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## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Date Written	23 <sup>rd</sup> December 2019
Report Author	Lisa Curtis Jones
Service Area	Social Services
Committee Date	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2020

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

### **Corporate Self-Evaluation - Question 2 (Provision and Service Delivery)**

#### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 Self-evaluation is a useful process that is rigorous and enables Chief Officers, Heads of Service and officers to be critically reflective about outcomes, service provision and leadership and management.
- 1.2 Following a refocus exercise of documentation to ensure it continued to meet the organisation's needs; the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) approved the re-introduction of the corporate self-evaluation process in May 2019.
- 1.3 Completion of the process is undertaken in 'bite-sized' chunks on a question-by-question basis. This aims to support all officers involved to contribute to the process whilst maintaining their ability to manage multiple other priorities.
- 1.4 This report focuses on the completion of the self-evaluation undertaken by the Chief Officer: Learning and her teams in relation to Key Question 2 (Provision and Service Delivery). The response directly relates to the Best Start to Life theme laid down in the Council's Corporate Plan: Focus on the Future.
- 1.5 This report and its appendices highlight the key findings of the self-evaluation activity; outline areas of good practice along with areas for development; and identifies the priorities for improvement, which will be developed into a Business Improvement Plan.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 Committee Members are requested to review the documentation and key findings following completion of Key Question 2 of the process.
- 2.2 Committee Members to review and scrutinise the evaluative judgements provided by officers within the report identified through completion of the self-evaluation process.

## **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Self-evaluation is a business process that is rigorous and enables organisations to be critically reflective about outcomes, service provision and leadership and management. In 2013/14, the Council introduced a self-evaluation process, which was completed by officers at Head of Service level. The format of the challenge sessions was based on high-level challenge in a session lasting 2-2½ hours; with a number of Heads of Service.
- 3.2 From using lessons learned over previous years, the format of the challenge of self-evaluation was developed (e.g.) self-evaluation was undertaken on a service-level basis; with challenge being offered a Performance Board consisting the Chief Executive, Directorate Lead; Portfolio Member and the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee to which the service reported. The key outcome of the process was to identify areas of good practice; along with priorities for improvement.
- 3.3 In 2019, a refocus exercise was undertaken to ensure the self-evaluation documents continued to meet the organisation's needs (e.g.) offered officers completing the forms opportunity to outline the current service position; highlight any good practice; note areas for development and to identify the services' priorities for improvement. The documents were organised in the form of 3 key questions:
  - Outcomes;
  - Provision and Service Delivery; and
  - Leadership and management.

There was no specific order in which the questions needed to be completed, as long as all three questions were completed within the year.

- 3.4 Following consideration of the updated documents by the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT); the new format was approved for re-introduction in May 2019.
- 3.5 As part of the process cycle supporting the delivery of the self-evaluation process (see Appendix 1), it was proposed that completed questions should be presented before the sector-specific scrutiny committee, which normally scrutinises the outputs/outcomes for the relevant service area. This was seen as an opportunity for Committee Members to review and explore facets of the wide range of activities for which Chief Officers were accountable; whilst for services, it was seen as an opportunity for details of their services to be brought before scrutiny to outline positive practice and achievements along with any challenges faced and areas for development.

- 3.6 Committee Members are asked to review the content of the completed questions and consider performance, areas of good practice, areas for development and, perhaps most importantly, the services' priorities for improvement for the coming year. Scrutineers' feedback will be used when considering how these priorities will be progressed.

## 4.0 WHERE WE WERE

- 4.1 In previous years, the Council had undertaken self-evaluation activities annual basis on a service-by service basis. The process required Heads of Service to review project/programme activity and reflect on what had been achieved, as well as identifying what needed to be prioritised next with a view to planning how should be done.

## 5.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW

- 5.1 Judgement: **Good**

- 5.2 In the past few months we have been completing our self-evaluation for Social Services in relation to Provision and Service Delivery. The areas covered are Children and Adult Services. The self-evaluation document in relation to this area (Question 2) is attached at Appendix 2. It covers the relationships between in-house partners and external partner relationships. The latter having developed considerably over recent years with the introduction of the Regional Partnership Board (RPB).
- 5.3 Within Social Services we work with a wide range of corporate services to ensure we provide good service delivery to the people of Merthyr Tydfil.
- 5.4 Both Adult and Children Services are in agreement that there are good working relationships with Accountancy/Finance, Insurance, Print, IT, Procurement, Health and Safety, Welsh and equalities and Complaints. These services provide a good service and provide information that assists us in operational matters and providing a service day to day. Much of this good work is built on well- established relationships with individual staff.
- 5.5 In respect of Human resources, Business Change, Legal Services, Performance Management, Admin, and Communications the feedback is mixed. In general the relationships are good within the services but services being provided in a timely manner can be an issue due to capacity within these areas. Over the past few years due to efficiencies departments have seen reduction in staffing, which then reduces capacity within these resources and then impacts on the service being offered. All these service areas are an important and essential part of providing a good services in general. Both Admin and Performance management use to sit within the Social Services directorate so relationships were stronger and the assistance given and information provided more detailed and tailored to meet social service's needs. These services have now been centralised corporately and therefore has changed the service we receive. In respect of Business Change support has always been good when we have a dedicated officer dealing only with Social Services as they learn the business and understand the service area to enable better support to be

offered. On saying that we do have good support in respect of the Scrutiny reporting and assistance around the self evaluation process to assist in meeting deadlines.

5.6 Over the past year to eighteen months relationships have improved with Housing Colleagues and benefits section, and there have been various joint projects to assist foster carers and care leavers due to working closely together. Communication is much improved across these services, which enables a better and joined up approach to working with people.

5.7 In respect of collaboration and partnership working there are a number of joint initiatives across Adults and Children Services:

- The Regional Partnership Board
- The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board
- Regional Adoption Service
- Cwm Taf Youth offending Service
- Regional front Door for Fostering
- Emergency Duty Team
- 4C's Commissioning Framework
- Joint Equipment Store
- Social Care workforce Team
- Stay Well @ Home
- Joint Learning Disability Commissioning group
- Transformation Steering Group

5.8 In line with the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act many of the services to support adults are now being planned on a regional basis with the health & social care partners within the Cwm Taf Morgannwg footprint. Development in the regional working has been assisted by the introduction of the ICF funding has allowed some innovative working across the region. This funding continues and we have seen more investment within children services this year, which will have a positive impact on our young people.

## **6.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE**

6.1 We want strong working relationships with our partners and working together will provide improved and sustainable services for the public. The plans we have drawn up need to be operational and resources provided to meet needs.

6.2 We want to provide services in a timely manner, and provide information and advice and assistance when required. Many of the innovations this year have been focussed on Early Intervention and Prevention and providing services to children and adults in a timely manner.

6.3 Improve outcomes for people across Merthyr Tydfil. We want them to live independent, healthy and fulfilled lives.

6.4 We need good internal processes and support regards Performance Management information. We have new social services performance measures in the New Year and we need capacity in the team to enable us to be prepared for these changes and

ensure that programmes re available on WCCIS. The team have been undertaking a review of capacity in recent weeks and this needs to be a priority in the next few weeks.

- 6.5 We need to enhance and improve relationships with Education and the Wellbeing Service to ensure we are providing services in a timely manner. ICF and IFST funding has assisted us in developing the Early Help Hub and the Supporting Family Change team and we need to work collaboratively on the early Intervention and Prevention Agenda. These teams are still in their infancy and will be further developed in the next year.
- 6.6 In recent months we have managed to secure funding for extra capacity within some of the teams through grant monies. We would like to see the reduction in the bureaucracy for recruitment to ensure we use the grant appropriately and get support in the teams as soon as possible.
- 6.7 Work with business support to complete a capacity assessment and reduce reliance on single points of dependency in certain areas. As part of this work we need to consider the role of admin within social services and the additionality they bring to the service.
- 6.8 Develop further our regional plans around dementia and improvements to day services. Also looking at developing alternative models of community based accommodation that enable people to remain in the community with support. We are currently working with housing colleagues on this proposal.

## **7.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT**

- 7.1 We will continue to work regionally across Cwm Taf Morgannwg to develop services and consider areas where there can be future collaboration.
- 7.2 We will work regionally on the transformation agenda with health colleagues, building on the success of Stay Well @ Home and looking at the second phase of the service.
- 7.3 Complete the capacity assessment and consider our single points of dependency and consider what areas should be prioritised to take forward. Work with colleagues in business change to assist with this.
- 7.4 Workshop set up for January to look at working alongside Education in respect of wellbeing and the Early Help Hub.
- 7.5 Work underway with regards the structure of the Performance Management team and developing a plan for the new performance measures.
- 7.6 Within children services we need to continue the good work, developing the Early Help Hub, and Supporting Change team. We also need to make progress with the development of the emotional Well-being Service for Children Looked After and the Pathway to Work for care leavers.

## 8.0 CONTRIBUTION TO WELLBEING OBJECTIVES

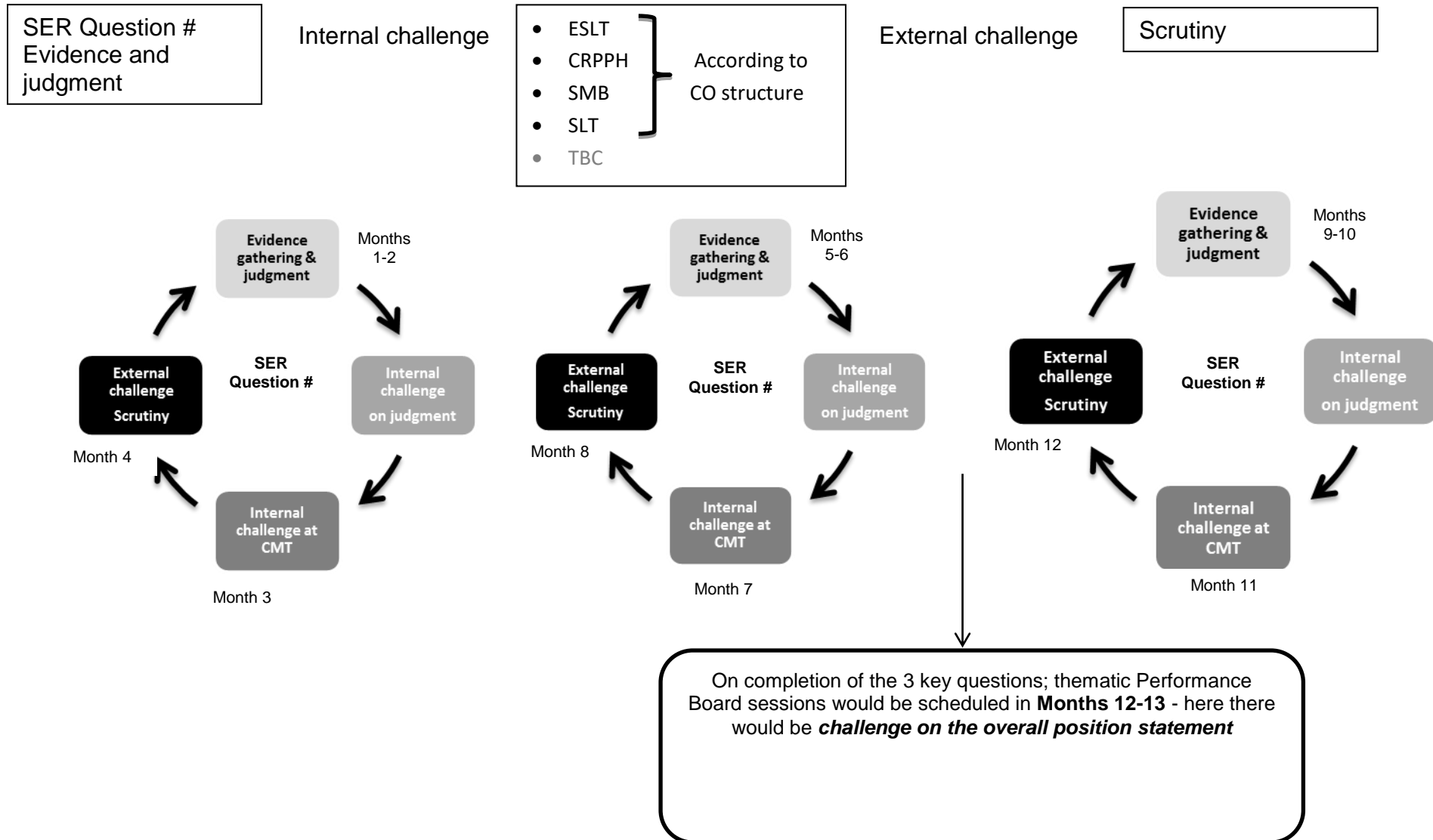
- 8.1 The corporate self-evaluation process is based around the services/activities delivered and should reflect the contribution made in relation to the four wellbeing objectives set down by the Council in focus in the Corporate Wellbeing Plan.
- 8.2 This report specifically links to the Living objective within the Council's Corporate Wellbeing Plan: **People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health.**
- 8.3 Through completion of other self-evaluation responses; we will also be able to demonstrate our team's contribution to support progress against the following objectives:
- Children and young people get the best start to life and are equipped with the skills they need to be successful learners and confident individuals;
  - People feel supported to develop the skills required to meet the needs of businesses, with a developing, safe infrastructure making Merthyr Tydfil an attractive destination; and
  - Communities protect, enhance and promote our natural environment and countryside

**LISA CURTIS JONES**  
**CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

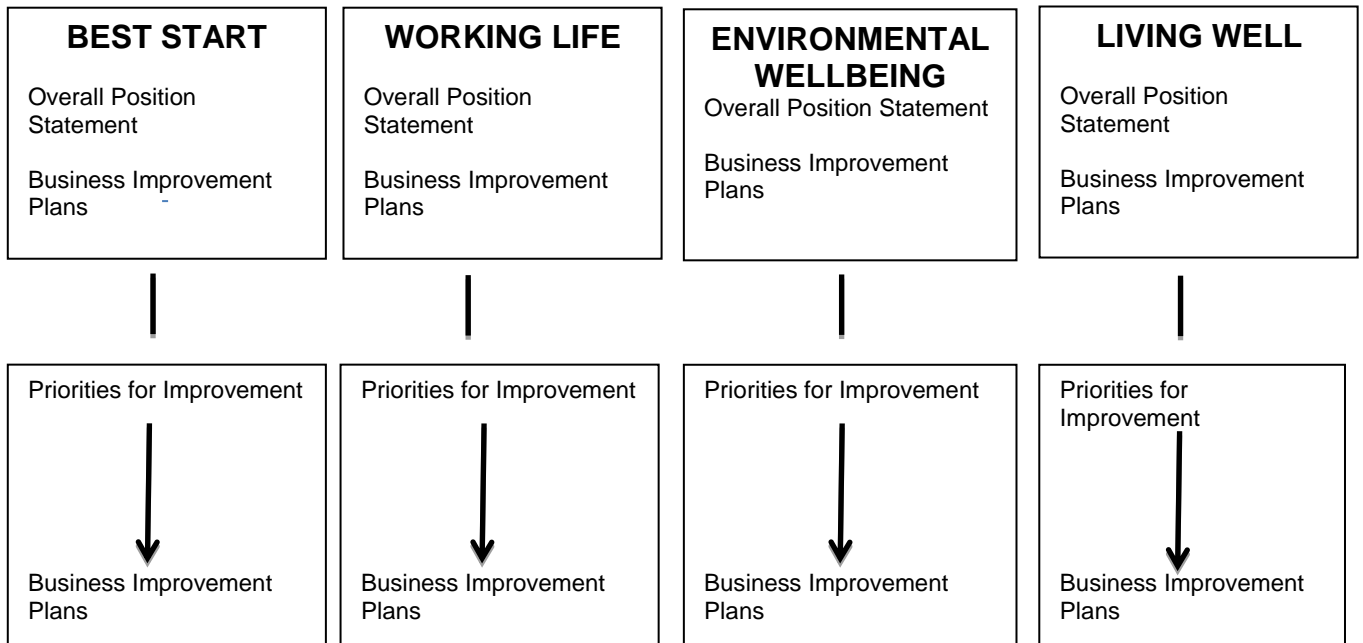
**COUNCILLOR CHRIS DAVIES**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		

**Self-Evaluation Process Cycle:** 4 months x 3



## Performance Board



Analysis of commonalities → Report to CMT to identify support needed to drive improvement

