

Dear Director

CIW Local Authority Performance Review

We published our code of practice for review of local authority social services in April 2019 which outlined our intention to write and publish an annual letter for local authorities which will:

- provide feedback on inspection and performance evaluation activity completed by us during the year;
- report on progress the local authority has made in implementing recommendations from inspections and/or child and adult practice reviews;
- outline our forward work programme.

This letter summarises our review of Isle of Anglesey County Council's performance in carrying out its statutory social services functions. It follows the four principles of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA) and our increasingly collaborative and strengths based approach to supporting improvement. The letter is intended to assist the local authority and its partners to continually improve.

The content is informed by our inspection of services for children in Isle of Anglesey during October 2018 and performance evaluation activity during the course of the year.

We discussed these matters and our proposed performance evaluation activity for 2019/20 with you at the annual Performance Review meeting on 24th April 2019.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Summary of strengths and areas for improvement in line with principles of SSWBA

- Well-being

A recent self-evaluation of older adults services by Isle of Anglesey County Council reports people have access to timely assessments for social care services, timely access to domiciliary care support and reablement services. The local authority suggests this has been made possible through development of a new 'patch based' commissioning model in partnership with the local health board. We note the drop in numbers of people in receipt of direct payments, the local authority will need to assure themselves an unintended consequence of patch based commissioning is not a reduction in voice and choice for people on the island.

To promote their wellbeing children need to be able to build relationships with social workers they can trust. Following the findings of our recent inspection, managers should ensure the number of social workers to which each child has to repeat their story is kept to a minimum. Social workers must also ensure every interaction with a child counts and be able to evidence their work in case files.

The local authority has made very positive efforts to build community initiatives over a number of years and has extended this work across the island with some success.

- People – voice and choice

We found strong leadership and governance by Isle of Anglesey County Council. Members of the local authority were able to demonstrate their contribution to children's services improvement journey and their knowledge of key challenges facing the council and how they interact to impact upon children and families.

The recent changes in senior leadership are being covered by interim arrangements for the statutory role of director of social services. Leaders of the council will want to ensure recent improvements in performance in children's services are not negatively impacted by changes in leadership.

Senior officers are visible, available and driving improvements and we found officer commitment and morale to be high. We found improvements in management oversight and professional accountability at all levels. We were reassured by senior officers identifying cases where opportunities to support children have been missed in previous years and firm commitment and direct evidence of Isle of Anglesey County Council proactively and systematically responding to the needs of these children.

We have discussed with the local authority the importance of maintaining improvements in children's services. We will be following up progress in the coming year to ensure the improvement achieved to date is embedded. We will focus on reading case files to ensure the 'drift' seen in previous years has been removed, children's voices are heard and they get the services to which they are entitled.

Local authority senior managers are aware they also have more work to do to ensure children have their voices heard in the planning and development of services and that their voices do lead to positive service development.

Welsh language is the first language of many of the local authority staff on Anglesey. Many officers are bi-lingual and this is reflected in the Annual citizen survey 2017 /2018 which records 92% of respondents receiving services were able to communicate in their preferred language. The survey also reports 91% of respondents felt they were treated with dignity and respect.

Our monitoring of the deprivation of liberty safeguards has identified the local authority, in common with many others in Wales, is unable to assure itself people's human rights are not being breached by being deprived of their liberty unlawfully. We will continue to monitor this.

- Prevention

In line with other local authorities Isle of Anglesey County Council has invested in extra care schemes to increase housing options for people who also need care and support. The local authority has been keen to ensure extra care is targeted appropriately at those who can benefit most from living there and make best use of domiciliary care services. In the face of reducing grants for extra care schemes the local authority is creatively looking to fund a further scheme itself in partnership with a housing association.

The model developed at Garreglwyd, a local authority care home providing enhanced care for individuals with dementia, where a CPN works very closely with care home staff to support any deterioration in health and avoid unnecessary moves is a positive example of preventing escalating needs. We look to the local authority to ensure adequate professional support is available in all commissioned service.

The Night Owls service provides peripatetic overnight care and support allowing individuals with complex needs to remain at home during the night, it is a unique scheme not universally available across the north Wales region. This is a further positive example of supporting people to remain within their own homes.

Throughout 2018 our programme of work focused on care experienced children and young people. Qualitative evidence was gathered from six local authority children and fostering inspections, 22 self-evaluations completed by local authorities, challenge meetings held with those local authorities who were not subject to an inspection and engagement activity with care experienced children, care leavers and foster carers. The report will be published on our website, with key findings made in respect of profile, sufficiency, practice, partnerships, stability, governance and corporate parenting. Many of the areas we have identified for improvement are being considered by Welsh Government's Ministerial Advisory Group on improving outcomes for care experienced children and young people and we also hope local authorities will consider their own contribution to addressing these findings.

- Partnerships

Community Resource Teams are at the early stages of development and will build on the strong working relationships that already exist between the local authority and the health board at an operational level. This should assist services in moving towards integration and seamless delivery of services.

In partnership with the local health board working hours of community services became more flexible during 2016 to 2017 and this has been continued to date. This flexibility ensures there is a basic seven day service on the island to support discharge at weekends and help avoid unnecessary hospital admissions. The local authority and the health board are aware this service requires further refinement to get the best from the investment.

Accommodation for children with complex needs who need to be looked after by the local authority is a challenge the local authority is addressing as a corporate issue. Colleagues in social care and housing are working closely with elected members to provide opportunities for living accommodation on the isle of Anglesey for children who are eligible for support. We will be following progress with this project during the year 2019/20.

CIW Performance Review Plan for 2019-20

Our scheduled thematic inspection programme for 2019/20 will be focusing on prevention and promoting independence for older people and for children services thematic inspection the focus will be on prevention, partnerships and experiences of disabled children. If your local authority is selected for inclusion in this programme, you will receive four weeks' notice of the scheduled date of the inspection.

Alongside the thematic inspection programme, we will undertake engagement activities aligned to the theme of inspections and meet with people who receive care and support services. We will convene a meeting with the local authority and its key partners during the summer to follow up on the self-evaluation of promoting independence for older people that local authorities' submitted in January 2019. National reports will be published upon the completion of the thematic inspection programme and engagement activities.

In late 2019 we will pilot a joint inspection of child protection arrangements. The joint inspection will be led by CIW and in partnership with HIW, Estyn, HMI Constabulary (HMICFRS) and HMI Probation. With the drive towards collaboration and integration in public services, CIW work closely with other inspectorates to share intelligence and jointly plan inspections. We will work closely with Social Care Wales to share information to support improvement in social care services.

CIW will continue in 2019/2020 to work with HIW in jointly inspecting community mental health teams. CIW will be following up recommendations made within HIW and CIW joint thematic review of Community Mental Health Teams as part of bi-annual head of service meetings with local authorities.

We will follow up progress of the children's service improvement plans and monitor opportunities for older adults to remain independent. We will undertake two pieces of focused activity within the local authority throughout the year.

You will note that this letter has been copied to colleagues in WAO, Estyn and HIW. CIW works closely with partner inspectorates to consider the wider corporate perspective in which social services operate, as well as local context for social services performance.

We will publish the final version of this letter on our website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sharon Eastlake', written in a cursive style.

Sharon Eastlake
Interim Head of Local Authority Inspection Team
Care Inspectorate Wales

Cc.
WAO
HIW
Estyn