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Date 12 June 2015

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH
Your Ref:

Councillor Sue Lent
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Years
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Sue

Thank you for attending Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2015 to help introduce the **Children's Services Delivery Plan 2015/17** and **Briefing on the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Managed Team**. I would also like to thank Tony Young and Irfan Alam for their full and honest answers that were provided at the meeting. During the consideration of the reports and answers to Members' questions, the Committee identified a number of comments concerns and recommendations which they asked me to write to you.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES DELIVERY PLAN 2015 - 17

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to be briefed on the Department's Delivery Plan for the next two years. Members did however question why the plans actions were always split over four quarters. Members noted that some major changes in service provision did take up to a year to develop, consult and implement. However the Members still considered that the actions should be prioritised so that those that could be implemented quickly were identified as such.

Members discussed the future sustainability of the caseload averages they understood that demand can be unpredictable; however the Committee recommended that the Department makes every effort to sustain the current caseload average.

Members discussed at some length the impact of the forthcoming budget settlements and the resourcing decisions to be made. The Committee requested that it is kept informed, as early as possible, as to the identification and development of any alternative service provision for Children's Services.

MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH) and MANAGED TEAM

MASH

The Committee appreciated the update and details of the progress being made in developing the MASH, Members noted that a project manager would be appointed soon. As a result the Members requested a further report prior to the Mash becoming operational.

Managed Team

Members wished to thank the officers for the detailed briefing on the operation of the Managed Team. Members were pleased to hear that only 45 cases out of the original 313 cases were being handed back to the mainstream teams. Officers reassured the Committee that the transfer of these cases would not have a major impact on the Social Workers caseloads, but this did not leave much flexibility for future changes in demand. Members agreed that they would continue to monitor average case loads to assess the impact of any changes in demand.

I hope that these comments, advice and recommendations, detailed above will be of use and support in improving outcomes for Children in need. The Committee looks forward to receiving the requested additional information listed above together with a positive response to this letter within the next month.

To recap, this letter requests several actions, requests for information and recommendations, as follows and requires a response:

- Reprioritise the actions, in future delivery plans, so that those that can be completed quickly are shown as such;
- To make every effort to sustain the current caseload average;
- To involve the Committee in the identification and development of any alternative service provision for children's service as early as possible.
- Provide a further progress report on the MASH prior to it becoming operational.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Irfan Alam, Interim Assistant Director of Children's Service
Kim Brown, Service Manager, Policy and Performance
Melanie Jackson - Personal Assistant to Deputy Leader