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12<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Dear Cllr McGarry

### **Further Queries Concerning the CSSIW Annual Evaluation**

I understand from Angela Holt that joint scrutiny members raised some queries of detail in relation to the written response from Councillors Elsmore and Lent following CSSIW's presentation of the Chief Inspector's Annual Evaluation of Social Services, to joint scrutiny in December last year.

Having reviewed the response, the technical aspects of which were prepared by my Directorate, I acknowledge that fuller answers to some of the questions raised in your original letter would be appropriate. Please accept my apologies for not addressing these matters more fully at the time.

I would therefore set out a fuller response in relation to the further queries as I understand them from Angela Holt as follows:-

1. **Recruitment of Personal Advisors** – this concerned committee's request to learn of the outcome of an investigation of the factors that resulted a failure to effectively recruit to vacant PA posts. Irfan Alam will liaise with Martyn Hutchings to agree a suitable date when this can be reported to the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.
2. **Direct Payments** – this sought further clarification concerning the on the provider contract. I am able to advise you that we are currently working with the incumbent provider organisation, until the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. During this time officers will consider a range of options including an in house model to secure the services going forward from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. An open book meeting was held on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to understand the current services and establishment which will assist in shaping future services.

A project group has also been established with officers from both Adult and Children's Services to consider a range of options available during the next 14 months. Progress from the project group will be reported to the Social Services Management Team by the Project Lead.

3. **Clarification of roles and responsibilities re Prevention** – In relation to the CSSIW's observation that greater clarity was required to ensure clear accountability and responsibility for the Council's prevention services. I think that we have been clear that a key priority is to ensure that the work to develop a comprehensive preventative service should be jointly progressed



across the Adult Social Services and Communities, Housing and Customer Services Directorates. As Committee will be aware the Social Services and Well Being Act 2014 requires all Local Authorities to adopt a “whole Council” approach to Prevention and Well Being and the joint approach taken has resulted in a much more comprehensive approach to prevention based on what makes a difference to people’s lives rather than what silo of the Council the service happened to sit in. The joint work has resulted in restructuring proposals that will, in my view, put the Council in the best position to respond to the requirements of the Act and to improve outcomes.

The temporary arrangements that were put in place following the senior management restructure have also been reviewed and, as anticipated, some realignment of services across both Directorates have been incorporated into the restructure proposals. We can make this information available to members in more detail if this would be helpful.

It is important to stress that as the Director of Social Services, I remain accountable for the totality of all social services provision including prevention, but that this is managed through my partnership relationship with colleague Directors wherever relevant. A new protocol to underpin the statutory accountabilities of the Director of Social Services and detailing these arrangements is currently under development and will be considered by both scrutiny committees at an appropriate juncture before being finalised and recommended to cabinet.

4. **Provision of information re Vega Watches** - We currently have 50 Vega watches in stock funded through the Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) 10 customers referred by Social workers are currently under taking a free trial. Of the original customers on the trial, over 50% felt it increased their independence and 90% would recommend the service to others. We are continuing to have requests from adult services and would recommend that we continue with the extended trial which is cost neutral. We have a number of private customers interested in the Vega watch and are working towards a criteria which would allow users to pay for their own provision which costs less than a monthly mobile phone contract.
5. **Clarification of roles and responsibilities re Prevention** - In relation to the CSSIW’s observation that greater clarity was required to ensure clear accountability and responsibility for the Council’s prevention services I think that I have been clear that a key propriety for me was to ensure that the work to develop a comprehensive preventative service should be jointly progressed across the Adult Social Services and Communities , Housing and Customer Services Directorates. As Committee will be aware the Social Services and Well Being Act 2014 requires all Local Authorities to adopt a “whole Council” approach to Prevention and Well Being and the joint approach taken has resulted in a much more comprehensive approach to prevention based on what makes a difference to people’s lives rather than what silo of the Council the service happened to sit in. The joint work has resulted in restructuring proposals that will, in my view, put the Council in the best position to respond to the requirements of the Act and to improve outcomes.

The temporary arrangements that were put in place following the senior management restructure have also been reviewed and, as anticipated, some realignment of services across both Directorates have been incorporated into the restructure proposals.

It is important to stress that the Director of Social Services remains accountable for the totality of all social services provision including prevention, but that this is managed through his partnership relationship with his colleague Directors wherever relevant. A new protocol to underpin the statutory accountabilities of the Director of Social Services and detailing these arrangements is currently under development and will be considered by both scrutiny committees at an appropriate juncture before being finalised and recommended to cabinet.

I hope that this addresses members' concerns more fully but please do not hesitate to come back to me if you require further information

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Young', written in a cursive style.

Tony Young  
Director of Social Services

Cc Sarah McGill/Cllr Elsmore/ Cllr Lent,/Cllr Cook/Irfan Alam/ Amanda Phillips

