

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD
HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS,
POWYS ON WEDNESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Present

Jack Straw (Chair)	JS	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 Representatives

			Present for Item:
Alison Bulman	AB	Director of Social Services	All
Alistair Davey	AD	Welsh Government Social Services Division (via phone)	1-7
Anna Hughes	AH	Strategic Improvement Manager Childrens Services	10
Caroline Turner	CT	Chief Executive	All
Chloe Davies	CD	Principal Social Worker – Care & Support (South), Children's Services	10
Cllr James Evans	JaE	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance	2-9
Cllr Myfanwy Alexandra	MA	Portfolio Holder for Adult Services	All
Cllr Phyl Davies	PD	Portfolio Holder for Education	All
Cllr Rachel Powell	RP	Portfolio Holder for Young People	All
Dylan Owen	DO	Head of Commissioning (Children & Adults)	1-7
Emma Palmer	EP	Head of Transformation & Communications	All
Hannah Hope	HH	PA to Senior Leadership Team (secretariat)	All
Jan Coles	JC	Head of Childrens Services	All
Jane Thomas	JT	Head of Financial Services	11
Lisa Williams	LW	WAO	1-9
Ness Young	NY	Corporate Director (Transformation)	All
Paul Bradshaw	PB	Head of Workforce & Organisation	10
Phil Hodgson	PH	WLGA Adviser	All

Apologies

Michael Gray	MG	Head of Adult Services
Cllr Matthew Dorrance	MD	Leader of the Labour Group

Chair welcomed Cllr Phyl Davies to his first meeting as Cabinet Member for Education. CT advised the Board of the recent changes in Cabinet. Cllr Hayes has resigned from the Cabinet, and Cllr Myfanwy Alexander is now Cabinet Member for Adult Services.

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Minutes of 28th August 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Chair reminded members that the next board meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 22 October at 10am. Meeting dates for 2020 will be sent out shortly via the

Secretariat. The Chair will meet with the Leader, CEO and Director on 19th December to cover any matters required.

2.	RESPONSE TO ACTIONS FROM THE LAST MEETING
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Board noted update on actions, which are complete or tabled for future meetings.

Outstanding Action: current performance measures will be emailed to AB within the next few days – **ACTION: AD.**

3.	UPDATES FROM CHAIR
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A planned review of the Improvement & Assurance Board took place last week, which comprised of WG officials, Chair, CEO and Leader. Board will remain in place at least until the next Children's Services and Adult Social Care full inspections, timings of which are unknown. Following the recent Estyn Inspection, agreement made that the education service will come within the remit of this Board, focussed on key aspects from the recent inspection. Membership of the Board for the Council (elected members) will be the same. CT will confirm officer membership in due course. WG are in the process of seeking to identify an independent member with education background, and will consult with the Leader before making that appointment. PH's role will change, currently WLGA adviser, but will become an Independent Member of the Board. The Terms of Reference are being reviewed and will follow. Emphasis of the Board will therefore be Children's Services, Adult Services, Corporate (quarterly updates) and Education. The intention is to hold both boards on the same day, education late morning, lunch break, then social care in the afternoon.

The first Education Board meeting on 22 October will have sight of the Estyn Report and the Council's initial response to this. The November Board's focus will be receive and review what the Council is presenting at the Estyn Improvement Conference on 28 November. Following these two meetings, the Board will be clear on the aspects which it will focus on.

Chair will be submitting his briefing report to the Minister by close of this week, alongside the amended TOR.

CEO would welcome some reflection on the Board at the October meeting, to recognise the journey and changes that have taken place. Consideration of some time set aside at start of October meeting – **ACTION: HH**

4.	DIRECTORS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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AB welcomed presenting her second Directors Executive Summary report.

Board noted the work being undertaken with Institute of Public Care (IPC), and noted the Council are awaiting the report from this. Board were advised this work was commissioned through the RPB with a recent workshop which was a positive event and attended by PTHB and Partners. **Report to be tabled at a future meeting – ACTION: AB.**

Consideration of whether I&AB Independent Members should meet with RPB colleagues, and further consideration will be given following tomorrow's Workshop which will cover Partnerships – Start Well, Live Well and Age Well.

Consideration of training required for Members to be aware of the options available within communities for care, as well as residential care.

A Healthier Wales event by WG took place yesterday, which AB took part in. A national report will follow, alongside a local report also.

Childrens Services:

The Board were advised of the improvement in statutory visits to LAC and CP, noting whilst significant improvement, there were a number of visits which were 1-2 days outside of timescale which could have improved performance further.

Assessments – 32 still overdue, noting this does not include s47 assessments. AB noted August performance data shows that 72% of s47 assessments have been undertaken.

AB provided assurances on the secure placement. The service continues to meet on a weekly basis with WG and CIW, with weekly briefings also. AD confirmed that assurance.

The Board acknowledged what has been achieved by the service to date, having undertaken a full service restructure it is positive to see how it links with improved positive performance, but also noting there is still work to be done to sustain this and the instability of the workforce will impact on this until it becomes stable.

Discussion on early intervention and help and the links between them, with JC outlining and providing an explanation of the numbers recorded. Noting those that are not requiring statutory services, may be using early prevention, which is balancing out the need and provision.

Signs of Safety: Board noted that staff need a safe place for appreciative reflection/enquiry. JC has put forward the challenge to OMT to define what it is they need, if they need space, what is required – following this, steps can be taken to put this in place. Three Roadshows undertaken this week across the county, with appreciative enquiry undertaken at each event – noting every possibility is being used to talk about SOS.

Supervision: structure in place and the service knows which posts require formal supervision. JC assured the Board that a higher performance will be seen in September's data, noting expectations have been made clear to staff. Quality of supervision is being checked through the correct process. **CT would like to see next month – what do caseloads currently look like on a monthly basis, in comparison to a year ago – ACTION: JC.**

LAC: achieving stability and reduction since Feb 2019. **ACTION: JC to share the recent LAC Reduction Expectations with the Board, together with the presentation made at the Visit.**

Adult Services

The Transformation Plan is due to be tabled at the October board meeting. More engagement required with SMT to take this forward, before engaging with the wider workforce.

Recent CIW Monitoring Visit: verbal update received at the end of the visit, which the Director said, "it was very positive". Formal Monitoring Outcome Letter received on 23 September, which was shared with the Board, and noted this was a balanced report. Noted continued efforts around QA and reflective practice and peer support. Still areas to improve, however the areas identified are already known to the service with work already underway. Jackie Barnett will be lead SMT on transformation for ASC moving forward.

Engagement with staff has been a key area undertaken by the Director and Heads of Service, however disappointed that 1 member of staff interviewed by CWI felt not engaged with.

Outcomes from using a strengths-based approach were discussed, and how these can be used to see what is making a difference. Noted the Transformation Plan while developing will include aspirations and outcomes and this should be captured within this moving forward.

The Board were advised that Adult Services have set a balanced budget over the next 3 years, which is aligned to the service aspirations and will be focussed on better outcomes for service users.

The Board were reminded of the work that is underway regionally regarding Safeguarding and would wish to receive future updates via the Directors Executive Summary. **ACTION: AB to include in future reports. ACTION: HH to circulate Regional Safeguarding Boards Annual Report which has recently been published.**

5.	ADULT SERVICES PROGRESS AGAINST CIW RECOMMENDATIONS
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Board noted the update tabled.

There remains a challenge within domiciliary care managing the demand and enabling people to live differently. The service is working with Community Catalysts, to look at how people can be supported within local communities. Currently in diagnostic period and will update the Board as this develops. Board noted the service understands the challenge and issues faced and are doing all that is possible to address these.

6.	CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROGRESS AGAINST CIW RECOMMENDATIONS
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Board noted the update tabled.

Monthly meetings with police colleagues have provided better engagement and communication.

Partnership: audit tool for referrals in place and will be undertaken on a regular basis and reported through to PLOG.

Safeguarding: Transitions Panel established jointly with Adult Services, as there is a need to clearly understand the needs of those young people who will require ongoing support.

Interventions Framework has been out to tender and will now be put into place with better services for children moving forward.

DASH training: consideration of joint training opportunities with police and health, noting current training fully allocated.

Care Leaver Apprenticeships – very positive to see this.

The Board were updated on the rationale for moving the Complaints Team to Children's Services, which was following the disbandment of the Business Services Unit, and which has allowed social care to consider where this team are best placed.

7.	CSE UPDATE REPORT
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Board noted the report tabled and welcomed the update on this matter.

Board were advised of the role of the Corporate Safeguarding Group which is chaired by AB, and representation from across the whole authority and Lead Cabinet Members. **ACTION: report to be tabled at next meeting, following which the flow of work will be agreed.**

ACTION: update to be provided at future Board meeting, to receive assurances of work underway and also that Schools and Governors are included too.

8.	BREAK
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10minute break

9.	CORPORATE LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE - VERBAL UPDATE
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CEO provided verbal update as follows:-

Currently have 2 Head of Service vacancies.

- Education – JS/PS is being updated to reflect level of responsibility. Advertisement of the post will commence from 14 October, with an appointment hopefully made by end of December, and in post by Easter/April.
- Digital & Communications – following advertisement of the post twice, decision made to split the role. EP now responsible for the Communications Team. The management of ICT & Customer Services has recently been advertised internally for 9months to ascertain if this will work, and also provide any internal potential and experience.

Effective interface between members and officers. Some recent changes within Cabinet, with 2 new Members to this Board attending as observers today, and will participate fully in future meetings.

Performance Management: publication of Estyn Report detailed serious recommendations in a number of areas, with significant concerns. Meeting local inspection team tomorrow to present initial post inspection action plan, which have been shared with the Chair of this Board. The detail behind this is now being populated and linking closely with performance management.

Brexit: there remains uncertainty with Brexit, CT assured the Board of the work undertaken by LA to prepare as much as possible. Multi agency arrangements chaired by Leader taking place. Nigel Brinn, Corporate Director leading internal discussions, and also taking part in regional arrangements. Risk Register in place, and the council are clear on the top risks.

Rurality and challenges of Powys: Rural Cost Analysis presentation handed out during the meeting, which NY, EP and JT jointly led on, and was presented by the Leader/Cabinet to WG Ministers last week in Cardiff. **ACTION: electronic copy to be shared with the Board.** Also presented to all Council Members at today's Member Seminar. Chair noted increasingly seeing evidence to support the problem, which is a real strength.

10.	MEDIUM & LONG TERM APPROACH TO WORKFORCE MATTERS: DEDICATED 1 HOUR SESSION
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Paul Bradshaw, Anna Hughes and Chloe Davies joined the meeting, and provided a presentation alongside JC.

Consideration of training undertaken via the medium of welsh as well as English, which may open up funding opportunities for Universities.

Council looking at regional and national requirements of the workforce and tailoring training to this – across all areas of the council.

Consideration of a “rural offer” to be included in future options.

Appreciative enquiry undertaken by JC on CD, and the Board noted that the discussion covered most of the areas which the Board are concerned with.

Chair noted this is the first time the Board has received a comprehensive position on workforce, which is positive. Chair noted the commitment of the council to do everything possible to address workforce matters and have fully permanent staff. Board also noted that the Council's reputation is just as important as pay when attracting staff to posts.

AB noted the services are wanting to make Powys the employer of choice and to support this AB will be undertaking an article in a future Community Care advert.

Board would like to see what decisions are made to take forward the options outlined in the presentation. **ACTION: table at future meeting.**

Chair noted workforce is key and the Board will continue to monitor this.

CT noted reference in Directors Executive Summary of 9 vacancies within Adult Services, and we mustn't overlook this when driving forward recruitment for Children's

Services. AB advised there will be a review of the skills mix in adult social care and look at how this is used to support the requirements of the service.

11.	FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND FORECAST - VERBAL UPDATE
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August position note as below:

Revenue: improvement in position during August, due to review of capital programme, showing reduced level of need to borrow. Significant underspend in this budget which helps support continuing expenditure in children's service that we are aware of.

Heading for balanced position at year end,

Savings: delivered over half the savings set out by the council - £10m remains, with assurances on delivery of £6.3m to be delivered by year end. Review being undertaken by SLT on outstanding savings with a recovery plan.

Schools: Level of deficit is a concern, compliance work with schools has increased, notices of concern issued in Summer, and some warning notices issued. This week, each Governing Body and Headteacher called in to challenge their recovery plan and have detailed discussions.

Budget Planning for future years:- Announcement of spending review from WG in September, with £6m extra coming into the Welsh budget, but the detail not known. WG noting they will be continuing to prioritise health. Council are continuing with worst case scenario planning, with services tabling how they will address this and further work underway.

Consultation with public due to start early October with a budget simulator, which was shared earlier with full council at the member seminar.

JS and PH would welcome sight of the budget framework briefing on education/schools. ACTION: JT to share document.

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

Jack Straw, Chair