

Meeting of the Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 September 2025

Responses to Recommendations / Additional Information Requested

| | Recommendations / Information Requested: | Response: | Accepted / Partially Accepted / Not Accepted: |
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| Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Improvement Check of Childrens and Family Services June 2025 | | | |
| Recommendations | | | |
| 1 | The Committee discussed the regional operating arrangements of the Emergency Duty Team and were advised that the arrangement was to be reviewed exploring what constitutes emergency out of hours social work and to provide clarity to prospective callers of the appropriate service to contact when necessary. The Committee recommended that Members are engaged in the review for their views. | The recommendations for improvement from the CIW inspection in relation to EDT are being progressed via the EDT governance board. It is suggested that Scrutiny consider inviting the EDT managers to a future scrutiny committee, alongside BCBC colleagues to talk about progress in relation to the improvements identified. | Partially accepted |
| Additional Information Requested | | | |
| 2 | The Committee discussed the resources required to implement the fostering aspects of the Action Plan and to recruit more in-house foster carers and requested a Briefing paper for all Members highlighting the importance of promoting becoming a foster carer for Bridgend. |  Briefing note for members - Promoting | Accepted |

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| Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Fostering Service Inspection June 2025 | | | |
| Recommendations | | | |
| 3 | The Committee recommended that the abbreviations and acronyms in the Foster Care Recruitment Strategy in Appendix 3 are removed or that a glossary be added to assist the Committee and the public. |  Plan on a Page - Foster Wales Bridgen | Accepted |
| 4 | The Committee expressed concern regarding the impact on service delivery of the Directorate's reliance on grant funding and recommended that this be added to the topics for discussion at the Deep Dive Group and requested that a list of all grant funding the Directorate has received in the last financial year and a breakdown of which services are funded by which grants, and which are one-off grants and which are recurring be provided to the Group and Members of the Committee. | Actioned in confidential Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate Deep Dive Group on 16 October 2025. | Accepted |
| 5 | Having discussed their concerns regarding the reliance on grant funding in the above point, the Committee recommended that consideration be given to a zero-based budgeting exercise being undertaken exploring the | It is intended that a review of spend will be undertaken in the new financial year, once the outturn figures for 2025-26 are known. This will look at spend levels and funding sources to seek to realign budgets where possible within existing resources. | |

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| | possibility of bringing the services or parts of the services supported by grant funding into the Directorate's core budget, where possible. | | |
| Additional Information Requested | | | |
| 6 | The Committee discussed the improvements made in relation to workforce and recruitment which has resulted in a substantial reduction in agency staff and an increase in newly recruited or qualified social workers being employed. The Committee were mindful that there is a period of supervision and training which requires time to embed and expressed concern that this could be impacting on consistency of practice identified by the Inspectorate and requested a written update be provided. | <p>In regards to Quality Assurance, the current framework ensures there is managerial oversight over cases which consider the quality of practice alongside process and procedures. The QA framework also forms part of the workforce development where themes and learning identified are woven into staff development and training opportunities through the Children's Innovation Group (CIG). In respect of the consistency of practice, alongside the training opportunities from SCDWP, the Signs of Safety model of practice is supported by the Consultant Social worker for Signs of Safety and a robust workplan to support the continued embedding of the Signs of Safety practice model. The QA framework also captures the consistency of the Signs of Safety practice and this year is able to evidence an increase in the citation and use of Signs of Safety across the service evidencing more consistency of practice offered.</p> <p>Newly appointed social workers receive induction supported by their manager. Alongside the</p> | Accepted |

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| | | <p>Corporate induction framework, there is a Directorate induction framework with a range of induction resources. In order to ensure that the highest standards of practice are achieved, it is essential for individuals to continue to develop professionally throughout their career and CPD commences from a new member of staff's induction and continues throughout their time working for BCBC.</p> <p>Newly qualified social workers are provided with tailored learning opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills to help them transition from qualifying to full professional practice. Our social care workforce development team work with managers to ensure that newly qualified social workers receive regular supervision, in line with the supervision policy and have access to mentoring support and time to reflect on their practice. Work allocated to the social worker should balance developmental opportunities with experience and levels of confidence. Social workers in their second and third year in practice will progress on to undertake the Consolidation Programme, a qualification required by Social Care Wales for all social workers who qualified from 2016 onwards and which should be completed within their first three years of practice.</p> | |

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| | | <p>The Directorate has a commitment to provide good quality, regular supervision to all staff working within the Social Services and Well-being directorate. There is a significant link between quality supervision and improving the outcomes of individuals, children, carers, and families with whom we work. The Directorate provides supervision skills training for line managers, which is aligned to the Directorate supervision policy. The policy is under review, staff consultation has commenced. Decisions made about individual cases in supervision are a core part of an individual's case record, as such the timeframe for the policy review has to work in line with the development and implementation of the Mosaic record system.</p> | |

Information Report - Quarter 4/Year End Performance 2024-25

Additional Information Requested

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| 7 | <p>The Committee expressed concern regarding the continued downward trend in relation to sickness absence and requested an update on any actions being taken to try and improve the position.</p> | <p>The directorate takes a strong approach to sickness management, working closely with HR colleagues to ensure compliance with corporate policies. There is a proactive approach to stress risk assessments and highlighting and offering wellbeing support. Where there are high levels of sickness in teams linked to stress related factors OD support for teams via the Social Care Workforce Development Team</p> | Accepted |
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| Forward Work Programme Update | | | |
| 8 | <p>The Committee requested that the following items be added to their Forward Work Programme:</p> <p>a. Review of the Regional Operating Model of the Emergency Duty Team; and b. Review of the Fostering Service (in 9-12 months)</p> | <p>To be actioned by Scrutiny, Chair of Committee and Corporate Director in Work Planning Meetings</p> | Accepted. |