

Social Care Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

12 March 2020

Chairperson: Councillor L.M.Purcell

Councillors: O.S.Davies, J.Miller, D.Whitelock,
A.N.Woolcock, C.Edwards, W.F.Griffiths and
H.C.Clarke

Officers In Attendance A.Jarrett, A.Thomas, K.Warren, J.Hodges,
D.Harding, M.Hayes, C.Howard, Ms.S.Jenkins,
L.Thomas, V.Smith, K.Wedmore, J.Woodman-
Ralph and C.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors A.R.Lockyer and P.D.Richards

1. **Declarations of Interest**

The following member made a declaration of interest at the start of the meeting:

Councillor C.Galsworthy Re: The Direct Payments Position
Report as she is in receipt of Direct
Payments for a family member.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

That the minutes of the Consultation on Social Services Budget and Draft Savings 2020/21, 23 January 2020 be approved.

That the minutes of the 19 December 2019 be approved.
Clarification was given at Members request on the "85% (11/13) of the cases audited."

In 85% (11/13) of the cases audited, the supervisee had attended at least one training session during the same period of time as the last three supervision sessions were held. As a result, this enabled both

the supervisor/supervisee to reflect on how the training had impacted on practice during the supervision sessions.

Following on, the Chair confirmed that the letter highlighted in the minutes of the 19th December 2019 (Minute Number 6 – Update on the Autism Spectrum Disorder/Neurodevelopment Disorders (ASD/NDD Strategic Plan) will be ready for consideration at the next meeting.

3. **Adult and Children & Young People Services High Level Measures - 3rd Quarter (April 19 - December 19)**

Information was received on the Adult, Children and Young People Services High Level Measure Data for the 3rd Quarter Period (April – December 2019) as detailed in the circulated report.

Members raised the following points:

- Long term sickness statistics identifies stress as a reason was this work or personal. Officers explained that it was both but if identified as work related an agreed process is implemented to manage and mitigate this.
- Why was there an increase in agency workers in 2019 compared to 2018. This was due to additional monies being received to employ additional occupational therapists.
- Why has the percentage of supervisions completed within timescale decreased. This was a result of the additional vacancies and sickness but at present a remodelling exercise within adult services was taking place which would result in mitigating this. A proposal would be brought to Members in due course.
- What was the criteria and process for adding/removing a child from the Child Protection register, as it seems to have increased slightly. It was explained that this was due to many factors, a dedicated Safeguarding Officer had been recruited who oversaw all these cases. Some young people who had been removed from the home and settled in foster care, had remained on both child protection and looked after registers. In addition, a review of cases over 12 months plus took place. The decision to remove a child/young person from the register was taken by a multi-agency panel which included education, police and anyone involved in the case. Cases that are deregistered are audited and if needed put back on the register.

The Principle Officer for that area also monitors the rate of changes.

- Clarification was sought in regard to why as stated in the Auditors report over half of the Adult Services cases did not have a clear analysis of the information shared. Officers confirmed that this was due to an admin process and a new procedure has been implemented.
- Again, in relation to the Auditors report why some files did not have a Medical Reference card on admission, which indicated that this information was not available at the audit or there was no reference card, this would need to be reviewed in policy. Officers explained that they would seek clarity from the health board who are responsible for the Medical Card and report back to Members.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

4. **Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

The committee chose to scrutinise the following cabinet board items:

Adult and Children and Young People Services – 3rd Quarter (April – December 2019) Performance Report

The committee received an overview of the Adult and Children and Young People Services – 3rd Quarter (April – December 2019) Performance as detailed in the circulated report.

Members raised the following:

- What progress has the Housing Options, Preventative Officer made with Registered Social Landlords (RSL's). The data identifies that 140 cases were not prevented from becoming homeless. Officers stated that contacts are made with social landlords and regular meetings take place with Tai Tarian and Pobl but the issue was that there was a lack in the provision of 1 bed accommodation. Members noted that the Preventative Officer funding was only for a year. Officers explained that it would be reviewed at the end of that period and additional funding would be sought to continue the work.
- It was queried why the way that data was recorded has changed. Officer explained that these are indicators that Welsh

Government request information on. Neath Port Talbot has its own data that officers monitor.

- Following on, it was asked whether there was any data available on the numbers of carers assessments that are requested. Officers to investigate and would update Members.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

Neath Port Talbot Carers Strategy

Members received an overview of the Neath Port Talbot Carers Strategy as detailed in the circulated report.

The committee were pleased that an easy read version had been included in the papers for today's meeting but asked that in future a simply, plain English version be produced. There was still wording contained within the easy read version that needed further explanation.

Clarity was requested on what was meant by the statement "Identify young people who need a transition assessment but are not receiving children's services". Officers explained that when a young person becomes an adult, a different assessment was needed during the transition period.

Discussion took place on what could be done to identify more carers within Neath Port Talbot, as in the report it states that out of 20,000 only 441 had been identified. Officers explained that there was a variety of reasons why this figure was low. A significant number of carers do not want the involvement of Social Services. Some are unaware or understand what support is available. Lots of work has taken place to raise awareness and this would continue as one of the priorities for the service but Members noted that no funding was available from Welsh Government to support this.

Officers also explained that a lot of work was taking place with the Youth Service and Schools to identify young carers who don't identify themselves. Members who were school governors were asked at school governor meetings to focus on this issue and to identify how many child carers there are within their schools.

Following scrutiny, the committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by cabinet board.

Annual Update on the Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan

An overview was received on the Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan 2017/20 as detailed in the circulated report.

Concern was expressed by Members that although the Housing Support Grant (HSG) had not reduced, it had been at a standstill for the last 4 years which resulted in reduction when taking into account inflation. Welsh Government were currently looking at the criteria around the HSG which could impact on NPTCBC. Discussion took place on the need to identify this to the Welsh Government.

Further discussion took place on what support was available to help service users access Universal Credit. In addition, the application form was now on-line, which made it more difficult for some to complete. Officers explained that the Department of Work and Pensions work with the Local Area Co-ordinators to help provide support to people who need it.

Members asked what was in place to support people with mental health issues if no counselling was available. Head of Adult Services was currently discussing this with the Health Service.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

Hillside Separation Policy

The committee received an overview of the Hillside Separation Policy as detailed in the circulated report.

Members congratulated officers on an excellent, well considered policy.

In addition, Members were pleased with the establishment of the Safeguarding Board.

Following scrutiny, the committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by cabinet board.

5. **Forward Work Programme 2019/20**

That the Forward Work Programme for 2019/2020 be noted.

6. **Urgent Items**

With the permission of the Chair the following was raised an urgent item for discussion at today's meeting pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Reason:

Due to the time element.

Coronavirus Update

The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing gave a verbal update to Members on the current situation and what measures were needed to enable service delivery during this emergency.

7. **Access to Meetings**

RESOLVED: That pursuant to Section 100A (4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12 A to the above Act.

8. **Direct Payments Position Report (Exempt under Paragraph 14)**

The committee received an overview of the Direct Payments Position as detailed in the private circulated report.

Members received an up-to-date position about the Direct Payments Service. It included the process of applying for Direct Payments, the monitoring of the process and data, performance monitoring and lessons learnt and case studies.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

CHAIRPERSON