



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
MERTHYR TUDFUL  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
County Borough Council

## MINUTES OF MEETING

# SCRUTINY : SOCIAL SERVICES MEETING

**TUESDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY, 2021**

**PRESENT:** Councillors: W R Smith (Chair)  
S Jago (Vice-Chair)

Councillors G Richards, T Rogers, D Sammon and I Thomas

**Other Councillors in Attendance:**

C Davies (Cabinet Member)

**Officers:**

L Curtis Jones (Chief Officer (Social Services)), S Jablaoui (Performance Officer), A Edevane (Head of Adult Services), J Eyre (Safeguarding), T Hudd (Family Support), L Morgan (Supporting People / Young People) and H Lang (Children with Disabilities)

M Morgan\* (Democratic Services Officer) and K Reddy (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
342	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were received from I Cathrew Co-opted Member.
343	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	No Declarations of Interest were made.
344	Wales Audit Office: Review of	Lisa Curtis Jones and Jon Eyre referred the Committee to the 'Wales Audit Office: Review of Whistleblowing and

	Whistleblowing and Corporate Safeguarding	<p>Corporate Safeguarding' report that had been referred from the Audit Committee and responded in detail to the following questions raised by the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Policy – When were these Policies last updated on the Web site and where are they located on the Web site.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair requested that the Committee be advised when the Web site had been updated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanation requested in relation to the judgements in relation to Schools</li> <li>• Whistleblowing – How many incidents of Whistleblowing have there been over the past few years – Where is the Authority in relation to other Councils – Is it possible to obtain figures from other Authorities</li> <li>• Paragraph 4.3 – When is the next report due</li> <li>• Paragraph 6.4 – Are staff advised of the Policy – Is the Policy drawn to the attention of new staff</li> <li>• What is the composition of the Safeguarding Group</li> </ul> <p>The Chair then thanked the Officers and Councillor C Davies Cabinet Member for the update to the Committee.</p>
345	Adult Advocacy Strategy	<p>Lowri Morgan referred the Committee to the 'Adult Advocacy Strategy' report and responded in detail to the following questions raised by the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraph 6.4 – Funding for advocacy services – Is there money available in the Council's budget</li> <li>• Paragraph 4.4 – Further details requested on how to help people understand and the proposals to spread the word in relation to the Service</li> <li>• The number of people in the County Borough with hearing impairment and Dementia in people under 65 years old – Is this common to all Authorities</li> <li>• Is this a Corporate Policy or just for Adult Services</li> </ul> <p>The Chair then thanked the Officers and Councillor C Davies for the update to the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee also agreed a review of the Adult Services Advocacy Strategy in six months.</p>
346	Children's Services Strategy	<p>Taryn Stephens referred the Committee to the 'Children's Services Strategy' report and responded in detail to the following questions raised by the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraph 5.7 – The Early Help Hub – Has there been an annual evaluation of this and the effectiveness of the overall service – Are people still aware of availability in the Community – What are the total number of referrals – Explanation requested in relation to assessments and referrals – Is it for the whole year</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy for Improvement Performance – Corporate Self Evaluation – What is the update on this</li> <li>• Strategy – Sustainable Services – Action Plan – What are the three years referred to</li> <li>• Children Looked After – What is the current figure</li> <li>• Employment and Training – Has the Pandemic had any impact on this</li> </ul> <p>The Chair then thanked the Officers and Councillor C Davies for the update to the Committee.</p>
--	--	--

### **Coronavirus Update**

Lisa Curtis Jones updated the Committee in relation to Vaccinations for Care Homes and Social Services Staff.

The Chair then thanked Lisa Curtis Jones for the update to the Committee and thanked the staff for the tremendous work that they had undertaken.

347	Forward Work Programme 2020/21	The Chair referred the Committee to the 'Forward Work Programme 2020/21' report and the Committee agreed the report.
348	Scrutiny Referrals, Feedback and Follow up Actions	<p><b><i>Whistleblowing</i></b></p> <p>The Committee agreed that Carys Kennedy be requested to provide a Briefing Note to the Committee in relation to Whistleblowing.</p>
349	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	The Chair and the Committee reflected in detail on the matters that had been discussed at the Meeting
350	Any other business deemed urgent by the Chair	The Chair advised that there was no business deemed urgent.