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Improvement and Assurance Board Wednesday, 28 August 2019

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON WEDNESDAY, 28 AUGUST 2019

Present

Jack Straw (Chair)	JS	Independent Member
Cllr Rosemarie Harris	RH	Executive Leader

In Attendance – PCC Representatives

			Present for Item:
Alison Bulman	AB	Director of Social Services	All
Alistair Davey	AD	Welsh Government Social Services Division	All
Caroline Turner	CT	Chief Executive	All
Cllr James Gibson Watt	JGW	Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group	All
Cllr Rachel Powell	RP	Portfolio Holder for Young People	All
Cllr Stephen Hayes	SH	Portfolio Holder for Adult Services	All
Hannah Hope	HH	PA to Senior Leadership Team (minute taker)	All
Jan Coles	JC	Head of Childrens Services	All
Jane Thomas	JT	Head of Financial Services	All
Lisa Williams	LW	WAO	All
Michael Gray	MG	Head of Adults Services	All

Apologies

Cllr Aled Davies	AD	Deputy Leader
Cllr James Evans	JaE	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance
Cllr Matthew Dorrance	MD	Lead of the Labour Group
Dylan Owen	DO	Head of Commissioning (Children & Adults)
Emma Palmer	EP	Head of Strategy, Performance and Transformation Programmes
Ness Young	NY	Corporate Director (Transformation)
Phil Hodgson	PH	WLGA Adviser

1. UPDATES FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reminded the Board of the recent change of membership, and again noted that a review of this Board is scheduled to take place between Welsh Government, the Council and the Chair by end of September 2019. The outcome of the Review will be brought back to the Board by the Chair.

The Chair wished to note the two Workshops held after the last Board meeting. The first session focussed on Quality Assurance, and the Board was advised that this was an impressive session with the individuals' contributions, approach, and recognition of what needs to be done, creating a really positive experience. The second session focussed on DTOC and was again an excellent session; the proposals were based on evidence, best practice and taking a broad approach to tackling the problem.

The Board was advised that the October meeting will now take place on 22nd October at 10am.

At future Boards, a Director's Executive Summary will now be tabled, which brings together updates on social care as a whole and highlights key matters. Monthly Performance Reports will no longer be tabled; the Board will be trialling the receipt of quarterly performance reporting in line with the corporate cycle. Any issues or risk in between this quarterly reporting will be highlighted within the monthly Director's Executive Summary.

2.	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
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The minutes of 31st July 2019 were agreed as a correct record, with the following further actions required:-

Page 3, paragraph 4 – it was noted this is not recorded as an action within the minutes and the Board requires confirmation that this is being undertaken. **ACTION: AB to ensure this is incorporated.**

Page 4, paragraph 5.1 ICF Funding. AB advised that this has not moved forward a great deal since the last meeting due to key officers being on leave over the summer period. **ACTION: DO to provide update via email or at the next I&AB.**

3.	RESPONSE TO ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING
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Action 1 Request for “Benchmarking information for social services indicators”
AD noted the WG consultation exercise underway on the framework and indicators, and the 14/15 key indicators which could be broken down and provided to Powys to allow comparative data to be used. **ACTION: AD to provide a note regarding the background to this for future years for September I&AB Meeting.** AB queried whether there was any current or previous data available that could be shared. **ACTION: AD to provide this year's data to AB.**

Action 2 Detailed ASC Delivery Plan

The Board noted that an updated detailed plan is timetabled for the October Board meeting.

Action 4 Outstanding Reviews

MG advised that the anticipated outcome and plan for how outstanding reviews will reduce over time will be included in update for next board meeting. Reviews are based on a strength based approach, and MG will look to bring this piece of work back to either October or November Board. **ACTION: add to Work Programme.**

Action 5 Corporate Workforce Matters

CT advised this is scheduled for September I&AB Meeting and will cover short- and medium-term actions.

Action 9 include information regarding QA and IRO's in future reports

Chair noted the Board is not looking for verbal updates on QA, but a quarterly report as to how that QA work is going through the system with assurance that the system is working and reflective learning is having an impact. **AGREED: quarterly report to be tabled and added to work programme for Sept 2019.**

Action 10 CT noted this action is linked to Action 5, looking at what is provided to Children's Services but also the wider council. **ACTION: 1hr item for September 2019 Board, looking at medium- and long-term approach to workforce matters.**

4.	DIRECTORS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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The Board noted receipt of the AB's first Director's Executive Summary and took questions on each section of the report.

LAC reduction: noted the links with the LAC reduction expectation template submitted to WG. The service is looking at reducing numbers in 2 ways; reducing numbers coming in and moving out of the system. The recent restructure is enabling the service to do this, with placements stabilising and keeping families together. This month the service is focussing on a number of 17yr olds and looking at what the possibilities are for each one.

LAC reduction expectations for Powys as submitted to WG are:

Yr 1 2019-2020 = 230

Yr 2 2020-2021 = 215

Yr 3 2021-2022 = 200

AD noted the commendable work done to date by Powys. AD noted WG event in October asking LA's to showcase/share their work/experiences/approaches for other LA's to see what is being done across Wales.

Childrens Services

Workforce: team working hard on recruitment and learning lessons from each recruitment process. Some success on converting agency staff to permanent staff. The Board noted the September Board would focus on Workforce, and the "Workforce Development Options Appraisal" document will be discussed at the September meeting. **ACTION: details to be included within the report for September, together with clear figures on numbers of staff (permanent and agency) to be included in report.**

Signs of Safety:

The Board has consistently asked for assurances that the service has put in place sufficient resources to enable the new process. JC advised posts have been put into place to support this, including the use of SCDWP funding for a consultant worker, and more recently appointment of a new post holder which will help to embed this. The Board clarified that the issue is the shortfall in the service to release officers to undertake this, alongside meeting the demands of the service.

RP noted that Partners would welcome involvement in training for SOS. JC noted the training plan which is in place and workshops already being undertaken with Partners. The Chair suggested talking to other LAs about their experiences engaging with partners and the impact of this. The Board noted the impact that SOS was having at a local level, as it provides consistent practice and the use of the model is essential. AB noted the positive impact of SOS with 23 children having been removed from the CP Register.

Top 5 Perf Indicators Childrens Services

Assessments – decrease in July performance and the service are not expecting see an improvement during August due to catching up on the backlog from staff vacancies. Noted this indicator does not include the number of “open” assessments which are awaiting completion. **ACTION: include the size of backlog in next month’s report.** JC’s expectation is that these will be completed by end of August and will reflect in September’s reporting. AD noted each case has been risk assessed, but there is a need to update regularly.

JGW questioned whether this included S47 assessments, and JC confirmed this indicator covers wellbeing assessments only, and S47 assessment is undertaken at the front door.

Statutory Visits – JC has held workshop with Team Managers looking at what needs to be done to move the performance forward. Planning process for scheduling visits now in place with weekly updates provided to AB for her assurance. RP concerned on Child Protection visits and delays in completing these, and the risks around this. JC noted and agreed with RP and has asked the team to focus on this and is confident the team managers know the children and offer consistency and have several ways of checking but agrees this should be a target which is met. CT requested an analysis of the reasons for delay in visits in order to understand the detail. **ACTION: JC to table report for Leaders meeting.** RH sought assurances on when will we see an improvement, and JC advised that September data will show this.

AD noted a Secure Placement signed off by WG during August, with weekly briefings being submitted. CEO, Leader, RP and Chair will be seeking assurances on the circumstances around this and the clear focus on the benefit for the child. **ACTION: AB to provide a detailed briefing ASAP.**

Supervision – The Board wished to understand what the issues are in being able to report this data. **ACTION: Jan to provide update on issues of reporting to next I&AB via Directors Executive Summary.**

Child Sexual Exploitation:

The Board noted it was good to see the positive activity around this, in line with CIW recommendations.

Adult Services:

Delivery Plan: Further updated version with more detail is scheduled for I&AB in October. **ACTION: MG.**

CIW Monitoring Visit taking place on 9/10 September 2019 with a focus on reviewing the strengths-based approach. **ACTION: Monitoring Visit Outcome Letter to be shared at future meeting on receipt.**

Delayed Transfer of Care: officer now in place working as a discharge co-ordinator to facilitate discharge from hospital, working closely alongside the senior nurse. Last week’s DTOC saw an improvement, and the service has started to see positive outcomes of the work being done. CT noted working with Partners has significantly improved and that a joint understanding is developing.

5.	CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROGRESS AGAINST CIW RECOMMENDATIONS
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The Chair asked that the Board be provided the summary report in future, not the whole Improvement Plan. **ACTION: JC.**

RP noted a few cross referencing and grammatical errors which would be picked up with JC to update.

Item 1.10 Threshold for decreasing assessments: RP questioned is this the right thing? JC noted there are matters undertaken prior to an assessment, which would hopefully decrease the need for assessments.

RP noted would wish to be included as Responsible Leader for Actions 3.38 and 6.13. **ACTION: JC to update accordingly.**

6.	ADULT SERVICES PROGRESS AGAINST CIW RECOMMENDATIONS
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Reviews: The Board need to see the forward plan for reducing the backlog. **ACTION: MG to include in next update.**

AB is reviewing productivity of staff and linking back to outstanding reviews, with the view to using the resources available to also reduce the backlog.

7.	FOR INFORMATION: DELAYED TRANSFERS OF CARE PRESENTATION TO I&AB WORKSHOP ON 01.08.2019
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The Board noted the recent presentation made at I&AB Workshop.

SH noted he had recently communicated with the Deputy Minister regarding the protocol for choice and had received a very helpful response in assisting the service prepare their policy with PTHB, in relation to choice and top up fees.

MG noted that the DTOC work is being undertaken as a project within the Transformation Plan and shows the Board an example of one of the pieces of work which underpins the Plan.

RP noted recent discussions and work underway regarding Glan Irfon. SH advised a report is due to Joint Partnership Board next week, and any issues will be reverted to I&AB if necessary. **ACTION: AB.**

8.	CORPORATE LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE
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CT provided update as follows:-

Lynette Lovell has been appointed as Interim Head of Education, alongside support arrangements being put into place as outlined at the last meeting.

Estyn report due to be published in new few weeks. The intention is to move ahead and advertise for Chief Education Officer during the Autumn, once the report is in the public domain. Briefings for Cabinet, Heads of Schools, schools service staff and Members have been arranged.

Clint Middleton, Head of Communication and Digital has left the authority for health reasons, and NY has agreed with CT to make some internal changes. EP will be taking up the responsibility for Communications.

8.1	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS
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Wyn Richards joined and presented this item.

The Chair noted the comprehensive report.

The Chair noted that it was good to have visibility of the work that has and is being done; clearly the Council is addressing matters and taking things forward, and the Board welcomes the strengthening of resources to support social care.

Laming Visits: The Chair emphasised the need for mentor training. CT will be looking to prepare some guidance for Members, to ensure visits are structured, organised and all clear on their roles. RP fully supports this approach but need to clearly understand roles and responsibilities, and also for those visiting to have the pertinent data and narrative prior to visits in order to understand the detail and complexities. RP also suggested visits to other LA's Scrutiny Meetings by Scrutiny Members.

The Board was pleased to see the work on both scrutiny and the development programme, which was required by the Sean Harriss review.

9.	FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND FORECAST
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The Board was advised that, as at 28.08.19 the Forecast is £4.6m overspend.

Savings currently undelivered are £10m, but JT has had assurance from Heads of Service that delivery of £6.2m within this financial year will be achieved.

The Council are mindful of pressures for social care, noting only £3.3m out of the £9m has materialised to date for adult social care.

Chair noted the Council have a grasp of the budget and know where the budget is at, there are risks but these are known including pressures.

CT noted the development and maturity of owning the budget over the last 6 months with Heads of Service owning their budgets, and Directors holding them to account on delivery.

RH and CT noted the need to share this information with all members, to develop their knowledge and allow further engagement. Further workshops are being held in the Autumn with Members to engage and help members understand the financial/performance data and activity levels.

MTFS has 3 models built and the council are proceeding with the worst case scenario, and has been used to build the financial model.

9.1	CIPFA ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN
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This is a Key piece of work that sets the vision to be delivered. CIPFA assessed PCC as a 2 Star Organisation. Work has already started to improve this. Presentation sets out where we want to be and is being used within the teams to engage and move forward. Setting out what the organisation will look like, role of leadership team, where teams fit and defines where we will be in 2 years' time.

Detailed Action Plan is in place, and focusses on many areas including skills, training, support, behaviours, process redesign. JT will be clearly monitoring the change and evaluating how this supports the process and journey. Extra resource has been sourced to help move this forward.

Discussion on whether the finance function has the resources and competence to do the non-transactional task and how sure are we going to be that this will be delivered. JT noted that the finance team senior officers have undertaken qualifications through CIPFA, future training will be required inhouse and externally.

CT noted the delay in the CIPFA assessment being undertaken and being published, and a lot of work has progressed since that assessment and would welcome having a reassessment in due course to see how far we have progressed. JGW would also welcome having JT's assessment of where she thinks the council are now at.

10.	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS
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25 September 2019 at 1pm
22 October 2019 at 10am
27 November 2019 at 1pm

11.	CLOSE OF MEETING
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No further matters raised, and meeting closed at 3pm.

Jack Straw, Chair

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