate.

Social Services – Adult Services

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Susan Elsmore Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Wellbeing and Claire Marchant Director of Social Services.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which she said that she was pleased to introduce the report, and she was pleased to welcome Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) in April after which positive feedback had been received.

Co-location had made a real difference in collaborative work; CIW had noted that staff treated people with respect and were positively enthusiastic. The Cabinet Member was pleased to see the increase in First Point of Contact/Independent Living Team and positive outcomes were already being seen here. There had been a slight increase in delayed transfers of care (DToc) usually there was a reduction following winter pressures, but this hadn't been the case this year. This was being addressed however by collaborative working by staff and the Chief operating Officer had commended staff for their efforts.

Members were provided with a presentation after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members;

Members noted the references to capacity in the report and asked how this issue had come about and how it was being addressed. The Director stated that there had been a significant programme of transformation, there was lots of work still to do and it needs to be properly resourced. There was money from Welsh Government/ICF/Transformation Fund and a whole system transformation was underway. It had been considered right and proper to include and highlight the issues in the report and that they are being addressed.

Members asked if transformation was impacting on capacity issues and how this may effect a restructure. The Director stated that she wasn't referring to a restructure, it was about having an effective operating model which was critical; a strength based approach working in a 'what matters' way requires the whole workforce to be trained. Lots of work was already underway with regards to commissioning, learning disabilities etc. so it was more about a change in the way of working rather than a restructure.

Members asked why sickness rates were 4.5 average up on last year. The Director acknowledged that this was an area of concern, officers were working with HR People Services and had invested for more support. The highest sickness rates were with Direct Services, there were issues with the age of the workforce as well as the type of work undertaken. Officers were trying to get to the root causes and were supporting people into the right jobs for them.

Members considered that the report formatting was difficult to read across and cross reference and that also in some areas there was no comparative data.

Members asked if there was a realistic working target in relation to DToc and if there were issues in relation to delay/move on space, The Director explained that she hasn't revisited the target as yet, this year it will inevitably be higher than last year due to a number of factors, mainly capacity in the Domiciliary Care Market, challenges with recruitment and retention and Regulation Inspection of Care Act. There was a major retender early next year and it was hoped that things would be more sustainable going forward. An increased demand in hospital setting had placed pressure on the whole system. The Director agreed to bring a report back to committee on the review of the Community Resource Team and Intermediate Care.

Members asked why there was difficulty in recruiting Mental Health practitioners. Members were advised it was because they were highly skilled. A focus on this issue would remain and it was important to have succession planning in place.

People & Communities

Cllr Elsmore remained for this part of the item. The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Thorne, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, Sarah McGill, Corporate Director People & Communities, and Jane Thomas, Assistant Director Housing & Communities.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Thorne to make a statement in which she said that she was pleased to introduce the report; Housing and Communities were making excellent progress against their corporate commitment and performance indicators. Cardiff had been recognised for its innovative council housing programme including its approach to developing difficult sites delivering quality sustainable homes. The shipping containers had been delivered to the Bute Street site making progress on the innovative scheme to house homeless families, providing 13 flats, short term homes while long term solutions are found. There was continued success with the community hubs, officers were working with the communities on a number of projects. The multi-disciplinary homeless team are fully operational and working to address the complex needs of rough sleepers.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Elsmore to make a statement in which she said that she was pleased to introduce the elements of the report that fall within her portfolio. Members were updated on Older Person's accommodation and the Sandown Court refurbishment scheme which had received a platinum level award, which was a hallmark of good practice recognised by Welsh Government. There were plans to refurbish Worcester Court and these were progressing. The Cabinet Member emphasised the importance of addressing older people's needs especially VAWSAV which requires a personalised approach, there was work being done on this with multi agency partnership working but still some way to go, a report would be brought to a future committee.

The Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

Members asked if the statistics in the report only related to Council Homes and were advised they did, there was a significant amount more that were sold through Wates.

Members asked why the target for building council homes was green when in previous years the target had not been met. Officers explained that the development programme doesn't follow a steady path, they have to take a view and it was likely that the target would be achieved; officers remain confident even though development is very complex and there are lots of variables. Members considered it would be useful to be informed of any concerns or reservation in meeting the target.

Members referred to the negative press that Container Homes has received in the national press in relation to air circulation, overheating, and overcrowding and sought assurances on this. Officers explained they have been very careful over the quality of the containers and they exceed space standards. Lots of work has been done in terms of heating and air quality and officers were confident with the containers.

Members wished to congratulate staff on exceeding the targets of providing advice on Universal Credit and the excellent work carried out.

With reference to it being a red target, Members asked what work was being done to lobby Welsh Government on the Local Housing Allowance. The Cabinet Member explained that this was a national issue, it was a huge problem, with people on very low incomes being forced into private rented accommodation and having to top up

the rent. Staff have been fantastic and proactive in contacting people rather than waiting for them to seek advice.

Members noted the work being done to address social isolation in relation to older people and families but asked what was being done about people living alone. Officers explained that there are programmes run through the Hubs, delivered by third sector partners that promote activities for people of all ages. It is a major issue, also seen via the gateway and complex needs clients and it is something that can be taken forward.

Members asked for an update on Satellite Pods. Officers explained that they have identified two sites and they have been referred to Planning, however there hasn't been an encouraging response. The Cabinet Member stated that she has contacted the Chief Planning Officer and explained the issues so they understand the priorities.

Members asked for the definition of 'temporary' in relation to the satellite pods and were advised that they would be temporary for each individual, so transient in effect. It was further explained that they are temporary buildings, aimed at clients who do not want to engage, it is a pilot to see if it works.

Members referred to the difficulties experienced with contractors and asked for more information on this. Officers explained that there is a lot of competition in Cardiff for builders, a tender had been put out recently and only 2 builders had come back on it. There has been difficulties with vacant property work, so issues in the framework need to be addressed. One more contractor has also withdrawn. It was explained that the supply chain was a challenge, along with a level of national uncertainty at the present time.

Members noted the levels of voids, and that quarter by quarter the numbers are increasing; and that the time taken to bring the voids back to use. Members asked for more information on this. Officers explained that this was a huge amount of work and some factors can and cannot be addressed. Often properties became empty due to the age of the previous and tenant and some have had no work carried out in them for years, so need lots of maintenance work. There had been issues with the previous contractor but now there was a service in place and there should be capacity to clear the voids and backlog by the end of the year, with the note that it is difficult to know how many will come in each month and what needs to be done to each one. Currently all have WQHS kitchens and bathrooms fitted and a certain standard of decoration before re-letting, but it may need to be considered that this slips if the numbers continue to come in as they have been, this is an ongoing piece of work.

Members considered it was time for a serious radical review of the overly complicated procurement process.

Members referred to the Commissioning Service for Male Victims of Domestic Abuse and asked for an update on the current position. Members were advised that Bridgend/Vale of Glamorgan/Cardiff will commission and other local authorities will observe for now and hopefully come on board once services are commissioned and they can see how well they are working.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

26 : COMMUNITY AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - DRAFT
WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

The Principal Scrutiny Officer updated Members on the work programme and advised that it is a working document that needs to remain flexible for additional items to be added to agendas as and when needed. The work programme would be reviewed by Committee throughout the year.

Members discussed various topics for inclusion in the work programme and the Principal Scrutiny Officer advised that she would circulate the work programme to Members in the coming week but emphasised that it would be a working document that could be revised and updated as needed.

27 : CORRESPONDENCE STATEMENT

Noted.

28 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received

29 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

2 October 2019 at 4.30pm in Committee Room 4 County Hall, Cardiff.

The meeting terminated at 6.50 pm