

**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

**REPORT TO:** **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT:** **SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2019**

**REPORT OF:** **DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER**

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**PRESENT:** COUNCILLOR S.C. THOMAS (CHAIR)

Councillors: D. Bevan  
G.A. Davies  
L. Elias  
J. Holt  
J. Millard  
M. Moore  
T. Sharrem

**AND:** Corporate Director of Social Services  
Head of Children's Services  
Head of Adult Services  
Service Manager for Provider Services  
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

**WITH:** David Wilson, Wales Audit Office

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>No. 1</b>	<b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b>  It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
<b>No. 2</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b>  Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: K. Rowson, P. Edwards, K. Hayden G. Paulsen and T. Smith.	

<p><b>No. 3</b></p>	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
<p><b>No. 4</b></p>	<p><b><u>SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p><b>No. 5</b></p>	<p><b><u>EXECUTIVE DECISIONS FOR SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Executive Decision Sheet.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Executive Decision Sheet be accepted.</p>	
<p><b>No. 6</b></p>	<p><b><u>WALES AUDIT OFFICE: WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS – ENSURING PREVENTATIVE SERVICES TARGET THE MOST VULNERABLE FAMILIES IN BLAENAU GWENT WHO DO NOT MEET THE CRITERIA FOR A CARE AND SUPPORT PLAN</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Children’s Services which presented Members with the Wales Audit Office: Well-Being of Future Generations – ensuring preventative services target the most vulnerable families in Blaenau Gwent who do not meet the criteria for a care and support plan.</p> <p>The representative from the Wales Audit Office spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein and concluded that the Council had acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle in setting the step ‘Flying Start, Families First, Early Years Childcare and Play ensuring preventative services target the most vulnerable families in Blaenau Gwent who do not meet the criteria for a care and support plan’ but there were opportunities to further embed the five ways of working.</p>	

	<p>The Head of Children’s Services was pleased with the outcome of the report and informed Members that Appendix 2 outlined the areas for improvement.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1, namely that the WAO review and actions to implement the proposals for improvement be accepted.</p>	
<p><b>No. 7</b></p>	<p><b><u>ANNUAL CIW INSPECTIONS WITH PROVIDER SERVICES 2018/19</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Social Services which was presented to summarise the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspections undertaken across Provider Services during the period April 18 – March 19 and update Members on the actions taken following the inspections.</p> <p>The Head of Adult Services spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p> <p>The Service Manager Provider Services commented that three of Blaenau Gwent’s four regulated services had been inspected by CIW and the Supported Living inspection was due shortly;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augusta House</li> <li>• Home Care Services</li> <li>• Cwrt Mytton</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Augusta House</u></b></p> <p>In response to a Member’s question regarding collaboration, the Service Manager said that collaboration was on-going with the Health Board, Augusta House was purpose built for people with complex needs and three bedrooms were fully equipped with overhead ceiling track hoists. The Service Manager explained that the Authority had recently secured Welsh Government funding which had enabled further improvements to be made to the disabled facilities at the service.</p> <p><b><u>Home Care</u></b></p>	

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A Member enquired regarding the home care service, the Service Manager said that there had been a reduction in the in-house Home Care service following a decision made by Council to reduce in-house home care. This had reduced the number of people the service supported in the community and these had been picked up by the private sector.

In response to a Member's question, the Head of Adult Services said that the new bungalows built at Llys Glyncoed Extra Care Facility were operated by Link Housing Association, separate from the Council.

### **Cwrt Mytton**

A Member enquired regarding social activities at Cwrt Mytton, the Service Manager said that there was no dedicated staff member to co-ordinate social activities and as the home supported adults who had a diagnosis of dementia social activities had to be carried out 'in the moment'. A staff member had been seconded who had previously worked as a Community Connector and a pilot project was underway to develop a social activities programme at Cwrt Mytton.

A Member raised concerns regarding the non-compliance notice. The Service Manager said that this issue had been rectified and the follow up inspection in May 2019 had reported that the non-compliance from the previous inspection had been met.

In relation to training the Service Manager said that although staff may not have been compliant with refresher training they were regularly competency assessed regarding manual handling, food hygiene and health & safety etc., however, it was challenging for Managers to schedule refresher training given the number of staff and the numerous refresher training courses required within the timescales.

A Member commented that he hoped to see that Cwrt Mytton would be maintained and decorated to a high standard. The Service Manager said that an improvement plan had been carried out with Technical Services and this was progressing well, he invited Members to visit the

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	<p>facility to meet the team and residents.</p> <p>In response to a Member's question regarding agency staff, the Service Manager confirmed that all agency staff were in receipt of mandatory training.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1, namely that the inspection reports by CIW and actions taken by the Department to mitigate any non-compliance of regulations be accepted.</p>	
<p><b>No. 8</b></p>	<p><b><u>REVIEW OF ACTION PLAN FROM THE INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES REPORT BY THE CARE INSPECTORATE WALES 2018</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Children's Services which was presented to provide Members with an update on progress on the action plan developed as a result of the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspection report on Children's Social Services in Blaenau Gwent which took place in 2018.</p> <p>The Head of Children's Services spoke to the report and highlighted the positive practice within the service area and the recommendations to improve service delivery.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely to continue to endorse the action plan and progress which had been made.</p>	
<p><b>No. 9</b></p>	<p><b><u>CARE INSPECTORATE WALES LOCAL AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE REVIEW</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Social Services which was presented to provide Members with the published Local Authority Performance Review annual letter from the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) which was published on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019.</p> <p>The Director of Social Services spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein.</p>	

In response to a Member's question regarding mental health partners involvement, the Director of Social Services said that the Mental Health Triage Project was a pilot project working across Gwent, whereby an Approved Mental Health Social Worker was placed within the police control room to give immediate advice and support to assist people presenting with mental health needs at the earliest opportunity. The focus was on early identification and intervention to prevent needs escalating to arrest or taken to a place of safety. A Member asked about the Directorates experience with CAMHS. The Director explained about the Iceberg Project and how this was trying to support all those children with mental health needs who are not eligible for specialist mental health services such as CAMHS. Transformation funding had been used to develop these early intervention and preventative services.

The Head of Children's Services commented that the InReach Project was working with schools to upskill school staff to identify and deal with mental health issues at a lower level.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely to accept the report and CIW letter as provided.

**No. 10** **SUPPORTING CHANGE TEAM INTERNAL AND INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Children's Services which was presented to outline the case to establish the Supporting Change Team on a permanent basis following two positive evaluations of the work undertaken by this team.

The Head of Children's Services spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein. The independent external evaluation had been commissioned to provide Scrutiny with additional assurances of the effectiveness of establishing the Supporting Change Team on a permanent basis. One of the recommendations was that funding be made permanent or long-term to ensure

	<p>the continuation of the programme. The internal evaluation evidenced that the work of the Supporting Change Team was preventing children coming into care and was achieving actual savings and cost avoidance for the department.</p> <p>Members commented that the programme provided a better avenue of care for children and had a positive impact on the budget and congratulated everyone involved in the programme.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the information and recommendations contained within the report and external evaluation report on the Supporting Change Team be accepted.</p> <p>Councillor Gareth L. Davies left the meeting at this juncture.</p>	
<p><b>No. 11</b></p>	<p><b><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 17<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2019</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chair of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee which presented the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 17th October 2019.</p> <p>Members requested an additional item be added to the FWP regarding the new Welsh Government legislation being introduced where parents are banned from physically punishing children and the implications on the service and its budget. The Director of Social Services said there would be implications for teachers, social services and children around safeguarding. He informed Members that an item could be scheduled into the Work Programme at a later date as this proposed legislation was currently out to consultation.</p> <p>The Head of Children’s Services commented that there could be cost implications for the Council in relation to this issue as policies and procedures would need to be in place.</p>	

<p>The Committee AGREED that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting on 17th October, 2019 be approved.</p>	
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