
Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Monitoring Report – November 2017

Reasons for the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with information about the role, function and activity of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service.
2. The Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee's terms of reference require the Committee to regularly review performance data and ensure performance monitoring systems are in place to achieve sustained improvements.
3. The Committee receives a report from the IRO service twice a year.

Background

4. Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) have a responsibility to act directly as corporate parents. Local authorities are required by law to appoint an IRO to every child who is looked after. They monitor care plans, convene and chair reviews for children subject to care orders, accommodated voluntarily, placed with foster carers, in residential or secure establishments, living with kinship carers or placed for adoption. Their role is to ensure that each care plan clearly sets out the help, care and support each child needs and takes full account of each child's wishes and feelings.
5. Independent Reviewing Officers have specific responsibility to escalate concerns about Looked After Children through a dispute resolution process. If the concern cannot be resolved within the line management structure, the process allows escalation to the Chief Executive and ultimately to the Children and Family Court

Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS Cymru) to consider legal action if necessary.

6. The November 2017 monitoring report is attached at Appendix A and provides an overview of the service, its workload and performance information.

Financial Implications

7. The Social Services Directorate has submitted a pressure bid for two additional IR Officers. This is currently being considered as part of the budget process for 2018/2019.

Legal Implications

8. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

9. The Committee is recommended to note the information contained in the report; and make any observations or comments.

Irfan Alam
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11 January 2018