

IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD
MINUTES

Thursday 29 November 2018, 13:00 – 16:37

Committee Room A, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells

Present

Jack Straw (Chair)	JS	Independent Chair
Bozena Allen	BA	Independent Member
Jaki Salisbury	JSa	Independent Member
Cllr Rosemarie Harris	RH	Executive Leader
Cllr Aled Davies	AD	Deputy Leader
Cllr James Gibson Watt	JGW	Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

In Attendance – PCC Representative

			Present for Item:
Cllr Rachel Powell	RP	Portfolio Holder for Young People	All
David Johnston	DJ	Interim Head of Children Services	All
Dylan Owen	DO	Head of Transformation for Adult Services	3 & 4
Francesca Sandwell	FS	Minute Taker	All
Ian Budd	IB	Director of Education	7 - 12
Jane Thomas	JT	Head of Financial Services	All
Jeremy Evans	JeE	Performance Audit Director, Wales Audit Office	All
Phil Hodgson	PH	WLGA Adviser	All
Alistair Davey	AD	Welsh Government Social Services Division	All
Rachel Thomas	RT	WLGA Adviser	All
Jan Coles	JC	Head of Childrens Services	7 - 12
Catrin Jones	CJ	Welsh Government	All
David Powell	DP	Acting Deputy Chief Executive	All
Emma Palmer	EP	Head of Strategic Policy and Performance	All
Louise Barry	LB	Head of Operations for Adult Services	3 & 4

Apologies

Mohammed Mehmet	MM	Acting Chief Executive
Alison Bulman	AB	Director of Social Services
Caroline Evans	CE	Corporate Policy, Assurance and Inspection Officer
Cllr Stephen Hayes	SH	Portfolio Holder for Adult Services
Cllr James Evans	JaE	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance
John Byrne	JB	Union Convener, Unison

1. Minutes from Last Meeting

	<p>The minutes of the last meeting, dated 31 October 2018, were agreed as an accurate record.</p>
2.	<p>Response to actions from the last meeting</p> <p>Item 2 - Action: DJ/JC to escalate to PLOG re: Health's failure to attend statutory meetings. AB will pick up tomorrow with health board - DJ was asked to update in AB's absence. DJ confirmed that a conversation had taken place, but he had no definitive update.</p> <p>ACTION: DJ to speak to AB and AB to provide written confirmation of her discussions with the Health Board prior to next Board meeting.</p> <p>Item 3 - Action: BA/JSa/AB/JC/EP/LB/DO to meet next month (outside of the Board) to discuss the BRAG ratings across both Children's and Adults – BA updated that a meeting had taken place, although, disappointingly, not all were present. 2 BRAG statuses for Adults were downgraded from blue to green. With regards to Children's, 8 BRAG statuses were downgraded from green to amber and amber to red. The Chair asked for assurance that the BRAG issue was now resolved. EP stated that for Adults, yes, but there was more work to be done with Children's. The Chair asked for the process to be completed by the next meeting.</p> <p>Item 6 - Action: JS asked, again, that AB develop an overarching narrative that describes the Powys commitment to children and binds all the strategies together. The Chair stated that this action had been outstanding for some time and needed to be completed before the next meeting in January.</p> <p>ACTION: DJ/AB to produce a narrative to show the Chair on 17th December.</p>
3.	<p>Adult Services – Performance report</p> <p><u>Performance report</u></p> <p>DO updated the board on the performance across Adults Services. He advised that Allied Healthcare has been sold to another company who are not registered in Wales for dom care.</p> <p>The Board sought assurance that when the transfer of service users took place there would be adequate capacity. DO updated that PCC had given Allied notice for 12th December and were awaiting TUPE information from them. Allied makes up only 3% of PCC's market and PCC would be using a small local company to provide care in its place. If the TUPE information was received, then it would be a smooth transfer across. DO stated he was confident that the capacity would be there.</p> <p>A business case has been submitted to the Health Board requesting £300k towards assisting with winter pressures. This was submitted 3-4 weeks ago and although it has been followed up, no decision has been made. The Chair insisted that this needed to be escalated by the Director of Social Services or the Chief Executive as this wait was not acceptable. It was acknowledged that £300k would not be enough money to pay for 40 additional members of staff required to deal with over a 1000 hours PCC is currently unable to provide, but would go some way to meeting this need.</p>

The Chair noted that the brief of the Board was to improve social care more widely and, therefore, it would be useful to have more information about all social care services, such as occupational therapy and sensory loss, ie those not social worker specific.

The developing of a costs avoidance calculator was discussed. DO reported that the service was waiting on a response to their business case for £470k. A pilot was in place and DO had submitted a paper so this will be added to the next agenda.

Following questions from Councillor Gibson Watt, a discussion took place regarding the figures on page 5 of the report, which clearly do not make logical sense, in particular that only 10% of assessments lead to service.

ACTION: DO to reflect on the figures in the report and provide a full explanation at the next meeting.

Exit interview paper

It was agreed that 'Leave of own accord' was unhelpful and not meaningful in order to understand why people had left the Authority, and whether it was something that managers could have been influenced.

ACTION: AB to work with HR to get more meaningful information.

Case Study

For information and noted.

Compliments

For information and noted.

4. Adult Services – Progress against CIW recommendations

It was noted that there had been changes made to the BRAG ratings. It was agreed that splitting some of the objectives into different colours (for example, green and red, rather than amber) helped provide a better understanding in terms of progress as there were often multiple parts to objectives.

EP updated that there had been shared learning with Heads of Service last month and considerable work had been done with EMT, Cabinet and Scrutiny to ensure the situation was understood. Member development sessions had taken place to help Members understand the complexities. Now PCC needed to focus on how it could take this forward across the organisation.

JS suggested that it would be useful to develop a simple process map so that key people outside of social care could understand the process.

ACTION: EP, LB and DO to lead on the development of a process map and for the map to be brought to the next workshop. This should complement the necessary service narrative.

5. Corporate Leadership and Governance – highlight report

DP updated that the Chair and MM had met the day before. JS and DP had met that morning and DP has given comments to JS.

Chair reported that during his meeting with MM they had discussed the work of board, how we work together, and what the priorities are likely to be post Children's Services inspection.

It was raised that Management Team needs to assure themselves that they are progressing and going in the right direction and that the fundamentals from Sean Harris report were included. MTFS needs to be included so that social care is properly reflected and this can be brought back to the first board meeting in January.

6. WAO Review of Transformation

JE presented his report to the Board.

The Chair reflected on the following: -

- From an independent point of view, the report notes a lot of positive change in terms of developing a vision and clarifying the financial position.
- Pace is the biggest challenge for the Authority, as it is for a lot of other councils.
- PCC needs to look at what other Authorities have done well and learn in order to increase pace.

JE confirmed that WAO would support PCC with identifying suitable support and advice.

JGW raised concern that the wider Council seemed to be missing from the report and the Scrutiny has not been involved in developing the approach. Need to also involve all Members and schools.

EP provided updates: –

- Work has been done to streamline governance. There is now one Transformation delivery board. The first board meets on 4th December and there will be sub-groups under the board.
- Communications around transformation were launched at the recent Leadership conference. Once all confirmed then this will be communicated more widely to staff by the end of January.

ACTION: EP to ensure the Board has sight of progress reports.

7. Children's Services – performance report

PH reported that following recent meetings with team managers in Children and Adult services, staff in Children's had expressed that they could see positive change taking place and wanted to be part of it, but they were realistic that it has been slow and needs to speed up. It was clear that this was very different to 12 months ago and was great to see. A change in behaviour and attitudes is key, but it must transfer to performance improvement and outcomes for children.

The Chair asked for an explanation as to why, despite Board members consistently stating that staffing needed to be resolved, it was taking until April to get a new structure in place.

DJ and JC explained that over 30 new job descriptions had been written and these had to go through job evaluation. They will then consult with the Unions and staff in January. This had been brought down from 45 days to 30 days. A review would then take place in February and by April people would be moving into the new posts. JC expressed frustration with the pace of the process. However, additional resource had been brought in and the Children's structure was being prioritised.

ACTION: JC/AB to break down the activity and adopt a staged approach, and endeavour to bring forward the implementation date.

The Board stated it was still concerned about the length of time it was taking to implement the new structure and asked JC to reflect upon this. JS raised that sufficient time could be saved in February if the consultation took was reduced to less than a month.

The Board sought assurance that everything was being done to minimise the disruption to the service and in particular to manage complex assessments within a timely manner. JC assured the Board that they had brought in extra resource to support less experienced managers and had developed a bespoke package of training. Work was being done to identify other areas of weakness.

Concern was raised as to whether there was sufficient capacity and competence within the legal team to support the service. JC and DJ were unable to answer this question and no one from Legal was present to update.

ACTION: A report on the capacity of the legal team to support Children's Services to be brought back to the next meeting AB.

The Board expressed disappointment that that the number of children and young people placed at home and on placement orders remained at similar level. JC indicated that this was one of 5 priority areas they were working on and that the analysing of the data should be finished soon.

While it was good to see LAC visits up to 97% it was disappointing and worrying to see CP statutory visits at 84%. JC expressed disappointment in the figures and explained that all the visits had taken place, but not all within the timeframe. This needed to be captured in future to provide the Board with assurance. The Board reiterated the need to flex resources and meet statutory targets.

ACTION: AB

The Board sought assurance regarding the counting of temporary registration. JC explained that this was children from other authorities moving into Powys who were being registered with the Authority. This explanation will need to be added to the report to save confusion.

Concern was raised at the cost of placements despite the introduction of the new resources panel. DJ explained that a piece of work was taking place to look at alternative placements and whether adjustments could be made to ensure better value for money. JC indicated that the service needed to ensure it was meeting the needs of children that had not been met properly in the past and therefore there would be a lag period of potentially years. DJ

reported it would take a couple of months before figures and narrative could be brought back to the Board.

All present were in agreement they the Authority needed to do the best thing for the children and young people in its care.

A piece of work needs to be completed on how much Powys spends on the cost of placements compared with other Welsh Local Authorities. JT stated that benchmarking had been done on this subject.

ACTION: PH to send DJ and JC national cost per child information and JC to report progress to the next meeting.

Concerns about the lack of foster carers was raised. DJ indicated that a further 20-25 foster carers were needed. However, the service was losing carers as fast as they were recruiting. The Chair raised that this linked to discussion re finance and how much money needed to be invested to ensure improvement. When it came to fostering and adoption no business case had been provided, despite regular promises. DJ reported that the payment structure and rewards were being reviewed and he would report back.

Reassurance was sought about the engagement of Health in strategy meetings. JC indicated that tough conversation had taken place and that an agreement had been reached that Health colleagues in the North would be available on Tuesdays and Thursdays to attend strategy meetings. This will then be reviewed and introduced in the South.

It was noted that there the outcome of LAC reviews was currently not being recorded. JC explained that this was because they did not have the data from the IRO service.

ACTION: JC to look at why the Service was not receiving outcome of LAC reviews and report back. AB/JC and finance to clarify investment in fostering/adoption etc.

Concern was raised regarding the number of assessment not being completed within the timescale. JC raised that there were still old assessments on the system that needed to be signed off because subsequent assessments had taken place. It is hoped that this will be completed by the end of November.

The Board was assured that this would be resolved when December's data was reported back to the Board in January.

However, there was confusion about what proportion of assessments were completed by the assessment team. JC explained that the previous structure had not helped, but that the figures completed by the assessment teams were 95% and 100% respectively. However, in the locality team they stood at a lower figure. The Chair requested that this be broken down across all teams to provide assurance.

8. Children's Services – Progress against CIW recommendations

The Chair asked for assurance that Children's Services had the resources, practice expertise and support in place to ensure that signs of safety worked effectively. AB/JC to report specifically on this in relation to new structure.

	9. Children's Services – Draft Closer to Home and Edge of Care Strategy
	The Chair noted that this report was clear and appropriate and reflected the last workshop.
10. CS Workshop (New Structure)	The Board requested that the new structure be brought back to the meeting after the consultation for awareness.
11. TAF Annual Report 2017-18	<p>The report was discussed. Assurance was sought in regards to the effectiveness of TAF and the number of children stepped up to children's services. JC stated that the report reflected the previous financial year. For example, the multiagency prevent hub had not worked and this would not be included going forward.</p> <p>It was noted that great steps had been made to bring CYPPS into social care which had taken longer than is reasonable.</p>
12. PPD Analysis	For information and noted.
13. Financial Overview and Forecast as at 30th September 2017	<p>JT presented the Financial Overview and Forecast report.</p> <p>Overspend was £5.86 million but areas of underspend have been identified which had resulted in projection of £3.6million. Still looking at areas where we can improve and save money and a communication has gone out to all staff. A lot of work has been done to improve the robustness of plans and test timelines of assurance on delivery of savings.</p> <p>Assurance was sought that Children's and Adults were being excluded from withholding vacancies. This was confirmed.</p>
14. External Advisers Updates	The updates had been circulated with the meeting agenda.
15. Any Other Business	None.