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My Ref / Fy Ref: CM29046

Date / Dyddiad: 3rd November 2014

Cllr Richard Cook  
Chair – Joint Children and Young People and Community & Adult Services  
Scrutiny Committee  
Room 279  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Dear / Annwyl Richard

**Joint Children and Young People and Community & Adult Services  
Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 10th September 2014**

Thank you for your letter of 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2014 following the joint committee and your acknowledgement of the improvements on previous reports, although we recognise that there is scope for further improvement. In response to Members' recommendations following their consideration of the report, we would advise as follows:

- **Expand the explanation of how evidence is gathered and provide references, as footnotes, to source documents.**  
We take the view that the balance of the report must focus on judgements and key areas of strength or weakness and we are reluctant to encumber the report with explanations about methodology; this is not the practice in any other Director's Report to our knowledge. The underpinning methodology to enable the Director's Report to be produced is called the Annual Council Reporting Framework and is supported by detailed and extensive guidance. However, we recognise the interest of Members in ensuring the link to evidence and will ensure this is made more explicit next year.
- **Amend the opening section of the 'Cardiff Social Services Overall', page 4, by including the word 'However' at the start of the second sentence.**

Agreed and amended.

**PLEASE REPLY TO / ATEBWCH I :** Cabinet Support Office / Swyddfa Cymorth Y Cabinet,

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- **Insert a section detailing how Children's Services and Adult Services currently capture and use service users' views.**

We recognise the importance of dedicating some narrative to service user engagement and will consider how best this can be achieved in the 2014/15 report.

- **Provide a footnote detailing membership of the Benchmark Group.**

Agreed and included in narrative.

- **In future years, provide trend data for national performance indicators so that it is clear what the direction of travel is for each performance indicator.**

Agreed.

- **Review the use of graphs and their layout.**

Agreed and noted for the 2014/15 report.

- **Amend the Corporate and Political Leadership and Support section as agreed at Committee.**

Agreed and amended.

- **Amend the Safeguarding section re Keeping Vulnerable Adults Safe to acknowledge the risks.**

Although the safeguarding section in respect of adults clearly references some of the risks that adults are exposed to, we recognise that it would be appropriate to strengthen the profile concerning these risks and will ensure that this is achieved in the 2014/15 review and report.

- **Amend the Safeguarding section to reference the needs flowing from Female Genital Mutilation, Honour-Based Violence, Forced Marriage, Trafficking and Radicalisation.**

We are unable to agree in relation to the 2013/14 year that there is value in referencing the needs flowing from Female Genital Mutilation or similar phenomena, when it is clear that we have no intelligence or evidence that would provide the basis for meaningful comment. We do acknowledge, however, that this is an issue that we should consider in the forthcoming year.

- **Insert a section detailing that there is joint working across the Council with regards to social care services.**

The point regarding joint working is well made, but would require a substantial piece of work to do justice to the issue. This will be significantly strengthened in the 2014/15 report.

- **Consider whether to include another Future Challenge that articulates the need to review non-statutory service provision.**

This area is potentially a very broad spectrum. Although Members indicate that it is a key challenge, your letter has not made it clear how this is manifested, or how it could be effectively captured. It is important to note that no work was undertaken during the 2013/14 year to evidence this concern.

- **Provide clarity about how each of the Future Challenges will be addressed and the role of the 'Areas for Development' in this.**

The Director's Report is not, in our view, the appropriate vehicle for detailing the way in which future challenges will be addressed. This is more properly the role of the respective Directorate Business Plans which will be shared with Committees in the normal way as part of the business planning cycle.

- **Remove 'successful' from phrase 'live successful and independent lives' (page 3).**

Agreed and amended.

- **Change all references in the Report from 'Mental Health Problems' to 'Mental Health Illness'.**

Agreed and amended.

- **Details of the membership of the performance Benchmark Group.**

The performance benchmark group comprises Swansea, Newport, Caerphilly, Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Torfaen.

- **Details of the reasoning to judge whether performance is 'very close'.**

It is acknowledged that a judgement which describes performance as being "very close" is probably unhelpful. In 2014-15 we will revisit how best to describe comparable levels of performance which are typical of the benchmark group.

- **Accessible Homes Register – details of trends in numbers waiting for an accessible home.**

Cardiff Accessible Homes (CAH) currently has 564 applicants on the housing register. On average between 130 to 170 applicants are housed each year into suitably adapted accommodation, but this figure obviously depends on the availability of adapted properties. In general, the number waiting for accessible housing since CAH became operational 10 years ago has increased by approximately 50 per year.

- **Details of the work underway or proposed to tackle social isolation and loneliness, whether undertaken by the Council or by partners.**

The significance of the extent of social isolation and loneliness and its consequences for individuals has been widely reported across the UK. The Health & Social Care Directorate is working with Cardiff & Vale University Health Board and third sector organisations to better understand the issues and to seek to improve the possibility of individuals being more engaged in activities with others and within their own neighbourhood communities. The need for people to develop social relationships is high on the Welsh Government agenda because loneliness impacts on people's mental health in equal measure to their physical health.

Work in the City of Cardiff to address these issues includes:

- Health & Social Care are extending work with all service user groups to gain access to a range of existing community based day services for eligible service users to encourage and support access to local facilities and activities.
- Housing & Communities, alongside Health & Social Care, have developed a "Gateway" service, funded by Welsh Government, and the service will be targeted at early intervention and putting people in contact with suitable services e.g. Age Connects, Mencap, as well as considering how assistive technologies can support people to manage risks in their own homes.
- Specifically in relation to older people – Together, the Health & Social Care and Housing & Communities Directorates have commissioned a 12 month pilot project with Age Connects (October 2014 - September 2015) to deliver a volunteer based service, the aim of which is to reduce social isolation and loneliness of older people by encouraging and supporting access to local neighbourhood activities and services.
- Cardiff & Vale UHB is delivering a range of health promotion activities which will also contribute to the well being and engagement of people in activities and in developing social relationships.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Sue Lent

**Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Families**



Councillor Susan Elsmore

**Cabinet Member for Health, Housing & Wellbeing**