



## MINUTES OF MEETING

# SCRUTINY : SOCIAL SERVICES MEETING

TUESDAY, 8TH OCTOBER, 2019

**PRESENT:** Councillors: W R Smith (Chair)

Councillors T Rogers, D Sammon and I Thomas

**Other Councillors in Attendance:**

Councillor C Davies (Cabinet Member)

**Officers:**

L Curtis Jones (Chief Officer (Social Services)) and A Lloyd (Head of Children's Services) and M Phillips (Democratic Services Officer)

**Outside Bodies:**

Nicola Kingham (Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
371	Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Jago and Councillor G Richards.
372	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	No declarations of interest were received.
373	Children's Services Strategy	The Chair agreed to re-order the agenda and Item 5 – Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2018/19 was presented first.

		<p>Annabel Lloyd introduced the report to the committee and highlighted the salient points within the report and explained that there are now six work streams, the additional strategy being based on Sustainability.</p> <p>The following questions were raised by the committee and responded to in detail by the officers in attendance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In relation to the key performance indicators on Page 17, Measure 24 Percentage of assessments completed for children within the statutory timescales is up from 87% to 94% and Measure 33, Percentage of looked after children who have had three or more placements has been reduced from 13.4% to 12.6%. Are you encouraged by these reductions</li> <li>• Page 7 of the report covers the workforce strategy, what is the current situation in relation to Social Workers, are there still vacancies or have staffing levels improved</li> <li>• Are the workforce coping with increases in workloads</li> <li>• Do we currently work with social landlords in relation to early intervention and prevention</li> <li>• Are the right calibre of officers currently attached to the Early Help Hub</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked the Officers from the report and their responses to the committees questions.</p>
374	Budget update for Scrutiny Committee	<p>Lisa Curtis-Jones introduced the item to the committee and highlighted the key areas within the report, specifically the section titled where we are now.</p> <p>The committee agreed that the report was very good and that there were no red flags that could cause issue in the near future and that the budget is currently well balanced.</p> <p>The Cabinet member for Social Services thanked the staff for their excellent work.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Social Services staff for doing an excellent job and hopes it can continue.</p>
375	Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2018/19	<p>Nicola Kingham introduced the item and highlighted the salient points contained within the report.</p> <p>The following questions were raised by the committee and were responded to in detail by the officers:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Powers of Protection – Can you explain to the committee what these powers are and how they are used</li> <li>• Are there any figures available to highlight the use of these powers in Merthyr Tydfil?</li> <li>• Can the figures be broken down to show each individual area in future reports</li> <li>• Can you highlight any advantages or disadvantages of the new larger Safeguarding Board</li> <li>• The report highlights radicalisation – are there any recorded incidents in Merthyr Tydfil</li> </ul> <p>Councillor D Sammon left the meeting 3.10pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Lines – Can you confirm that Merthyr Tydfil is currently free from this issue</li> <li>• NEETS are not included in this report – Does the safeguarding Board not cover this area</li> </ul> <p>The Cabinet Member thanked the officers for the excellent work carried out around safeguarding and thanked Nicola for an excellent report.</p>
376	Forward Work Programme 2019/20	The Chair advised the committee that there were no changes to be made to the current Forward Work Programme 2019/2020
377	Scrutiny Referrals, Feedback and Follow up Actions	The Chair advised the committee that no referrals, feedback or follow up actions had been received.
378	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	The Chair and the Committee reflected on the issues that had been considered.
379	Any other business deemed urgent by the Chair	No other business was deemed urgent by the Chair.