

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET BOARD

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES
- A. JARRETT**

14th January 2016

SECTION C – MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

**Update on the Action Plan in regard to the Recommendations from Care and
Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) Inspection Report (April 2015)**

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise Members on progress made with regards to Children and Young People Services (CYPS) compliance against the 15 Recommendations contained within the CSSIW's Inspection Report, published in April 2015.

Executive Summary

2. This report provides an update on the following 15 CSSIW Recommendations:-
 - Strong political and corporate support for children's services must continue if the improvements made are to be sustained and further consolidated.
 - The Corporate Parenting Panel should continue to focus on ensuring better outcomes for looked after children and young people are achieved and support improved mechanisms to gain the views of service users.
 - The workforce strategy must include medium to long term aims for recruitment and retention of social workers. Arrangements for deputy team managers and consultant social workers should be reviewed to ensure the capacity to carry out their responsibilities is consistent across the service.
 - Caseloads must be continuously monitored to ensure there is sufficient capacity for workers to undertake direct work with children, young people and their families.

- Leadership and development programmes should be made available to build resilience within the operational management team, and continued support is required for the development of the independent reviewing team.
- The implementation of the Participation and Engagement action plan should be given priority.
- The quality assurance framework must be systematically implemented across the service. The quality of supervision should be reviewed to ensure there is a consistent approach which represents an effective front line quality assurance process.
- The complaints service should be monitored consistently to ensure there is sufficient resource and capacity available to manage it effectively. Better organisational learning should be derived from complaints to improve the quality of services.
- The looked after children's strategy should be reviewed to ensure that services focus on emotional well-being and that the best outcomes are achieved for those children and young people in long term care.
- More interagency work is required to agree thresholds across the service particularly for decision making on stepping up and stepping down arrangements.
- The Family Support Strategy should be reviewed to ensure there is clarity about eligibility and better integration between the support services across the tiered approach to meeting need. Arrangements to support families to engage in early preventative service also should be included.
- The effectiveness of arrangements to ensure the needs of children and young people are assessed, if concerns about their wellbeing are repeated, should be strengthened.
- The multi-agency peer review group should consider trends in demand and monitor the thresholds for and the take up and effectiveness of preventative services.
- Risk assessment training should be provided for unqualified support workers, and work to promote consistency in risk management should retain a strong focus.
- Further improvement in the quality of care planning is required and in particular a greater emphasis on permanency arrangements for those in long term care.

Background

3. Neath Port Talbot CYPS was made subject to the CSSIW 'Serious Concerns Protocol' in November 2012. Quarterly monitoring arrangements were put in place to assess progress made by the local authority and a subsequent Inspection in November 2013 resulted in the protocol remaining in place.

A further Inspection was undertaken in February 2015, during which, Inspectors focussed on whether sufficient progress had been made to improve the quality and consistency of services for children and young people in need of support or protection, including those who were looked after and care leavers. Inspectors also evaluated the potential for the local authority to sustain and further develop improvements in the service.

Upon completion of the CSSIW Inspection Report; the Chief Inspector (CSSIW) took the decision to recommend to the Minister, the removal of Neath Port Talbot CYPS off the Serious Concerns Protocol. However, contained with the report were 15 Recommendations that required attention.

CYPS have subsequently allocated specific project management resources; in addition to senior management oversight in ensuring that adherence to the recommendations is being progressed/achieved. **Appendix 1** outlines the progress made against the Recommendations during the period, April 2015 to December 2015.

Financial Impact

4. After consideration this is not applicable.

Equality Impact assessment

5. After consideration this is not required.

Workforce Impacts

6. After consideration this is not applicable.

Legal Impacts

8. After consideration this is not applicable.

Risk Management

9. After consideration this is not applicable.

Consultation

10. No requirement to consult.

Recommendations

11. Members continue to monitor CYPS' progress against the CSSIW recommendations.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

12. Matter for monitoring. No decision required.

Implementation of Decision

13. Not Applicable.

Appendices

14. Update on CSSIW Recommendations during the period April – December 2015.

Officer Contact

15. Ian Finnemore – Business Strategy Manager
Telephone: 01639 763023
Email: i.finnemore@npt.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Progress Made on CSSIW Recommendations during the period April – December 2015

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
1	Strong political and corporate support for children's services must continue if the improvements made are to be sustained and further consolidated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Children, Young People and Education Committee (CYPE) continues to provide the forum, whereby members can provide appropriate challenge and support. • Enquiry days have been arranged with CYPE members to discuss and acquire greater knowledge on specific aspects of CYPS e.g. child sexual exploitation. • The Corporate Parenting Panel continues to be chaired by the Leader of the Council and has strong representation from the Cabinet and wider Council • Regular Cabinet Member attendance at CYPS senior management meetings. 	Ongoing
2	The Corporate Parenting Panel should continue to focus on ensuring better outcomes for looked after children and young people are achieved and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corporate Parenting Panel have met on four occasions during the period. Key areas discussed in these meetings, include: • Accommodation for Care Leavers • Improving education attainment of Looked After Children • Looked After Children in the Youth Justice System 	Ongoing

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
	improved mechanisms to gain the views of service users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Safeguarding and Care Planning of Looked After Children and Care Leavers who exhibit Vulnerable or Risky Behaviours <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further work is required in acquiring the views of service users. 	
3.1	The workforce strategy must include medium to long term aims for recruitment and retention of social workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As at the 31st December, there were no vacancies within CYPS. Vacancies during the entire period have been consistently low. • Weekly and fortnightly reporting of establishment oversight has occurred, via the Children’s Services Management Group (CSMG) and Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings. • Robust decisions in place to minimise risk/s arising from inappropriate appointments. • HR sign-off on all recruitment activities prior to new entrants being accepted into post. • ‘Safer Recruitment’ training delivered to all new managers. 	Ongoing
3.2	Arrangements for deputy team managers and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Job Descriptions in place • Task and Finish Group formed (of staff from across the 	Completed

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
	<p>consultant social workers should be reviewed to ensure the capacity to carry out their responsibilities is consistent across the service.</p>	<p>service), to clarify roles and report back to the Practice Improvement Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and consistent role boundaries across the service that allows for the mobility of staff to areas where the need is greatest. • Clear progression routes for staff and succession planning activities in place. • Staff aware of management expectations and deliverables for each role. • Ongoing training in place for managers and supervisors on organisational policies and procedures. • Priority management & leadership development requirements identified and bespoke programme developed • Managers can access and participate in management and learning programme, leadership development programme, Team Manager Development Programme (TMDP) and Middle Manager • All new managers (including deputy team managers) attend 2 hour introduction to people management training. • Team Manager and Principal Officer Meetings changed to 	

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
		<p>fortnightly following consultation between CSMG & Team Managers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A revised Appraisal system was designed and rolled out to Senior Managers in September 2015, with the aim that all Team Managers to have an appraisal by end December 2015 and all staff to have a completed appraisal by 31st March 2016. 	
4	Caseloads must be continuously monitored to ensure there is sufficient capacity for workers to undertake direct work with children, young people and their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average number of cases held by qualified workers across CYPS has remained relatively low during the period, and as at 30th November 2015, numbered 13.4 • Maintaining low caseloads is a priority and this is reflected in the average caseload figure being reported to Children, Young People and Education Committee on a regular basis throughout 2015/16. • Going into 2016, further emphasis will be placed upon the safe reduction in the number of child in need cases open to the services. 	Ongoing
5	Leadership and development programmes should be made available to build resilience within the	<p><u>Leadership and Development Programme Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing training in place for managers and supervisors on organisational policies and procedures. 	Ongoing

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
	operational management team, and continued support is required for the development of the independent reviewing team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority management & leadership development requirements identified and bespoke programme developed • Managers can access and participate in management and learning programme, leadership development programme, Team Manager Development Programme (TMDP) and Middle Manager. • All new managers (including deputy team managers) now attend a 2 hour introduction to people management training. <p><u>Supporting the Development of the Independent Reviewing Team</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the summer of 2015, a change management process was concluded which resulted in all Conference and Review Service staff being incorporated onto the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) pay grade. • The Team have operated with little or no vacancies throughout the second half of 2015. <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p>	

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A system will be developed to enable Community Teams to formally provide feedback to the Conference and Review Service, to help identify and address areas for improvement. • Joint training will take place between IROs and Conference Secretaries to ensure Minutes for conferences and reviews are produced to a consistently high standard. 	
6	The implementation of the Participation and Engagement action plan should be given priority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Performance, Quality and Practice Development Team have taken the service lead on implementing the Participation and Engagement action plan. During the period April to December 2015, the team have: • Provided training across the service on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). • Developed an electronically accessible participation handbook for children and young people. • Established a Participation and Engagement Working Group which incorporates children and young people within its membership. • Implemented revised Looked After Children consultation documents • In July 2015, a feedback mechanism was established for families (at point of case closure), in the form of a 	Ongoing

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
		<p>questionnaire and designated feedback phonenumber. Responses have been limited to-date; however, work is currently underway to increase response rates.</p> <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the development of systems to capture and act upon qualitative information emanating from the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act suite of questionnaires aimed at children, parents and carers. • Develop a programme of events/opportunities (during 2016) to celebrate success with children, young people and their families/carers. 	
7	The quality assurance framework must be systematically implemented across the service. The quality of supervision should be reviewed to ensure there is a consistent approach which represents an effective front line quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Performance, Quality and Practice Manager has both provided Community Team Managers with training to enhance their auditing skills and also formulated audit tools to assist the process and promote consistency. • A monthly audit programme is in place, which has recently been modified to reflect the move towards “Peer Audits” within the service. Principal Officer audits of Supervisions form part of the monthly audit programme. • The Performance, Quality and Practice Manager will 	Ongoing

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
	assurance process.	<p>provide a monthly report to the Principal Officer/Team Manager Meeting, outlining findings from the most recent audits and exploring any areas of practice which may be improved upon.</p> <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Audits to become fully embedded, with Deputy Team Managers playing a greater role in the process. • The audit process to better contribute towards future practice improvement initiatives. 	
8	The complaints service should be monitored consistently to ensure there is sufficient resource and capacity available to manage it effectively. Better organisational learning should be derived from complaints to improve the quality of services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly complaints meetings with Performance, Quality & Practice Manager are in place and on-going. • Fortnightly meetings between the Complaints Officer and CYPs senior managers are in place to monitor and act upon complaints. <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further work is required to identify thematic issues arising through complaints. 	Ongoing

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
9	The looked after children's strategy should be reviewed to ensure that services focus on emotional well-being and that the best outcomes are achieved for those children and young people in long term care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report on the update to the Looked after Childrens Strategy will be provided to Members on 14th January 2016 • Over the past 12 months there has been a decrease in the number of looked after children in line with the targets set by the LAC strategy and Forward Financial Plan • Through the reduction of Looked after children numbers and associated costs the target saving of £700,000 has been achieved • Support services have been re-commissioned to include services to support rehabilitation of looked after children to their families and to support the prevention of placement breakdown • Improvements in workforce stability have resulted in positive improvements in assessment, care planning and risk assessments for children who are looked after • Decision making in relation to children becoming looked after has been strengthened through the use of the Accommodation Panel. Senior Management/Head of Service approval is required for all new admissions into care (including emergency placements). 	Ongoing

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanence continues to support the prevention of drift for children who are looked after and to ensure that where possible children are cared for outside of the looked after children system • The use of Independent foster placements has reduced. <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To implement a resource panel in addition to the accommodation panel • To seek approval of a fostering recruitment strategy with the aim of increasing the number of placements with NPT foster carers for children aged 11 plus • To seek approval of a new foster carers finance policy • To seek approval for an additional range of support services for children with complex needs and their foster carers • To develop a new fostering marketing strategy 	
10	More interagency work is required to agree thresholds across the service particularly for decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review Meetings have been established and are working effectively. Positive working relationships have been developed between the “front door” and partner agencies. 	Ongoing

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
	making on stepping up and stepping down arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the 2nd half of 2015, the Team Around the Family (TAF), relocated into Neath Civic Centre to work more closely with CYPS partners. • A step up/down process flowchart has been devised and implemented between CYPS and TAF. • In Nov 2015, a “Single Point of Contact” (SPOC) was implemented providing, both partner agencies and members of the public, with one point of contact when wishing to raise concerns about the welfare of children. • The development of a TAF I.T. system is reaching its conclusion. One of the key aims of the system is to provide better background information with regards to previous/current involvement with children and families. The system will also provide performance management information relating to cases that are stepping up and down between TAF and CYPS. <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To fully embed the SPOC • To utilize the newly available performance management information, to identify and better understand the 	

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
		intricacies of those cases stepping up/down between TAF and CYPS.	
11	The Family Support Strategy should be reviewed to ensure there is clarity about eligibility and better integration between the support services across the tiered approach to meeting need. Arrangements to support families to engage in early preventative service also should be included.	<p><u>Family Support Strategy provides clarity with regards to eligibility and integration between support services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement has been received from the CSMG to implement (from Jan 2016) a “Resource Panel”, which will facilitate families in accessing a range of appropriate support services. • CYPS now have access to designated commissioning and monitoring officer support. • A programme has been devised to review all commissioned services. • A Transition Protocol has been implemented to support young people “moving” between CYPS and Community Care services. A Tracking Planning Group is in place to support relevant young people during this period of transition. <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To fully embed the Resource Panel • To undertake a review of the Family Support Strategy 	Ongoing

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
		<p><u>Support families to engage in early preventative services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the 2nd half of 2015, the TAF relocated into Neath Civic Centre, to work more closely with CYPS partners. • A step up/down process flowchart has been devised and implemented between CYPS and TAF. • In Nov 2015, a “Single Point of Contact” (SPOC) was implemented providing, both partner agencies and members of the public, with one point of contact when wishing to raise concerns about the welfare of children. • The development of a TAF I.T. system is reaching its conclusion. One of the key aims of the system is to provide better background information with regards to previous/current involvement with children and families. The system will also provide performance management information relating to cases that are stepping up and down between TAF and CYPS <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To fully embed the SPOC 	

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
12	The effectiveness of arrangements to ensure the needs of children and young people are assessed, if concerns about their wellbeing are repeated, should be strengthened.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management information on the number of re-referrals and multiple contacts that did not progress, are provided periodically to senior managers. • Periodic reviews of relevant contacts have been carried-out by senior managers. 	Ongoing
13	The multi-agency peer review group should consider trends in demand and monitor the thresholds for and the take up and effectiveness of preventative services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The multi-agency peer review group intend undertaking this piece of work in early 2016. 	Ongoing
14	Risk assessment training should be provided for unqualified support workers, and work to promote consistency in risk management should retain a strong focus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYPS in conjunction with Training colleagues, are currently undertaking a training needs analysis, to best establish and determine role specific training requirements for unqualified staff. <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior managers to consider the possibility of qualified staff (already having received the training) to cascade it 	Ongoing

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Update	Status
		down through the service.	
15	Further improvement in the quality of care planning is required and in particular a greater emphasis on permanency arrangements for those in long term care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the Quality Assurance Framework, audits of all plans have occurred regularly throughout 2015. • During the period 1st April – 31st December 2015, 100% of children had a permanency plan in place at their second review. • CYPS has been part of a Welsh Government led pilot aimed at capturing, recording and acting upon the personal outcomes of children and families. Childrens Plans are the key tool used in recording the work involved by all parties, in attempting to achieve these outcomes. <p><u>Areas requiring further development during 2016</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the quality of care planning will continue to be a priority during 2016, with the Quality Assurance Group playing a key role in taking this forward. • It is the intention to fully roll-out personal outcome focused practice throughout CYPS. • All care plans are outcome focussed, and include the voice of the child. 	Ongoing