

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

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM35332

Eich Nghyf / Your Ref:

Dyddiad / Date: 7th September 2016

Cllr Mary McGarry
Cardiff County Council
County Hall
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Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Annwyl / Dear Mary

Joint CYP Scrutiny - 11 July 2016

Thank you for your letter following committee's consideration of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2015-16 and for the committee's comments.

In responding to the committee's comments and recommendations it is important to clarify the status of the Annual Report. Namely that it is not a Council Report as such but is the report of the Director of Social Services in his role as a statutory officer. As such it is a matter for the Director to determine any changes to the report or future format and content.

In relation to the committee's recommendations we have therefore consulted with the Director and can confirm that he has agreed the following in relation to the report itself:-

1. **Governance and accountability** – this recommendation is agreed and future reports will reflect the broader governance structure
2. **Balanced picture** – it is agreed that future reports should reflect strengths and weaknesses but we do not share the committee's view that the 2015-16 report demonstrates insufficient balance.
3. **Demand and Supply issues** – this is highly complex question and we do not recall that a generalised assertion being made by officers to this effect. It is recalled that there was acknowledgement of the supply pressures associated with domiciliary care and residential care for older people and it is becoming something of a given that demand and complexity overall are growing. The Director has advised in relation to this recommendation, he can see the benefit of highlighting demand and supply issues more specifically, where relevant, in future.

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- 4. Benchmarking** – the Director advises that he is unable to accept this recommendation as written. Although keen to support better performance comparison this is likely to be unachievable in general terms at the 2016-17 outturn. This is because all Welsh authorities and the Welsh Government (WG) are currently in a transitional year in following the implementation of the Social Services and Well Being Act 2014 (SSWB) with effect from April of this year. In practical terms this means that local authorities are setting baselines for completely new measures (there are one or two exceptions) during 2016-17. Moreover, unless WG decides to release provisional quarterly data, no meaningful comparable data will be available by the time the 2016-17 report is finalised. In terms of Core City comparisons, this is going to be even more difficult for the 2016-17 year and for the same reasons associated with SSWB Act transition. The Director is a member of a Core Cities Directors network and is committed to utilising this relationship to consider how best performance comparisons can be developed but for the reasons cited, this is unlikely to bear fruit in the current financial year or in time for the 2016-17 report.
- 5. Additional Adult Focused Indicators** – in part for the reasons set out in 4 above, the Director is not prepared to agree this albeit he may reconsider at the end of the transitional year. Additionally however, he has emphasised the scope and scale of the work entailed in the introduction of the new statutory outcomes framework arising from the SSWB Act; performance management resources are fully committed to achieving this as a statutory requirement and must be prioritised accordingly.
- 6. NEETS** – this recommendation is agreed and future reports will take cite numbers in addition to percentages.
- 7. Joint Health Protocol (children)** – the Director will consider whether this merits a section or fuller expansion during the drafting of the 2016-17 report, albeit the importance of highlighting action to improve health and particularly mental health in children is acknowledged.
- 8. CAMHS** - the Director will consider whether this merits a section or fuller expansion during the drafting of the 2016-17 report.
- 9. Adult exploitation** – the Director will consider whether this merits a section or fuller expansion during the drafting of the 2016-17 report in consultation with the Safeguarding Adults Regional Board, taking account of its implications for adults who need care and support.
- 10. CSSIW Areas for Improvement** – these areas are always referenced in the Annual report and play a key role in determining priorities and the Director will consider whether any or all of these merit direct inclusion in the Key Challenges section during the drafting of the 2016-17 report.
- 11. Outcome 1 Safeguarding Graphs** – this recommendation is agreed.

12. Signposting – the recommendation that “careful consideration is given to queries before people are signposted...to ensure that crucial intervention is not delayed” is puzzling. The Director would wish to emphasise that Information, Advice and Assistance provided under the Social Services and Well Being Act 2014, is the statutory responsibility of the Director of Social Services so that even where partners deliver some front door services, it will remain a clear requirement that signposting enables timely assessment, care and support. It is for this reason that qualified social workers are embedded in the First Point of Contact.

In relation to the Joint Committee’s request for additional briefings we are able to respond as follows

1. **Statutory visits** – a briefing will be provided as requested
2. **Social Worker Turnover (children services)** - a briefing will be provided as requested
3. **Social Worker Degree Programme-** a briefing will be provided as requested as part of 2 above
4. **Gateway presentation** – a presentation will be arranged as requested
5. **Adult Safeguarding Action Plan** - a copy of this report will be provided as requested
6. **CSSIW Domiciliary Care Inspection Report** - a copy of this report will be provided as requested

We note the committees’ intention to monitor the Directorate’s progress as part of their work programme. It may be helpful in this regard to again remind committee that these are already incorporated in the Directorate’s annual Delivery/Business Plan and that the commitments in that plan are in turn the subject of the quarterly Cabinet Performance Monitoring Report which is scrutinised by both committees.

Yn gywir / Yours sincerely



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



Y Cynghorydd / Councillor Susan Elsmore
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