

**JOINT EDUCATION & CHILDREN AND SOCIAL CARE &
HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
23rd MAY 2016**

Present: Councillor G. Thomas (Chair)

Education & Children

Councillors C.A. Campbell, J.M. Charles, I.W. Davies, W.G. Hopkins, P. Hughes-Griffiths, J.D. James, M.J.A. Lewis, D.W.H. Richards, T. Theophilus, J.E. Williams

Mrs. V. Kenny – Roman Catholic Church Representative

Mrs. E. Heyes – Parent Governor Member for Llanelli Area

Mrs. K. Hill – Parent Governor Member for Dinefwr Area

Mrs. A. Pickles – Parent Governor Member for Carmarthen Area

Social Care & Health

Councillors S.M. Caiach, W.T. Evans, H.I. Jones, K. Madge, E. Morgan, E.G. Thomas, J.S. Williams

Also in attendance:

Councillor G.O. Jones – 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. R. Sully – Director of Education & Children

Mr. G. Morgans – Chief Education Officer / Head of Education Services

Mr. A. Rees – Head of Learner Programmes

Mr. S. Smith – Head of Children's Services

Mrs. H. Smith – Executive Support Manager (Communities)

Mr. M. Hughes – Democratic Services Officer

Present as an observer:

Ms. L.J. Morris – Senior Press Officer

Venue: County Hall Chamber, Carmarthen (2:00 – 2:45pm)

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor G. Thomas as Chair for the meeting.

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2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S.M. Allen, D.J.R. Bartlett, D.J.R. Llewellyn, J. Williams and Canon B. Witt.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor	Minute Item(s)	Nature of Interest
Councillor K. Madge	Item 6	His daughter works in Social Care Services.
Councillor E. Morgan	Item 6	His daughter is a staff nurse in Mental Health Services.

4. DECLARATION OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of party whips.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions were received.

6. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES IN CARMARTHENSHIRE 2015/16

Councillor K. Madge declared an interest in that his daughter works in Social Care Services.

Councillor E. Morgan declared an interest in that his daughter is a staff nurse in Mental Health Services.

The Director of Community Services presented his annual report on the effectiveness of the Social Care Services in the county. Members considered the report which gave an overview of the progress made on areas identified for improvement in last year's report and highlights those areas to be developed in the current year. Members also noted that there was a statutory requirement for the Director of Social Services to report annually to the Council on the delivery, performance and risks as well as plans for the improvement of the whole range of Social Services.

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The Director of Community Services noted that he considered the presentation of this report to scrutiny members as an important element within the development of the final document. He reminded members of both Committees that this draft report provided them with the opportunity to question the content and gave him an opportunity, as the Statutory Director for Social Services, to consider any comments elected members might have.

The following issues were discussed during consideration of the report:

It was asked whether any studies on the impact of population movements on health and social care services had been undertaken (e.g. a resident of another county receiving care in a Carmarthenshire hospital or vice-versa). The Director of Community Services informed members that whilst such instances were not recorded in the Authority's statistics, they did impact in terms of adding pressure to the care system. However, he added that no new or significant trends had emerged from the population profile and census data used during the past year. However, officers had undertaken some work in relation to looked after children from other local authority areas being moved to Carmarthenshire, due to the pressure that such movements placed on the Authority's services and in particular, the County's schools. The Director of Education & Children informed the members that numbers were volatile and that these figures were monitored on a regular basis by officers from the Authority alongside colleagues in the Hywel Dda Health Board. He acknowledged that there were large numbers of looked after children residing in the County but that the report highlighted the good work being done in this complex and challenging area.

It was asked whether the numbers of children moving into the County was due to the quality of the services provided by the Authority. The Director of Community Services noted that there was limited evidence to suggest that families moved nearer schools with good disability services/centres but there was no evidence of substantial movements of children into specific catchment areas.

Reference was made to travelling times of staff in rural areas and it was asked whether this was now taken into account in terms of their work hours and salaries. The Director of Community Services informed the members that payment for domiciliary care workers was for the number of hours worked and this included travelling time. There had been a problem with a previous arrangement but this had now been dealt with as part of the new re-commissioned service. He stated that the Authority did struggle to complete care packages in more rural areas via the independent sector which is why the Authority's domiciliary care service had been retained in order to cover for arrangements that could not be met by the independent or private sector.

The proactive work of the Authority in conjunction with the Health Board in bringing the budget under control was welcomed and it was asked whether any additional costs had been experienced due to the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act. It was also asked whether the recent milder winters had helped ease the financial pressure on the services. The Director of Community Services noted that the services were facing the same relentless pressures all year round

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and that the winter pressures were something of a misnomer. He reminded members that the budget for this year had reduced once again and this only added to the problem of providing and maintaining the various services. The Director of Education & Children noted that there were pressure points and referred to the 'When I'm ready' scheme which had been introduced as part of the new Act. This gave children in care the statutory right to remain with foster carers beyond the age of 18, subject to meeting certain criteria such as remaining in some form of full-time education and so on.

Members welcomed the comprehensive report which showed the achievements across the services as well the challenges and priorities for the future. They requested that both committees' appreciation be relayed to officers in the relevant departments for their hard work.

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to endorse the report to the Executive Board.

SIGNED: _____ (Chair)

DATE: _____