

JUDGEMENTS IN REVIEWS

INTRODUCTION

Each joint review should provide clear, well evidenced and well considered judgements about performance that can be understood and acted upon by a wide range of stakeholders, locally and nationally.

All these stakeholders have proper expectations that the final judgements are consistent, rigorously tested and demonstrated conclusively in the report made to the local authority.

How judgements are made

The joint review is not an inspection of specific services, nor an examination of individual practice. It is designed to provide a general overview of the whole social services authority's performance, by exposing a diagonal 'slice' across and through the organisation, connecting the experience of users and carers with the policies and decision-making of councillors and senior managers. It examines the self-assessment of the authority and compares it with actual experience at the frontline. Reviewers talk with staff at all levels and with the key staff from the council's main partner organisations.

The review draws on a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence and seeks to explain the differences and gaps in the story they tell. This 'diagonal slice' is complementary to the evaluation and scrutiny of others, such as SSIW and WAO, and to the internal processes of the organisation in managing its performance. The process culminates in the production of an overall judgement that is informative, can be understood by the public and will allow comparison between authorities.

At each stage of the review, the team will form provisional judgements on the authority's performance. These develop and evolve as more evidence is gathered and analysed. Some of them are shared at key points in the process, to focus the work of the team and to allow the local authority opportunities to engage in dialogue about the issues and to provide additional evidence.

Once all the evidence has been gathered and assessed, there follows a rigorous process of challenge both within the joint review team and by experienced moderators before the final conclusions are shared with the local authority and other key stakeholders. This is intended to ensure that any judgements:

- draw on the whole range of qualitative and quantitative evidence;
- derive from correct application of the joint review methodology;
- are rigorously tested against known criteria;
- are deliberate, fair, consistent, informed and free from bias.

Judgements and quality assurance

The review process as a whole is designed to ensure that the judgements reached by the team achieve these standards but there are also specific safeguards of quality:

- management of the process by two properly appointed and accountable organisations, SSIW and WAO;
- consistent moderation of judgements by senior managers within these organisations;
- transparent criteria for reaching judgements;
- judgements exercised by reviewers who are accountable, have relevant experience and meet the competence standards required by SSIW and WAO

- use of teams that contain reviewers and lay assessors with complementary skills and perspectives;
- use of a comprehensive and uniformly applied methodology that is based upon best practice;
- triangulation of evidence obtained from a wide range of sources and using a variety of approaches;
- an appeals process that is fair and authoritative.

The overall judgement

The overall judgement involves reaching conclusions in respect of two key performance dimensions:

- *How good are the services?*
- *How well placed is the authority to sustain and improve services?*

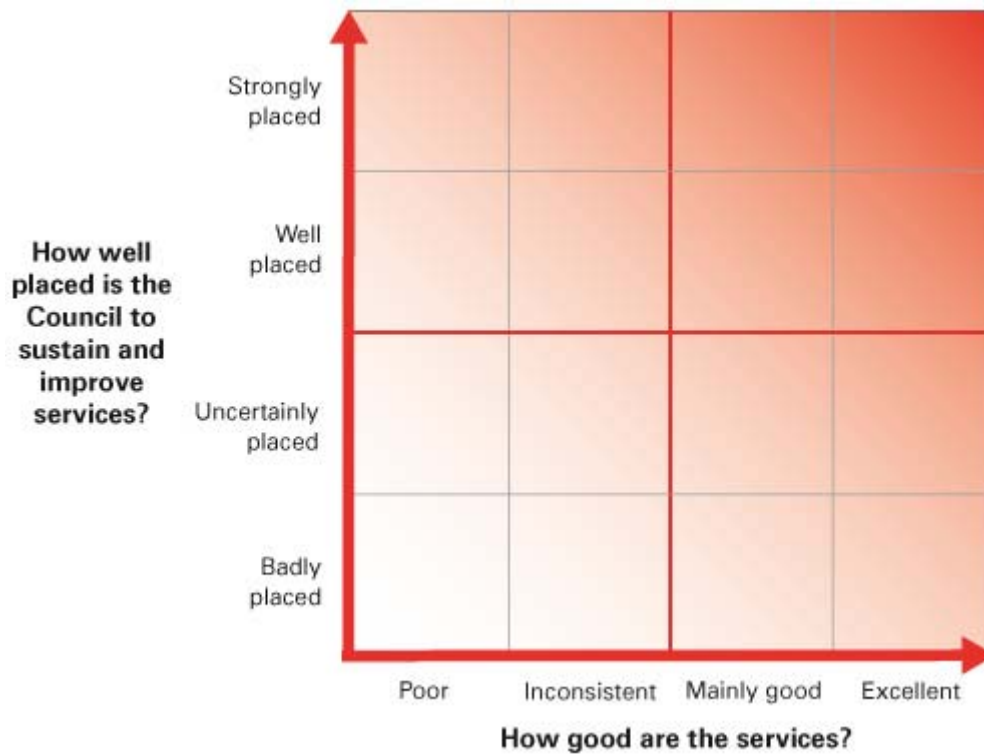
Each of the two dimensions has a four-point rating scale.

<i>How good are the services?</i>	<i>How well placed is the authority to sustain and improve services?</i>
Poor	Badly placed
Inconsistent	Uncertainly placed
Mainly good	Well placed
Excellent	Strongly placed

The judgement is presented by showing the authority's position on a performance matrix.

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Exhibit 1 The Joint Review Performance Matrix



The matrix presents these overall conclusions consistently and clearly. It enables citizens to compare their council with others and contributes to political accountability.

The basis for judgements

Each dimension incorporates seven domains.

How good are the services?

<i>Getting help</i>
Access to services
Assessment
Care management and review
<i>The services provided</i>
Range of services provided
Quality of services provided
<i>The effect on people's lives</i>

Arrangement to protect vulnerable people
Success in promoting independence and social inclusion.

How well placed is the authority to sustain and improve performance?

<i>Shaping services</i>
Resources
Planning and partnerships
Commissioning and contracting
<i>Delivering social services</i>
Workforce
Performance management
<i>Providing direction</i>
Leadership and culture
Corporate and political support and scrutiny.

These areas are reflected throughout all the stages of a review and provide a common structure for collecting evidence, making judgements and writing reports.

For each of the 14 domains, this document provides (in Appendix 1):

- a definition of what is being measured;
- indicative areas for examination;
- the basis for judgement.

Reaching a judgement

The joint review team will reach a judgement in respect of all the domains, using the rating scale for each dimension and applying the relevant basis for judgement. For example, access will be rated as poor, inconsistent, mainly good or well established and effective. *Workforce* will be rated as not well placed (to sustain and improve

services), uncertainly placed, reasonably placed or well placed. These individual judgements are included in the final report.

The overall judgement in each dimension (and so the matrix position) is determined initially by collating the individual judgements in all the seven relevant domains for that dimension.

However, application of the rating system to achieve the overall judgement may be moderated by a range of factors. For example, some of the fourteen domains may be given greater weighting, to ensure that the judgements for each of the two dimensions properly reflect either critical success factors (such as effective systems to protect vulnerable people) or serious concerns (such as systemic and entrenched weaknesses in one or more major service areas that are not being tackled).

The definition of a major service area would include:

- children's services
- the usual service user categories in adult services (e.g. mental health services, services for people with a learning disability, older people's services, etc.).

There can be no absolute definition of serious concerns. However, government statutes and guidelines provide an important starting point. The protocol describing how the National Assembly for Wales will respond to serious concerns about local authority social services (Section 3.10 in the Handbook) states that these may include the following:

Practice:

- frequent or very serious failure to meet statutory requirements or failure to follow guidance without appropriate justification
- failure to protect vulnerable people from actual or potential harm

- significant unfairness in dealing with individuals entitled to service
- persistent under-performance on key indicators

Staffing and management:

- lack of suitable staff in key positions
- lack of effective guidance and quality control
- failure to respond to concerns raised by SSIW or similar bodies, or to take corrective action following justified complaints
- deliberate attempts by senior managers to mislead or misinform

Policy:

- unfair discrimination
- flagrant breach of guidance

External relations:

- breakdown in working relationships with key partners
- serious and persistent adverse publicity, likely to undermine public confidence in the service.

Whatever the service under consideration, the joint review will consider whether the weaknesses are:

- dangerous;
- systematic (i.e. not just due to individuals' judgements);
- widespread (i.e. relating to more than one team or unit);
- persistent (i.e. lasting over several months);
- current (i.e. not yet resolved).

Dispute resolution

Scope

This section sets out a procedure for dealing with cases in which a local authority challenges one or more findings or judgements of the review.

A separate paper sets out a procedure for dealing with complaints about the conduct of a review or reviewer. There may be occasions on which a challenge to a finding or judgement is based in whole or in part on a complaint about conduct. In such a case, the two procedures must operate in parallel.

Normal process

The lead reviewer drafts the report, based on the findings of the review subject to internal and external moderation and sub-editing. The review support co-ordinator sends the draft report to the local authority (chief executive and director of social services) for comment on matters of accuracy and clarification. The local authority is asked to submit written comment within an agreed period.

The lead reviewer will consider any comments and:

- correct any factual inaccuracies;
- provide any necessary clarification;
- attempt to resolve any other matters that do not alter the agreed and moderated findings of the team.

The lead reviewer may, as appropriate, request further evidence from the local authority or discuss further with the local authority the substance of the points raised. The lead reviewer may also, as appropriate, discuss with the review team and moderator and lead managers any point raised by the local authority which may justify a change in the findings.

The lead reviewer may not make any significant change to the findings or judgements without the agreement of the moderator or lead managers.

The lead reviewer will inform the local authority of changes made to the report in the light of the local authority's comments.

Challenges to judgements

If the local authority challenges any of the formal judgements of the review (under each domain or the overall judgement grid), the lead reviewer will explain to the local authority the basis for the judgement and consider the grounds given by the local authority for a change. If the lead reviewer considers the judgement should stand, s/he should inform the local authority accordingly.

If the lead reviewer considers that there may be justification for a change, s/he should discuss this with the moderator. If the lead reviewer and moderator (after any appropriate discussion with other members of the review team) agree the change is justified, the lead reviewer should inform the local authority.

Further challenge

If the local authority still does not accept the findings or judgements of the review, it should be invited to state its grounds for disagreement in writing. The lead managers will consider these grounds and make a final decision. The lead managers will inform the authority of the decision and the reasons for it.

Access

What is being measured?

How far the authority helps people to find out what help is available and how to get it; how far the authority encourages use of services by all those who are eligible

Areas for examination

1. The provision of information about services, eligibility criteria, prioritisation and the assessment process.
2. Efforts to tackle obstacles to access experienced by those with disabilities or caused by factors such as geography, linguistic preference or social exclusion (including shared access arrangements, outreach work and electronic access).
3. Involvement of users and carers in evaluating and improving information and access arrangements.
4. The referral network
5. Duty and other systems for receiving enquiries from all potential sources (including outside office hours and electronic access).
6. Referral-taking (including correct identification of concern/need and obtaining relevant information).
7. The screening process (including an explicit decision about prioritising a response, the existence and use of eligibility criteria).
8. The response (including a clear outcome such as emergency intervention).
9. Unallocated assessment work and the management of waiting lists.
10. Systems for monitoring the effectiveness of access arrangements.

Key concepts

Responsiveness to need; co-ordination; timeliness; reliability; consistency; fairness; empowerment; inclusivity; well managed risk; extent of compliance with national standards and frameworks

Basis for judgement

- Provision of comprehensive and accessible information, in relevant languages and formats, to the public about all services
- Presence of well-established and effective arrangements for receiving and managing referrals (including good referral networks with other organisations)
- Presence of accessible, reliable and well-publicised arrangements for members of the public to make contact with your services, both during the working day and out of office hours
- Promptness and effectiveness of response to enquirers and referrers, that is sensitive to their needs (significant delays or gaps in making contact, including the management and scale of waiting lists)
- Useful systems for monitoring the effectiveness of access arrangements.

Assessment

What is being measured?

How far service users or carers receive an assessment of their needs that is timely and conforms to relevant guidance in respect of content and quality

Areas for examination

1. Assessments completed within required time scales and updated as necessary.
2. Conformity to national frameworks or other relevant guidance
3. Information-gathering (including service user's own views, access to relevant sources of information, arrangements for specialist expertise and involvement by other professionals).
4. Informed analysis (including assessment and management of risk, equality issues).
5. Protocols for sharing information between agencies and professionals, including joint arrangements.
6. Assessments shared with service users or carers.
7. Waiting lists for assessment and the management of waiting lists.
8. Systems for monitoring the effectiveness of assessment arrangements.

Key concepts

Focus on outcomes; proportionality; involvement by users and carers; timeliness; co-ordination; efficiency; fairness; responsiveness to need; consistency; well managed risk; compliance with national standards and frameworks

Basis for judgement

- Presence and effectiveness of clear systems to determine eligibility and priority
- Assessments that comply with guidance/standards in respect of timeliness, quality, content and updating
- Service users and carers involved in their assessments, which are then shared with them
- Access to specialist expertise in assessment (e.g. occupational therapy, medical/nursing, police)

Care management and review

What is being measured?

The extent to which

- **service users have a good, up-to-date written care plan which is grounded in the assessment, specifies the services to be provided and intended outcomes, and addresses identified needs and risks;**
- **care plans are reviewed effectively at the intervals stipulated/agreed**

Areas for examination

1. Content of plans (including the quality of care planning, involvement of service users, planning towards identified outcomes).
2. Links to service provision (including care managers' awareness of different service options and gaps, liaison with service providers, resourcing of care plans).
3. Care management processes (including appropriate allocation and workloads, the management of risk, ongoing involvement with service users/carers, explicit decision-making, timely and appropriate closure of cases).
4. Systems for reviewing care plans (including timeliness, content and quality, evaluation of plans and their implementation, involvement of service users and carers, avoidance of drift).
5. Unallocated cases, cases waiting and inactive cases.
6. Extent of joint working with other agencies or professionals (including multi-disciplinary and inter-agency sharing of information).
7. Arrangements for transferring cases between teams, service areas and divisions (especially at key transition points).
8. Communication between case manager and service user/carer.
9. Managing termination or change of service provision.

10. Compliance with the requirements of statute, regulations and guidance.
11. Links between assessment, plans, services and outcomes (stated and achieved).
12. Effectiveness of case recording and the use made of case files.

Key concepts

Focus on outcomes; involvement by users and carers; timely processes; efficiency; matching needs and services; co-ordinated work across agencies, professions and service providers; well managed risk; consistent involvement by practitioners; workload management; compliance with national standards and frameworks

Basis for judgement

- Capacity to appropriately allocate, transfer and close all current cases
- Presence of a written care plan specifying services to be provided, intended outcome for all current cases and how risks will be managed
- Whether the service elements of care plans are properly resourced, costed and delivered
- Whether cases are reviewed appropriately
- The consideration given to the views of users and carers in developing and agreeing care plans

Range of services provided

What is being measured?

The extent to which users receive services which:

- **meet assessed needs;**
- **keep them safe;**
- **help them to live in an appropriate setting;**
- **promote independence and a voice.**

Areas for examination

1. The range and volume of services available (including flexibility, unmet need, costs and choice).
2. The allocation of services (including access, targeting, matching, service thresholds, co-ordination with other agencies and service providers, finance and charging).
3. The availability of services and the speed with which they are made available.
4. The flexibility of services around the needs of users (including the provision of information about services, processes for introduction).
5. Relationship to strategies and key performance indicators (including accommodation/placement, reablement, intermediate care).
6. Equitable application of systems for rationing the use of services.

Key concepts

Meeting needs; availability; flexibility; choice; cost; equitable allocation; unmet need; partnership working; user and carer involvement

Basis for judgement

- Availability of the right range and volume of services to meet assessed need
- Progress of partnership arrangements with others to provide services (including integrated and specialist)
- Presence of significant shortfalls/delays/excessive costs in providing services
- Flexibility of services around the needs of users
- Effective arrangements for consulting about the range of services and the development/design of future service provision

Quality of services provided

What is being measured?

The extent to which services are provided in ways that conform to required standards of care, with respect for individual needs and circumstances.

Areas for examination

1. Service delivery and consistency (including responsiveness to problems and emergencies).
2. Service quality and quality of care (including explicit standards, conformity with relevant standards, respect for individual circumstances and needs).
3. The involvement of service users in determining how services will be delivered (including systems for dealing with complaints, representations and compliments).
4. Outcomes for service users (including objectives achieved, needs met, changes of circumstances).
5. Systems for assuring quality.
6. The extent to which services are culturally sensitive and value diversity in respect of race, religion and linguistic preference.
7. The extent to which services empower service users and carers (individually and collectively) and encourage appropriate levels of independence.

Key concepts

Promptness; consistency; reliability; quality of care; focus on outcomes and enabling; empowerment of service users and carers; delivering equality and diversity; resolution of complaints; compliance with national standards

Basis for judgement

- Provision of reliable standards of care, with respect for individual needs and circumstances
- Extent to which the views and circumstances of service users and carers (including ethnicity) are reflected in the services provided
- Responsiveness of services to problems and emergencies
- Whether complaints, representations and compliments are welcomed and used to improve the quality of services
- Responsiveness to issues raised by the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales

Arrangements to protect vulnerable people

What is being measured?

The effectiveness of arrangements for protecting vulnerable people and managing risk.

Areas for examination

1. Response to allegations of abuse or neglect (including out of office hours, multi-disciplinary assessment, systems for collating concerns arising in different places and at different times).
2. The management of risk and harm (including the consistent operation of agreed procedures, within social services and on a multi-agency basis).
3. The provision of services that properly safeguard vulnerable people (including service shortfalls).
4. The involvement of service users in decision-making (including proper consideration of their individual needs and circumstances, use of advocacy services).
5. Effectiveness of inter-agency safeguarding bodies.
6. Out-of-hours services that can respond to emergencies without undermining independence.
7. Safeguards in recruitment and selection processes.
8. Systems for evaluating practice and information-sharing.

Key concepts

Responsiveness; effective assessment and management of risk; consistency; co-ordination of multi-disciplinary responses; expertise and judgement; compliance with procedures; involvement of service users

Basis for judgement

- Effective responses to allegations of abuse or neglect, in terms of good quality risk assessment and risk management processes? (including out of hours)
- Provision of services needed to safeguard vulnerable people
- Multi-agency procedures and safeguarding bodies working well
- Case decision-making underpinned by awareness of risk factors
- Good use of safeguards in recruitment, selection and supervision processes (for staff, volunteers, etc.) that protect vulnerable groups from abuse
- Effectiveness of systems for collating concerns arising in different places at different times

Success in promoting independence and social inclusion

What is being measured?

The extent to which service users are enabled to achieve the best possible social outcomes, in terms of independence, overcoming barriers to inclusion and developing abilities.

Areas for examination

1. Support for people to remain in the community or family setting (including support for carers).
2. Improvement in the quality of the physical and social environment (including opportunities for social interaction, empowerment, removing barriers to participation).
3. Services to reduce dependency and social dysfunction (including employment, education and training opportunities, assuring personal finance, direct payments).
4. Promotion of equality and diversity (including work to engage with potential service users in hard to reach groups).
5. Efforts to mainstream service provision.
6. Performance in relation to hospital discharges and the balanced use of institutional care.

Key concepts

Independence; equality; diversity; empowerment; life chances; community support; reablement; normalisation

Basis for judgement

- Success at supporting people in the community, or family setting, rather than in residential or institutional care
- Effectiveness of support for carers
- Success in providing services to support independence and develop life skills
- Promotion of equality and diversity in your services, including hard to reach groups
- Availability and take-up of direct payments

Resources

What is being measured?

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The extent to which the authority has sound arrangements for using and managing its resources, including finance and assets.

Areas for examination

1. Overall financial status of the authority.
2. Financial planning for social services that links statutory duties, corporate policies and priorities, resource allocation, service planning and commissioning.
3. Budget-setting processes and evidence of budget realignments in pursuit of strategic goals.
4. Asset management strategies.
5. Arrangements for budget management and control (including schemes of delegation, monitoring and financial information systems, support to budget holders).
6. Arrangements for charging and income collection.
7. Resourcing of individual services and service areas in respect of assets and facilities.
8. The use made of information about comparative unit costs and the costs of individual care plans.
9. Exercises to improve delivery of value for money.
10. Staff awareness of their responsibility for managing resources.

Key concepts

Sustainability; accountability; prioritisation; delegation; income maximisation; flexibility; comprehensive and reliable information (e.g. commitments, forecasting); effective strategy formulation and implementation; outcomes for service users; involving stakeholders; engagement with national priorities and initiatives; corporate working

Basis for judgement

- Whether resource allocation decisions (including capital planning programme) are effectively linked to strategic and service planning priorities
- Extent to which social services are able to meet commitments and remain within allocated budgets
- Whether services are adequately resourced in assets and facilities, with clear policies explaining how resources are distributed between different service groups
- Ability to meet your commitments and keep to agreed budgets
- Effectiveness of systems of devolved budget responsibility and budget control
- Effectiveness of steps taken to achieve value for money in your services
- Whether the budget-setting and financial processes include a rigorous review of current and future spending needs
- Joint investment plans with key partners

Planning and partnerships

What is being measured?

The authority's ability to shape the pattern and delivery of services through formulating and implementing plans, internally and with key stakeholders.

Areas for examination

1. Planning structures and processes, including engagement with all major stakeholders.
2. Links to community plans and corporate strategies.
3. Analysis of need and service demands.
4. Service plans/strategies and their basis in evidence.
5. Fulfilment of statutory planning obligations.
6. Links between longer- term strategic or service plans and operational or business plans.
7. Involvement of service users and carers in planning and developing services.
8. Service improvements or changing patterns of services in response to plans.

Key concepts

Needs analysis; collaborative working; strategy formulation; service outcomes; linking plans at different tiers; service user/carer involvement; engagement with national priorities and initiatives

Basis for judgement

- Whether your planning structures and processes effectively engage all major stakeholders, including your own staff and users and carers

APPENDIX 1

- Whether your service plans are firmly based on an analysis of need and service demands
- Fulfilment of statutory planning obligations
- Clear links between corporate, service, operational/business and financial plans
- Effective partnership working at strategic and operational levels, to deliver concrete outcomes, key policies, plans and initiatives

Commissioning and contracting

What is being measured?

The extent to which the authority's commissioning and contracting practices ensure that it is able to convert plans into purchasing intentions so that services are provided by the most appropriate provider and deliver best value.

Areas for examination

1. Range of commissioning strategies published and implemented.
2. Links to strategic and service plans.
3. Access to information about profiles of need/demand and the range of service options, including market mapping.
4. Arrangements to ensure consideration of potential partnerships within and between authorities and with other providers, including the voluntary sector.
5. Service-wide strategic commissioning that matches needs and resources to deliver best value services.
6. Arrangements for contracting, monitoring and reviewing services (including those provided in-house) and links to performance management.
7. Corporate procurement policies and the application of best practice standards.
8. Relationships with service providers across the social care sector.
9. Systems to evaluate the effectiveness of commissioning strategies.

Key concepts

Needs analysis; market mapping; managing supply and demand; cost; monitoring; stakeholder engagement; strategy implementation; best value; flexibility; fairness; impact on service users and carers; joint arrangements; benchmarking

Basis for judgement

- Access to information about profiles of need/demand and the range of service options
- Progress made with service-wide strategic commissioning strategies that match needs and resources
- Effective arrangements to ensure consideration of potential partnerships within and between authorities and with other agencies, including the voluntary sector
- Capacity for effective contracting, monitoring and reviewing services, including those provided in-house

Workforce

What is being measured?

How far the authority recruits and deploys sufficient numbers of staff and carers with the appropriate qualifications, training, experience, knowledge and skills to undertake their defined roles.

Areas for examination

1. Workforce or human resources strategy for social services and for the social care sector as a whole.
2. Staff deployment and skills mix.
3. Recruitment and retention.
4. Staff development and training, including training needs analysis.
5. Personnel policies and procedures.
6. Human resources and social care workforce development partnerships.
7. Dissemination and adherence to the Care Council codes of practice.
8. Progress and extent of registration of eligible staff with the Care Council.
9. Industrial relations.

Key concepts

Comprehensive and reliable data; effective strategy formulation and implementation; outcomes for service users; involving stakeholders; engagement with national priorities and initiatives; corporate working

Basis for judgement

- Ability to recruit and retain sufficient staff with suitable qualifications and experience to carry out the work required
- Whether staff (of all disciplines and grades) are effectively developed and their competence enhanced/ensured
- Progress with longer-term workforce planning across the social care sector as a whole and with human resources/workforce development partnerships
- Progress on the development of human resources and social care workforce development partnerships
- Dissemination and adherence to the Care Council codes of practice
- Progress and extent of registration of eligible staff with the Care Council

Performance management

What is being measured?

The authority's capacity for managing performance in ways that ensure staff and services meet the standards that have been set for them and deliver improvement targets

Areas for examination

1. Practice and service standards and systems for monitoring them.
2. Systems of supervision and appraisal.
3. Frequency of case audits and other quality assurance exercises.
4. Performance monitoring on the basis of performance targets and indicators, using information systems that are fit for purpose.
5. Complaints and representations system, including its use to identify and remedy service shortfalls.
6. Involvement by service users and carers in developing standards and monitoring performance.
7. Alignment between the corporate and social services agendas, systems and processes.
8. Review/inspection findings and the response made.
9. Operational or business planning and systems for monitoring performance against objectives or targets.
10. Achievement of national and local priorities or key targets
11. ICT systems.

Key concepts

Standards, targets, audit, quality assurance, compliance, accountability, stakeholder involvement; evidence of improvement

Basis for judgement

- Baseline standards of practice and service delivery in place, with clear performance targets and indicators?
- Use of comprehensive systems for supervision and appraisal, with systems to monitor delivery
- Effectiveness of case audits, contract monitoring and other quality assurance exercises
- Regular performance monitoring using management information systems that are fit for purpose
- Strong links between planning, accountability and performance management

Leadership and culture

What is being measured?

The extent to which managers and staff in social services can demonstrate effectiveness in meeting their individual and collective responsibility for delivering quality services.

Areas for examination

1. Structural arrangements including clarity of roles, responsibilities and delegations.
2. The presence of agreed key principles, aims and objectives for social services (including accurate analysis of current strengths and areas for development) and the means of communicating them.
3. The management culture and whether senior managers model a way of doing business and treating people which can be reflected appropriately through the organisation to the point of service delivery.
4. Leadership capacity incorporating both professional and business management and the ability to fulfil statutory roles.
5. Well-managed leadership of change to deliver better outcomes for service users at an appropriate pace.
6. The use made of management information and project planning to achieve planned changes.
7. The response to external evaluations and evidence of problems.
8. Staff morale and participation in service improvement.
9. Relationships with key stakeholders, including partner agencies and service users.

Key concepts

Organisational culture; leadership; effective strategy formulation and implementation; change and project management; responsiveness;

involving stakeholders; communication; engagement with national priorities and initiatives; corporate working

Basis for judgement

- Leadership and direction for all social services functions, with agreed key principles, aims and objectives and sound decision-making
- Clarity of roles, responsibilities, delegations and organisational structure
- Adequate leadership and management capacity incorporating both professional and business management and the ability to fulfil statutory roles
- Effective communication and staff contribution to organisational development
- Whether senior managers model a way of doing business and treating people which can be reflected appropriately through the organisation to the point of service delivery
- Appropriate organisational stability and well-managed leadership of change, including effective implementation of plans and projects
- Rigorous arrangements in place for reviewing services and performance on the basis of self-assessment with rigorous challenge, comparison, tests of competitiveness and consultation

Corporate and political support and scrutiny

What is being measured?

The extent to which the local authority as a whole contributes to achieving social services statutory responsibilities and priorities

Areas for examination

1. Links between service aims and corporate aims, setting a strategic direction for social services within the local authority.
2. Effect of corporate management arrangements on the management of social services.
3. Social services' contribution to the delivery of corporate priorities.
4. The local authority's approach to delivering improvements in social services by using Wales Programme for Improvement processes.
5. Effectiveness of political leadership in valuing, representing and setting a direction for social services.
6. Effectiveness of political arrangements in scrutinising performance and securing public accountability.
7. Elected members' understanding of key social services priorities.
8. Elected members' performance in meeting their responsibilities for making critical decisions.
9. The extent of corporate and cross-cutting work in delivering the social care agenda.
10. The authority's engagement with key stakeholders, including partner agencies, the voluntary sector and service users or carers.
11. Corporate working to promote equality, diversity and social inclusion for service users and staff.

Key concepts

Effective strategy formulation and implementation; leadership; scrutiny; prioritisation; corporate management; outcomes for service users; involving stakeholders; engagement with national priorities and initiatives; ownership of problems

Basis for judgement

- Link between service aims and corporate aims
- Quality of decision-making
- Effect of corporate management arrangements on the management of social services
- Effectiveness of political leadership in valuing, representing and setting a direction for social services
- Effectiveness of political arrangements in scrutinising performance and securing public accountability
- Member and corporate management awareness of the strategic direction and priorities set for social services by the local authority
- The extent to which corporate efforts contribute to delivering the authority's agenda for social care and social services
- A sustained focus on what matters most