

The Improvement and Assurance Board met on the 27th February 2019 and welcomed Dr Caroline Turner as the new Chief Executive at Powys County Council. Since the January Board meeting CIW have carried out a Monitoring Visit in Children's Services. This was carried out over a number of days during February and the findings recognised that there was some excellent work happening in children's services whilst there remains lots to do.

On the 26th February 2019, the Board met with a number of officers from both Children's and Adult Services and conducted a deep dive session into workforce. This workshop was productive, helpful and challenging. The information presented the significant challenge of Powys in respect to the de-population of working age adults and the importance of ensuring that the Council is seen as an employer of choice for social care workers, and also that the teams were working with both the Health Board and Social Care Wales on the longer term strategy.

Adult Services:

The performance in Adult Social Care remains consistent. The CIW Monitoring Visit in December 2018 reflected that the Quality Assurance Framework is embedded into practice and this is positive to note.

The service remains under significant pressure with challenges in relation to delayed transfer of care and demand for domiciliary care remaining high whilst there continued to be capacity issues. There has also been a number of provider concerns which the service has had to step in and resolve which has contributed to further pressure on the available resource.

A further Monitoring Visit from CIW is expected to take place in May and the service is awaiting confirmation of dates and the theme of the visit.

Children Services:

The Board observed that if Children's Services performance was benchmarked against other local authorities it would not be poor. However, there remains significant work to ensure that the service targets are achieved and provide the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Powys. The Board noted the increase in Children Looked After by the local authority and accepting the explanation provided by the Head of Service and Director.

The Board recommended that the Director of Social Services raises with Welsh Government Officers the requirement to capture children who receive respite over 100 nights/year as Children Looked After.

The service has just completed its consultation with staff on the proposed new structure and the Head of Service updated the Board on progress and the recruitment campaign which is running alongside this. Clips of the campaign were shared at the workforce deep dive session.

Finance:

The Board received an update from Jane Thomas, Section 151 Officer in relation to the outturn for this financial year and discussed the proposed budget for 2019/20. The Board discussed the risks in relation to delivery against the pressures for both Adult Social Care and Children's Services and acknowledged that there was both risk associated with the delivery of the plans and the 'gap' which currently has no plans. This has been addressed in the Section 151 Officers statement to Full Council.

If you have any questions or require more information about the work of the Improvement Board, please email: socialcarematters@powys.gov.uk