

COUNCIL: 29 SEPTEMBER 2016

CABINET PROPOSAL

AGENDA ITEM:

DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES REPORT 2015-16 (ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORTING FRAMEWORK)

Reason for this Report

1. The purpose of this report is for the Cabinet to receive the seventh Annual Report of the Director of Social Services (Appendix 1) as required by the Welsh Government. The requirement is outlined in the document 'Statutory Guidance on the Role and Accountabilities of the Director of Social Services' issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970.

Background

2. From 2009-10, the Statutory Director of Social Services in each council in Wales has been required to produce and publish an Annual Report as part of an Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) for social services.
3. The Report and the systems and processes established to inform its production have been refined and developed in 2015-16 to take account of learning from previous years. Feedback and comments received on the report this year will be taken into consideration during the preparation of future reports. This year, the focus has been on re-framing the report in response to feedback from Scrutiny Committees to ensure that it is outcome based and more reader-friendly.
4. The Report was prepared following an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of social care services. The resulting judgements and identification of improvement priorities are supported by performance information.
5. The report will be submitted to the Care & Social Services Inspectorate, Wales (CSSIW). The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act places the annual Director of Social Services' report on a statutory footing and, in preparation for these new arrangements, CSSIW will no longer produce an individual performance evaluation report for each council. Verbal feedback will be provided at a Performance Review

Meeting in September between CSSIW, the Director of Social Services and relevant (invited) elected member portfolio holders.

6. The Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) supported the introduction of the ACRF and produced a 'toolkit' for use by authorities that provides guidance on the areas to be covered in the Report.
7. The priorities for action identified in the Annual Report are reflected in the Directorate Plan for Social Services for 2016-17.

Issues

8. As required by the ACRF the report was finalised as a result of engaging managers and staff in a structured challenge process.
9. In previous years, the need to improve the opportunity for citizens who use or are eligible for social services to engage in some level of challenge prior to finalising the report and lessons learned has been noted. Last year the Director and senior managers, alongside members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee, engaged in a face to face challenge session with young people based upon their own analysis of the report. This was a positive and mutually beneficial experience and a similar event with young people was held on 18th June 2016. Feedback from the event is included in the report.
10. Adult Services approached a number of stakeholder organisations including Age Connects and C3SC regarding the challenge process and they responded positively, being keen to engage and provide feedback. A draft version of the report was issued to these organisations and an overview of their feedback is included in the report.

Scrutiny Consideration

11. The draft Director's Report was considered at a joint meeting of the Children & Young People and Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committees on 11 July 2016. A response to the recommendations from Scrutiny will be provided following receipt of their letter.

Reasons for Recommendations

12. To receive the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services for 2015-16 in order to fulfil the responsibilities required by the Welsh Government in the document entitled 'Statutory Guidance on the Role and Accountabilities of the Director of Social Services'.

Legal Implications

13. The legal requirements to which the report relate are referred to earlier in the report. Further advice has been received which confirms that the report should be presented to full Council, following consideration and approval by Cabinet. There are no other legal implications directly arising from the report.

Financial Implications

14. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

CABINET PROPOSAL

Council is recommended to note the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services for 2015-16.

THE CABINET

29 September 2016

The following Appendix is attached:

Appendix 1: Director of Social Services Annual Report 2015-16

The following Background Papers have been taken into account:

- Statutory Guidance on the Role and Accountabilities of the Director of Social Services
- Social Services Improvement Agency Annual Council Reporting Framework Toolkit