Dear Mr House

I would like to thank you, and the other members of the CPB, who were able to attend the Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 13th of Wednesday the March. The Panel found your presentation most informative, and welcomed the opportunity to receive feedback on the work of the Panel to date, and how we can best move forward in the future. The Panel also found it very useful to get your opinion on how the Scrutiny Panel could be more effective, and what the priority areas for the Partnership will be in the future.

After the CPB members had left the meeting the Panel had its own discussion about how they could best move forward in the scrutiny of the CPB. They agreed that the scrutiny work over the past year had been too broad and they needed to focus on one topic and get a deeper understanding of the issues to be able to scrutinise it effectively.

However the panel also agreed that they need to ensure they scrutinised the work of the Board and not simply looking at a particular workstream or activity. The Panel agreed that they will therefore ensure that they do not focus purely on the activities on the ground but will focus on the issues around collaboration such as sharing resources, information and knowledge, communication across different partners, joint commissioning, leadership, allocation of responsibility, problem solving etc.

The Panel did however feel that to look at these issues in isolation, without focussing on a particular topic, would be too abstract and cause difficulties for effective scrutiny and meaningful recommendations.

The Panel therefore agreed that they should focus on one topic for the following year, but use that topic as a vehicle for scrutinising the work of the CPB, focussing on
partnership working, issues surrounding collaboration and eventual outcomes for the citizen.
The panel then discussed which area they would focus on for the following year. The main areas that the Panel felt were equally worthy were:

- Asset Management
- NEETs
- Integrated Health and Social Care
- Public Health
- Safeguarding Children

After considerable debate the Panel agreed that they would initially focus on the issue of NEETS for the following year and then decide which area to prioritise next after they had finished their scrutiny of that area. The Panel therefore agreed that they would use NEETS as a vehicle to scrutinise the work of the CPB, focusing on the partnership issues.

Resolved:
That the Panel would focus its next years work on the topic of NEETS but using that topic as a vehicle to scrutinise the work of the CPB, focusing on the partnership elements.

The Panel felt that this would also help to address the issue surrounding duplication of scrutiny across the council committees and the Panel. By focusing on the work of the partnership through the NEETs issue, the Panel could have a very specific and dedicated role which it can communicate to each other committees and report its findings back to the relevant committee, to ensure scrutiny is not being duplicated.

However, since the Panel made this decision it has come to our attention that the welsh Audit Office (WAO) are conducting a Wales wide study of NEETS which Cardiff will be significantly involved in. Officers have therefore contacted the inspectors who are undertaking these investigations to see what will be covered, when and how the scrutiny Panel could best work alongside them. As a result of these discussions the Panel have decided to delay their scrutiny of NEETs until the third meeting of this year, which will be held around December time. This will enable the panel to use the information gathered from the WAO investigation as well as relieving pressure involved in giving evidence to the WAO and allow the panel to scrutinise the NEETs issue more effectively.

The Panel have therefore had to explore another topic for their first two meetings of the year, which will be held in May and September. As asset management was highlighted as a priority by the Board, the panel have chosen to scrutinise the public sector asset management agenda, and how the Board are working in relation to this, in the first two meetings. The Panel will then move on to their more in depth scrutiny of NEETs beginning in December.
Resolved, post meeting:
That in light of the WAO national study into NEETs, the Panel will await the publication of their report to provide additional valuable information for the Panel before commencing the scrutiny of NEETS. The Panel will therefore focus the work of its first two meetings on public sector asset management and use this as the vehicle by which to scrutinise the work of the Board and how effectively partnership working is taking place.

The Panel were also conscious that they had conducted effective scrutiny over the last year and wanted to ensure that they followed up on their previous recommendations, to see what actions had been taken as a result. The Panel therefore agreed that they would review their recommendations from the previous year and request follow up information when they felt appropriate time had been given for actions to be taken.

Resolved:
That the Panel revisit their recommendations from the previous year and follow up their progress with the CPB when they felt enough time had been taken for actions to be implemented.

The Panel also wanted to get a greater understanding of the CPB itself and what happens at the CPB meetings themselves. This issue was raised with you during some of the discussions and I believe you said you would be happy for scrutiny Panel members to attend some of the CPB meetings to get a better understanding of how the CPB operates.

Resolved
Emyr Williams to liaise with Rachel Jones to arrange Panel members attendance at one or more of the CPB meetings.

Finally, the Panel members discussed the response to their letter from the meeting they held in January. The Panel were happy with the response in general but there was one issue that they would like further clarification on.

Recommendation one highlighted the Panels view that there needed to be an “overarching monitoring framework that could monitor a child and family’s development throughout their life and could be used to measure the impact and cost benefit of interventions and used by all partners involved in similar activity. This could also be used by areas which had not received interventions to help prove the impact that interventions were having in an area compared to those which had not received the intervention.”

Recommendation 2 requested that the links between different support mechanisms for families, throughout a child’s life, be mapped and that the links between each of those support services be evidenced to ensure children / families do not ‘go off the radar.’
The response to both recommendations highlighted how the Families First programme will use the Team around the Family (TAF) service to implement a Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) which will provide a universal way for these services to plan and monitor the services delivered to the family and the impact that is being achieved. As this is a long term partnership delivery system it will also allow the families to be continually monitored and signposted to appropriate services as their levels of need change over the years.

The Panel accepted this response and look forward to seeing the results of this approach in the years to come. However the Panel do feel that it important to note, that not all family support services are being delivered through the Families First programme. In fact nearly a third of services to children and families in Cardiff fall outside of this Programmes remit, particularly those focused on children and families with the most need (e.g. disabled children). Therefore the Panel would like some further details on how the CPB plans to engage with agencies outside of the Families First programme, when addressing recommendations one and two.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Jones
Stand in Chair – Cardiff Partnership Board Scrutiny Panel