

JOINT SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH AND EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 4TH JULY, 2018

PRESENT: Councillor D. Price [Chair]

Councillors:

S.M. Allen, L.R. Bowen, K.V. Broom, I.W. Davies, R.E. Evans, W.T. Evans, M.J.A. Lewis, B.W. Jones, D. Jones, K. Lloyd, A.S.J. McPherson, E. Morgan, S. Najmi, B.A.L. Roberts, E.M.J.G. Schiavone, B. Thomas, E.G. Thomas and D.T. Williams.

Mrs V. Kenny – Roman Catholic Church Representative
Mrs J. Voyle-Williams – Church in Wales Representative
Mrs M. Jones – Parent Governor [Dinefwr Area]
Mr J. Davies – Parent Governor [Llanelli Area]

Also in attendance:

Councillor G. Davies – Executive Board Member for Education & Children
Councillor J. Tremlett - Executive Board Member for Social Care & Health

The following Officers were in attendance:

Mr J. Morgan - Director of Community Services
Mr G. Morgans - Director of Education & Children
Mr S. Smith - Head of Children's Services
Ms S. Sauro - Performance, Analysis & Systems Manager
Mrs M. Evans Thomas - Principal Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen : 9.30 a.m. – 11.05 a.m.

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Darren Price as Chair for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. Jones, G. Thomas and from Mrs G. Cornock-Evans (Parent Governor Member).

3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor/Member	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
D. Jones	6 – Draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services	She has relatives who work in the Education Department.
B.A.L. Roberts	6 – Draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services	Her daughter is a health visitor.

Mrs V. Kenny	6 – Draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services	Her daughter works in Social Services
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4. DECLARATIONS OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

6. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES IN CARMARTHENSHIRE 2017/18

[NOTE: Councillors D. Jones and B.A.L. Roberts and Mrs V. Kenny had earlier declared an interest in this item.]

The Committee considered the draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the Performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2017/18. Members were informed that there was a statutory requirement for the Director of Community Services of Social Services to report annually on delivery and performance, as well as plans for the improvement of the whole range of social services.

The report detailed the progress made on areas identified for improvement in last year's report and highlighted those areas to be developed in the current year. It examined each service area within Social Care and showed how service strategies, actions, targets and service risks will be addressed and delivered operationally by the service this year, based on the approved budget.

The report outlined how the service performed in 2017/18 together with an assessment on the future, together with strategic priorities for 2018/19. It linked closely with the Business Plans for the Directorates of Community Services and Education & Children's Services.

Following publication of the report, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and the Welsh Government will complete their analysis and review of the report. There will be a formal meeting with CIW in October to discuss their analysis and proposed plan. This will be followed by an Annual Letter to Council in late November/early December, confirming their analysis and inspection plan. The process will link in closely with the Wales Programme for Improvement and the Annual Letter from the Wales Audit Office.

Officers noted that it was a very positive report on the whole, however, officers were coming to the end of their ability to simply drive efficiencies and it was essential to look at how the demand is funded.

The following questions/observations were raised on the report:-

- Concern was expressed that at the end of the financial year there were 462 reviews outstanding in the Older Adults Division and reference was made to the huge pressure on staff and the need for more staff. The Director of Community Services agreed that the number is high, however, it was the best the department has ever done. A huge effort has been made by the service in this area and the vast majority of the outstanding reviews were only just outside the timescale. He explained that the challenge for the service was to demonstrate that they are efficient and effective in undertaking reviews and if they are not able to continue that trajectory then either we have to accept a performance below what is desired or we have to add resources;
- Reference was made to pooled budgets and regional partnership and officers were asked to expand on the challenges. The Director of Community Services explained that the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places a requirement on Local Authorities to utilise pool funding in a number of areas. The social care budget will be pooled across three Local Authorities and the Health Board. In the region of £35-£40m would potentially be put into the pooled fund. The Welsh Government pays the Authority in arrears on a monthly basis so in order to pool the money upfront the Authority would essentially have to borrow and pay back. There was also the issue of cross subsidy wherein if we pool money and use less than we put in and it is used for residents in another Authority that would be illegal. Officers are currently working on a virtual pooled budget. He further explained that the Regional Partnership Board is a constructive forum, however, working together in that way tends to be slow when trying to reach a consensus, but it is working;
- Reference was made to one of the Strategic Priorities for 2018/19 listed in the report – assess residential care arrangements in the Llanelli area to ensure appropriate accommodation provision in the area and officers were asked for further information. The Director of Community Services explained that this refers to a sum of money that was allocated a few years ago for care provision. Officers are looking at what will be provided at Delta Wellbeing and what we need to provide in-house;
- With regard to the reference to the reduction in the compliance with timescales for new child protection case conferences on page 3, there were no reasons or figures included to support this statement. Also on page 12, with regard to the decline in the number of children on the child protection register during 2016/17, it was felt that it would be helpful to include the figures for the previous year. The Director of Community Services accepted that the information needs to be cross-referenced and reminded members that the report is in draft form. He agreed that it important to have the figures so that trends can be identified, however, some of the data is not finalised until May/June and it has been slow coming through. He added that he would include a more detailed explanation around these topics;
- Officers were asked for the reason why the number of clients receiving domiciliary care dropped by 10% in January/February. The Director of Community Services explained that it wasn't due to one reason and was a complex matter of diverting people to different services. We have an increasing number of older people who receive direct payments which allows them to purchase their own care. That is proving to be a very attractive option for a number of people, however, demand does ebb and flow. Looking at the overall average, the trend is flat. He added that officers will be monitoring and interpreting these packages going forward;

- Asked what opportunities are available for looked after children when they leave care, the Director of Community Services informed the Committee that more looked after children go on to university than ever and they are out performing their free school meal equivalents. The Head of Children's Services explained that if children are with us for a while they achieve good outcomes. It is all about long term support and commitment;
- Reference was made to the fact that 71.4% of children in receipt of care and support achieved the core subject indicator at Key Stage 2, however only 12.5% of children in receipt of care and support achieved the core subject indicator at Key Stage 4 and concern was expressed at this huge drop;
- It was pointed out that it would be useful to have data in relation to careleavers in their twenties i.e. how many are working, how many have come back to us to use our mental health services etc. The Director of Education & Children explained that data is collected with regard to where our learners are in 5 years/10 years etc. It was more of a challenge getting this information for careleavers, however, officers would look at how this data could be captured;
- Reference was made to the project whereby individuals with mental health issues ran in the Swansea Half Marathon and officers were asked if further examples of such projects could be included in the report. The Director of Community Services informed the Committee that there are a number of wellbeing initiatives which could be included;
- Reference was made to the fact that children spend far too much time on gadgets which affects not only their mental health but also their physical health. The Director of Education and Children agreed with the importance of fresh air for children and referred to the fact that Schools have a Wellbeing Strategy which includes a focus on more use of the outdoors;
- Reference was made to transport to schools and officers were asked if it would be possible to do some research into integrating children into their communities so that they would not need taxis to take them to school. This would not only have benefits for the children but economic benefits also. The Director of Education & Children explained that officers are already undertaking some work in this area and could bring a report to members on the work being done to develop the independence of our learners in Ysgol Goffa and at QE High School. The Head of Children's Services added that officers are currently working with the TIC team to look at ways of providing a better, integrated approach to transporting our learners.

RESOLVED that that the Draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the Performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2017/18 be received.

CHAIR

DATE