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Health and Care Scrutiny Committee Friday, 8 March 2024

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD BY ZOOM ON FRIDAY, 8 MARCH 2024

PRESENT

County Councillors: G E Jones (Chair), J Ewing, L Rijnenberg, C Robinson, C Walsh, L Brighthouse.

Cabinet Members in attendance

County Councillors S Cox, S C Davies and D Selby.

Officers in attendance (Powys County Council)

Nina Davies (Director of Social Services and Housing), Rachel Evans (Head of Commissioning and Partnerships), Sharon Frewin (Head of Adult Services), Sharon Powell (Head of Children's Services), Jenny Ashton Head of Community Services, Rachel Williams (Senior Manager Mental Health and Disabilities), Gavin Williams (Senior Manager Care and Support) and Joanna Harris (Senior Strategic Commissioning Manager.)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs A Jenner, H Hulme, E Roderick, B Breeze, Lynette Lovell (Director of Education and Children), Jane Thomas (Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer), Charlie Darwin (Senior Manager Corporate Parenting).

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest from Members relating to items to be considered on the agenda.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS

The Committee did not receive any disclosures of prohibited party whips which a Member had been given in relation to the meeting in accordance with Section 78(3) of the Local Government Measure 2011.

4. MINUTES AND ACTIONS LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on the 1st December 2023 were agreed by Committee members present, as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting and ratified accordingly by the Chair.

Update on Actions from previous meetings as follows:

WCCIS replacement – Work was continuing with the national team and with Welsh Government for a replacement for WCCIS, progress will be shared at April's committee meeting.

Cyber issues – for clarification the Councils does not have any operating systems that are as old as Windows 7 or 8. There were however a limited number of operating systems which were due for decommissioning, that have recently gone out of active support.

All other action items were scheduled within the forward work programme.

5.	UPDATE ON THE JOINT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP - LEISURE REVIEW
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The Committee received a brief overview of the report from Cllr G E Jones, Chair of the Joint Scrutiny Leisure Review Working Group.

Cabinet Member, Cllr David Selby commented that the scrutiny process had been very positive, with much learning undertaken and acceptance of the comment that more information had been required, which would be provided moving forward under the Sustainable Powys programme.

In response to the question on the whether wider impacts had been considered during the process, the Chair informed that the process had been light touch, but focussed on where provision was without input from social care professionals regarding the social and well-being impact.

6.	CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING BOARD ACTIVITY REPORT
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Background:

- The Corporate Safeguarding Board review progress of actions on the Safeguarding Regulatory Tracker, all actions were either completed or in progress.
- Highlighted within the Regional Safeguarding Annual Report was Powys CC's work on Child Exploitation, the strategy for which has been rolled out across other regions.
- The National Safeguarding Week held in November was considered very successful.
- The Boards focus in December was on Child Performance Licencing and Child Work permits, this included a spotlight on safeguarding to raise awareness, and further awareness raising scheduled for the Royal Welsh Show.
- There has been an increase in the number of 16-17yr olds in need of interim accommodation due to homelessness. The Board has requested data of Powys Care Experienced young people will be included in future reports to retain a focus.

- There has been a significant improvement (72%) in contact with Elective Home Educated (EHE) children and families.
- Powys will be participating in a pilot on Children Missing Education.
- In relation to Safeguarding Compliance, concern was raised of School staff compliance with VAWDASV level 1 with training, the Board were informed of ongoing work to improve the position, with a steering group established and Level 3 trained staff to support across the schools service.
- For noting the JICPA (Joint Investigation on Child Protection Arrangements) was completed in October 2023, the report has been received and will be on the Safeguard Boards agenda for the March meeting.

Issues Raised by the Committee:	Responses Received:
Would it be possible to inform within Section 2.8B the actual number rather than a percentage of children who, are Electively Home Educated	The Director would take the action away to review and include if numbers were sufficient as to not lead to identification of individuals.
Were there any trends or analysis available as to the reasons the EHE numbers have risen, or purely lifestyle changes following the pandemic.	There were a range of reasons, from the disruption caused during the pandemic, religious, medical and sporting reasons. The aftermath of the pandemic gave parents a different lens to view their child's education. In some cases, children were not wanting to go back to a formal school setting and parents had found that they could successfully educate at home, which afforded them greater flexibility.
Clarification sought on referrals in relation to Care Homes staff not meeting threshold were those issues noted and taken up with the various providers	Social Care review every Safeguarding by scrutinising circumstances that had led to the situation occurring. In some circumstances referrals are not deemed to be safeguarding issues, and others may require contract monitoring visits to be undertaken. We share information through the Joint Information Monitoring Panel with CIW PTHB covering a range of reasons and circumstances to identify or understand any patterns and trends that may result in training issues.
In relation to WCCIS downtime and slowness, with the need to prioritise provision and the ability sign off assessments, can assurance be given that these issues had been included within the Risk Register and in addition that paperwork was completed by staff.	The Director assured that issues due to the WCCIS had been reflected within the Risk Register. Head of Adults Social Care gave assurance that work was completed by staff during periods of downtime or slowness of WCCIS. The Heads of Service receive e-mail

	<p>notifications of system downtime and would contact Senior & Team Managers to ensure staff revert to the paper process, with additional administrative support, if needed, to upload information when the system returns.</p> <p>For additional assurance even when the live system is down, there is still the read only function. This does cause and creates challenges in terms of practice and the timeliness of inputting data in the short term, however, children are still seen. A continuing risk, would be that as the system is becoming less operational as move to a new system, there could be increased periods of downtime, this is monitored week by week and the service facilitate the recordings in a different way at different juncture points.</p>
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7.	POWYS COUNTY COUNCILS RESPONSE TO LLAIS ENGAGEMENT REPORTS
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Issues Raised by the Committee:	Responses Received:
<p>When appropriate could the Director request information in relation to the age range of the individuals who gave feedback as helpful to understand the engagement undertaken by the organisation in particular to younger people from a preventative stance.</p> <p>Also, could be beneficial for Llais to contact the Clerk for the Town and Community Councils to use these networks to broaden to scope of engagement possibilities.</p>	<p>The Director will raise this challenge with the Regional Director of Llais at the next fortnightly meeting and request an update on what engagement Llais would be considering in the future.</p>
<p>Could commentary provided back to Llais, if there were delays in service provision often an apology at the outset can diffuse further escalation.</p>	<p>There was still work in progress with Llais, the comments made were at times unclear if related to Health or Social Care, so it could be helpful to have this discussion with Llais, around areas in which they could improve.</p>

8.	WORK PROGRAMME
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- The forward work programme was noted by Members present.

9.	EXEMPT ITEMS
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RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following items of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 1,2 & 3 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).

The Monitoring Officer has determined that category 1,2 & 3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules applies to the following item. His view on the public interest test (having taken account of the provisions of Rule 14.8 of the Council's Access to Information Rules) was that to make this information public would disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

These factors in his view outweigh the public interest in disclosing this information. Members are asked to consider these factors when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering excluding the public from this part of the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Liz and seconded by Cllr Chris with all Committee Members in agreement.

10.	TRANSITION BETWEEN CHILDREN'S AND ADULT SERVICES
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The Committee received a presentation on the Transition between Children's and Adults Services from Rachel Williams, Senior Manager Mental Health and Disabilities and Gavin Williams, Senior Manager Care and Support.

11.	NOT FOR PROFIT FOSTERING FRAMEWORK AND BUSINESS CASE
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The Committee received a presentation on the Not-for-Profit Fostering Framework and Business Case from Sharon Powell, Head of Children's Services and Jo Harris, Senior Strategic Commissioning Manager Children's Services.

**County Councillor
G E Jones
(Vice Chair)**

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