

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 Caerphilly County Borough 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 of this letter is informed by our performance evaluation activity during the course of the year. The activity included:

- In 2017/18 inspectors consulted with staff and service users experiencing mental ill-health as part of our support to the HIW review of community mental health services
- Focused activity in March 2019 reviewing the progress of Mental Health Triage Project. A pilot with Gwent Police placing professionals within the police control room to assist with people presenting with mental health needs.

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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.

- Adult Services Self Evaluation submitted to CIW earlier this year.
- Children's Services Challenge Meeting.

We discussed these matters and our proposed performance evaluation activity for 2019/20 with you at the annual Performance Review meeting on 2nd April 2019.

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

- Well-being

The local authority benefits from a senior management team which has a clear understanding of its own strengths and areas of challenge in both Adult and Children's services. A strong governance framework is in place that drives development and cultural changes and which is supported fully by elected members. The local authority has utilised its population assessment to identify and develop services in line with the SSWBA.

Social Services have made some progress with its new case management database (WCCIS), however extracting performance information remains challenging. It is positive to note Mental Health services have established an integrated system to record service user's information. Future developments include having one recording system to assist the Gwent Duty Teams with information sharing and consistency of practice.

The local authority continues to build on its practice of having meaningful conversations with people about what matters to them. There have been positive developments in the provision of information, advice and assistance (IAA) with a lead officer appointed to develop and further progress the use of DEWIS database to enable staff and people within the community to easily access information quickly directly from the web site. The local authority is starting to see positive impact of having an IAA offer with 95% of people who received advice and assistance not contacting the service again in the following 6 months.

Further work is required within both Children's and Adult services to embed outcome focused practice across the workforce. Further training on Collaborative Communications has been undertaken by all front line teams in Children's services enabling staff to hold more explorative and deeper conversations with children and their families to help them identify what matters to them.

- People – voice and control

In addressing the needs of care experienced children and young people the vision of having a service that is psychologically informed has resulted in investment in the Multi-Disciplinary Intervention Support Team (MIST) and the development of a local authority residential provision using ICF funding. This is evidence of the local authority's to develop therapeutic placement provision and improve availability and choice of placements and prevent the need for children to be placed far away from their community.

Challenges continue with recruitment of foster carers which limits the choice of placements for young people entering care resulting in placement breakdown or placements out of county. The local authority acknowledges this deficit and have reviewed its terms and conditions for Foster Carers resulting in an increase in fostering applications and assessments.

Recruitment and retention of staff within Children's Services is an ongoing challenge. The local authority acknowledges these difficulties and its impact on staff within specific children's teams, and continues to review its workforce plan and career progression framework. Recent work has begun with Social Care Wales on recruitment initiatives.

Feedback from Carers has shown an improvement in services, with Carers support worker and Carers Connect sitting in the IAA service. This has enabled a quick response to carers to support them in their role. The local authority has used ICF funding to develop a number of creative ways of working with carers which has resulted in some carers now running their own support groups.

The local authority has focused on supporting the workforce with training on assessing mental capacity and determining what is in a person's best interest. This has resulted in improved practice by staff who are considering options for positive risk taking.

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

The Community Resource Team continues to offer rapid response to people's medical and social needs as well as falls and reablement services. Participation in the West Ambulance Service NHS Falls (WAST) falls pilot has shown a positive impact in reducing unnecessary admissions to hospital. In addition, the implementation of 'pimp my zimmer' a coloured walking frame pilot between the local authority, ABUHB and the Ambulance service has reduced the number of falls experienced by older people within residential services.

Within Children's Services there is a rising number of children and young people who require intensive care and support by the local authority due to their complex needs and or risky behaviour. The local authority has experienced challenges in securing appropriate fostering arrangements which can meet the young people's needs. It is working at both regional and local partnership level to respond to the challenge of appropriately meeting the needs of care experienced children and young people, ensuring there is sufficient choice and availability of placements to meet children's needs.

The local authority is working jointly with the health board on creating an early prevention model to enable children and young people to access mental health support at an earlier stage. Along with regional partners, it is developing a model of earlier prevention which includes family group conferencing, SGO support, mediation, and enhancing Edge of Care which demonstrates a change in practice and a focus on working together with children and families.

Within adult services pressures continue due to the fragility of the domiciliary care sector where there are challenges of recruitment, inability to provide packages of care at short notice and handing back packages of care from independent providers. This is resulting in delays in people being discharged from hospital. The regional commissioning group is currently exploring opportunities for joint commissioning of domiciliary care and has

developed links with Coleg Gwent to improve uptake and training for health and social care students within the region with Caerphilly local authority taking a leading role.

A Joint Adult and Children's Case Review Group has been established to consider all referrals for APR & CPR which has enhanced shared learning across the two sectors and enabled development of better joint working.

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

Partnership arrangements at both local and regional level continue to develop and mature. This has resulted in significant improvements in commissioning, pooled budgets and increasing social care services delivered on a regional footprint. For this joint partnership to function considerable commitment from all senior managers is pivotal, there is a challenge in balancing time commitment to undertaking development work and balancing this with the ever increasing pressures and workload of managing core business.

In March we visited the Mental Health Triage Project (MHTP), which was being piloted by the local authority and partners. We heard positive feedback from partners with the police valuing the support to ensure safe and accountable decisions in ensuring positive outcomes for people. The effectiveness of this MHTP project is to be evaluated by Swansea University with the intention of developing the project further.

CIW Performance Review Plan for 2019-20

Our scheduled 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.

We will undertake engagement activities aligned to the thematic inspections and meet with people who receive care and support services. CIW will be convening a meeting with the local authority and its key partners in the summer to follow up areas identified in the self-evaluation submitted in January 2019 focusing on prevention and promoting independence for older people self-evaluation. A thematic national report will be published upon the completion of inspections 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.

Our focused activity with the local authority is likely to include some follow up to inspection findings relating to LAC and care leavers in children's services; our engagement in adult services will focus on people aged over 65s in the community, and possibly day services. This may be subject to change in the light of emerging issues.

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



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Cc.
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Estyn