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Date: 15th January 2020

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Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach on Tuesday, 21st January, 2020 at 5.00 pm to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christina Harrhy'.

Christina Harrhy
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

- | | Pages | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 | To receive apologies for absence. | |
| 2 | Mayor's Announcements. | |

1 - 2

A greener place Man gwyrddach

Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat



3 To receive petitions under Rule of Procedure 28(3).

4 Presentation of Awards.

5 Declarations of Interest.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

6 Leader's Announcement.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

7 Council held on 19th November 2019.

3 - 12

8 To receive and to answer questions received under Rule of Procedure 10(2).

To the Leader of Council from Councillor Kevin Etheridge.

To ask the Leader of Council to define the measures in regard to working together with opposition and backbench Councillors in moving issues forward in regard to Team Caerphilly, and how the Leader proposes to make Scrutiny Committees more challenging and effective in dealing with issues of concern for our residents, and if the Leader will make a statement on the new working approach with a timescale and action plan.

To receive and consider the following reports: -

9 Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2020/21

13 - 16

10 Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2018/19.

17 - 54

To receive and note the following information item under Rule of Procedure 16.2 (b):

11 Appropriation of Residential Properties (Urgent Item Cabinet 27th November 2019).

55 - 62

Circulation:

All Members And Appropriate Officers

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Agenda Item 2



CIVIC DIARY ENGAGEMENTS

20th November 2019 – 21st January 2020

November

- 26th Schools Anti Drink Drive Awards, Mayor's Parlour
- 27th Christmas Lunch with over 50's Forum, Lewis School Pengam
- 27th Young Promoters 'Under the Frozen Moon, Tir-y-berth Primary School
- 28th One Beat Voluntary Sectors Awards, Newbridge Vision Centre
- 28th Key Stage 3 & 4 Awards Ceremony, Blackwood Comprehensive School
- 29th Christmas Fayre, Trinity Fields School
- 29th Christmas Fayre, Crumlin

December

- 1st Salvation Army Community Carol Service, Risca
- 2nd Santa Appeal Visit, Creditsave
- 2nd Civic Carol Service, Newbridge School
- 3rd Santa Appeal Visit, Ecolab
- 3rd Santa Appeal Visit, Blackwood Comprehensive School
- 4th Santa Appeal Visit, General Dynamics
- 4th Christmas Lunch with Unison Retired Members
- 5th Santa Appeal Visit, Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni
- 5th Santa Appeal Visit, Link Financial
- 5th Action for Children 150th Anniversary Event, Cardiff
- 5th 100th Birthday, Ystrad Mynach
- 5th Music Service End of Term Concert, Lewis Girls School
- 8th West Mon Guides Carol Service, Abercarn
- 9th Christmas Concert, Trinity Fields School
- 10th Christmas Concert (Foundations phase), Trinity Fields School
- 10th Christmas Concert, Upper Rhymney Primary School
- 11th Christmas Fayre, ASD Centre, Risca Community School

- 11th Moose International Carol Service, Risca
- 13th CanDo's Carol Concert, Cascade
- 13th Caerphilly Community Chorus' Christmas Concert
- 15th Four Counties Youth Concert, City Hall, Cardiff
- 16th Young Promoters 'The Christmas Show', Park Primary School
- 17th Making a Difference Project (Llamau), Bargoed
- 18th Citizenship Ceremony, Penallta House
- 19th Community Carol Service, Newbridge
- 20th Carols and Presentation of Hampers by Markham Primary, Hill View Care Home, Aberbargoed
- 23rd Sapphire (65th) Wedding Anniversary Presentation , Senghenydd

January

- 15th Santa Appeal Presentation of Certificates, Mayor's Parlour
- 18th Open Quickstepfitness Gym, Bedwas

Agenda Item 7



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER 2019 AT 5.30PM

PRESENT:

Councillor J. Simmonds - Mayor
Councillor C. Andrews - Deputy Mayor

Councillors:

M. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, A.P. Angel, J. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, C. Bezzina, A. Collis, S. Cook, C. Cuss, W. David, D.T. Davies, M. Davies, N. Dix, C. Elsbury, K. Etheridge, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, Mrs C. Forehead, A. Gair, Ms J. Gale, N. George, C. Gordon, R.W. Gough, L. Harding, D. Harse, D. Havard, A.G. Higgs, A. Hussey, V. James, L. Jeremiah, G. Johnston, Mrs B.A. Jones, S. Kent, G. Kirby, Mrs A. Leonard, Ms P. Leonard, C.P. Mann, P. Marsden, B. Miles, S. Morgan, Mrs G.D. Oliver, B. Owen, Mrs T. Parry, Mrs L. Phipps, D.V. Poole, D.W.R. Preece, J. Pritchard, J. Ridgewell, J.E. Roberts, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, G. Simmonds, S. Skivens, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe, R. Whiting, L G. Whittle, T. Williams, W. Williams, B. Zaplatynski

Together with:-

C. HARRY (Interim Chief Executive), M.S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director of Communities), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), L. Donovan (Head of People Services), S. Harris (Interim Head of Business Improvement Services & Acting S151 Officer), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer) and R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

Also present:

N. Jenkins and G. Jones (Wales Audit Office)

1. WEB-CASTING FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Interim Chief Executive reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed and would be made publically available in live and archive form via the Council's website. She advised that decisions would be made via the electronic voting system.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L.J. Binding, D. Cushing, K. Dawson, Miss E. Forehead, J.E. Fussell, D.T. Hardacre, M.P. James, Mrs D. Price, J. Scriven, Mrs E. Stenner and J. Taylor.

3. MESSAGES FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor expressed his condolences to Councillor Donna Cushing following the tragic loss of her partner, and asked Members to keep her in their thoughts during this sad time.

The Mayor also gave a warm welcome to Councillor Kevin Etheridge on his return to Council following his recent illness. Councillor Etheridge thanked the Mayor for his kind words and expressed his appreciation to all those who had sent him messages of support and kept in touch with his family during his treatment and recovery, including fellow Members, Corporate Directors, staff at Blackwood Housing Office, local ward residents, and the Interim Chief Executive.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest under the Employees' Code of Conduct were received from Christina Harray (Interim Chief Executive) and Mark S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director of Communities) in respect of Agenda Item 13 (Recruitment for the Post of Chief Executive). Details are minuted with the respective item.

5. TO ELECT A LEADER OF COUNCIL AND NOTE THE PAYMENT OF A SENIOR SALARY

It was moved and seconded that Councillor Philippa Marsden be appointed as Leader of Caerphilly County Borough Council and receive a senior salary payment. By a show of hands, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that Councillor P. Marsden be appointed as Leader of Caerphilly County Borough Council and her receipt of a senior salary payment be noted.

Fellow Members offered their congratulations to Councillor Marsden on her appointment and highlighted the many skills and qualities that she would bring to the position of Leader.

Councillor Marsden thanked Members for their support and stated that it would be a true honour and privilege to serve as Leader of Caerphilly County Borough Council. She announced that the Cabinet would remain unchanged for the foreseeable future but that Council would be advised of any subsequent changes. The Leader also referred to the year ahead and announced that she looked forward to setting out her exciting plans in detail in January 2020.

6. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referred to the many events and visits that he and the Deputy Mayor have undertaken since the last meeting and referred to Members to the list of engagements included in the agenda papers at Agenda Item No. 4.

The Mayor highlighted the many Remembrance Services held across the county borough to honour past and present members of the Armed Forces and had been honoured to attend many of these services. Members were also advised of the recent Royal visit by HRH Princess Anne to the Sense TouchBase daycare centre for adults in Caerphilly. Finally, the Mayor highlighted the launch of the Litter Picking Hub at Bargoed Library, which included participants from local primary schools.

7. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 28(3)

It was noted that there were no petitions to be presented on this occasion.

8. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Chartered Institute of Public Relations Silver Award

Members were informed that the Council's Communications Team were recently awarded a CIPR Silver Award at the prestigious PRIDE Awards ceremony held in Cardiff Bay. These awards celebrate best practice in the Public Relations and Communications industry across Wales, and bring together the top communications teams from the private and public sector to celebrate success and recognise excellence.

The Communications Team received the Silver Award for their work in communicating the recent changes to parking enforcement across the county borough. The Council's 'Park Smart' campaign has been held up as an example of best practice, with elements being used by neighbouring authorities in their own communication work around parking enforcement.

Steve Pugh, Hayley Lancaster and Nick Rutter from the Communications Team came forward in order to be congratulated on their achievement.

South Wales Argus Health and Care Home Awards

Members were informed that Andrew Davies from Social Services had been selected as a finalist in the South Wales Argus Health and Care Home Awards.

Andrew has worked for the Authority for many years to support adults with learning disabilities, and since 2003, has continually supported clients at a purpose built bungalow. Over the years, Andrew has built up fantastic relationships with the clients' families and helped to provide the most appropriate support for them. He became especially close to one client, supporting his day to day activities, gaining his trust, and becoming his friend. Sadly, the client lost his battle with cancer earlier in the year, but throughout his illness, Andrew spent many hours sitting with him, even on his days off, and was a great comfort to the residents and staff in helping everyone cope with the loss.

It was explained that Andrew is a popular member of his team and is dedicated to bringing quality and happiness to people's lives, which is evident in the level of care and support he provides.

Andrew Davies came forward in order to be commended by Council on his achievement.

Shared Lives Plus Awards – Scheme Innovation Award

Members were advised of the South East Wales Shared Lives Scheme, which is a Caerphilly county borough-led service provided as a partnership between Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen for any adult only 18 years old with an identified support need. The Council also provide Shared Lives for the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.

It was explained that at the recent Shared Lives Plus Awards Ceremony, the Council won the Scheme Innovation Award, which is a national award that was awarded to the scheme that has changed most to develop Shared Lives for new people, or demonstrated a co-

produced approach to developing and improving its service. The Shared Lives Scheme has significantly developed in many areas, including preventing hospital admission and the escalation of care and support needs, supporting hospital discharge and older people with dementia and end of life plans. Shared Lives carers share their home, family and community life with the individual, providing safety and support with a focus on developing and maintaining independent living skills and connections in the community.

Emma Jenkins and Louise Powell from the Shared Lives Team came forward in order to be congratulated by Council on the team's achievement.

Defence Employer Recognition Scheme – Gold Award

Members were informed that the Council recently achieved the Gold Award as part of the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, which recognises UK employers for their support and commitment towards the Defence and Armed Forces communities. The Gold Award is given in recognition of employers who have provided exceptional support to the Armed Forces Community and defence by going above and beyond their Armed Forces covenant pledge.

It was explained that Caerphilly has demonstrated an active approach towards Armed Forces Community employment via established HR policies and procedures, as well as flexibility for annual training and mobilisation commitments. Caerphilly is one of the first local authorities in Wales to introduced Guaranteed Interview Schemes for service leavers, veterans, reservists and spouses.

Lisa Rawlins (Armed Forces Liaison Officer) and Kathryn Peters (Corporate Policy Manager) came forward to be congratulated on their hard work and to be presented with the award from Councillor Andrew Whitcombe (Armed Forces Champion).

Pride of Britain Awards – Child of Courage Award

Members were very pleased to recognise the achievement of Jaydee-Lee Dummett from the Caerphilly county borough who, after saving her brother Laylan's life, was honoured with a Child of Courage Award at the national Pride of Britain Awards ceremony.

It was explained that earlier in the year, Laylan had awoken disorientated during the night and, after recalling a gas safety lesson in school, Jaydee-Lee recognised the deadly signs of carbon monoxide poisoning. She noticed that the detector alarm had turned from green to red, and recited the gas emergency number from memory to her mother. An engineer arrived at their home to make the gas supply safe, and was very impressed with how much Jaydee-Lee has remembered from her lesson in school. Her quick thinking certainly saved her brother's life, and this demonstrates how important it is to teach children of all ages about home safety and the work of the emergency services.

Jaydee-Lee, together with her brother Laylan and mother Lindy, came forward in order for Council to recognise her Pride of Britain award, and received a standing ovation from Members.

9. MINUTES – SPECIAL COUNCIL 3RD OCTOBER 2019

Subject to it being recorded that Councillor D.T. Davies had left the meeting immediately following his declaration of interest (and before consideration of Item 3) it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Special Meeting of Council held on 3rd October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

10. MINUTES – COUNCIL 23RD OCTOBER 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of Council held on 23rd October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

11. MINUTES – SPECIAL COUNCIL 28TH OCTOBER 2019

Subject to it being recorded that Councillor J. Bevan had been in attendance, and that Councillors C. Gordon and D.T. Davies had left the meeting immediately following their respective declarations of interest (and before consideration of Item 3) it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Special Meeting of Council held on 28th October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

12. TO RECEIVE AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(4)

It was noted that there had been no questions received on this occasion.

13. NOTICE OF MOTION – NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE PREVENTION OF YOUNG CARDIAC DEATH

Consideration was given to the Notice of Motion received from Councillor C. Cuss and supported by Councillors J. Bevan and D. Harse. In accordance with Rule 11 (3) of the Constitution, the Mayor had agreed to allow the motion to be dealt with at Council, without being first discussed at an overview and scrutiny committee.

Councillor Cuss requested in his Notice of Motion that Council:-

- (i) write to Welsh Government and ask that they support a National Strategy for the Prevention of Young Sudden Cardiac Death and look at the possibility of providing a free cardiac screening programme for our young people, starting with mandatory screening for any young person taking part in competitive sport in Wales;
- (ii) pledge to support a National Strategy for the Prevention of Young Sudden Cardiac Death to help save the lives of the 12 apparently fit and healthy young people who die every week in the UK of undiagnosed cardiac conditions by writing to UK Parliament and urging Members of Parliament to support the campaign mypledge@c-r-y.org.uk.

Councillor Cuss explained that his Notice of Motion followed the tragic passing of 16-year old Jake Pickford from the Moriah ward, who died from Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome (SADS) in August 2018. Jake was a talented footballer and athlete who played for Aberbargoed and Pengam Football Clubs, and since his untimely death, a number of fundraising events have been organised by his family and the local community to raise money for public access defibrillators, which have now been placed in several locations across the Rhymney area.

It was explained that unfortunately this is not the only incidence of sudden cardiac death in the county borough and that 12 young people every week lose their lives to an undiagnosed heart defect. Members were therefore asked to support a national strategy to ensure consistent reporting, with the data collected being used to inform national policy and allow for

preventative or therapeutic interventions to reduce or remove the risk of sudden cardiac death.

Members acknowledged the cardiac screening already carried out by voluntary organisations, but expressed their support for the Notice of Motion and the need for a national strategy, and also extended their sympathies to the family of Jake Pickford. Members asked why mandatory screening had only been proposed for young people participating in competitive sport and suggested that this screening should be extended to all children as a preventative measure. It was explained that research has shown that young people participating in competitive sport are more at risk of sudden cardiac death.

Having considered the reasons for the Motion, and the information provided in relation to the Motion, and following due debate, it was moved and seconded that its content be supported. By way of the electronic voting system this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, the Notice of Motion be supported.

REPORTS REFERRED FROM CABINET

Consideration was given to the following report referred from Cabinet.

14. ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2018/19

Consideration was given to the report, which was presented to the Audit Committee by the Wales Audit Office on 15th October 2019 and subsequently to Cabinet on 16th October 2019. Both the Audit Committee and Cabinet endorsed the contents of the Annual Improvement Report (AIR) 2018/19 as appended to the Officer's covering report and recommended its approval by Council.

It was noted that the Annual Improvement Report for 2018/19 outlined the key messages from the Wales Audit Office and makes a judgement as to whether the Council have and are likely to comply with their statutory duty in compliance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvement'. This AIR is two-fold as it summarises the work carried out by the WAO during the year 2018/19 and provides the regulators judgement as to whether the Council will comply with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. For 2018/19 the WAO judgement was:

“The Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement and is at a crucial pivotal point in its ambition to transform”

Based on, and limited to, the work carried out by the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General believes that the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure (2009) during 2019-20.

Ms Non Jenkins (Wales Audit Office) was welcomed to the meeting to summarise the findings of the AIR. She explained that the Council is now at a crucial pivotal point and has significant opportunities to quickly grasp through its *#TeamCaerphilly* transformation programme, in order to ground its ambitions and turn them into action and improved outcomes for its citizens by 2022.

The WAO has recognised the achievements of the Council, particularly in relation to meeting the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act whilst delivering the Flying Start programme, and has recognised that the Council has taken account of the sustainable

development principle whilst delivering this programme. Ms Jenkins also referred to the Thematic Review Service User Perspective carried out by the WAO to gain the views of tenants and leaseholders on the work undertaken through the Council's WHQS programme. Positive views were received on many aspects of the programme, although feedback was less satisfactory in relation to areas of external works. The Council has also responded positively to the WAO's WHQS report and statutory recommendations in June 2017, and has made significant improvements which has led to the WAO concluding that the Council is likely to meet the WHQS by December 2020.

Members were advised that the WAO has worked with the Council in terms of the Business Improvement Programme Board and acted as a critical friend to provide real-time constructive feedback and challenge to the Board in terms of its vision and objectives for the transformation programme. As a result the Council has recognised that a fresh approach to transformation is needed and Caerphilly 2022 (C2022) is therefore an opportunity not to be missed. In addition, Ms Jenkins explained that although some progress has been made in addressing the previous WAO recommendations in relation to corporate safeguarding, the Council needs to further strengthen its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements.

In closing, Ms Jenkins referred to the national report recommendations set out at Appendix 3 of the AIR and invited questions from Members.

During the course of the ensuing debate, reference was made to the #TeamCaerphilly Transformation Strategy and a Member asked if it would be possible for the Leader to outline in January 2020 how it is intended to turn the aims of the Strategy into actions and drive the change of agenda forward in order to achieve best practice for the Council and best outcomes for residents. The Leader confirmed that she would set out her vision in January 2020 on how she planned to take forward the Strategy, which will place an emphasis on the Council as a 'listening Authority' in respect of communication and engagement. It was also explained that that extensive work has been carried out in preparation for the #Team Caerphilly operating model and that once the Leader has set out her plans in January 2020, work will be carried out with elected Members, Council staff, residents and stakeholders to drive the aims of the Strategy forward.

A Member referred to the findings of the WAO in respect of corporate safeguarding arrangements and asked if there should be a requirement for the post of Chief Executive and other senior officers to have a DBS check as part of their conditions of employment. It was confirmed that this question would be taken during consideration of the next item on the agenda.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By way of the electronic voting system this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, the Annual Improvement Report (AIR) 2018/19 be approved.

Ms Jenkins was thanked for her presentation and for her attendance at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following report.

15. RECRUITMENT FOR THE POST OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Christina Harray (Interim Chief Executive) and Mark S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director of Communities) declared personal interests item in this item, under the Employees' Code of Conduct, as their current interim posts were directly affected by the report, and left the Chamber for the remainder of the meeting.

The Head of People Services drew Members' attention to items in the report requiring clarification, namely Paragraph 5.9 which refers to 2 JNC national pay awards in recent years for Chief Executives in 2016 and 2018. It was explained that both pay awards covered a period of 2 years, and that the pay award in 2016 was for 1% in each year but the pay award in 2018 was for 2% in each year and not 1%. Members were therefore advised that the information set out in the table at Paragraph 5.10 therefore needed to be amended to reflect the 2% pay awards as follows:

	Increment 1	Increment 2	Increment 3	Increment 4
Chief Executive	151,262	156,859	162,456	168,070

Consequently, it was explained that some of the Financial Implications at Section 10 of the report would also need to be changed as follows:-

- 10.3 Should Council agree the national pay awards as detailed in paragraph 5.10 there will be a further additional cost of £11,050 [and not £6,591 as set out in the report].
- 10.4 The total additional cost including oncosts for incremental progression and the national pay awards will be £32,803 at the top of the grade [and not £28,344 as set out in the report].
- 10.7 This would leave a residual additional cost of £13,793 [and not £9,334 as set out in the report] that would need to be incorporated into the Final 2020/21 Budget Proposals report in February 2020 alongside all other pay and non-pay inflationary pressures.

Furthermore, the recommendation at 3.1.2 would therefore need to be updated as follows:-

- 3.1.2 That the salary range is updated to include the national pay awards for 2016 and 2018. Both pay awards covered a period of 2 years and was 1% in 2016 and 2% in 2018.

Members were reminded that the pay award was agreed in 2016 for the Interim Chief Executive as stated in Paragraph 5.9 of the report and the salary range was updated at that time.

Consideration was then given to the report which advised Members of the requirement by law for the Council to have in place a Head of Paid Service. Within the Council, this responsibility is designated to the Chief Executive. On 3rd October 2019, Council made the decision to dismiss the former Chief Executive from the employment of the Council with effect from that date. The Council is now able to recruit a permanent Chief Executive and the report made recommendations in this regard in accordance with Council policies.

Members were advised that the Council's constitution determines that full Council will make the appointment of the Head of Paid Service following the recommendation of a short list for such an appointment by the Appointments Committee.

It was explained that the updated table at Paragraph 5.10 reflected the salary range agreed by Council within the Pay Policy in March 2019 and the adjusted nationally agreed pay awards 2016-2019, namely £151,262 at the lower increment and £168,070 at the higher

increment. Should Council agree to set a salary range different to the one above, it would need to refer the new arrangements to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. Members were reminded that the Chief Executive also undertakes the statutory role of Returning Officer at elections. The salary for the post does not include the fees for those elections, which for non-local elections are set and agreed by the Cabinet Office/Welsh Government over which the Council has no jurisdiction.

Should the Council agree to the recommendations in the report, the Appointments Committee will be convened to agree the job advert and recruitment exercises. It is intended to advertise the post in January 2020 in accordance with the salary to be agreed by Council, and the job description and person specification attached at Appendix A to the report.

Members were reminded of the key nature of the Chief Executive post in terms of the future direction of the Council and were also advised of the need to strike a balance between the level of salary set, in these times of austerity, whilst also seeking to attract candidates of the highest calibre. With this in mind, a set of amended recommendations to replace those set out in the report were proposed as follows:-

- 3.1.1 That the recruitment of a permanent Chief Executive be agreed with a spot salary of £140k, subject to the salary being confirmed/approved by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales;
- 3.1.2 That all future nationally agreed pay awards for the Chief Executive be approved automatically;
- 3.1.3 That the post be externally advertised in January 2020 in accordance with the job description and person specification attached at Appendix A and the process set out within the report;
- 3.1.4 The post of Deputy Chief Executive be removed from the Council's organisational structure.

Members were advised that these amended recommendations would achieve annual savings from the Chief Executive post of £5371 per annum, as well as avoiding the need to find an additional £32,803 to fund the salary range agreed within the 2019 Pay Policy and associated pay awards. Furthermore, the removal of the funding attached to the Deputy Chief Executive post would enable further savings of £19,010 to be released.

The proposals in respect of the amended recommendations were moved and seconded and debate took place on the contents of the report.

Support was expressed for the proposed reduction in the Chief Executive's salary given the need for the Council to make savings across a wide range of service areas. Members referred to the fees associated with the statutory role of Returning Officer and asked if these could be absorbed into the Council's budget to make further savings, or if the Returning Officer role and fees could be re-assigned to other individuals, such as Officers within the Electoral Services Team.

The Head of People Services explained that the delegation of the role of Returning Officer is a matter for each local authority, and that Caerphilly Council has determined that the role of their Returning Officer is the responsibility of the Chief Executive. It was explained that the Returning Officer responsibility is one of a personal nature and is distinct from their responsibilities as an employee of the Council. These responsibilities are defined by legislation, and any breach of these duties is a summary offence and could be subject to a personal fine. It was explained that although money is received from WG and other parties for any non-local elections, it is difficult to plan for snap elections and therefore it would be

very difficult to pitch a salary for the role of Returning Officer at short notice. Members were also advised that Welsh Government are currently considering new legislation which may remove the fee associated with the role of Returning Officer.

During the course of debate, Members expressed the view that they should have more involvement throughout the recruitment process for the Chief Executive, and were reminded that although responsibility for shortlisting is delegated to the Appointments Committee, the appointment of the successful candidate is made by full Council.

Reference was made to the query received earlier in the evening in respect of DBS checks, and a Member suggested that the position of Chief Executive should include a requirement to undergo a DBS check, in order to provide reassurance to the public. The Head of People Services explained that the Council are guided by the regulations set down by the Disclosure and Barring Service, who operate to a strict set of criteria, and that the post of Chief Executive would not fit the criteria in accordance with their work set. Furthermore, it was explained that if the local authority attempt to undertake DBS checks for non-eligible personnel, then there is a significant risk of a fine being levied against the Council.

Following due debate and having already been moved and seconded, the set of amended recommendations were put to the vote. By way of the electronic voting system (and in noting there was 1 against) these were agreed by the majority present, and became the substantive motion.

A further vote was then taken in order for these recommendations to be approved. By way of the electronic voting system (and in noting there were 2 against) this was agreed by the majority present.

Council therefore RESOLVED that

- (i) the recruitment of a permanent Chief Executive be agreed with a spot salary of £140k, subject to the salary being confirmed/approved by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales;
- (ii) all future nationally agreed pay awards for the Chief Executive be approved automatically;
- (iii) the post be externally advertised in January 2020 in accordance with the job description and person specification attached at Appendix A and the process set out within the report;
- (iv) the post of Deputy Chief Executive be removed from the Council's organisational structure.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 6.45 p.m. and wished all in attendance a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2020 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR



COUNCIL – 21ST JANUARY 2020

SUBJECT: COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2020/21

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION & CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek Council approval of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the 2020/21 financial year.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The report recommends continuing to operate a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the 2020/21 financial year on the same basis as the scheme used in 2019/20.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme should continue for the 2020/21 financial year along with the previously agreed local discretions.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Council is required annually to adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme and local discretions.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Members will recall that Council Tax Benefit was abolished in April 2013 and replaced by the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

5.2 On the 29th January 2013, Council adopted the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2013/14 in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2012. The Welsh Government put a sunset clause in those regulations which meant that they became invalid after the 31st March 2014.

5.3 On the 28th January 2014, Council adopted a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/15 (its local scheme) in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014. These regulations prescribe the main features of the scheme to be adopted by all Councils in Wales and allow for some limited local discretions. The scheme provides for claimants to receive a reduction of up to 100% of their Council Tax bill in certain circumstances. The same arrangements were adopted for 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20

5.4 The Council is required to formally approve a Council Tax Reduction Scheme on an annual basis. The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 have now been agreed and these apply in relation to a Council Tax Reduction Scheme made for a financial year beginning on or after the 1st April

2020. The regulations uprate certain figures used to calculate an applicant's entitlement to a reduction under a Council Tax Reduction Scheme, and the subsequent level of reduction. It also makes consequential amendments as a result of changes to the wider welfare system.

- 5.5 As the 2020 regulations do not contain any significant changes for claimants, it is proposed that the Council continues its local scheme in line with the regulations as recently amended for the financial year 2020/21, effective from the 1st April 2020, and continues to exercise the previously approved local discretions as provided for within Part 5 of the Prescribed Requirements Regulations: -

Discretion	Discretion to be adopted by CCBC
The ability to increase the standard extended reduction period of 4 weeks given to persons who have ceased to receive qualifying benefits after they return to work, where they have previously been receiving a Council Tax reduction that is to end as a result of their return to work.	<p><u>Pensioners</u> The standard period of 4 weeks specified in paragraph (33) Schedule 1 will apply, and</p> <p><u>Non-Pensioners</u> The standard period of 4 weeks specified in paragraphs (35) and (40) Schedule 6 will apply.</p>
The ability to backdate the application of Council Tax reduction for periods longer than the new standard period of 3 months before the claim is made.	<p><u>Pensioners</u> The standard period of 3 months specified in paragraph (3) Schedule 13 will apply, and</p> <p><u>Non-Pensioners</u> The standard period of 3 months specified in paragraph (4) Schedule 13 will apply.</p>
Discretion to disregard more than the statutory weekly amount of £10 of income received in respect of War Disablement Pensions and War Widow's Pensions (disregarded when calculating the income of the applicant).	<p><u>Pensioners</u> The total value of any pension specified in paragraphs 1(a) and 1(b) Schedule 4 will be disregarded, and</p> <p><u>Non-Pensioners</u> The total value of any pension specified in paragraphs 20(a) and 20(b) Schedule 9 will be disregarded.</p>
Discretion to provide more than the minimum information prescribed in the Prescribed Requirements Regulations when issuing notification of decisions of an award of Council Tax Reduction.	To supplement the minimum requirements specified in the Prescribed Requirements Regulations, where appropriate.

- 5.6 The provisional 2020/21 budget for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme totals £14,997,303.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 There are no assumptions within this report.

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

- 7.1 The payment of Council Tax Reduction is a key element of the Council's anti-poverty strategy and a significant source of funding.
- 7.2 The revenue raised through Council Tax is a key element in setting a balanced budget which in turn supports the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015: -
- A prosperous Wales.
 - A resilient Wales.
 - A healthier Wales.
 - A more equal Wales.
 - A Wales of cohesive communities.
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.
 - A globally responsible Wales.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 8.1 The revenue raised through Council Tax supports effective financial planning which is a key element in ensuring that the Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 are met.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has previously been carried out for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. As the proposed Scheme for 2020/21 has no significant changes from previous years, a further impact assessment will not be required at this time.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Funding for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme was transferred into the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) in the 2013/14 financial year.
- 10.2 The Welsh Government has confirmed its commitment to a fully funded Council Tax Reduction Scheme to the 31st March 2021. There is currently no firm commitment beyond this date.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 Local Government Finance Act 1992 and regulations made under the Act.
- 13.2 Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2012 and the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended).

Author: Stephen Harris, Interim Head of Business Improvement Services & Acting S151 Officer.
Tel: 01443 863022 E-mail: harrisr@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Amanda Main, Housing & Council Tax Benefits Manager
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education & Corporate Services
Cllr. Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Planning.

Background Papers: -

- Council Report 29th January 2013 – Adoption of a Council Tax Reduction Scheme
- Council Report 28th January 2014 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2014/15.
- Special Council Report 25th February 2015 – Council Tax Resolution 2015/16 and Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- Special Council Report 24th February 2016 – Council Tax Resolution 2016/17 and Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- Council Report 24th January 2017 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2017/18.
- Council Report 23rd January 2018 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2018/19
- Council Report 22nd January 2019 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/20



COUNCIL – 21ST JANUARY 2020

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES 2018/19

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

- 1.1 The attached report was presented to the Social Services Scrutiny Committee on the 22nd October 2019. The report provided the Scrutiny Committee with the key messages that have been identified in the preparation of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services for 2018/19. The report sought the comments of Members prior to its submission to Full Council on the 21st January 2020.
- 1.2 The Director informed Members that this is his tenth Annual Director's Report for Caerphilly County Borough Council. The report is an opportunity for the Statutory Director of Social Services to provide a summary of the effectiveness of Caerphilly County Borough Council in delivering Social Services to its citizens.
- 1.3 It was highlighted to Members that the partnership agenda is becoming increasingly significant for Social Services departments in Wales. The Regional Partnership Boards are increasingly becoming the "vehicles of choice" for Welsh Government in implementing policy changes and as recipients of grant funding to assist partners implement these changes.
- 1.4 Members heard how the work of the RPB has been assisted by additional funding from the Integrated Care Fund and also from the Transformation Fund provided by Welsh Government to support the intentions of "A Healthier Wales" in providing seamless services to the public.
- 1.5 The report outlined areas of the Social Care workforce where it remains difficult to recruit and retain staff and carers. Members were advised that steps taken to help with the recruitment of foster carers and social workers within Children's Services were successful. However, challenges remained, particularly in relation to the domiciliary care workforce.
- 1.6 Members discussed in detail service priorities for 2019/20 that had been developed in conjunction with key partners.
- 1.7 It was suggested that the Directorate work closely with colleagues from the Communications Department in order to promote the work of carers via the Council's Social Media platforms. In the "Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2018/19" (page 111) it was highlighted that the Council's Carers Team had 61 followers on Twitter. The Social Services Scrutiny Committee believed that this figure could be improved upon with greater exposure and promotion.
- 1.9 Following consideration of the report, the Social Services Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended the Annual Director's Report of Social Services 2018/19 to Council.

Author: Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer – jacqum@caerphilly.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2018-19



SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 OCTOBER 2019

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES 2018/19

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Social Services Scrutiny Committee of the key messages that have been identified in the preparation of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services for 2018/19.
- 1.2 To seek the views of the committee on the report prior to the presentation of the report to Council on the 19 November 2019.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Part 8 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA) requires Directors of Social Services in Wales to publish an annual report about the exercise of the local authority's social services functions. The attached report has been written in a format that is compliant with the requirements of the SSWBA.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the contents of the Annual Director's Report for 2018-19 prior to its submission to Council on 19 November 2019 for its adoption.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Statutory guidance requires the Corporate Director Social Services to present the Annual Report to Council for its adoption.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 This is the tenth Annual Director's Report for Caerphilly County Borough Council. This report is an opportunity for the Statutory Director of Social Services to provide a summary of the effectiveness of Caerphilly County Borough Council in delivering Social Services to its citizens.
- 5.2 The format and content of the report is prescribed by CIW and outlines in some detail how we addressed our priorities for 2018/19 and lists our priorities for 19/20. At the start of the report is some performance information for 2018-19 together with comparable information for 2017-

18 and 2016-17. Members should be aware that the final details of the Performance & improvement Framework for Social Services in Wales are still awaited and it's only at this point will we be able to compare our performance with other LA's in Wales.

5.3 I would particularly draw members attention to the reference to how the partnership agenda is becoming increasingly significant for Social Services departments in Wales. The Regional Partners Boards are increasingly becoming the "vehicles of choice" for Welsh Government in implementing policy changes and as recipients of grant funding to assist partners implement these changes. This regional work is becoming increasingly intensive, time consuming and poses challenges on how we engage with elected members prior to the implementation of new service delivery models. A report on the work of the Regional Partnership Board in Gwent and how it impacts on our work in Caerphilly is scheduled for a future Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

5.4 Following presentation to Council on 19 November 2019, the Annual Director's Report will be made available to Welsh Government, CIW, members of the public, partner agencies and stakeholders.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 There are no assumptions made or presumed in this report.

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

7.1 This report is compliant with the requirements of Part 8 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

7.2 Caerphilly Social Services contributes to the wellbeing goals contained in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

7.3 Wellbeing objective 6 of the authority's Corporate Plan 2018-23.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 The delivery of Social Services by Caerphilly County Borough Council contributes to all of the Well-being Goals contained within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and also supports the well-being objectives of other public bodies. The service operates in a manner that is in accordance with sustainable development principle as set out in the Act. The Annual Report evidences the emphasis on collaboration, for example, with the establishment of the Greater Gwent Regional Partnership Board and a Population Needs Assessment which will inform Area Plans. Caerphilly Social Services are also active partners in Gwent wide partnerships developing integrated approaches to supporting children and young people.

8.2 Service users are involved in how services will be developed and delivered in the future through surveys, contract monitoring processes, Elected Member rota visits, complaints and compliments, consultation events and feedback from Inspections. The Annual Report focusses on performance in 2017/18, but takes a longer term view as well in considering the challenges that lie ahead and how services are being developed now to meet them. The promotion and maintenance of independence is a guiding principle for the service and is reflected in the emphasis on prevention.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no equalities implications to this report that have not been considered or would adversely affect any individual or group

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The 2019-20 priority areas for development set out within the Annual Director's Report are aligned with the Social Services Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the Directorates revenue budget for 2019-20.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 In order to produce the Annual Director's Report a wide range of information sources are taken into account including feedback from our customers and regulators/inspectors. This feedback has been incorporated into the Annual Directors Report where relevant.

13. STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 Part 8 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

Author: Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services & Housing
Consultees: Social Services Senior Management Team
Councillor Carl Cuss, Cabinet Member Social Care
Councillor Lyndon Binding, Chair Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor John Bevan, Vice Chair Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Corporate Management Team

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Annual Report of the Director of Social Services & Housing 2018-19

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF
SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING
2018/19

DRAFT

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DRAFT

1. Introduction

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services & Housing for Caerphilly County Borough Council for 2018/19. This report is essentially a snap shot of our services and encompasses some of the achievements and challenges we have experienced during 2018/19.

Our main focus for the year has been to continue to embed the requirements of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act and to ensure we engage meaningfully with people who use our services and have “different conversations” to those that we have had historically.

In 2018/19 we have seen the continued emergence of the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) as the principle facilitator for joint working between the 5 Local Authorities in Gwent, the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board together with third sector, independent sector and public partners. The work of the RPB has been assisted by additional funding from the Integrated Care Fund and also from the Transformation Fund provided by Welsh Government to support the intentions of “A Healthier Wales” in providing seamless services to the public.

Whilst the allocation of grant funding to assist with regional service models is welcomed, the Directorate has continued to have to make efficiencies and savings in order to contribute to the Authority’s Medium Term Financial Plan. Once again, these savings have been directed towards not filling vacant posts and to back office efficiencies. Every effort continues to be made to protect front-line services.

The Authority continues to rely on independent sector and voluntary sector partners for many of our services. Some of these services continue to be fragile in their nature and the balance between services provided directly by the Local Authority and those commissioned from the Independent Sector is something that now has to be looked at.

Like many Authorities there are areas of the Social Care workforce where it remains difficult to recruit and retain staff and carers. Steps needed to be taken during 2018/19 to help with the recruitment of foster carers and social workers within Children’s Services. I am pleased to be able to say that both initiatives were successful, however, there remains challenges particularly in relation to the domiciliary care workforce.

In my report for 2017/18 I referenced the fact that my responsibilities now also included the role of the Director of Housing. We have continued to develop links between both service areas with a view to ensuring Housing provision is fit for purpose for an increasingly aging population.

This report also outlines some of our service priorities for 2019/20. These will build on progress made in 2018/19 and will increasingly be developed in conjunction with our key partners. Amongst these priorities are:-

- The embedding of Compassionate Communities in the North of the Borough.
- Developing a Corporate Volunteering Scheme.
- Opening our second Children's Home.
- Expanding our discharge to assess model in the local Hospital.
- Continue to monitor recruitment in Children's Services.
- Submit a funding bid for a third Children's Home.
- The continued development of Community Hubs principally in the North of the Borough.

Welsh Government is in the process of a major review of the performance measurement framework for Social Care. Caerphilly is fully engaged in supporting this review with key officers attending workshops and steering group meetings. In the absence of a national performance framework, we continue to capture local performance information and some key measures are detailed below together with comparable information on performance in 2016/17 and 2017/18:

2018-2019 Performance Measures

Adult Services:

Measure	Results 2016/17	Results 2017/18	Results 2018/19
% of adult protection enquiries completed within 7 days	92.46%	92.61%	100%
The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over	2.86	5.65	6.23
% of adults who completed a period of reablement and have a reduced package of care and support 6 months later	27.42%	35.56%	38.6%
% of adults who completed a period of reablement and have no package of care and support 6 months later	85.48%	64.44%	38%
The average length of time adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes (weeks)	125.5	157.67	173.93
Average age of adults entering residential care homes	83.77	83.06	83.76
% of adults who have received advice and assistance from the information, advice and assistance service and have not contacted the service for 6 months	94.74	90.31	95

Children's Services:

Measure	Results 2016/17	Results 2017/18	Results 2018/19
% of assessments completed for children within statutory timescales	95.12%	93.39%	90.49%

% of re-registrations of children on local authority Child Protection Registers (CPR)	5.05%	2.40%	5.77%
The average length of time for all children who were on the CPR during the year	291.09	268.58	268.58
% of children seen by a registered dentist within 3 months of becoming looked after	43.86%	75.58%	66.67%
% of children looked after at 31 st March who were registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of their placement	100%	100%	100%
% of looked after children who have experienced 1 or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the year to 31 st March	11.1%	10%	7%
% of looked after children on 31 st March who have had three or more placements during the year	12.6%	10.914%	9.4%

Care Leavers:

Measure	Results 2016/17	Results 2017/18	Results 2018/19
% of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at 12 months after leaving care	65.96%	51.16%	51.35%
% of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at 24 months after leaving care	51.35%	60.78%	45.16%

2. How are People Shaping our Services?

Caerphilly Social Services is committed to making sure that people are able to make their voice heard, whether this is about how our services are developed and delivered in the future or whether it is about a service they are receiving now. We do this in a number of different ways including, undertaking surveys, contract monitoring processes, responsible Individual visits, complaints and compliments, consultation events and feedback from Inspections.

All of our Regulated services are now registered under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act (RISCA) 2016. This has been a major piece of work completed in accordance with the statutory timescales.

Key activity undertaken by CIW during 2018/19 has included:

Children's Services:

- A full unannounced inspection was undertaken at Ty Ni, the residential children's home and feedback was very positive.

Adults Services:

- A self assessment was completed in relation to services for older people excluding those in care homes. Caerphilly was not chosen for a focused inspection however, visits were undertaken to Extra Care establishments to gain peoples views of the Information, Advice and Assistance Service.
- Annual inspections under RISCA have commenced of all registered services. To date inspections have been undertaken in Ty Hapus – children's respite house and Ty Clyd, Ty Iscoed and Brodawel Residential Homes

The reports for the above inspections were generally positive and although, understandably, they identified areas for further development as opposed to areas of non compliance, they all recognised the good progress being made across service areas. All reports are available to view on the Inspectorate web site

<http://ciw.org.uk/our-reports/?lang=en>

Periodic engagement meetings are held with the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) involving the Senior Management Team and the Cabinet Member for Social Services & Wellbeing. In line with the Inspection changes in CIW, both Adult Services and Children's Services have completed Self Assessments in relation to the themes identified by CIW.

Social Services has a Statutory process that has to be followed when someone is unhappy with our services and wishes to make a complaint. We endeavour to ensure that the handling of complaints is quick and effective with the result that the majority of issues are able to be resolved as early as possible.

During 2018/19 the Directorate received 117 Stage 1 complaints and 1 complaint which progressed directly to Stage 2. The majority of the complaints were resolved to the customer's satisfaction at Stage 1 and this is due to the efforts that are placed on resolution at Stage 1 of the process.

Of the 117 complaints received at Stage 1, 27 (23%) related to Adult Services, 84 (72%) to Children's Services and 6 (5%) to Service Strategy and Business Support. This is consistent with the previous year's figures (118), where the number of complaints regarding Children's Services has been the higher figure. Previous years have shown more of a fairly even distribution of complaints between Adult and Children's Services.

The Customer Services Team record whether complaints are upheld, partially upheld or not upheld. This enables the Directorate to note any themes and trends from the findings to improve future practice and identify any isolated incidents of poor practice that may require attention. Of the 117 complaints received at Stage 1 in 2018/19, the following outcomes were noted:

- 17 were closed, as the matters were resolved early or signposted to other processes, e.g. legal process
- 6 complaints were upheld
- 9 complaints were partially upheld
- 84 complaints were not upheld
- 1 complaint was not given an outcome as it proceeded to a stage 2 before the stage 1 process was completed

During 2018/19 the Directorate received 6 requests to progress complaints to a Stage 2 formal investigation, an increase from the previous year when there was just 1 Stage 2 investigation. All 6 (100%) of the Stage 2 investigations related to Children's Services.

There were 15 contacts by our customers during this year to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW). This is an increase of on the previous year when 8 customers approached the PSOW for support.

The Directorate appreciates the importance of learning from complaints and representations and it is recognised that equal emphasis needs to be placed on learning from positive outcomes.

Praise is received by teams in the form of thank you cards, letters and emails and these are sent to the Complaints and Information Team for them to record. 74 compliments have been logged during the year, of which 72 (97%) relate to Adult Services and 2 (3%) relate to Children's Services. In addition, annual survey responses by some service areas results in positive feedback that can be used to measure the success of the Directorate in those areas.

During the year 19 surveys were sent out, 5 (26%) of these were for Adult Services and 14 (74%) were for Children's Services. Many of the comments made in response to the surveys have been incorporated into this report.

During 2018/19 we received:

117 Stage 1 Complaints and
managed 6 Stage 2 Complaints

3. Promoting and improving the well-being of those we help

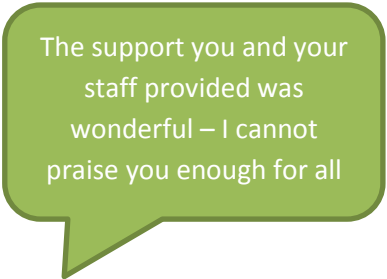
Quality Standard 1 – Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

Throughout 2018/19, in accordance with the requirements of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act, staff within Caerphilly's Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service received training to support having 'meaningful conversations' with service users, their families and carers about what really matters to them in line with the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act.

'Meaningful conversations' start with IAA staff the first time someone contacts us. These conversations concentrate on peoples strengths , on working with people to regain or maintain their independence and utilising their own skills and networks to achieve their desired outcomes wherever possible.

It is important to acknowledge that the majority of contacts for Children's Services are from professionals and as a result the 'what matters' conversations with the child and/or their family are unable to take place until an assessment for Care and Support has commenced.

A guiding principle for Caerphilly Social Services is the promotion and maintenance of independence. For Children's Services, this means supporting families to stay together and maintaining children within their homes and communities wherever it is safe to do so. This is underpinned by timely assessments of need and creative solutions being sought to help keep families together.



The support you and your staff provided was wonderful – I cannot praise you enough for all

Whilst some families may have a negative view of Children's Social Services to start with, we ensure that children, young people and their parents and carers are fully involved in the assessment process and that they help to shape and influence their plan for care and support. Working in this way helps to improve working relationships over time.



The support I have received has improved relationships within my family

We have full access to the national citizen's wellbeing database called DEWIS so that people can have quick and easy access to information directly from a website rather than having to make a call to Social Services and/or speaking to a professional where

they may prefer not to. We have a dedicated lead officer to further progress the development of DEWIS.

To ensure that they have the opportunity to participate in consultations or purely making their views known all children have access to an Independent Advocate who can support them in meetings to ensure their voices are heard. We have also developed Parent Advocacy through partnership working funded by Families First.

96.5% of our assessments were completed within the statutory timescale and;
Over 700 children were supported to remain living within their families.

During 2018/19, 95% of adults who received advice and assistance from the IAA did not contact the service again within the next 6 months. This is a positive message as it suggests that the advice and assistance received helped to retain their independence, choice and control.

We continue to make use of our assessment beds which are located in Ty Clyd and Ty Iscoed residential homes. These beds help to prevent people going to hospital unnecessarily and enable them to be discharged in a timely manner.

All the staff were incredible. They were respectful and kind. I wouldn't have made such progress if it wasn't for their care.

Supporting people to remain or regain their independence is a key objective for all who work within Social Services. In 2018/19 54% of adults who completed a period of reablement had no package of care and support 6 months later.

How we addressed our priorities for 2018/19:

- We have successfully delivered the nationally recognised 'Collaborative Communication' training to all front line teams in Children's Services which focuses on enabling families to identify outcomes and solutions to difficulties for themselves.

- We continue to work with colleagues in Health to embed care navigation training and principles of place based working in GP surgeries.
- The DEWIS system is now fully operational.

What are our priorities for 2019/20?

- Utilising Transformation Grant funding, we will work with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to embed 'Compassionate Communities' in the North of the Borough. Compassionate Communities is an initiative which aims to help communities understand the range of services available from public bodies, the voluntary sector and the community itself. People can then be signposted by professionals or members of the community to services that can help them. This is particularly important in trying to overcome loneliness and isolation.
- Implementation of a single point of contact for GP and other professional referrals to Primary Care Mental Health Services through IAA and the Space-Well-being Panels.
- Work with Health to develop integrated well-being networks across the borough that map all the resources available for people. This programme also looks to develop community champions to enable them to provide information to citizens.

Quality Standard 2 – Working with people and partners to protect and promote people’s physical and mental health and emotional well-being

Caerphilly CBC recognises the importance of working with people and our partners to improve outcomes for children and young people and this will continue to be a priority for us going forward.

Caerphilly are active partners in the Gwent wide Children and Families Strategic Partnership which is prioritising the development of integrated approaches to supporting children and young people including therapeutic support for children Looked After through the regional development of the My Support Team (MyST) service across the five Local Authorities. This service was originally developed in Caerphilly in 2017.

The Gwent wide Attachment Trauma Service has been offering advice, consultation and training to Caerphilly social work teams with the aim of supporting children and young people to remain living at home or remain in stable foster placements.

With MyST support I have been able to return to live in Caerphilly and see my family more

Caerphilly MyST, is a multi disciplinary therapeutic intervention service supporting the most challenging children and young people to prevent placement breakdown and prevent the need for children to be placed in high cost residential provision outside the County Borough.

In response to a small number of particularly challenging children, we have purchased a property to develop a second Children’s Home within the County Borough and recruited a residential staff team. It is hoped that the new home will be fully operational by the end of 2019.

My wife is in hospital and she is my main carer. I just need her home here with me

Across Adult Services, we continue to develop our Community Resource Team (CRT) which offers a rapid response to people’s medical and social needs. In addition we have developed a discharge to assess pathway in Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr which has been recognised national as an area of good practice , the Data Unit are currently producing a YouTube video to promote the service and tell peoples stories of using the pathway.

I didn’t realise how much support I needed until I started to have the help. Now I know I can stay living in my own home.

During the year we have focused on identifying and developing services for carers to support them in their caring role. We held a series of events during carers week, we listened to what carers told us, developed social media sites and focused on events.

We have increased the number of people who see themselves as carers by over 50% from 546 to 1073 and we undertook 176 carers assessments in 2018/19.

We recognise that people don't want to be in hospital for any longer than necessary. We have therefore increased the number of domiciliary care providers on our framework to enable us to arrange more packages of care so people can be discharged home as soon as they are well enough.

The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 and over in the borough was 6.23% per 1000 population which puts us 8th of the 22 local authorities in Wales.

The Council has six residential care homes for older people, which it owns and runs, all of which have adopted the Dementia Care Matters approach. Two of our homes, Brodawel and Ty Iscoed, have achieved 'butterfly status' which is the nationally recognised mark of good practice. All our homes are now registered under Regulation Inspection Social Care Act as required.

The average age of adults entering residential care homes was 83.76 years.

The average length of time adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes is 174 days, illustrating our commitment to enable people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible.

We continue to work with our health colleagues in integrated mental health teams to develop the services we provide to promote people's mental health and emotional well-being.

How we addressed our priorities for 2018/19:

- Identified over 50% more carers – provided opportunities and support for them to continue in their role utilising the Intermediate Care Fund to maximise opportunities for service development and provide small grants for individuals to do what matters to them.
- Successfully registered all adults and children’s service under the Registration and Inspection of Social Care Act (RISCA).
- We have purchased a property to establish a second Children’s Home for Caerphilly children and young people.

What are our priorities for 2019/20:

- Expand the ‘discharge to assess’ model in the local hospital in readiness for Clinical Futures and the opening of the University Grange Hospital.
- Further develop the pan Gwent Home First model on the Royal Gwent and Nevill Hall Hospitals to prevent inappropriate admissions to the wards using peoples own strengths and an IAA approach with focuses on what matters.
- We will operationalise the second Children’s Home.
- We will host the regional MyST Programme Director and Clinical Director posts on behalf of the Gwent Children and Families Partnership.

Quality Standard 3 – Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

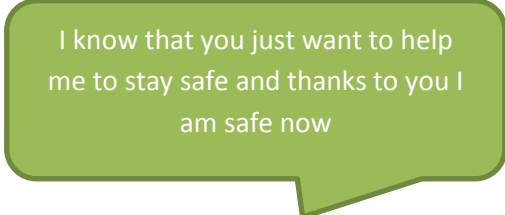
Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is the most important thing that the Authority does. Consequently the Authority has ensured that it is a Corporate priority and responsibility. A cross Directorate Corporate Safeguarding Board is led by the Assistant Director for Children’s Service and chaired by the Cabinet Member for Social Care & Wellbeing.

Safeguarding is everybody’s business and is a key theme running through the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. Consequently we make sure that our staff, contractors and partners are aware of their responsibilities in this area.

A Corporate Safeguarding Policy is in place and a programme of training and awareness raising is underway. Each service area has identified a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and periodic practice development groups are held to support the DSO’s. The Corporate Safeguarding Board produces an Annual Report for Elected Members. The Welsh Audit Office undertook a self –assessment exercise across all Welsh Local Authorities in relation to Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and will undertake fieldwork during 2019.

The arrangements for improving safeguarding policies, procedures and practice across the region are led by the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB), the Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB) and the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Board. These Boards are supported by a Business Unit funded by the statutory partners and hosted by Caerphilly. The Boards have a clear governance structure and their work is supported by a set of sub groups. Caerphilly are active partners on these Boards.

The Boards agreed to establish a joint Adults and Children’s Case Review Group to consider all referrals for Adult and Child Practice Reviews. This has enhanced shared learning across the two sectors and enabled the development of better joint working across the region.



I know that you just want to help me to stay safe and thanks to you I am safe now

Within the Council, responsibility for children’s, adults and education safeguarding all lie within Children’s Services. Although discrete service areas, they are all managed by one Service Manager and capacity and resilience has been improved as a result.

Decisions are made on all referrals within 24 hours ensuring full compliance with statutory procedures.

Our performance over the past year in safeguarding was:

- 100% of adult protection enquiries were completed within 7 days
- 2,704 Adult Services Care & Support Plans were reviewed
- 98% of initial Child Protection Conferences were carried out within statutory timescales
- 98% of all Child Protection Reviews were carried out in timescale
- 100% of children on the Child Protection Register have an allocated Social Worker
- 100% of children Looked After have an allocated Social Worker

As long as I feel safe
I feel happy.

We continue to provide training on 'Ask and Act' to all front line staff so they can recognise the signs of domestic abuse.

We closely monitor services we commission in terms of the quality of care they provide and this covers domiciliary care, supported living and long term care homes.

How we addressed our priorities for 2017/18:

- Safeguarding vulnerable children, young people and adults is a constant priority for the Council and the core business for the Social Services Directorate.
- We have continued to share learning from Adult and Child Practice Reviews across all agencies.

What are our priorities for 2019/20:

- Establishment of one Gwent Wide Safeguarding Board covering both Adults and Children's safeguarding.

- Await the outcome of the WAO Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements
- Manage the transfer of Education Safeguarding back to the LEA for 2019/20

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Quality Standard 4 – Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

Supporting Looked After Children and young people leaving care to reach their full potential and achieve positive outcomes is a key priority for Children’s Services and the Corporate Parenting Group. A dedicated Looked After Children Education (LACE) Team provide targeted support to children and young people at key stages in their education. In addition, tuition and extra-curricula activities are funded to support children to achieve their full potential. Attendance levels for LAC in primary and secondary school are 96% and 92% respectively, well above the target set by the Council. Exclusion rates for Looked After Children are very low and are continually monitored.

When I went into care you kept me in my school which was really important to me

Caerphilly has a proven track record of supporting young people into further and higher education and a number of Care Leavers have gained Degrees and similar qualifications.

52% of Care Leavers are engaged in education, training or employment 12 months after leaving care.

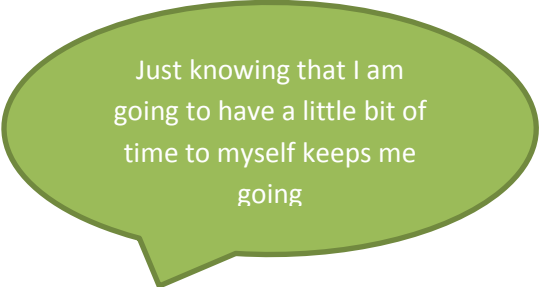
We recognise that it is important for people to be more self reliant and maintain their independence enabling them to participate fully in society and their local community.

In 2018/19, the Community Connectors received 244 referrals, 85% of had outcomes where people were assisted in being directed to services or organisations that helped them achieve “what matters to them”.

The local authority employs a number Community Connectors who have developed a database of activities taking place in local areas so they are able to signpost or take people to clubs and activities that interest them, such as ‘knit and natter’, art classes, craft groups, men’s sheds and luncheon clubs.

We are committed to embedding the DEWIS information system so people can access information for themselves 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

I would never have asked for help but now I don’t know what I would do without you – I am so glad I met you



Just knowing that I am going to have a little bit of time to myself keeps me going

Supporting carers is key. We have developed a carers skill swap system which is going from strength to strength. Carers are contacting each other and swapping skills for example, one carer did another's ironing in exchange for a sitting service to enable them to attend a birthday party.

Many of our carers have amazing artistic and technical skills which they are happy to teach each other. This is reflected in the use of our carers face book page which has 141 members. 61 people follow the Council's Carers Team on Twitter. We have also produced a carers news letter which is available electronically and in hard copy.

How we addressed our priorities for 2018/19:

- We supported the regional partnership to make full use of the ICF grant funding to maintain the 'Skills for Living' project for young people leaving care
- We worked with Dementia Care Matters to develop a bespoke Caerphilly Dementia Care Matters programme delivered to 30 local authority staff and 9 staff in the independent sector. A further 16 staff are currently attending the training.

What are our priorities for 2019/20?

- We propose to create a Community Connector specifically for Children's Services using ICF grant funding
- Complete the work on compassionate communities with health colleagues and develop a road map of resources available to enable people to develop their communities and participate in society
- Evaluate the implementation of compassionate communities within the north of the borough in terms of impacts on isolation and loneliness

Quality Standard 5 – Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

We want to support children, young people and adults to be as socially active as possible, to feel they can make decisions for themselves and keep themselves safe.

We have embedded the “what matters conversations” across the Directorate and trained staff to enhance their skills to focus on outcomes, the strengths and assets of people, their families and networks.

We recognise that people having fulfilling relationships with those they are close to is really important for their well-being.

For Looked After Children and young people, maintaining contact with their families and their home communities is really important and Children’s Services do everything they can to ensure contact arrangements meet the needs of everyone involved and are positive events.

Contact is the most precious time I have with my children and you always try and make sure it is as positive as it can be

Within Adult Services, we continued to recruit more carers to our Shared Lives Scheme to enable us to offer more choice and increase the number of placements we are able to offer in family homes to people of all client groups. We also made funding available to allow adaptations to people’s homes, such as ramps and showers to allow people to remain independent. We are working with health to develop a bespoke service for people in crisis in respect of their mental health which will be a separate arm of the service.

We have set up Carers Groups across the county borough to enable carers to meet socially over a coffee. Our Carers Team attend many events to promote their service and their efforts have been recognised.

We were able to establish a small fund that informal carers could apply for grants to help them in the following categories:

- Carers Essentials
- Carers Time Out
- Carers Access
- Carers Skills

I cannot fault the support and information I receive from the Carers Team – there is always something to look forward to

With our partners we agreed to refresh the Strategy for Learning Disabilities and during consultation meetings with our citizen groups, people told us that relationships are really important to them. This is now a fundamental part of the 'what matters' conversations and reviews are ensuring we are outcome focused. We signed up to the Learning disability charter which was produced by people with a learning disability supported by a project officer funded by ICF.

We recognise that we have more work to do on supporting relationships and this will be a priority for us going forward in terms of expansion of the My Mates club.

Within Children's Services, wherever possible and whenever safe to do so, we ensure children are placed as close to their home communities as possible in order to support their links with their family and home.

There are increasing demands being placed on us to recruit more foster carers in order to meet the needs of children and young people. We implemented an enhanced remuneration package for foster carers in June 2018 and recruitment has increased as a result. We continue to run a radio recruitment campaign which has helped us increase the enquiries we receive and the assessments that we are undertaking.

The workloads in Children's Services have continued to increase during 2018/19 particularly in cases involved in court proceedings resulting in increasing numbers of children becoming Looked After. This has put additional pressure on budgets and although we are working hard to prevent children coming into care we have to acknowledge the relationship between levels of poverty within the county borough and deprivation, abuse and neglect.

The increasing workload not only places an increased burden on financial resources but also on staff resources and social worker recruitment in frontline teams within Children's Services became challenging. As a result, a Market Supplement was approved by the Council to help us recruit new social workers.

How we addressed our priorities for 2018/19:

- The My Mates scheme was successfully rolled out across the borough.
- We worked with Health to develop a Service Level Agreement for Shared Lives to provide host families for people who are experiencing a mental health crisis.
- We reviewed the Foster Carer fees payment structure.

- We monitored the recruitment difficulties within Children’s Services and responded by introducing a Market Supplement incentive.

What are our priorities for 2019/20?

- Continue to monitor Social Worker recruitment in Children’s Services.
- Review the Market Supplement for key posts.
- Secure Intermediate Care Funding to develop Shared Lives further for people with dementia.
- Review the Learning Disability Strategy and the Learning Disability Charter with people to see what difference we have made.

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Quality Standard 6 – Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

Children’s Services actively support Looked After Children and young people to engage in education and training and provide individual support wherever necessary. Children and young people are encouraged to make the best use of their leisure time and are supported to engage in community activities wherever possible.

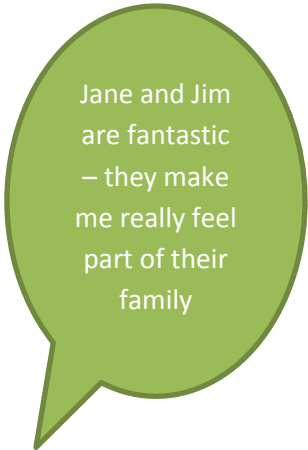
I have been helped to move into my own place and I know that they are always there to support me – it makes me feel safe and secure

Children’s Services have a well established working protocol with Housing to ensure we can provide appropriate support to young people facing homelessness. We have a range of supported accommodation available including shared living provision, supported lodgings and supported tenancies. We continue to review this provision and look to identify further opportunities for new developments.

Key performance includes:

- 100% of Looked After Children have a plan for permanence in place by the time of their second LAC Review (within 4 months of becoming Looked After).
- 100% of young people leaving care have an allocated worker to support them and we keep in touch with 100% of our care leavers up to the age of 21 years.
- 52% of care leavers are engaged in education, training or employment 12 months after leaving care.

Within Adult Services, during the refresh of the Learning Disabilities Strategy, people clearly told us where they lived was very important to them. They wanted independence with some support. Taking on board this message we have opened a series of flats in Ashfield Road which has enabled people to have their own front door but with targeted support when needed. A YouTube video (<https://youtu.be/ecj-ZCyAhu4>) has been produced to show the fantastic impact this had on people’s lives enabling them to be both independent and part of a community.



Jane and Jim
are fantastic
– they make
me really feel
part of their
family

We are working with our colleagues in Housing to review the current accommodation we have available to see if it can be used differently to increase the range of choices for people.

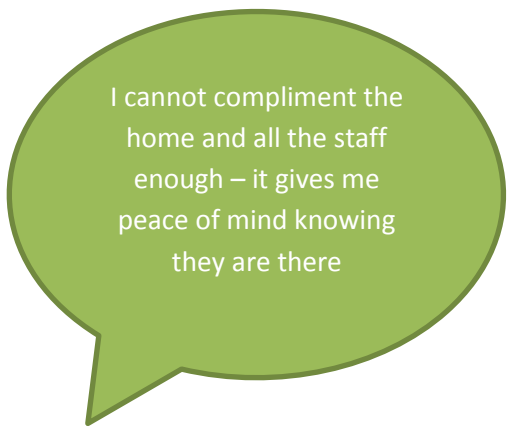
The authority is currently implementing the Welsh Housing Quality Standards programme and there are Occupational Therapists who liaise directly with Social Services to ensure that individuals needs are met in respect of provision of adaptations such as level access showers, and ramped access.

As a Council we are committed to developing dementia friendly communities so people can be supported to participate in normal activities of daily living such as shopping, banking and eating out. You will see the dementia friendly signs in local establishments and many people wearing the blue flower badge indicating they have been trained as a dementia friend.


Dementia Care matters to us. We are fully committed to ensuring all our services are dementia friendly. In our residential homes we have changed all the paperwork to be much simpler and truly reflect the person. This enables us to ensure we meet personal outcomes and know people's likes and dislikes.

You may also see many different displays and themes reflecting people's former lives. These change regularly and can reflect current events. The homes are now divided into small house units each with its own staff team so they can really get to know the residents.

The physical environment within some of the homes has also changed with the introduction of primary colours reflecting people's choice of their bedroom door and communal areas are brighter and more defined.



I cannot compliment the
home and all the staff
enough – it gives me
peace of mind knowing
they are there



I just wanted my own
front door – without
your help I would
never have got here

With our partners we have piloted expansion of our Shared Lives Scheme to look at a health initiative which provides placements with families to prevent people going into hospital and/or facilitating them being discharged to a family home. This enables people to have time to recover,

receive more therapy interventions and have an assessment of their needs in more appropriate surroundings. This is progressing well with 23 carers recruited providing 2,062 nights of long term support and 940 nights of short term care. We are committed to this alternative model of accommodation.

How we addressed our priorities for 2018/19:

- The My Mates scheme was successfully rolled out across the Borough

What are our priorities for 2019/20?

- Explore the potential to develop bespoke supported accommodation provision for young people leaving care to reduce the use of B&B accommodation
- Submit an ICF Capital bid to develop a third residential Children's Home
- Develop reablement services for people with memory loss and/or dementia using ICF funding to enable them to be as independent as possible.

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4. How we do what we do

Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles

Our staff are our greatest asset; a skilled and motivated workforce are essential to safeguard and support vulnerable people, promote independence and enhance service delivery. Ensuring that frontline practitioners and managers are supported and well trained is crucial to the success of our service. Our workforce is relatively stable with good staff retention. However, we have experienced challenges in recruiting to specific teams within Children's Services and have implemented a Market Supplement incentive as a result.

We have a joint Workforce Development Team with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and they are responsible for delivering a training and development strategy that supports development opportunities for staff at all levels in Social Services.

The key workforce planning issues for the Directorate over the next 12 months will be directly linked to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). Even though our budget settlement for 2018/19 included some funding from the Council to help with the financial pressures of additional demand, there will still be an obligation for savings to be made, and this will extend into 2019/20 and beyond.

The Authority holds workforce development responsibility for the whole care sector. The Care Sector employs over 3,000 staff with approximately 50% employed by the local authority and 50% by independent and third sector.

Our Financial Resources and How We Plan For the Future

Budget management is embedded as a core function of Divisional Management Teams (DMTs) and the Senior Management Team (SMT) with the Financial Services Manager being a member of the Senior Management Team. Budget reports are discussed at DMTs and SMT on a regular basis and these management teams are the key players in the development of the financial strategy of the Directorate. This focus on budget management has helped to ensure that the Directorate delivered the savings targets that were set for 2018/19 as well as us remaining within our allocated budget for the year.

An analysis of the spend per head of population indicates that Caerphilly's spend on Children's Services, Adults with Learning Disabilities and Adults aged 65+ is less than the average for Wales. Spend on Adults with Physical Disabilities is just above the

Welsh average but spend on Adults with Mental Health Needs in Caerphilly is around 56% higher than the Welsh average.

Both Adults Services and Children's Services have experienced continued significant demographic pressures during 2018/19. These pressures were identified early and have been factored in to the Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). However, if demand for services continues to grow at the rate experienced in the early part of 2018/19 then the budgetary growth factored in to the MTFP may be insufficient to fund the additional cost pressures.

The most significant growth in demand during 2018/19 has been experienced in the following areas:-

- Independent sector residential care for children
- Nursing care for older people
- Domiciliary care to support people in their own homes.
- Residential and nursing care for people with learning disabilities
- Supported living

The Directorate will need to focus its efforts in managing demand in these areas if it is to deliver a balanced budget in 2019/20.

Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability

Part 9 of the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act places a key emphasis on partnership working and to this end the authority is now a part of the Greater Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) with the other four local authorities in Gwent and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

The work of the RPB has intensified during 2018/19 and it now has a major influence over the work of social services in Caerphilly and in particular with the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

Since its inception the RPB has produced,

- An Area Plan
- A Market Position statement which outlines the provision of existing services and what services may be required in the future.
- An Annual report which pulls together all of the work of the RPB.

Further information on the work of the RPB and copies of the above reports can be found at its website at www.gwentrpb.wales/home.

One of the major pieces of work undertaken in 2018/19 was the finalising of our work on standardising some of the ways that we commission services from the independent sector. To this end we have;

- Finalised and signed off a section 33 agreement to allow the allocation of pooled funds for residential care for older people
- Developed a single service specification and contract for residential care for older people
- Developed a methodology to calculate the fees paid to independent sector Providers
- Developed a quality assurance methodology that can be used by all statutory Partners.

However, our partnership working is not limited to the RPB. We have a significant range of services provided with other local authorities and partners including;

- A joint workforce development team with Blaenau Gwent
- A Gwent frailty Service developed in conjunction with the four other local authorities and the health board
- Regional Safeguarding Boards covering all partners across Gwent.
- A Shared Lives scheme run on behalf of six local authorities.

In addition we have implemented the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) to help us share information between all of the other local authorities and Health Boards in Wales.

Political support for Social Services in Caerphilly CBC remains strong. Despite the very difficult financial settlement for the authority, additional funding was allocated to help us meet some of the financial pressures from an increasingly ageing population.

The Corporate Director for Social Services & Housing is a member of the Council's Corporate Management team which meets weekly to consider key decisions on strategic and operational priorities, prior to these issues / decisions going onto Scrutiny / Council.

There is an Executive member for Social Services & Wellbeing who sits on the Council's Cabinet and also attends the Social Services & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee with senior Managers.

Scrutiny Committee consisting of sixteen elected members meets every six weeks to oversee the performance of the Directorate and to consider any policy / service developments prior to them being considered by Cabinet.

Amongst some of the reports considered by Scrutiny Committee during 2018-19 were;

- Foster Care fee Levels
- Parliamentary review – Health & Social Care
- Social Services Revenue Budget
- Charging For Non Residential Services
- Annual Complaints & Compliments Report

Useful Links

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COUNCIL – 21ST JANUARY 2020

SUBJECT: APPROPRIATION OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

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- 1.1 The attached report was considered as an urgent item by Cabinet on 27 November 2019.
 - 1.2 The Constitution requires that any decision taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of Council, giving the reasons for its urgency. Therefore the report is presented to Council for Members' information, on the basis that it was required to be implemented to ensure the Council could benefit from Affordable Housing Grant from Welsh Government, to contribute towards the cost of the appropriation and improvement works, by completing the transfer no later than 29th November 2019.
 - 1.3 The recommendations of the report were considered and approved by Cabinet.
 - 1.4 Members were asked to note the recommendations of the report and Cabinet decision.

Author: C. Evans, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4210

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Cabinet – 27th November 2019.



CABINET –27TH NOVEMBER 2019

SUBJECT: APPROPRIATION OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

REPORT BY: INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNITIES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to appropriate two formally tied residential properties, currently held by Bereavement Services (General Fund), for Housing purposes to Caerphilly Homes (Housing Revenue Account). The properties are surplus to their original requirements and therefore tenancies and other operational matters will be managed by Caerphilly Homes.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The properties known as Cemetery House, Abercarn, which is situated within the grounds of Abercarn Cemetery and 65 Cromwell Road, Risca were previously let as tied tenancies by Bereavement Services for members of their staff. Following the ending of the tied tenancies the tenants have held a secure tenancy under the Housing Act 1985 and Bereavement Services have certain duties and responsibilities as part of this contract.
- 2.2 Providing, managing and maintaining tenanted accommodation is not the primary role of Bereavement Services. Consequently they are highly reliant on other services to support them in this regard so it is proposed to transfer this responsibility by appropriating the assets for housing purposes to be held in the Housing Revenue Account. Caerphilly Homes have agreed, in principle, to the transfer of these properties to their stock at market value and would improve the properties to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. However financial viability of the proposal is dependent on the success of applications to Welsh Government for Affordable Housing Grant assistance. In order to achieve funding for both the transfer and improvement costs it is anticipated that the transfer of the properties would be required to be completed by 29 November 2019. The report seeks urgent Cabinet approval for appropriating both properties from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account for housing purposes.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the appropriation of the tenanted assets known as Cemetery House, Abercarn and 65, Cromwell Road, Risca from Bereavement Services to Housing, pursuant to S.122 of the Local Government Act 1972 and at an agreed market value.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The two residential properties are surplus to the operational requirements of Bereavement Services and the management of residential properties is outside of their operational remit. Caerphilly Homes have indicated a willingness to accept the two tenanted properties into the social housing stock and improve them to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard thereby increasing their stock of affordable homes for rent.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Cemetery House, Abercarn is a three bedroom detached house, whilst 65 Cromwell Road, Risca is a three bedroom semi-detached property. Both properties have current tenants who have secure tenancies; Caerphilly Homes have accepted that they will remain tenants of those properties.
- 5.2 The properties were previously let as tied tenancies by Bereavement Services for members of their staff; however the tenants are no longer tied to employment with the Service. Following the ending of the tied tenancies, the tenants have since held secure tenancies under the Housing Act 1985 and Bereavement Services have retained certain duties and responsibilities in respect of maintenance of the premises and occupation as part of these contracts.
- 5.3 Providing, managing and maintaining tenanted accommodation is clearly not the primary role of Bereavement Services and they are reliant on other services, including Legal, Housing and Property Services to support them in this regard.
- 5.4 Since 2003 the two properties have been included in the Caerphilly Homes rent debit (non HRA) which collect the rent and water charge on behalf of Bereavement Services. The annual rent is journaled from the HRA to the relevant cost centre each year minus an admin fee. Annual Caerphilly Homes rent increases, in accordance with cabinet decisions, have been applied to these properties since 2003.
- 5.5 Bereavement Services are looking to divest themselves of the responsibility by transferring these tenanted assets, and the 'best fit' is considered to be Caerphilly Homes. Caerphilly Homes have agreed to consider the transfer of the properties into their social stock however, in addition to funding the transfers; they will be obligated to invest substantial sums in the two properties in carrying out improvements to ensure they meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. Due to the type of properties and extent of work involved to bring them up to the WHQ Standard the transfers are not considered to be a viable proposal for Caerphilly Homes unless it is successful in applying for Affordable Housing Grant funding to contribute to the transfer and improvement costs necessary to bring these properties up to an acceptable standard.
- 5.6 Affordable Housing Grant (AHG) is a grant programme which provides 58% revenue funding to Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) towards the costs of acquiring and improving new social housing. The grant is paid in the form of a revenue stream by annual instalments over a period of up to 29 years with the remainder of the cost required to be funded by Caerphilly Homes.
- 5.7 LHAs are able to submit affordable housing scheme applications to Welsh Government for approval subject to the schemes being included within a Local Authority's Programme Development Plan (PDP). In order for AHG to be paid to

LHAs affordable housing schemes must receive Welsh Government approval. The individual approval stages are listed below:

Stage 1 – Acquisition

This is a LHA's application to purchase land or property with AHG funding. It provides an indication of costs anticipated at tender stage. It seeks approval of acquisition costs and requests grant based on the purchase price.

Stage 2 – Pre Planning

This is a LHAs application to seek Welsh Government's view of estimated costs.

Stage 3 – Tender/Works

This is an LHAs application to build affordable homes on a specific site or rehabilitate an existing dwelling with AHG funding.

- 5.8 The proposed appropriation of these two properties was included in the LHAs latest PDP but AHG funding ends in March 2020 and the deadline for submitting claim forms for all stages is 29 November 2019. To benefit from grant funding it is anticipated that Caerphilly Homes would require full ownership by 29 November 2019 and to begin works on site before April 2020.
- 5.9 The appropriation of the properties would be under Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972, and it has been agreed by Caerphilly Homes that they would be appropriated at full market value, taking into consideration property condition and the presence of secure sitting tenants. These valuations have been confirmed by an independent valuer at £72K in respect of Cemetery House, Abercarn and £54k in respect of 65 Cromwell Road, Risca.
- 5.10 In order to qualify for the AHG funding the properties need to be improved to Development Quality Requirements (DQR) Part 2 (Requirements for existing and rehabilitated dwellings built by housing associations), which is largely comparable to WHQS. Initial property condition surveys have been completed and costs for achievement of WHQS are estimated at:-
- Abercarn Cemetery House - £23,100.03;
 - 65 Cromwell Road, Risca - £29,021.44.

5.11 Conclusion

The two tenanted properties known as Cemetery House and 65 Cromwell Road are surplus to the operational requirements of Bereavement Services and the management of residential properties is outside of their operational remit. Should the proposed appropriation be approved by Cabinet then Caerphilly Homes, if successful in applying for Affordable Housing Grant, would utilise the properties as social housing and improve the properties to meet WHQS.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made.

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

7.1 *Caerphilly Homes Service Plan (2018-2023).*

Priority Object 2 – Increase the provision of new, affordable homes to meet identified needs, promoting “Lifetime Homes” principles for grant funded delivery and where appropriate supporting Welsh Government’s innovative Housing Programme.

7.2 *Corporate Plan 2018-2023.*

The proposal contributes towards or impacts the following Corporate Well-being Objectives:

Objective 2 - Enabling employment - Use investment in improving homes to increase the number of skilled, qualified workers by providing apprenticeship, training and work placements with our in-house workforce and building contractors.

Objective 3 - Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people’s well-being.

Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.

Welsh Government Policies

7.3 *Improving Lives and Communities: Homes in Wales (Welsh Government, 2010),* which sets out the national context for improving homes and communities, including the energy efficiency of existing homes.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 The report contributes to the following Well-being Goals:

- A prosperous Wales*
- A resilient Wales*
- A healthier Wales*
- A more equal Wales*
- A Wales of cohesive communities*
- A globally responsible Wales*

8.2 The report is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act. The five ways of working of the sustainable development principle, listed in the Act are:

- Long Term – Housing is a long term asset and these proposed additional social rented homes will meet current and future needs.
- Prevention – The additional homes will assist in meeting housing need and prevent homelessness and poor health attributable to poor housing conditions.
- Integration –The proposal brings together a variety of stakeholders to deliver long term sustainable benefits for lives and communities.
- Collaboration – Bereavement Services and Caerphilly Homes are working in collaboration to ensure a sustainable future for the properties concerned.
- Involvement – There will be an opportunity for tenants to have an input into the

planning and design of proposed improvement works and into determining their future housing needs.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 An EqIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and for lower level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqIA has not been carried out.
- 9.2 The current tenants of the two properties have been consulted on the proposals and their views taken into consideration in planning for the transfer and improvement of the properties should the appropriation be approved.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The recent approval of AHG to part fund the purchase and improvement of these properties will be included in the next business plan due for submission to Welsh Government and does not require further borrowing to implement. The funding will be taken from the HRA capital receipts reserve where we have retained 25% of our Right To Buy (RTB) sales. The AHG funding stream over the next 29 years will in theory replenish 58% of the capital used. Since the abolition of RTB's in January 2019, there is no further opportunity to gain additional income in this way.
- 10.2 The properties have been valued by an independent valuer at £72K in respect of Abercarn Cemetery House and £54K in respect of 65 Cromwell Road.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 Consultation responses have been reflected in this report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 Section 122 Local Government Act 1972.

14. URGENCY (CABINET ITEMS ONLY)

- 14.1 The decision will not be subject to call-in as the decision needs to be implemented urgently to ensure the Council can benefit from Affordable Housing Grant from Welsh Government to contribute towards the cost of the appropriation and improvement works, by completing the transfer no later than 22nd November. In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution, the Mayor has agreed that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and should be treated as urgent. The decision will be reported to the next meeting of the Council together with the reasons for urgency.

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