

SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

13 July 2017

Chairperson: Councillor A.Llewelyn

Vice Chairperson: Councillor S.E.Freeguard

Councillors: H.C.Clarke, A.P.H.Davies, C.Galsworthy,
H.N.James, J.Miller, S.Paddison, M.Protheroe,
L.M.Purcell and S.H.Reynolds

Officers In Attendance N. Jarman, D.Berni, G.Evans, D.Harding,
J.Hodges and N.Evans

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

1. **TO RECEIVE THE SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18.**

The Committee noted the forward work programme.

2. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

2.1 Redesign of Management Arrangements

Members considered a report that sought support in principle for the proposed redesign of management arrangements within the Social Services, Health and Housing Directorate.

Officers advised that since the report was published there had been discussions that had resulted in the need to remove the post of head of Adult Services from the Departmental Structure if the proposals were accepted.

Members were advised that this was not a further restructuring but something far more important and it was hoped would be in place by the end of the calendar year. Officers further advised that the approach was on an asset based approach and this would be the subject of an All Member seminar in the future.

Members asked for assurances that there will be systems in place that ensure the appointed Head of Service can manage all services under their remit. Officers stated that this proposal was a two way split with one Head of Service responsible for the professional side and the other responsible for the support side.

Officers continued that this was an opportunity to consolidate the business support services because it was currently spread too thinly across the directorate.

Members raised concern in relation to the risk associated with the proposals and officers confirmed that the proposals will ensure that there will be sufficient time for officers to carry out all the required work. Officers stated that there would not be any future reports that would request cutting staff numbers nor increasing workloads.

Members asked whether the Council has looked at best practice elsewhere when developing proposals. Officers confirmed that the Council regularly looks for best practice and the Local Area Committee model had been taken from an initiative in Australia.

Members asked whether the proposals have been fully costed. Officers stated that they have and there are sufficient funds in place even if there was an unprecedented increase in demand for services.

Following scrutiny the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

2.2 CSSIW Performance Review of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Social Services

Members considered the report that was the assessment by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales of the Council's Social Services Functions.

Members were advised that the Senior Management Team of the Department met twice yearly with inspectors to discuss policies, procedures and processes within Social Services.

Members asked what inspections the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales had undertaken in the past year. Officers stated that the inspectorate generally undertook thematic inspections across Wales. Specific inspections were generally undertaken within individuals Councils when the need arose.

Members asked for clarity in relation to the statement contained within the assessment about Local Assembly Members opposition against some of the proposed changes. Officers stated that this was generally with regards suggestions of setting up social enterprises and that this was incorrectly seen as outsourcing.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

2.3 Development of a Pilot Transition Team between Children and Adult Services

Members considered a report that sought Members approval to establish a pilot transition team for individuals moving from children's services to adult services.

Officers advised that a steering group would be established to monitor the pilot and any issues will be addressed going forward. Members were told that the pilot team would be responsible for establishing protocols that would become the norm if the pilot was successful and the service is embedded.

Members asked what the potential challenges were and it was confirmed that the focus will be for young people with complex care needs requiring support into adulthood to include those young people with substance misuse problems, emerging mental health difficulties and self harm.

Members requested clarity on why the pilot would run for 5 months and officers stated that this was due to bureaucracy and anything over this limit becomes a permanent change, if the pilot is successful or needs to be extended further update reports and project proposals will be presented to the Committee for consideration.

Further clarity was requested in relation to staff resources in the pilot and officers stated that there would be 2 social workers from adult services and children's services and this was deemed sufficient for the pilot.

Following scrutiny the committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

2.4 Monitoring the performance and progress of the Western Bay Regional Adoption Service

Members considered a report that contained information on the performance of the Regional Adoption Service.

Members were pleased to note that this initiative has reduced the amount of time before a looked after child becomes adopted but officers stated that there is need for further improvements. Officers continued that this was an issue across Wales and not just a problem for the Western Bay Region.

Members raised concerns in relation to the way the report was written and that it included too many acronyms throughout. It was agreed that in the future Democratic Services Officers would ensure that any acronyms would be contained within a document that would accompany the relevant report.

Clarity was sought on how the service reaches out to prospective adoptive parents and it was confirmed that the advertising was via the use of the website, general publicity such as poster campaigns and advertising at events but it should also be noted that advertising for adopters differs from advertising for fostering as applicant's motivation is different.

Members asked what were the delays in relation to placing children for adoption and officers stated that on occasions it was out of the services control and as a result of medical delays.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

2.5 Quarterly Performance Management Data 2016/2017 – Quarter Four Performance Data

Members considered the end of year performance monitoring report for 2016/2017.

Members asked why there was no all wales comparative data for performance in relation to homelessness. Officers stated that this was

because the information was not yet available from Welsh Government.

Members questioned the unprecedented change in complaints and officers stated that this was because of the proposed service changes that had been consulted on i.e. changes to home care service and changes to day opportunities.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

2.6 Children and Young People Services – 4th Quarter Performance report.

Members considered the end of year performance monitoring report for 2016/2017.

Members asked why only 66% of cases had been consulted through the Section 47 process. Officers stated that a high number of cases were seen at the initial stage and that this snapshot figure did not mean that individuals had not been consulted.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

CHAIRPERSON