



**Cafcass Cymru Advisory Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2019
Cafcass Cymru Offices, Cathays Park, Cardiff**

Present:

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| Jackie Murphy (JM) | Chair |
| Paul Apreda (PA) | FNF Both Parents Matter Cymru |
| Sarah Coldrick (SC) | AFA Cymru |
| Beth Flowers (BF) | Office of Children's Commissioner for Wales |
| Gareth Jenkins (GJ) | ADSS Cymru |
| Dan Ronson (DR) | Family Mediation Council |
| Rachel Thomas (RT) | Office of Children's Commissioner for Wales |
| Nigel Brown (NB) | Cafcass Cymru |
| Matthew Pinnell (MP) | Cafcass Cymru |
| Rhianon James (RJ) | Cafcass Cymru (secretariat) |

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.

2. Introductions and Apologies

Round the table introductions were led by the Chair.

Apologies were received from:

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|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Catrin Cracroft | Law Society Representative |
| Viv Laing | NSPCC Cymru |
| Des Mannion | NSPCC Cymru |
| Sharon Lovell | NYAS Cymru |
| Sean Oneill | Children in Wales |
| James O'Reilly | Legal Services Commission |
| Zoe Richards | Learning Disability Wales |
| Hugh Simkiss | HMCTS |
| Sue Thomas | Magistrates Association |

3. Minutes of meeting held on 14 November 2018 – sign off prior to publication on Cafcass Cymru website

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters arising

It was noted that the date for July meeting has changed and will now be held on 9 July at 2.30 pm at Cathays Park, Cardiff.

5. Referrals and Performance

Public Law

NB provided an overview of the referrals and performance figures covering 1 April 2018 to 28 February 2019. This year has been steadier overall with a small decrease of 6%. It was noted that 50% of section 31 applications are urgent hearings and NB stated that this poses a real challenge for Cafcass Cymru. This issue is also being explored by the President's Public Law Working Group.

SC highlighted the large number of non-agency adoptions. Following discussion it was suggested Cafcass Cymru could undertake work in the future to drill into the information it holds on adoption applications.

Private Law

NB reported that private law work has seen a further increase with a 5% increase in safeguarding enquiry reports in the year to date. Cafcass Cymru and HMCTS are working very closely with the police forces across Wales to ensure that the safeguarding checks requested from the police are returned within timescale.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Work is continuing to be undertaken to improve KPI3. KPIs 1, 2 and 4 have all attained the 95% target.

6. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Inspection Report

NB stated that he was delighted with CIW Inspection Report and thanked the Chair and members for their contribution. Members had received a copy of the report in advance of the meeting and NB shared an overview of the key findings.

NB stated that Cafcass Cymru is preparing a response to CIW setting out the actions it intends to take in response to the areas for development identified during the inspection.

GJ said the Cafcass Cymru should be very proud of its achievements as should members of the Advisory Committee. He stated that the Inspection Report provides a very balanced picture.

7. Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) Review – Short Report and Feedback

SC spoke about the paper prepared by AFA Cymru in connection with the Family Justice Council's Special Guardianship Working Group. Members had been provided with a copy of the document in advance of the meeting.

In addition, SC reported that AFA Cymru is currently undertaking a piece of work for Welsh Government mapping a framework for SGO support across Wales. AFA Cymru will explore examples of good practice in Wales and prepare a draft framework which sets out a 'core offer' of support that every family with special guardianship arrangements may expect.

Following a brief discussion, members agreed to bring this topic to a future meeting for a wider discussion.

The Chair thanked Sarah Coldrick for her interesting presentation.

Action: Secretariat to include this item on a future agenda

8. President of the Family Division's Private – Public Law Work Streams

NB provided an update on the President's Private and Public Law Work Streams. The continued high volume of public and private law applications to the Family Court and the absence of the possibility of new legislation to reform the Family Justice System, have caused the President of the Family Division, Sir Andrew McFarlane, to establish two working groups to explore what opportunities there are for improvements within the existing frameworks for public and private law. Both groups will report back to him by the end of April in readiness for the President's conference in May, with a view that the President will spend the summer considering the evidence and will issue guidance at the end of the year.

NB stated that he had attended the Family Justice Board on 21 January in London where the focus of the discussion was on the Targeted Family Justice Review (TFJR) undertaken by Ministry of Justice. The TFJR was commissioned in response to the increase in care applications and variation in the rates of issuing between local authorities. Working with several local authorities in Wales and England, it has developed eight proposals which largely focus on influencing behaviour and changing practice within the various parts of the Family Justice System. The Ministry of Justice will take forward these proposals and develop a work programme in conjunction with members of the FJB.

Following a brief discussion, members agreed to bring this topic to a future meeting for a wider discussion.

Action: Secretariat to include this item on a future agenda

9. Family Justice Observatory (FJO) / Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) Project

At the last Advisory Committee meeting MP agreed to invite someone from FJO to provide an overview of the FJO and SAIL project to Committee members. Professor Karen Broadhurst was due to attend the meeting today to report on the work of the

FJO but was unable to attend. However, she has confirmed she will attend the meeting on 6 November.

In order to support the work of the FJO the Nuffield Foundation has agreed to fund a Data Platform and Analytics Service (DPAS). This will involve the transfer and availability of anonymised data that can be used by researchers for meaningful system-wide enquiry across key issues. Cafcass Cymru and Cafcass (England) are currently working with the FJO to transfer the organisations' administrative data in to SAIL Databank at Swansea University. .

Action: Secretariat to include this item on the agenda for 6 November.

10. Quality Assurance Learning and Improvement (QALI) – Summary of Practice Review

At the last meeting, Committee members asked if they could look at how quality reviews are completed. Suzanne Burgoyne (SB), Head of Operations, North Wales, prepared a Summary of Practice Review and copies were sent to members in advance of this meeting. SB will give a detailed presentation to members at the next Advisory Committee meeting on 9 July.

Action: Secretariat to include this item on the agenda for 9 July.

11. Any Other Business

- **Commission on Justice in Wales**

NB informed members that in September 2017 the previous First Minister established a Commission on Justice in Wales to review the operation of the justice system in Wales. The Commission has been taking evidence from a range of stakeholders and NB confirmed he gave evidence to the Commission on 1 February.

12. Dates for 2019

The dates for 2019 meeting were confirmed as follows:

9 July 2019 – 14:30 – 16:30

6 November 2019 – 09:30 – 11:30

All meetings will be held in Cardiff.

The Chair thanked members of Cafcass Cymru Advisory Committee for their valuable contribution to the meeting.

ACTION SHEET

| Agenda item number | Action | Lead |
|--|---|-------------|
| Item 7 – SGO Review – Short Report and Feedback | To include this item on a future agenda for wider discussion. | Secretariat |
| Item 8 – President of the Family Division’s Private and Public Law Work Streams | To include this item on a future agenda for wider discussion. | Secretariat |
| Item 9 – FJO / SAIL | Secretariat to include this item on the agenda for 6 November 2019. | Secretariat |
| Item 10 – QALI – Summary of Practice Review | To include this item on the agenda for 9 July 2019. | Secretariat |