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CHILDREN'S SERVICES QUARTER Q4 AND YEAR-END PERFORMANCE  
2023/24

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**Reason for the Report**

1. This report sets out the year-end performance results for Children's Services arising from the following:
  - An extract from the draft Council Annual Well-Being Report 2023/24 (**Appendix A**)
  - 2023/24 Quarter 4 Children's Services Report (**Appendix B**)

**Background**

Cardiff Council Annual Well-being Report 2023/24

2. Each year, in order to address a number of statutory requirements as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Council produces an Annual Well-Being Report (AWBR) which is a comprehensive self-assessment of Council performance in delivering its Wellbeing Objectives for the previous year.
3. The AWBR assessment of performance contained within the end-of-year report is developed via a thorough framework of self-assessment involving the political and managerial leadership of the Council. It draws on a wide range of sources of performance information, including the performance data recorded in the [Corporate Performance Dashboard](#), against each Key Performance Indicator (KPI) and Step contained in the Corporate Plan.

4. The Annual Well-being Report 2023/24 highlights a range of strategic performance challenges, which need to remain the subject of corporate focus over the year ahead.
  - Managing sustained increase in the complexity and scale of demand across council services:
  - Ensuring continued service and financial resilience: The Council faces significant immediate and medium-term budgetary challenges.
  - Responding to new risks and issues.
5. The lead scrutiny committee responsible for the assessment of the ABWR is the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee. This committee holds a performance panel meeting with all scrutiny Chairs and Cabinet Members and senior officers to assess the issues, challenges, progression and performance. The performance panel met on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024, and a verbal update will be provided at this meeting.
6. In addition to the above meeting, this scrutiny committee will have the opportunity to consider the relevant part of the ABWR – for both Education and Children’s Services. The former is set out as a separate agenda item at this committee meeting.
7. An extract from The Annual Well-Being Report (WBO 1) relating to Children’s Services is attached in **Appendix A**. In addition to the information set out in Appendix A, there is a performance dashboard available for Members’ review. Link: [Corporate Performance Dashboard](#).

#### Q4 Children’s Services Performance Report

8. Each quarter, Members of this Scrutiny committee receive a performance report from Children’s Services, containing data and information from the Service. This report includes a number of KPIs set out in the Corporate Plan, plus additional data that has been requested by this Scrutiny Committee. The Q4 report is attached at **Appendix B**.

## Performance reporting

9. **Appendix A** contains a narrative of the process used in the development of the AWBR and an overall assessment across the Council, progress made and continued risks and pressures on Children's Services within WBO1 – Cardiff is a Great Place to Grow Up.
10. **Appendix A** also sets out a further description of progress, risks and challenges under the heading of ***“Shifting the balance of care and protecting the wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people, and families”***
11. The AWBR includes access to the [Corporate Performance Dashboard](#) and contains KPI results for the following. Please note that some of these may be repeated in Appendix B and that YJS results will be reported in detail in a separate agenda item at this meeting:
  - K1.18 – the number fostered by local authority foster carers
  - K1.19 - The number fostered by external foster carers as a %age of regulated placements (excluding kinship)
  - K1.20 - The number of placed in in-house residential placements
  - K1.21 - The number of children looked after in external residential placements as a %age of regulated placements (excluding kinship)
  - K1.22 - The number of children returned home from care during the year
  - K1.23 - The percentage of children looked after in regulated placements who are placed in Cardiff
  - K1.24 - The percentage of children looked after in regulated placements who are placed in Cardiff or a neighbouring authority
  - K1.25 - The percentage of permanent social worker vacancies in Children's Services
  - K.132 - The percentage of care leavers in categories 2, 3 and 4 who have completed at least three consecutive months of employment, education or training in the 12 months since leaving care
  - K1.33 - The percentage of care leavers in categories 2, 3 and 41 who have completed at least three consecutive months of employment, education or training in the 13-24 months since leaving care
  - K1.34 - The number of people supported through the Family Gateway

- K1.35 – The number of people supported by the Family Help Team and Family Help Disability Team
- K1.36 – the %age of families referred to Family Help, showing evidence of positive distance travelled.

12. The range of performance data received from Children’s Services is contained in **Appendix B** to this report. Please note that these may be repeated in Appendix A and that YJS results will be reported in detail in a separate agenda item at this meeting. The following data is reported on:

- Demand - Contact / Referrals to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and on Open Cases
- Demand - Well-being Assessments completed within 42 working days
- Demand - Section 47 Assessments completed within 10 working days
- Demand – narrative on timeliness of assessments
- Number of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR), registrations and de-registrations
- Looked After Starts, Ends and Total Number of Children Looked After
- Number of children and young people receiving Care and Support
- Number of care leavers over time by age, open to the Personal Adviser team

13. In line with the Children’s Services Strategy Strands of Shifting the Balance - Place, People and Practice, the data is then categorised as follows:

- ***Shifting the Balance – Place - Ensuring a range of support in the community and a variety of homes for children are available in Cardiff***
  - Total Children Looked After (CLA) by Placement Type – as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016
  - Total CLA by Placement Type – as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024
  - Placement Location as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022
  - Placement Location as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023
  - Number of Children Returned Home from Care
  - Accommodation Strategy / Fostering Update – narrative

- ***Shifting the Balance – People - Supporting a permanent workforce***
  - Percentage of Social Worker Vacancies in all Teams
  - Net Result of Social Workers Starting and Leaving
  - Sickness Update
  - Workforce Strategy Update – narrative
- ***Shifting the Balance – Practice - Developing our practice and procedures***
  - Interventions Hub - Outcomes following intervention at Adolescent Resource Centre (ARC)
  - Interventions Hub - Outcomes following intervention from Think Safe!
  - Reviewing Hub - Step downs following Care and Support Plan (CASP) Review
  - Reviewing Hub - Safeguarding procedures to be considered
  - Percentage of Initial Child Protection Conferences on Time
  - Percentage of Initial Core Group Meetings on Time
  - Percentage of Child Protection Review Conferences on Time
  - Percentage of Child Looked After Reviews on Time
  - Percentage of Visits to Children on the CPR On Time
  - Percentage of Statutory Visits to CLA On Time
  - Percentage of Visits to CASP On Time
  - Child Protection Plans in Place
  - Children looked after plans in place within 10 working days of start of being looked after
  - Care and Support Plans in Place
  - Pathway Plans in Place Within 3 Months of Becoming Eligible
  - Child Protection Allocations
  - Child Looked After Allocations
  - Care and Support Allocations
  - Personal Advisor Allocation
  - Percentage of care leavers in categories 2, 3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of education, employment or training in the 12 months since leaving care
  - Percentage of care leavers in categories 2, 3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of education, employment or training in the 13-24 months since leaving care

- Operating / Practice Model / Quality Assurance Update

### **Scope of Scrutiny**

14. The scope of the scrutiny of this report is for the Committee Members to review the information provided to the Committee in **Appendices A and B** and [Corporate Performance Dashboard](#), and to provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member and Director.

### **Way Forward**

15. At this meeting, Councillor Ash Lister (Cabinet Member for Social Services (Children's)); and Deborah Driffield (Director of Children's Services) will be in attendance to answer any questions Members may wish to ask.

16. Members may wish to review the information presented at the meeting and determine whether there are any comments, concerns or recommendations which they would like to pass on to the Cabinet Member and Director of Children's Services.

### **Legal Implications**

17. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

## **Financial Implications**

18. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. These financial implications will need to be considered before any changes are implemented.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to review the information provided in the report, **Appendices A and B** and at the meeting and provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member and Director of Children's Services.

**DEBBIE MARLES**

**Director of Governance & Legal Services**

**4 September 2024**