

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

**County Council
23rd January 2020**

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Rachel Powell, Portfolio Holder for Young People and Culture

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Huw Williams

In a recent Improvement and Assurance Board Bulletin, it was written, that, *‘workplace supervision (Children’s Services) is vital in a whole variety of ways, current compliance levels are low, although slightly rising, and now that the structure is in place, must be addressed as a matter of urgency’*. Can the portfolio holder, therefore, provide a comparative progress report, from September 2019 to December, to include:

- i) evidence of the numbers of qualified, newly qualified and agency social workers receiving structured, regular and appropriate level of workplace supervision, and**
- ii) what is the current average case load for each worker and is the work appropriate to each worker’s qualification and training level?**

Response

Evidence of the numbers of qualified, newly qualified and agency social workers receiving structured, regular and appropriate level of workplace supervision

Children’s Services Leadership Team are committed to ensuring all operational staff receive dedicated, formal 1:1 supervision every month, in addition to any informal, group and peer supervision that takes place. The Children’s Leadership Team recognise that their performance indicator, the percentage of operational staff who have had case supervision on a monthly basis, is currently not at the percentage level that we aspire to reach as part of our continued improvement journey.

The percentage of operational staff who have had Case Supervision on a monthly basis is one of the services top 5 performance indicators.

Since September when the restructure was completed, performance has ranged between 80% and 85% and our internal target has been set at 90%. During this time period training has been provided to Managers around supervision, the model, process and expectations in line with a new reflective policy adopting Signs of Safety. Further analysis of more in depth supervision data across the whole service is being currently being assessed by the Children’s Leadership Team. Findings so

far are reassuring that there are no trends showing a particular team, type of post holder or individual that is not receiving supervision each month.

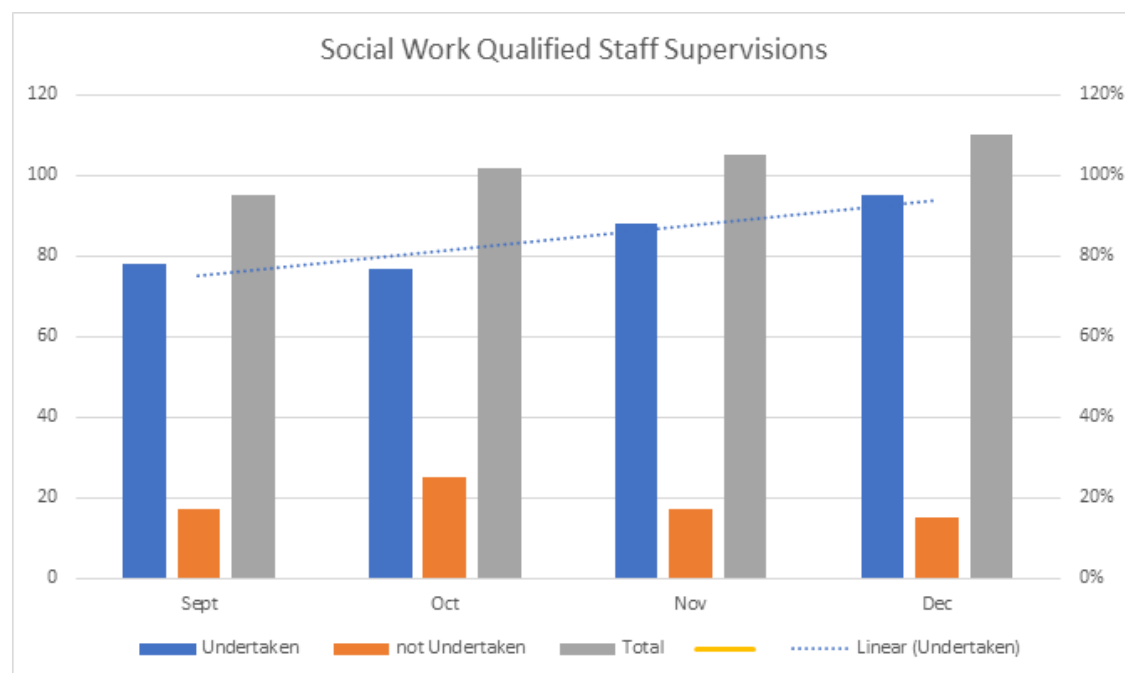
A breakdown of qualified, newly qualified and agency social workers are provided in the tables below.

The numbers in the tables are per individual employee and not full time equivalents (FTE) and the total number has increased each month as staff have been appointed.

Supervisions are not due where staff are absent for 2 weeks or more during the month and are not included in these reports. This may be due to Annual Leave, Sick leave or Maternity leave or end of employment. Staff with absences of less than 2 weeks within the month are included in the reports.

Annual leave and sickness is not recorded for all Agency staff on trent and so this will have impact on the figures above.

All (includes all Qualified Social Workers, Newly Qualified and Agency) Qualified Social Work Staff Supervision – Breakdown of Data



In conclusion supervision recording is part of the weekly data assurance meetings between Senior Managers and Team Managers, supported and facilitated by the Improvement Team. Supervision performance is also scrutinised at the monthly Head of Service and Senior Manager performance meetings. Supervision performance is reviewed and discussed as a group in the monthly Operational Management Team meetings.

Now that Managers have all received supervision training and the new Signs of Safety supervision policy has gone live, the Children's Leadership Team continues to be committed to embedding the importance of good quality and regular supervision for all staff. The continued monitoring and analysis of the supervision data will allow Senior Managers to identify and forecast if there are any weaknesses or potential issues that may arise in teams which could have an impact on staff receiving their supervision and aim to address them promptly.

As Portfolio Holder, I am assured on the reasons and rationale for some staff not having had supervision within the Month which includes sickness absence, rescheduled by just a few days which misses the cut off point for reporting.

What is the current average case load for each worker and is the work appropriate to each worker's qualification and training level?

An analysis has been undertaken to compare the average caseload in comparison to the previous year:

In Autumn 2019 the average caseload for qualified social workers was 16.16.

In Autumn 2018 the average caseload for qualified social workers was 23.8.

The majority of cases are held by Social Workers and Senior Social Workers in each team which is appropriate for their social work qualification and training level.

Principal Social Workers hold a smaller number of more complex cases when required. This reflects their managerial level and responsibilities within the team and their increased experience as a practitioner.

Team Managers do not hold cases, which is appropriate for this leadership position.

In addition to this, of the 8 Newly Qualified Social Workers in the service at this present time:

2 are non-case holding.

2 are very recent newly qualified social workers and they have an average caseload of 8.

4 are at the end of their newly qualified social worker status (April 2020) and they have an average caseload of 14.

These average case load for Newly Qualified Social Workers varies to reflect at what point they are in their first year of practice. The focus is on their continued professional development and supporting them to develop and grow confidently as practitioners as their experience increases.

Senior Managers and Team Managers review their teams individual caseloads on a regular basis and when assigning new cases to staff to ensure workloads are fair and manageable.

