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Health and Care Scrutiny Committee – 27 June 2019

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL - COUNTY HALL ON THURSDAY, 27 JUNE 2019

### PRESENT

County Councillors G I S Williams (Chair), D E Davies, H Hulme, A Jenner, G Morgan, K M Roberts-Jones, D Rowlands, E Vaughan, A Williams and R Williams

Officers: Michael Gray, Jo Harris, Strategic Improvement Manager, Head of Adult Services, Barry Kirwan Improvement Consultant, John Morgan Children's Commissioning Manager, Dylan Owen, Head of Commissioning, Jacqueline Pugh, Finance Business Partner, Marcia Smith, Head of Business and Systems Improvement and Vanessa Young, Corporate Director, Transformation

<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors J Charlton, E Jones, S McNicholas, J M Williams and Portfolio Holders S M Hayes and R Powell

<b>2.</b>	<b>VICE CHAIR</b>
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**RESOLVED** that County Councillor A Williams be elected Vice Chair for the ensuing year.

<b>3.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>
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There were no declarations of interest.

<b>4.</b>	<b>DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS</b>
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There were no disclosures of party whips.

<b>5.</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>
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**Documents:**

- Minutes of the last meeting held on 14 May 2019

**Outcome:**

- **The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 14 May 2019 as a correct record**

<b>6.</b>	<b>ACRF</b>
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**Documents:**

- Director of Social Services draft Annual Report 2018-19

**Discussion:**

- The report is a statutory requirement and whilst the comments of scrutiny will be noted, it remains the Director's report
- It will be considered by Cabinet and Council prior to publication
- The Social Services and Wellbeing Act updated the requirements for the report – the Director has to report on how the improvement journey has been achieved and how wellbeing has been promoted. There is also a requirement to show how residents are enabled to access services.
- The Committee were aware that a new approach 'What matters to you?' had been adopted and asked how this might be shown in delivery – a strengths based approach was taken replacing the previous assessment approach. The aim is to ensure people can achieve what they want. This has changed the service dramatically and significant change is being seen, for example the numbers in day care are dropping dramatically and fewer are choosing domiciliary care. There is also a reduction in those choosing residential care although this is a much slower decrease. This is being achieved at the same time as the numbers of older people are increasing. Whilst a concerted effort has been made to change systems and structures, changing the culture of the organisation is more challenging. Training is in place. Conversations with families and individuals are key to the process in helping them returning to managing their lives independently prior to the crisis which may have occurred.
- One item of work that had been planned was to clarify the 'offer' that would be made to children in line with the Children's Commissioner for Wales' request and the Committee asked if that piece of work had been completed – a commissioned service is now provided for all Looked After Children and all LACs have received an active offer.
- The percentage of LACs attaining Foundation Phase Indicator had decreased significantly and the Committee questioned the reasons behind this statistic. Further information would be sought from Education Service, but this was the first time local indicators had been reported. A small cohort's statistics could vary significantly because of one or two pupils.

**Outcomes:**

- **The report was noted**

<b>7. COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS</b>
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**Documents:**

- Annual Social Services Complaints, Compliments and Representations Report 2018-19

**Discussion:**

- The report is a statutory requirement
- Whilst the service believes in getting things right first time, there is an expectation that where this has not been achieved, the matter will be put right as soon as possible
- There are three key stages:
  - Enabling - make individuals aware of the procedure
  - Responding - provide a fair opportunity for an individual to be listened to

- Learn lessons - ensure that there is clarity regarding what happens next and there are no adverse consequences if a complaint is made
- The service also learns from compliments and what has been achieved
- Staff are encouraged to 'say sorry' for the experience that has led an individual to complain whilst not necessarily acknowledging that the complaint itself is valid. A defensive culture needs to be broken down.
- Enquiries endeavour to resolve issues before they reach the formal complaint stage. These are also recorded.
- Adult Services, by nature of the service, which is predominantly supportive, generates more complaints than Children's Services which is subject to more regulation and therefore generates fewer complaints
- The Committee noted an increase in the number of referrals to the Ombudsman from one to eight – this does include referrals from previous years as it can take up to 12 months to answer a complaint. A different approach has also been taken with the service encouraging reports to the Ombudsman to ensure transparency. The Ombudsman is finding more in favour of the service. The majority of cases originate in Radnorshire and Welshpool.
- The Committee asked if a rate of complaints per team could be provided – it was acknowledged that there had been high staff turnover and sickness in a team in the south which was reflected in the number of complaints for that team
- Within the report it was noted that some complaints were deemed 'not eligible' – with regard to children, a complainant must have parental responsibility. Other family members do not have the right to complain the service try to resolve these issues informally. If a child is subject to legal proceedings, no complaint can be progressed. There is some discretion if a complaint is more than a year old.
- Members asked how advocates were appointed and whether they were trained or had qualifications and if they were paid – the service commissions formal advocates who are trained in mental health or mental capacity. Sometimes an individual may want a friend or a neighbour and it is possible to have both a formal and informal advocate.
- There is also a multi-agency Quality Assurance Board where practitioners can refer poor practice at a care home, for example
- Approved foster carers are asked to complete an annual review detailing what has gone well, what has not and what could be improved – Members asked whether any analysis of responses was undertaken. Lunch and learn sessions are held to go through a sample of situations to consider practice and decision making.
- Staff who are the subject of a complaint will be supported by the service and by HR where appropriate
- Members asked whether vexatious complaints were recorded. At the moment they are not, but further consideration would be given to this with corporate colleagues

**Outcomes:**

- **The report was noted**

<b>8. CIW MONITORING VISIT (ADULTS)</b>
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The Head of Adult Services briefed the Committee on a recent CIW Monitoring Visit

- A previous review in January 2018 had identified functionality issues with Information, Advice and Assistance and key areas for improvement
- It had been necessary to ensure a timely and appropriate first point of contact giving timely and quality advice
- As a response the Powys People Direct service had been remodelled and relaunched as ASSIST in March 2019
- Contact officers will have consistent, quality conversations with callers to ascertain what matters, what strengths and what networks are in place – the Council will then assess any gaps and decide whether any other support is required.
- A further monitoring visit took place in May 2019 – CIW noted that it was still a new service being implemented. However, the rate of abandoned calls had improved significantly and call handlers were clear regarding the wider social services system and where to signpost callers. The website still contained some outdated information which has been addressed.
- There has been criticism of an online referral form for health colleagues which was difficult to complete online. The form does encourage the ‘what matters’ conversation rather than an assessment form which may be used in a health context. This has highlighted the need for further partnership working.
- The role of Community Connectors was welcomed with one being located within the ASSIST team
- Feedback must be right to enable the Authority to identify gaps in community provision – Commissioning and Operations will liaise more closely going forward
- Work is ongoing with the Strategy and Change Team to understand demand and the response to that demand
- A pilot project to address the response to the front door service has been established. This is a multi-disciplinary team to manage demand comprising two social workers, one occupational therapist, one reablement support worker and one community connector. In the five weeks this team has been operational, 45 cases have been managed with the majority being prevented from progressing to long term needs. This pilot project will need full evaluation and consideration.
- Members suggested that a Health professional could be co-located with the team. There may also be possibilities for an officer of the Housing service to be included to enable a ‘whole person’ conversation to take place. This would be beneficial for the individual and may also be more cost effective. A further report would be provided to the Committee following evaluation.
- The Committee also questioned the availability and recruitment of Welsh speakers for the team. Other languages were also considered. A translation service is available for other languages but there are statutory requirements for the Welsh language.

**Outcomes:**

- **A further report would be considered following evaluation of the pilot multi-agency team approach**

<b>9. FINANCE</b>
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**Documents:**

- Adult Social Care Outturn 2018/19
- Children's Services Outturn 2018/19

**Discussion:**

- Committee noted that Adult Social Care ended the year with an underspend of £1.936M which took into consideration the growth within the budget of £6.5M. Children's Services ended the year with an overspend of £5.639M
- The Committee noted a significant level of debt within the service which amounted to 72% of the debt of the Authority
- A large proportion of this debt was linked to the Powys teaching Health Board. The Corporate Director, Transformation informed the Committee that much of this debt had been cleared since year end and that discussions with PtHB were ongoing regarding the element outstanding which related to a longstanding issue in relation to the learning disability resettlement scheme. These discussions were open, positive and constructive. A report would be provided to Committee to update them at their next meeting.
- Members raised the issue of paying for continuing care – agreement had been reached with the Chief Executive of PtHB that further work on continuing care would be undertaken by an independent expert to ensure the service can progress with less dispute. There has been a lack of clarity regarding criteria and this is being addressed.
- Members were aware that the number of providers had dropped from 19 to 12 and asked whether those clients had been taken on by the in-house team and what the cost implications were. Clients had been transferred to other providers through a tendering process. The majority of these had been domiciliary care clients. The market was considered fragile but that 19 providers may have been too many. There is an intention to look at the implications of different options. It was confirmed that the using the in-house service would have a significant financial impact.
- It was acknowledged that savings had been exceeded. There were issues around calculating cost avoidance. Future budgets were to be based on an outcome budgeting basis.
- The issue of recruitment was known but the majority of posts were now filled and underspends of a similar level were unlikely in the future. It was inevitable that there would be some slippage between one officer leaving and another being recruited.
- The level of agency staff was unsustainable but recruitment was difficult in some areas – this may not be based on pay but on the reputation of the Authority, geography and the cost of living
- An analysis of pay across different authorities was being undertaken
- The number of Children Looked After (CLA) had increased in the last two years. The Committee was informed that there were 246 CLA at the time

the accounts were closed. Of these, 43 were placed with family and had no cost to the budget.

- The number of CLAs had peaked at 250 in February and is now 243. The numbers of children placed out of county have also reduced although the percentage remains the same. In general, Wales has seen an increase in all CLAs.
- Members were concerned that the budget was difficult to monitor when the number of CLAs could be volatile. A lot of work has been undertaken including edge of care, prevention and work to return children to families as safely as possible.
- There needed to be a political strategy and vision
- A review of 37 children on care orders had been carried out to see if these could be transferred to special guardianship orders. A similar review will be carried out with regard to placement orders. It was possible that 45 children could be taken out of care by these methods. However, this would take some time for court processes to be completed and there could be increased legal costs.

County Councillor D Rowlands left the meeting at 12.15

**Outcomes:**

- **The Committee receive a further presentation on Children Looked After**

**The Committee adjourned until 13.45**

**Present: County Councillors A Williams (Chair), D Davies, H Hulme, A Jenner, G Morgan, K Roberts-Jones and R Williams**

<b>10. PERFORMANCE</b>
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**Documents:**

- Adults' Performance Report May 2019
- Children's Performance Report May 2019

**Discussion:**

- The number of complaints regarding delayed transfers of care were double in the south of the county. A Care Co-ordinator has been appointed who will work with the hospital Care Co-ordinator. Social Workers are to be collocated in hospitals to ensure the right decisions are made in a timely manner.
- Although some Members were of the opinion that patients could be transferred from acute hospitals to community hospitals if sufficient beds were available, officers warned that once a patient has been declared medically fit then they should go home. The ethos of the service was to offer more support in the community so that people can return home.
- It was noted that micro businesses were to be encouraged to provide care. The service is working with Community Catalysts to work within communities to help people set themselves up as businesses to provide care for up to four people without the need for registration.

- The new staffing structure within Children's Services was being implemented. It was hoped that there would be a minimal change of social workers for children and cases would only transfer if absolutely necessary so as to avoid children having changes in worker. This transfer is being managed very carefully.
- 41 positions were currently being advertised
- Any unsuccessful candidate is sent information regarding fostering and supported lodgings
- Permanent senior managers have been recruited and temporary staff have left or will be leaving soon
- Six agency staff have been appointed to permanent posts
- 80% of contacts received in May by Children's Services have been dealt with at the front door and through the Early Help service and have not been referred to Children's statutory services. Fewer assessments have been completed outside of timeframe with 84% completed within timescale
- Performance may have been impacted by the changes in staffing and transition to the new structure however the service was pleased to report that performance was improving

**Outcomes:**

- **The reports were noted**

<b>11.</b>	<b>WORKING GROUPS</b>
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**Documents:**

- Scrutiny Summary Report – Children's Services Working Group
- Scrutiny Summary Report – Adult Services Working Group

**Outcomes:**

- **The reports were noted**

<b>12.</b>	<b>WORK PROGRAMME</b>
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**Documents:**

- Scrutiny forward work programme

**Outcome:**

- **Noted**

**County Councillor G I S Williams (Chair)**

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