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Date: 16th October 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Social Services Scrutiny Committee** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Tuesday, 22nd October, 2019** at **5.30 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. Councillors and the public wishing to speak on any item can do so by making a request to the Chair. You are also welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, both these requests require a minimum notice period of 3 working days, and a simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

All Committee meetings are open to the Press and Public, observers and participants are asked to conduct themselves with respect and consideration for others. Please note that failure to do so will result in you being asked to leave the meetings and you may be escorted from the premises.

Yours faithfully,

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

Christina Harrhy
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

- | | Pages | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 | To receive apologies for absence. | |
| 2 | 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.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



To approve and sign the following minutes: -

- | | | |
|---|--|--------|
| 3 | Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on the 10th September 2019. | 1 - 6 |
| 4 | Consideration of any matter referred to this Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure. | |
| 5 | Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme. | 7 - 26 |

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports: -

- | | | |
|---|---|----------|
| 6 | Budget Monitoring Report (Month 5). | 27 - 42 |
| 7 | Wales Audit Office Review of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements. | 43 - 80 |
| 8 | Welsh Government - Looked After Children Reduction Expectations. | 81 - 86 |
| 9 | Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2018/19. | 87 - 122 |

Circulation:

Councillors: A. Angel, J. Bevan (Vice Chair), C. Bezzina, L.J. Binding (Chair), D. Cushing, M. Evans, Miss E. Forehead, A. Gair, Ms J. Gale, D.C. Harse, V. James, L. Jeremiah, Mrs A. Leonard, B. Owen, S. Skivens and C. Thomas

Users and Carers: Michelle Jones, Jill Lawton and Mr C. Luke

Aneurin Bevan Health Board: A. Gough (ABUHB)

And Appropriate Officers

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SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN,
YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 10TH SEPTEMBER 2019 AT 5.30 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor L. Binding - Chair
Councillor J. Bevan - Vice Chair

Councillors:

A. Angel, C. Bezzina, M. Evans, Miss A. Gair, J. Gale, D.C. Harse, V. James, L. Jeremiah, Mrs A. Leonard and C. Thomas.

Cabinet Member: C. Cuss (Social Care and Wellbeing).

Together with:

J. Williams (Assistant Director - Adult Services), G. Jenkins (Assistant Director - Children's Services), M. Jones (Interim Financial Services Manager), M. Jacques (Scrutiny Officer), P. O'Neill (Senior Youth Service Manager), C. Jones (Youth Forum Co-ordinator) and A. Dredge (Committee Services Officer).

S. Taylor (Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and L. Jones (Gwent Transformation Programme).

Youth Forum Representatives: I. Jones (Chair), L. Parker (Welsh Member Youth Parliament) and L. Mallon (Project Group Chair).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors D. Cushing, E. Forehead, B. Owen, S. Skivens, D. Street (Corporate Director - Social Services and Housing), Mrs M. Jones, Ms J. Lawton and Mr C. Luke (Co-opted Members) and A. Gough (Aneurin Bevan University Health Board).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – 18TH JUNE 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 18th June 2019 (minute nos. 1 - 9) be approved and signed as a correct record.

4. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

5. SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer introduced the report that informed the Committee of its Forward Work Programme planned for the period September 2019 to April 2020.

Members were advised that the Dementia Friends Training that had been scheduled for this meeting will be rearranged to a date to be confirmed. The Scrutiny Committee were asked to consider the work programme and to make any amendments or request additional agenda items to be included for future meetings.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the work programme appended to the report be approved.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

6. JUNIOR & YOUTH FORUM PRIORITIES

The Chair welcomed representatives from the Youth Forum, CAMHS and the Gwent Transformation Programme to the meeting.

The Youth Forum Representatives delivered a presentation and showed a video that provided the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the issues raised by Children and Young People in the last year. They explained that following the Youth Forum Conference in January 2019 and the Junior Forum meeting in November 2018, Children and Young People have identified issues important to them and have voted on Priority Issues for 2019.

The issues voted on by the Youth Forum were knife crime, tackling homelessness, putting an end to period poverty, providing safe adventurous outdoor play and their overall priority issue was raising awareness of Mental Health. They felt the Services should be improved with young people's help and that young people should receive mental health first aid education. The issues voted on by the Junior Forum were more support for children with additional learning needs, more shelters and opportunities made available to homeless people, raising awareness of speeding cars within communities and community litter picks. Their overall priority issue was raising awareness of support for Drugs and Alcohol.

The process that follows the identification of issues was discussed and this includes working with Officers, Cabinet and the Public Services Board (PSB) as appropriate on a range of initiatives intended to have a positive impact in moving forward.

Members discussed the priority issues in detail and asked if there were any statistics available in relation to bullying and if any progress has been made since this priority issue was raised previously. The Senior Youth Service Manager advised that the issue of bullying comes up year on year and is now looked at formally with colleagues in education. Officers consider this is making a difference at a strategic level. A Member queried if matters have improved since the priority issue of mental health had been raised 2 years ago. The Youth Forum

Representatives advised that this issue is now addressed on a higher platform and is progressing on a regional scale. Social Services are working closely with CAMHS in relation to the Transformation Programme which is currently being implemented. Clarification was sought in relation to waiting times for CAMHS. S. Taylor referred to Specialist CAMHS which is about seeing the right person at the right place at the right time and for this area there is no waiting list. For urgent appointments, individuals are seen on the same day. Specialist CAMHS has a new Community Team which is a single point of access which is moving away from clinic settings. She was pleased to note the issues raised by young people and felt their voice and working together will help shape the way forward, by developing fantastic opportunities.

The Chair requested a rounded report from CAMHS, Social Services and other agencies on the main priorities raised by the Junior and Youth Forums as he feels that both priorities are linked. He felt this information will provide a clear view of the current position and allow suggestions on how the Scrutiny Committee can support young people in moving forward. In addition, the Chair would like to invite representatives from the Junior and Youth Forums to the meeting when the report is presented so that they can gain an appreciation of the response to the issues they have raised.

In response to a Member's query, the Youth Forum representatives referred to their own personal experiences whilst at school and feel that mental health first aid training should be provided to pupils and teachers. A Member referenced drug and alcohol prevention and Officer's advised that services are commissioned with the Health Board and the working relationship is very positive.

The Chair thanked representatives from the Youth Forum, CAHMS and Gwent Transformation Programme for attending the meeting and for responding to questions during the course of the debate. The representatives from the Youth Forum thanked Members for the opportunity to deliver their priority issues.

Following consideration and discussion, and subject to an additional recommendation in that *Officers to work with partners on an overarching report on the two main priorities raised by the Junior and Youth Forums – Mental Health and Raising Awareness of Drug and Alcohol Support, be agreed* it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Youth Forum's Priority Issue of Mental Health, be supported;
- (ii) the Junior Forum's Priority Issue of raising awareness of Drug and Alcohol, be supported;
- (iii) the Social Services Scrutiny Committee to have due regard to issues raised within the report by Children and Young People when making decisions which impact upon their lives;
- (iv) Officers to work with partners on an overarching report on the two main priorities raised by the Junior and Youth Forums – Mental Health and Raising Awareness of Drug and Alcohol Support.

7. WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 6 - TO SUPPORT CITIZENS TO REMAIN INDEPENDENT AND IMPROVE THEIR WELL-BEING (2018-23)

The report provided Members with the first year (2018/19) performance of the 5 year Plan (2018-2023) towards achieving Well-being Objective 6 - Support Citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.

Members were advised that completion of the objectives is on track and several have already been completed and were referred to Appendix A that provides the full detail of the update. Page 2 highlights the outcomes for achieving that include: Supporting people to 'help themselves' by providing comprehensive advice and information including signposting to other services; Having 'meaningful conversations' to help people identify 'what matters' to them to inform 'outcome focused and Continuing to identify opportunities to work collaboratively wherever appropriate. Reference was then made to page 5, which sets out the tracking progress and how each outcome has been and will be achieved.

A Member questioned why there isn't an equality impact assessment (EIA) attached to the report. Officers advised that the focus of the report and the wellbeing objective relates to Social Services and there is no discrimination to citizens and therefore an EIA is not required. Reference was made to the Corporate Plan which is an overarching document for the Authority and this contains an EIA. A Member requested an update on the recruitment of Foster Carers. Officers advised that there are 20 new Foster Carers employed which are 5 over the target set. Members were pleased to note that Caerphilly's Model has been used by other Local Authorities due to its success.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

8. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (MONTH 3)

The report provided Members with the projected revenue expenditure for the Social Services Directorate for the 2019/20 financial year and the progress made against the savings targets built in to the 2019/20 revenue budget for the Directorate.

The report identifies the reasons behind a projected underspend of £339k for Social Services in 2019/20, despite a significant increase in demand for residential care placements for children since the beginning of the financial year. It also identifies the progress that has been made to date towards achieving the £2.261million savings target that was included in the Social Services budget for 2019/20.

Members discussed the areas of projected underspend within Children's Services and it was explained that this links mainly to Management, Fieldwork and Administration. This relates to the turnover of staff, the difficulty in recruiting in the North of the Borough and ICF Funding. The report represents the first quarter of the financial year. A Member sought further clarification for the projected underspend within Adult Services of £1, 202k. The Officer advised that there has been a fall in demand in respect of external Residential Care. This has resulted in a potential underspend of £737k for all adult residential and nursing care provision. There is also a projected underspend of £532k for Own Residential Care and Supported Living, which is largely due to client contributions. The further £250k projected underspend relates to staff cover but this may increase in the second quarter due to holiday cover. Members noted that in respect of Domiciliary Care, following the recently completed tender process, 4 new providers have been engaged to undertake services.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the budget virement of £190k from the Social Services Budget to the Education budget in respect of the Education Safeguarding Team, be noted;

- (ii) the projected underspend of £339k against the Social Services budget for 2019/20, inclusive of transport costs, be noted;
- (iii) the progress made to date towards delivering the £2.261million savings target that was included in the Social Services budget for 2019/20, be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.00pm.

Approved as a correct record, subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2019.

CHAIR

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SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND OCTOBER 2019

SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES & HOUSING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the Social Services Committee Forward Work Programme.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholders.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 The Social Services Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified and discussed at the scrutiny committee meeting on Tuesday 10th September, 2019. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period October 2019 to April 2019.

5.2 The forward work programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the council website. Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

5.3 The Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1. The Cabinet Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2. A copy of the prioritisation flowchart is attached at appendix 3 to assist the scrutiny committee to determine what items should be added to the forward work programme.

5.4 **Conclusion**

The work programme is for consideration and amendment by the scrutiny committee prior to publication on the council website.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

7. **LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

7.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and subsequent Statutory Guidance include requirements to publicise the work of scrutiny committees. The operation of scrutiny committee forward work programmes was agreed following decisions by Council in October 2013 and October 2015.

7.2 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

Scrutiny Committee forward work programmes contributes towards and impacts upon the Corporate Well-being Objectives by ensuring that the Executive is held to account for its Corporate Objectives, which are:

Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all

Objective 2 - Enabling employment

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 4 - Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment

Objective 5 - Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

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

8. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

8.1 The Forward Work Programmes contribute to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016 by ensuring there is an effective scrutiny function and that council policies are scrutinised against the following goals:

- 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

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

12. CONSULTATIONS

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

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 The Local Government Act 2000, The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

Author: Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer

Consultees: Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/ Monitoring Officer
Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Legal Services
Councillor Lyndon Binding, Chair of Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor John Bevan, Vice Chair of Social Services Scrutiny Committee

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
Appendix 2 Cabinet Forward Work Programme
Appendix 3 Forward Work Programme Prioritisation Flowchart

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Appendix 1 - Forward Work Programme - Social Services

Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
22/10/2019.				
	Looked After Children Targets	To appraise CMT of the authority's response to Welsh Government expectations around setting targets within Children's Services.	Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J
	Director's Annual Report Social Services	A summary outlining the effectiveness of Social Services. The progress achieved in relation to set priorities for the previous year. Priority areas for development in the year ahead.	Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J
	Month 5 Budget Monitoring	Identification of significant variances between budgeted expenditure and forecasted expenditure for the financial year based on information available at the end of August, along with causes and any mitigating action taken.	Jones, Mike J	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J
	Follow-up Review of Corporate Arrangements for the Safeguarding of Children	The review contains recommendations for future working. Members will be made aware of these recommendations and how progress will be reviewed / scrutinised.	Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J
03/12/2019.				
	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Social Services	To discuss savings / efficiency proposals.	Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J
04/02/2020.				
	Month 9 Budget Monitoring Report	Identification of significant variances between budgeted expenditure and forecasted expenditure for the financial year based on information available at the end of December, along with causes and any mitigating action taken.	Jones, Mike J	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J
	Regional Partnerships Boards (including pooled budgets & long term plans)	RPB's are becoming increasingly influential in terms of policy development and recipient of resources from WG. The report will outline the role and function of the RPB's, the current priorities in Gwent and discuss the role of scrutiny committee's in relation to the RPB.	Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J
17/03/2020.				
	Multi-Disciplinary Intervention Support Team (MIST)	The update will provide activity information for the Caerphilly Service demonstrating improved outcomes for children looked after and will include case studies.	Welham, Jennie	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J
	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board presentation	The presentation will outline the current issues & priorities of the Board.	Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J
	Dementia Friends Training	This training is part of the Authority's commitment to becoming a Dementia Friendly Council, to improve the lives of people affected by dementia. As part of this we support Dementia Friendly communities that empower people affected by Dementia, to have high aspirations and feel confident, knowing they can contribute and participate in activities that are meaningful to them. Awareness and promote the training.	Cooke, Paul	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J

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Appendix 1.

Meeting Date: 22nd October 2019 - Information Reports			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses

Meeting Date: 3rd December 2019 - Information Reports (MTFP Special)			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses

Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Meeting Date: 4th February 2020 - Information Reports			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses

Meeting Date: 17th March 2020 - Information Reports			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses

Meeting Date: 28th April 2020 - Information Reports			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses

Social Services Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Meeting Date: 2020 - Information Reports			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses

Meeting Date: 2020 - Information Reports			
Subject	Purpose	Key Issues	Witnesses

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Appendix 2 - Forward Work Programme - Cabinet

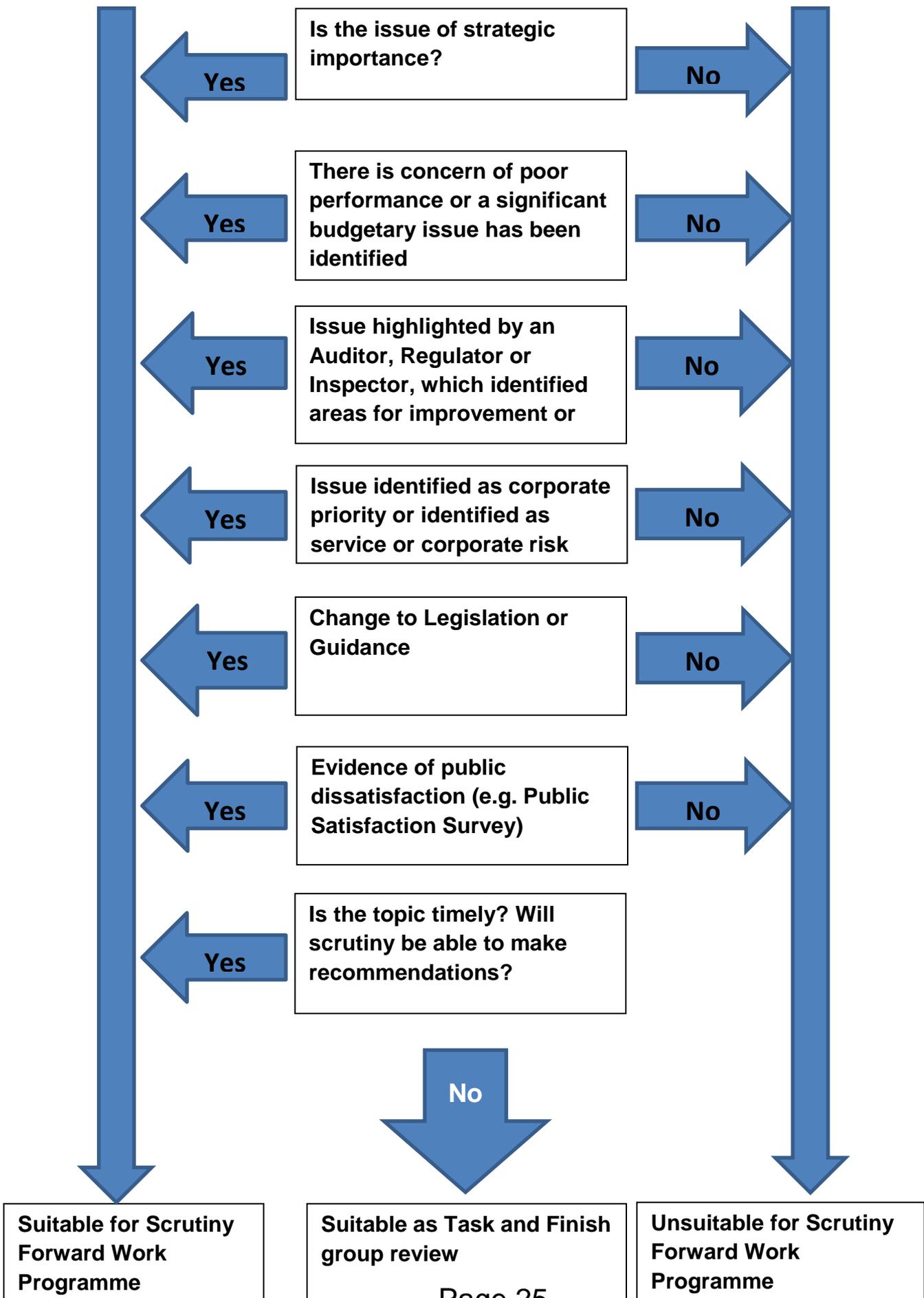
Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
16/10/19	Annual Improvement Report 2018/19	To present the Annual Improvement Report for 2018/19	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
16/10/19	Hafodyrynys	To update Cabinet on discussions with Welsh Government in relation to implementing the recommendations within the Air Quality plan for Hafodyrynys Road	Godfrey, Maria; Edwards, Ceri	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned
16/10/19	Annual Performance Report 2018	To discuss and present the draft Annual Performance Report	Roberts, Ros	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
16/10/19	Land at Pontymister Industrial Estate	The matter has been consulted on with local Risca members and 2 of the 5 members have raised objections to the proposed sale principle. While any development would be subject to planning considerations, the scrutiny committee's views are being sought on the principle of the sale prior to consideration by cabinet.	Williams, Mark	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa
16/10/19	Free Swim Initiative	Changes to Grant Funding to deliver the Welsh Government Free Swimming Initiative	Reynolds, Jeff	Cllr. George, Nigel
30/10/19	Chartist Gardens - Development Options	To seek approval of the development proposal and associated financial model prior to submitting scheme for planning approval.	Couzens, Shaun; Williams, Mark	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa
13/11/19	20/21 Draft Budget Proposals	To discuss the draft budget proposals	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
13/11/19	Funding Formula for Cwm Rhymni	To consider proposals to change the current funding arrangements for YGG Cwm Rhymni and the possible funding sources.	Richards, Sue	Cllr. Marsden, Philippa

13/11/19	European Social Fund Operation - Inspire to Achieve (ISA)	To seek approval from CMT to deliver Inspire to achieve as part of a regional operation lead by Blaenau Gwent CBC	Richards, Sue	Cllr. Marsden, Philippa
13/11/19	Corporate Volunteering	To consider our options for the establishment of a Corporate Volunteering Scheme on a Directorate or Whole Organisation basis.	Peters, Kathryn; Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J.
13/11/19	Integrated Wellbeing Hubs	To provide an update to Cabinet	Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J.
13/11/19	(9) Structured programme of service reviews to be agreed	Strategic Action Plan - item to be agreed.	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
13/11/19	(11) Commercial and Investment Strategy to be drafted and approved by Cabinet	Strategic Plan - item to be approved	Harrhy, Christina	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
27/11/19	Renewable Energy Generation - Tredomen Campus	To present a basket of options to Cabinet for achieving carbon neutrality at the Tredomen Campus	Williams, Mark	Cllr. Morgan, Sean
27/11/19	Waste and Recycling Collection Systems	To advise Cabinet of the findings of the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Waste Review Working Group and to seek Cabinet approval for recommendations relating to the Authority's waste and recycling services.	Hartshorn, Robert	Cllr. George, Nigel
27/11/19	Cabinet Forward Work Programme	For discussion and update	Tranter, Robert J.	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
11/12/19	meeting cancelled			
15/01/20	Community Asset Transfer Policy to be finalised and approved by Cabinet (16- #Team Caerphilly Strategic Action Plan)	Approval by Cabinet of Community Asset Transfer Policy	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa

15/01/20	Community Sport - Regional agenda	To consider future delivery options for community sport on a regional (pan "Gwent") basis.	Lougher, Jared	Cllr. George, Nigel
15/01/20	Develop a Consultation and Engagement Framework to support empowered communities to come on this journey with us. - (17- #Team Caerphilly Strategic Action Plan)	To approve the consultation and Engagement Framework	Harrhy, Christina/ Kath Peters	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
29/01/20	Caerphilly County Borough Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024	To seek approval of the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 to be formally adopted as Council Policy.	Cullinane, Anwen	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
29/01/20	Proposed Use of Reserves	To consider proposals for the use of reserves.	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Jones, Barbara

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Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation



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SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 22ND OCTOBER 2019

SUBJECT: BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (MONTH 5)

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of projected revenue expenditure for the Social Services Directorate for the 2019/20 financial year.
- 1.2 To update Members on the progress made against the savings targets built in to the 2019/20 revenue budget for the Directorate.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report will identify the reasons behind a projected underspend of £457k for Social Services in 2019/20, despite a significant increase in demand for residential care placements for children since the beginning of the financial year.
- 2.2 It will also identify the progress that has been made to date towards achieving the £2.261million savings target that was included in the Social Services budget for 2019/20.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are asked to note the projected underspend of £457k against the Social Services budget for 2019/20, inclusive of transport costs.
- 3.2 Members are asked to note the progress made to date towards delivering the £2.261million savings target that was included in the Social Services budget for 2019/20.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure Members are apprised of the latest financial position of the Directorate.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Directorate Overview

- 5.1.1 The 2019/20 original budget for social services of £90,333,115 included £190,867 in respect of the team responsible for overseeing the safeguarding of children within educational settings. Line management for this team subsequently transferred from the Directorate of Social Services and Housing to the Directorate of Education and Corporate Services and the budget for the team has been vired accordingly. As a result the revised budget for Social Services currently stands at £90,142,248.

- 5.1.2 Information available as at 31st August 2019 suggests a potential underspend of £507k against this revised budget. However, this does not include the costs of transport for Social Services service users which is funded through a budget held by the Integrated Transport Unit within the Directorate of Communities. This budget for transport costs amounts to £1,434,468 and is forecast to be overspent by around £50k. This is due to a Medium Term Financial Plan savings target included in the 2019/20 budget which is unlikely to be delivered in 2019/20.
- 5.1.3 This overspend against transport costs would partially offset the underspend forecast against the Social Services budget resulting in a net underspend of £457k as shown in the following table:-

Division	Revised Budget (£000's)	Projection/ Commitment (£000's)	Over/(Under) Spend (£000's)
Children's Services	23,502	24,585	1,083
Adult Services	64,531	62,972	(1,559)
Service Strategy & Business Support	2,109	2,078	(31)
Sub Total Directorate of Social Services	90,142	89,635	(507)
Transport Costs	1,434	1,484	50
Grand Total	91,576	91,119	(457)

5.2 Children's Services

- 5.2.1 The Children's Services Division is currently projected to overspend its budget by £1,083k as summarised in the following table: -

	Revised Budget (£000's)	Projection/ Commitment (£000's)	Over/(Under) Spend (£000's)
Management, Fieldwork & Administration	8,727	8,466	(261)
Residential Care Including Secure Accommodation	4,671	6,130	1,459
Fostering & Adoption	8,313	8,125	(188)
Youth Offending	395	395	0
Families First	47	4	(43)
After Care Support	658	778	120
Other Costs	691	687	(4)
Totals: -	23,502	24,585	1,083

Management, Fieldwork and Administration

- 5.2.2 The social worker vacancies that were experienced early in the year have now been filled but many of these appointments have been made towards the bottom end of the grade resulting in a projected underspend in respect of these post. This has been compounded by delays in backfilling secondments to fixed term, grant aided posts, increasing the potential underspend in respect of management, fieldwork and administrative posts within the Children's Services Division to £261k.

Residential Care Including Secure Accommodation

- 5.2.3 The Children's Services Division has achieved a saving of around £250k in respect of residential placements for children since the month 3 position was reported to Members. This has been through a combination of a net reduction in placements by 1 child, delays in appointing staff at the Ty Isaf Residential Home and identifying a more cost effective placement for 1 other child. Unfortunately, these savings have been largely offset by an increase of around £243k due to a net increase of 2 parent and baby placements. As a result, the forecasted overspend in this area remains similar to the position reported in month 3, at £1,459k.

Fostering and Adoption

- 5.2.4 The division has continued to experience an increase in demand for foster care placements. However, with the success of the ongoing foster care recruitment campaign it has been possible to accommodate a greater proportion of these placements with Caerphilly's in-house foster carers. These placements are less expensive than placements made through independent fostering agencies and as a result an underspend of £188k is forecast, despite the overall increase in services provided.

Families First

- 5.2.5 Following a cut in specific grant funding in 2018/19, the Children's Services budget has been used to underwrite a funding shortfall of £47k across the Families First Programme. However, a number of projects have reported potential underspends at the end of the first quarter of 2019/20 so it is expected that only £4k will need to be underwritten by Children's Services. The resultant underspend of £43k would not reduce the amount of Welsh Government grant funding claimable.

Aftercare

- 5.2.6 Three more care leavers currently receive support to live independently than when the month 3 position was reported to Members in September 2019. These additional arrangements are expected to cost over £200k within the current financial year resulting in a projected overspend of £120k.

5.3 **Adult Services**

- 5.3.1 The Adult Services Division is currently projected to underspend its budget by £1,559k as summarised in the following table: -

	Revised Budget (£000's)	Projection/ Commitment (£000's)	Over/(Under) Spend (£000's)
Management, Fieldwork & Administration	8,130	8,185	55
Own Residential Care and Supported Living	6,594	6,142	(452)
Own Day Care	3,996	3,946	(50)
Supported Employment	69	69	0
Aid and Adaptations	772	783	11
Gwent Frailty Programme	2,367	2,283	(84)
Supporting People (net of grant funding)	0	0	0
External Residential Care	15,432	14,835	(597)
External Day Care	1,409	1,497	88
Home Care (In-House and Independent Sector)	11,428	11,034	(394)
Other Domiciliary Care	13,149	12,901	(248)
Resettlement	(1,020)	(1,020)	0

	Revised Budget (£000's)	Projection/ Commitment (£000's)	Over/(Under) Spend (£000's)
Services for Children with Disabilities	1,312	1,384	72
Other Costs	893	933	40
Totals: -	64,531	62,972	(1,559)

Management, Fieldwork and Administration

- 5.3.2 The Adult Services budget for 2019/20 included a savings target of £550k to be achieved through a review of staffing across the division. As of 30th June 2019, 7.69 full time equivalent posts had been removed from the division delivering savings of £349k. Since then a further 6.17 full time posts have been earmarked for deletion which will ensure the full savings target will be achieved in preparation for the 2020/21 financial year. However as these savings will only be achieved in part during the current financial year, a net overspend of around £55k is projected in 2019/20 in respect of management, fieldwork and administrative posts.

Own Residential Care and Supported Living

- 5.3.3 An underspend of £452k is projected within this service area. This can largely be attributed to an increase in income received from service users. The level of this income is subject to individual financial assessments of each service user which can be significantly influenced by the value of property owned by the service users accommodated within our care homes at any point in time. As a result this forecast can fluctuate significantly over time depending on the relative wealth of service users at the time that forecasts are made.

Own Day Care

- 5.3.4 The underspend of £50k forecast against our own day care services assumes staffing vacancy levels and replacement costs will be maintained at existing levels throughout the financial year

Aids and Adaptations

- 5.3.5 Forecasts provided by the Gwent Wide Integrated Community Equipment Service (GWICES) suggest that Caerphilly CBC could overspend by around £11k during 2019/20 based on demand for aids to daily living experienced between April and August 2019.

Gwent Frailty Programme

- 5.3.6 The underspend of £84k in respect of the Gwent Frailty Programme is attributable to a combination of Reablement Support Worker vacancies within Caerphilly and centrally held pooled budget underspends.

Supporting People

- 5.3.7 A review of supporting people contracts has been undertaken since the month 3 position identified a potential overspend of £96k. Following that review it is anticipated that Supporting People Services will be delivered within budget during 2019/20.

External Residential Care

- 5.3.8 The Adult Services Division has experienced a large drop-off in demand for residential care since the budget for 2019/20 was set. This has resulted in a potential underspend of £597k for all adult residential and nursing care provision.

External Day Care

- 5.3.9 The Adult Services budget for 2019/20 included a savings target of £205k to be achieved through a review of external day care provision. An overspend of £88k is currently forecast in this service area which would indicate that savings of £117k have been achieved to date. Work is ongoing to identify more cost effective services for a number of existing service users that could deliver the savings target in full by the end of the financial year.

Home Care (In-House and Independent Sector)

- 5.3.10 Actual costs incurred in the first 5 months of the financial year suggest a reduction of around 300 hours per week paid to in-house carers, contributing to a projected underspend of £342k in respect of the in-house service. This reduction of 300 paid hours per week equates to around 240 hours of contact with service users.
- 5.3.11 The reduction in in-house contact hours has been more than offset by an increase of around 325 hours per week in domiciliary care commissioned through the independent sector at a cost of £270k. This increase in hours has been coupled with an increase in the rates charged by independent providers following a re-tendering of contracts with effect from 1st October 2019 at a cost of £282k. Around £266k of Welsh Government Grant funding had been earmarked in preparation for the impact of the re-tendering exercise resulting in a projected net overspend of £286k in respect of independent sector domiciliary care provision.
- 5.3.12 Welsh Government grant funding had also been earmarked to partially fund an increase in demand for residential care for people with learning disabilities and for the MyST fostering service. However, as underspends are forecast for these services in 2019/20, £338k of Welsh Government Grant will be re-directed to fund the increased demand for independent sector domiciliary care for older people and adults with disabilities.
- 5.3.13 The overall impact of the issues covered in paragraphs 5.3.10 to 5.3.12 is a net projected underspend of £394k in respect of home care services.

Other Domiciliary Care

- 5.3.14 The underspend of £248k projected in respect of other domiciliary care costs can largely be attributed to a combination of reduced take up of direct payments and refunds from direct payment recipients following audits of recipients' accounts.

Children with Disabilities

- 5.3.15 An overspend of £31k in respect of staff cover at Ty Hapus Resource Centre coupled with an increase in foster care provision for children with disabilities, has resulted in a potential overspend of £72k in this service area.

Other Costs

- 5.3.16 A net overspend of £40k has been forecast in respect of Other Costs for Adult Services. This includes an overspend of £14k due to an under-provision for unsocial hours enhancements within the Telecare budget and £11k in respect of mental health capacity assessments. The remainder of the overspend is attributable to shared care respite services. The Social Services budget for 2019/20 included a £50k savings target to be achieved through a retendering of the contract for this respite service. Unfortunately, the revised contract did not take effect until 1st October 2019 and therefore, the savings will not be achieved in full within the current financial year. However, the full year impact of the revised contract is expected to achieve the full £50k savings target.

5.4 **Service Strategy and Business Support**

5.4.1 The service area is currently projected to underspend by £31k as summarised in the following table: -

	Revised Budget (£000's)	Projection/ Commitment (£000's)	Over/(Under) Spend (£000's)
Management and Administration	888	889	1
Office Accommodation	218	214	(4)
Office Expenses	169	154	(15)
Other Costs	834	821	(13)
Totals: -	2,109	2,078	(31)

5.4.2 The underspend of £31k in respect of Business Support is attributable to a combination of reduced printing costs, insurance premiums frozen at 2018/19 prices and the end of the national "Making the Connections" project to which the Directorate has previously subscribed.

5.5 **Progress Made Against the 2019/20 Revenue Budget Savings Targets**

5.5.1 The 2019/20 budget for Social Services included a savings target of £2,261k. As of 30th June 2019, actions had been implemented which would deliver around 84% of this target. Since that position was reported to Members in September, further actions have been implemented which will deliver a further 12% of the target. Work is ongoing to deliver the remaining 4% (£88k) of the targeted savings to ensure that the £2,261k target will be achieved in full in time for the start of the 2020/21 financial year.

5.5.2 The 2019/20 budget for Social Services Transport which is managed by the Integrated Transport Unit within the Directorate of Communities included a further savings target of £50k. No savings have been identified to date and it is possible that any efficiency savings that can be achieved will be negated by increasing demand. Therefore, a comprehensive review of the situation has commenced to determine whether this saving is deliverable.

5.6 **Conclusion**

The Directorate is progressing well towards delivering its savings target for 2019/20. However, increasing demand for residential placements for children (including parent and baby placements) is a cause for concern along with transport costs. Underspends due to temporary staffing vacancies, reduced demand for services for adults and increased contributions from service users accommodated in our own residential homes are mitigating these concerns in the current financial year but it is too early to predict whether the reduction in demand for adult care and the increased service user contributions are indicative of a longer term trend or just a short term phenomenon. This should become clearer as we move in to the winter months. In the meantime, efforts remain focused upon reducing the need for residential care for children and providing more cost effective placements where they are necessary.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 The projections contained in this report assume that demand for services will remain at existing levels for the remainder of the financial year unless there is strong evidence to suggest otherwise.

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

7.1 The provision of budget monitoring information is required as part of the budgetary control requirements contained within the Council's Financial Regulations.

7.2 Corporate Plan 2018-2023

The expenditure of the Directorate is linked directly to its ability to shape and deliver its strategic objectives, which in turn assists the achievement of the Authority's stated aims and well-being objectives.

8 WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 Effective financial management is a key element in ensuring that the Well-being Goals within the Well-Being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 are met.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the issues covered are for information purposes only, therefore the Council's full EIA process does not need to be applied.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 As detailed throughout the report.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 All consultation responses have been incorporated into this report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations.

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Appendices: Appendix 1 - Social Services 2019/20 Budget Monitoring Report (Month 5)
Appendix 2 - Social Services Medium Term Financial Plan Savings in 2019/20

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Appendix 1 - Social Services 2019/20 Budget Monitoring Report (Month 5)

	Revised Budget 2019/20	Projection	Over/ (Under) Spend
	£	£	£
SUMMARY			
CHILDREN'S SERVICES	£23,501,959	£24,584,744	£1,082,785
ADULT SERVICES	£64,531,017	£62,972,403	(£1,558,614)
RESOURCING AND PERFORMANCE	£2,109,272	£2,078,300	(£30,972)
SOCIAL SERVICES TOTAL	£90,142,248	£89,635,447	(£506,801)
CHILDREN'S SERVICES			
Management, Fieldwork and Administration			
Children's Management, Fieldwork and Administration	£9,716,824	£9,576,405	(£140,419)
Social Services Grant	(£89,108)	(£81,383)	£7,725
Transformation Grant	£0	(£105,348)	(£105,348)
Intermediate Care Fund Contribution	(£900,499)	(£924,131)	(£23,632)
Sub Total	£8,727,217	£8,465,543	(£261,674)
Residential Care Including Secure Accommodation			
Own Residential Homes	£1,590,291	£1,297,536	(£292,755)
Gross Cost of Placements	£3,153,188	£4,903,453	£1,750,265
Contributions from Education	(£72,682)	(£70,979)	£1,703
Contributions from Health	£0	£0	£0
Sub Total	£4,670,797	£6,130,010	£1,459,213
Fostering and Adoption			
Gross Cost of Placements	£7,867,624	£7,583,615	(£284,009)
Social Services Grant	(£613,933)	(£499,433)	£114,500
Other Fostering Costs	£158,872	£158,872	£0
Adoption Allowances	£97,978	£80,220	(£17,758)
Other Adoption Costs	£363,028	£363,028	£0
Professional Fees Inc. Legal Fees	£439,039	£439,039	£0
Sub Total	£8,312,608	£8,125,341	(£187,267)
Youth Offending			
Youth Offending Team	£395,152	£395,152	£0
Sub Total	£395,152	£395,152	£0
Families First			
Families First Team	£192,436	£195,835	£3,399
Other Families First Contracts	£2,552,696	£2,505,800	(£46,896)
Grant Income	(£2,697,747)	(£2,697,747)	£0
Sub Total	£47,385	£3,888	(£43,497)
Other Costs			
Preventative and Support - (Section 17 & Childminding)	£66,290	£66,290	£0
Aftercare	£657,882	£778,270	£120,388
Agreements with Voluntary Organisations	£602,029	£597,651	(£4,378)
Intermediate Care Fund Contribution	(£100,000)	(£100,000)	£0
Other	£244,599	£234,432	(£10,167)
Transformation Grant	(£122,000)	(£111,833)	£10,167
Sub Total	£1,348,800	£1,464,810	£116,010
TOTAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES	£23,501,959	£24,584,744	£1,082,785

	Revised Budget 2019/20	Projection	Over/ (Under) Spend
	£	£	£
ADULT SERVICES			
Management, Fieldwork and Administration			
Management	£128,350	£134,488	£6,138
Protection of Vulnerable Adults	£301,498	£297,341	(£4,157)
OLA and Client Income from Client Finances	(£293,267)	(£285,523)	£7,744
Commissioning	£707,804	£732,637	£24,833
Section 28a Income Joint Commissioning Post	(£17,175)	(£17,175)	£0
Older People	£2,268,306	£2,329,896	£61,590
Less Wanless Income	(£44,747)	(£44,747)	£0
Promoting Independence	£2,281,109	£2,455,434	£174,325
Social Services Grant	(£22,493)	(£19,594)	£2,899
Provider Services	£394,630	£416,735	£22,105
ICF Funding	(£134,857)	(£134,857)	£0
Learning Disabilities	£733,240	£719,862	(£13,378)
Contribution from Health and Other Partners	(£44,253)	(£44,253)	£0
Mental Health	£1,363,564	£1,380,895	£17,331
ICF Funding	£0	£0	£0
Section 28a Income Assertive Outreach	(£94,769)	(£94,769)	£0
Drug & Alcohol Services	£336,493	£325,368	(£11,125)
Emergency Duty Team	£266,610	£266,610	£0
Further Vacancy Savings	£0	(£233,231)	(£233,231)
Additional Savings Target	£0	£0	£0
Sub Total	£8,130,043	£8,185,117	£55,074
Own Residential Care			
Residential Homes for the Elderly	£6,644,814	£6,716,419	£71,605
Intermediate Care Fund Contribution	(£92,806)	(£93,864)	(£1,058)
-Less Client Contributions	(£1,986,840)	(£2,396,019)	(£409,179)
-Less Section 28a Income (Ty Iscoed)	(£115,350)	(£115,350)	£0
-Less Inter-Authority Income	(£38,297)	(£39,297)	(£1,000)
Net Cost	£4,411,521	£4,071,888	(£339,633)
Accommodation for People with Learning Disabilities	£2,615,587	£2,503,087	(£112,500)
-Less Client Contributions	(£63,437)	(£63,437)	£0
-Less Contribution from Supporting People	(£41,319)	(£41,262)	£57
-Less Inter-Authority Income	(£328,479)	(£328,479)	£0
Net Cost	£2,182,352	£2,069,909	(£112,443)
Sub Total	£6,593,873	£6,141,797	(£452,076)
External Residential Care			
Long Term Placements			
Older People	£10,925,100	£10,578,855	(£346,245)
Less Wanless Income	(£303,428)	(£303,428)	£0
Less Section 28a Income - Allt yr yn	(£151,063)	(£151,063)	£0
Physically Disabled	£530,706	£421,557	(£109,149)
Learning Disabilities	£3,637,585	£3,446,119	(£191,466)
Mental Health	£969,700	£809,967	(£159,733)
Substance Misuse Placements	£60,316	£60,316	£0
Social Services Grant	(£632,112)	(£422,584)	£209,528
Net Cost	£15,036,804	£14,439,739	(£597,065)

	Revised Budget 2019/20	Projection	Over/ (Under) Spend
	£	£	£
Short Term Placements			
Older People	£254,794	£254,794	£0
Carers Respite Arrangements	£40,274	£40,274	£0
Physical Disabilities	£42,137	£42,137	£0
Learning Disabilities	£16,654	£16,654	£0
Mental Health	£41,321	£41,321	£0
Net Cost	£395,180	£395,180	£0
Sub Total	£15,431,984	£14,834,919	(£597,065)
Own Day Care			
Older People	£657,116	£630,522	(£26,594)
-Less Attendance Contributions	(£16,869)	(£16,869)	£0
Learning Disabilities	£2,814,615	£2,848,565	£33,950
-Less Attendance Contributions	(£20,691)	(£20,691)	£0
-Less Inter-Authority Income	(£24,986)	(£27,509)	(£2,523)
Mental Health	£755,400	£700,363	(£55,037)
ICF Funding	(£87,100)	(£87,100)	£0
-Less Section 28a Income (Pentrebane Street)	(£81,366)	(£81,366)	£0
Sub Total	£3,996,119	£3,945,916	(£50,203)
External Day Care			
Elderly	£9,784	£16,562	£6,778
Physically Disabled	£126,121	£105,206	(£20,915)
Learning Disabilities	£1,262,957	£1,371,527	£108,570
Section 28a Income	(£72,659)	(£72,659)	£0
Mental Health	£82,932	£76,469	(£6,463)
Sub Total	£1,409,135	£1,497,105	£87,970
Supported Employment			
Mental Health	£69,233	£69,233	£0
Sub Total	£69,233	£69,233	£0
Aids and Adaptations			
Disability Living Equipment	£548,494	£561,111	£12,617
Adaptations	£216,681	£216,681	£0
Chronically Sick and Disabled Telephones	£7,168	£5,168	(£2,000)
Sub Total	£772,343	£782,961	£10,618
Home Assistance and Reablement			
Home Assistance and Reablement Team			
Home Assistance and Reablement Team (H.A.R.T.)	£4,220,333	£3,988,303	(£232,030)
Wanless Funding	(£67,959)	(£67,959)	£0
ICF Funding	(£32,063)	(£34,915)	(£2,852)
Transformation Grant	£0	(£107,212)	(£107,212)
Independent Sector Domiciliary Care			
Elderly	£6,236,107	£6,517,758	£281,651
Physical Disabilities	£795,826	£871,563	£75,737
Learning Disabilities (excluding Resettlement)	£375,669	£371,804	(£3,865)
Mental Health	£293,400	£226,389	(£67,011)
Social Services Grant	(£393,373)	(£731,860)	(£338,487)
Gwent Frailty Programme	£2,434,266	£2,350,216	(£84,050)
Appropriation from Specific Reserve	(£67,322)	(£67,322)	£0
Sub Total	£13,794,884	£13,316,765	(£478,119)

	Revised Budget 2019/20	Projection	Over/ (Under) Spend
	£	£	£
Other Domiciliary Care			
Shared Lives			
Shared Lives Scheme	£996,126	£1,119,333	£123,207
-Less Contribution from Supporting People	(£98,421)	(£125,520)	(£27,099)
Net Cost	£897,705	£993,813	£96,108
Supported Living			
Older People	£51,370	(£548)	(£51,918)
-Less Contribution from Supporting People	£0	£0	£0
Physical Disabilities	£1,539,334	£1,396,380	(£142,954)
-Less Contribution from Supporting People	(£22,177)	(£20,846)	£1,331
Learning Disabilities	£8,506,313	£8,801,275	£294,962
Less Section 28a Income Joint Tenancy	(£28,987)	(£28,987)	£0
-Less Contribution from Supporting People	(£259,857)	(£259,957)	(£100)
Mental Health	£2,072,720	£1,873,179	(£199,541)
-Less Contribution from Supporting People	(£10,046)	(£10,045)	£1
Net Cost	£11,848,670	£11,750,450	(£98,220)
Direct Payment			
Elderly People	£114,515	£120,979	£6,464
Physical Disabilities	£730,809	£671,381	(£59,429)
Learning Disabilities	£823,725	£632,905	(£190,820)
Section 28a Income Learning Disabilities	(£20,808)	(£20,808)	£0
Mental Health	£3,736	£3,593	(£143)
Social Services Grant	(£25,617)	(£21,982)	£3,635
Net Cost	£1,626,360	£1,386,067	(£240,293)
Other			
Sitting Service	£314,805	£314,107	(£698)
Extra Care Sheltered Housing	£512,624	£495,340	(£17,284)
-Less Contribution from Supporting People	(£13,454)	£0	£13,454
Net Cost	£813,975	£809,447	(£4,528)
Total Home Care Client Contributions	(£2,037,686)	(£2,037,686)	£0
Sub Total	£13,149,024	£12,902,091	(£246,933)
Resettlement			
External Funding			
Section 28a Income	(£1,020,410)	(£1,020,410)	£0
Sub Total	(£1,020,410)	(£1,020,410)	£0

	Revised Budget 2019/20	Projection	Over/ (Under) Spend
	£	£	£
Supporting People (including transfers to Housing)			
People Over 55 Years of Age	£430,255	£435,372	£5,117
People with Physical and/or Sensory Disabilities	£46,125	£44,036	(£2,089)
People with Learning Disabilities	£109,077	£114,795	£5,718
People with Mental Health issues	£1,050,693	£1,158,060	£107,367
Families Supported People	£518,774	£514,117	(£4,657)
Generic Floating support to prevent homelessness	£848,921	£845,434	(£3,487)
Young People with support needs (16-24)	£1,033,654	£942,020	(£91,634)
Single people with Support Needs (25-54)	£403,973	£403,337	(£636)
Women experiencing Domestic Abuse	£476,112	£430,013	(£46,099)
People with Substance Misuse Issues	£381,501	£393,547	£12,046
Alarm Services (including in sheltered/extra care)	£255,594	£255,895	£301
People with Criminal Offending History	£141,127	£144,003	£2,876
Contribution to Social Services Schemes	£606,984	£622,162	£15,178
Newport CC funding transfer	(£70,000)	(£70,000)	£0
Less supporting people grant	(£6,232,790)	(£6,232,790)	£0
Sub Total	£0	£0	(£0)
Services for Children with Disabilities			
Blackwood Resource Centre	£317,576	£348,749	£31,173
Residential Care	£357,593	£355,706	(£1,887)
Foster Care	£408,343	£452,239	£43,896
Preventative and Support - (Section 17 & Childminding)	£9,470	£9,470	£0
Respite Care	£56,258	£68,293	£12,035
Direct Payments	£164,911	£151,937	(£12,974)
Social Services Grant	(£2,537)	(£2,337)	£200
Sub Total	£1,311,614	£1,384,058	£72,444
Other Costs			
Telecare Gross Cost	£621,675	£635,983	£14,308
Less Client and Agency Income	(£353,985)	(£353,985)	£0
-Less Contribution from Supporting People	(£83,705)	(£83,590)	£115
Agreements with Voluntary Organisations			
Children with Disabilities	£350,837	£366,593	£15,756
Elderly	£150,907	£151,428	£521
Learning Difficulties	£61,928	£60,904	(£1,024)
Section 28a Income	(£52,020)	(£52,020)	£0
Mental Health & Substance Misuse	£43,783	£43,783	(£0)
MH Capacity Act / Deprivation of Libert Safeguards	£97,460	£108,389	£10,929
Other	£55,143	£55,143	£0
Provision for Fee Uplifts	£0	£0	£0
Social Services Grant	£0	£0	£0
Wales Independent Living Expenditure	£1,152	£224	(£928)
Gwent Enhanced Dementia Care Expenditure	£278,878	£278,878	£0
Gwent Enhanced Dementia Care Grant	(£209,692)	(£209,692)	£0
Intermediate Care Fund Contribution	(£69,186)	(£69,186)	£0
Sub Total	£893,175	£932,850	£39,675
TOTAL ADULT SERVICES	£64,531,017	£62,972,403	(£1,558,614)

	Revised Budget 2019/20	Projection	Over/ (Under) Spend
	£	£	£
<u>SERVICE STRATEGY AND BUSINESS SUPPORT</u>			
Management and Administration			
Policy Development and Strategy	£172,082	£175,231	£3,149
Business Support	£715,925	£713,534	(£2,391)
Sub Total	£888,007	£888,765	£758
Office Accommodation			
All Offices	£277,756	£274,402	(£3,354)
Less Office Accommodation Recharge to HRA	(£60,103)	(£60,103)	£0
Sub Total	£217,653	£214,299	(£3,354)
Office Expenses			
All Offices	£169,330	£153,912	(£15,418)
Sub Total	£169,330	£153,912	(£15,418)
Other Costs			
Training	£323,619	£323,619	£0
Staff Support/Protection	£9,401	£9,401	£0
Information Technology	£32,054	£32,054	£0
Management Fees for Consortia	(£51,002)	(£51,002)	£0
Insurances	£254,212	£248,254	(£5,958)
Other Costs	£265,998	£258,998	(£7,000)
Sub Total	£834,282	£821,324	(£12,958)
TOTAL RESOURCING AND PERFORMANCE	£2,109,272	£2,078,300	(£30,972)

APPENDIX 2 - SOCIAL SERVICES MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN SAVINGS IN 2019/20

Impact Upon Public	Saving Proposal	Total Value of Proposal £000s	Full Year Effect of Savings Achieved to Date £000s	Further Savings to be Achieved £000s	Comments
Nil	Budget realignment and deletion of vacant back office posts with no public impact	197	197	0	These proposals were reflective of the position in 2018/19 and as such had been delivered prior to 1st April 2019
Low	Review of administrative support in Children's Services	189	189	0	A restructuring of administrative support services has been implemented reducing the workforce by 6.73 full time equivalent posts.
Low	Review of staffing budgets in Adult Services	550	550	0	13.86 whole time equivalent vacant posts have been permanently removed from the adult services structure. In addition 1 post employed by GOFAL has also be ended.
Low	Review of non Residential Charging Policy	100	100	0	Cabinet approval received on 13th March 2019 to implement charges for community based services and independent sector day services.
Low	Retender of shared care respite contract	50	50	0	New contracts implemented with effect from 1st October which will deliver half of the target in 19/20 with the full target delivered for a full year
Low	Review of own day services for adults	300	300	0	Overall underspend forecast for own day services.
Low	Review of external day services for adults	205	117	88	Work ongoing to provide alternative arrangements for 3 service users which could deliver the remaining savings.
Low	Non-renewal of mental health carers support contract	34	34	0	Contract ended in 2018/19 and was not renewed.
Low	Implications of Social Services & Wellbeing Act 2014	150	150	0	Net underspend against adult services care packages indicates that this saving has been achieved.
Medium	Review of Barnardo's contract	186	186	0	Contract re-negotiated with effect from 1st April 2019.
High	Reduction in growth provision	300	300	0	Net underspend against social services indicates that this saving has been achieved.
		2,261	2,173	88	

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SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND OCTOBER 2019

**SUBJECT: WALES AUDIT OFFICE REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S
CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Scrutiny Committee of the Wales Audit Office (WAO) Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements within Caerphilly County Borough Council undertaken in May 2019 and report on the implementation of an action plan in response to the recommendations made by the Review.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The WAO undertook a follow up review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements for Children in Caerphilly in May 2019. The subsequent report was presented to Corporate Management Team for approval in June 2019 and the Performance Audit Manager from WAO also presented the report findings to the Corporate Safeguarding Board in June 2019.

- 2.2 The Review report is attached as Appendix 1 and concluded that;

Although the Council has made some progress in addressing our previous recommendations, the Council needs to further strengthen its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements

- 2.3 In response, the Council was required to complete a Management Response and this is attached for information at Appendix 2. This document refers to the strategic recommendations made in the Review. The Corporate Safeguarding Board has developed an action plan to address both the strategic recommendations made and the areas of good practice for consideration identified in the Review and this is attached as Appendix 3. The WAO Auditor acknowledged that there were many positive developments in place and planned to address the areas for improvement but because some of them were yet to be fully realised, their conclusion was that further work is needed to strengthen corporate governance and oversight.

- 2.4 It is really important to note that this was a review of the corporate governance of safeguarding arrangements and did not consider safeguarding children practice and

procedure.

- 2.5 The content of this report was considered and approved by Cabinet on 18th September 2019.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the content of the WAO Review report and the progress made in implementing the recommendations detailed in the Council's Action Plan.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure Scrutiny Committee is fully aware of the findings of the WAO Review and supports the Corporate Safeguarding Board to oversee implementation of the Action Plan.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The full WAO Review Report is attached as Appendix 1 for information.
- 5.2 The Review identifies 5 areas for improvement in line with the National Recommendations published in 2015. The Council's Management Response to the Review is attached for information at Appendix 2.
- 5.3 However, in addition, the Review identified good practice that the council could consider and the Corporate Safeguarding Board agreed to include all these good practice areas in the detailed Action Plan that is attached as Appendix 3.
- 5.4 Committee Members will be able to note that many of the actions identified are relatively straight forward to implement and achieve and as a result the timescales set are within the current financial year.
- 5.5 The key findings fall into the following themed areas:

Corporate Safeguarding Board:

- increased frequency of meetings
- increased performance reporting
- development of a Training Framework for all service areas
- development of a self assessment tool
- consider the inclusion of Corporate Safeguarding on Risk Registers
- improved access to the policy and the Annual Report

Designated Safeguarding Officers:

- complete the self-assessment tool
- implement the Training Framework

Human Resources:

- implement the Safer Recruitment Policy
- develop a tracking system for DBS checks for all staff who require them
- support the implementation of the Training Framework through the use of

ITrent or an alternative Learning Management System (LMS).

Procurement and Contract Monitoring:

- ensuring contractors and volunteers have received appropriate training and DBS checks

Internal Audit:

- Staff to be trained
- Role to be clarified

5.6 The Corporate Safeguarding Board will oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and will report progress made in their 2019/20 Annual Report.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

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

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

7.1 Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

7.2 Cabinet Commitment – to protect the most vulnerable people in our society and make safeguarding a key priority

7.3 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

The content of this report contributes towards Well Being Objective 6: Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 The content of this report contributes to the following Well Being Goals:

- A resilient Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

The report is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act as follows:

- Long Term – safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is and always will be a priority for the Council and it is essential that all employees, volunteers and contractors fully understand their personal and professional responsibility to safeguard vulnerable individuals.
- Prevention – robust Corporate Safeguarding arrangements should help prevent the escalation of need and subsequent demand on higher tier statutory services
- Integration – Caerphilly’s Corporate Safeguarding Policy reinforces that safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is everybody’s business within Caerphilly
- Collaboration – the Corporate Safeguarding Board and the Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) Development Group ensures that every service area is represented, has a DSO identified and provides training and support to those DSO’s to fulfil their corporate safeguarding responsibilities.

- Involvement – the Corporate Safeguarding Board consists of representatives from key service areas to ensure that there is a whole Council approach to safeguarding.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the Council's full Equality Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no funding implications arising from this report.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 The report is for information purposes and reflects the views of consultees.

13. STATUTORY POWER

- 13.1 Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

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Appendices:

1. Wales Audit Office – Follow-up Review of Corporate Arrangements for the Safeguarding of Children – Caerphilly County Borough (June 2019)
2. Caerphilly County Borough Council – Management Response (June 2019)
3. Caerphilly Corporate Safeguarding Board Action Plan (June 2019)

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WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru
Auditor General for Wales

Follow-up review of corporate arrangements for the safeguarding of children – **Caerphilly County Borough Council**

Audit year: 2018-19

Date issued: June 2019

Document reference: 1326A2019-20

This document has been prepared for the internal use of Caerphilly County Borough Council as part of work performed in accordance with section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and section 18 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

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The team who delivered the work comprised Gareth Jones, managed by Non Jenkins under the direction of Huw Rees.

Contents

Although the Council has made some progress in addressing our previous recommendations, the Council needs to further strengthen its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements.

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Summary

What we reviewed and why

- 1 We undertook this review to seek assurance that the Council has effective corporate arrangements in place for safeguarding children. We considered the findings of our 2014 report into the Council's arrangements to support safeguarding of children¹. We also considered the Council's progress in implementing the recommendations contained in the Auditor General's report, 'Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils' (July 2015)².
- 2 We undertook the review during May 2019. The Council provided a self-assessment of its progress in addressing the recommendations and proposals for improvement made in 2014 and 2015. The Council provided documents to support its self-assessment. We then interviewed key officers and the lead member for Corporate Safeguarding.
- 3 Our review has been limited to reviewing the Council's self-assessment of its progress against our previous recommendations and proposals for improvement. We have not tested the effectiveness of the Council's safeguarding arrangements in practice as part of this review.

What we found

- 4 Our review sought to answer the question: **Has the Council acted upon the recommendations and proposals for improvement contained in the national and local reports of the Auditor General published in 2014 and 2015?**
- 5 Overall we found that: **Although the Council has made some progress in addressing our previous recommendations, the Council needs to further strengthen its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements.**
- 6 Based on the work we have done, the Council needs to further strengthen its oversight and assurance of its corporate safeguarding arrangements. In particular, the Corporate Safeguarding Board has a very extensive remit but only meets annually. The Council does not currently include Safeguarding in its corporate risk register nor service area risk registers. The Council should strengthen the oversight of the assurance provided by its Corporate Safeguarding Board to ensure that the Council's procedures for safeguarding children and adults are robust. The role of the Cabinet, Audit Committee, Internal Audit and Scrutiny in relation to Corporate Safeguarding need to be clarified.
- 7 The Council's Cabinet commitments include safeguarding as a key priority, and the

¹ Auditor General for Wales, **Local Authority Arrangements to Support Safeguarding of Children – Caerphilly County Borough Council**, October 2014

² **Auditor General for Wales, Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils**, July 2015

Council's ethos is that 'Safeguarding is Everybody's Business.' However, it has yet to fully address a number of our previous national recommendations as shown below. **Exhibit 2** that follows sets out our assessment of the Council's progress in implementing each national recommendation and local proposal for improvement.

Exhibit 1: National recommendations that have yet to be fully addressed

The table below sets out the national recommendations that the Council has not yet fully addressed

National recommendations that have yet to be fully addressed
<p>R3 Strengthen safe recruitment of staff and volunteers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with safe recruitment policies cover all services that come into contact with children; • creating an integrated corporate compliance system to record and monitor compliance levels on DBS checks; and • requiring safe recruitment practices amongst partners in the third sector and for volunteers who provide services commissioned and/or used by the council which are underpinned by a contract or service level agreement.
<p>R4 Ensure all relevant staff, members and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring safeguarding training is mandated and coverage extended to all relevant council service areas, and is included as standard on induction programmes; • creating a corporate-wide system to identify, track and monitor compliance on attending safeguarding training in all council departments, elected members, schools, governors and volunteers; and • requiring relevant staff in partner organisations who are commissioned to work for the council in delivering services to children and young people to undertake safeguarding training.
<p>R6 Improve accountability for corporate safeguarding by regularly reporting safeguarding issues and assurances to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced and council-wide set of performance information covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benchmarking and comparisons with others; • conclusions of internal and external audit/inspection reviews; • service-based performance data; • key personnel data such as safeguarding training, and DBS recruitment checks; and • the performance of contractors and commissioned services on compliance with council safeguarding responsibilities.
<p>R7 Establish a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to undertake systems testing and compliance reviews on the council's safeguarding practices.</p>
<p>R8 Ensure the risks associated with safeguarding are considered at both a corporate and service level in developing and agreeing risk management plans across the council.</p>

Exhibit 2: assessment of the Council's progress in addressing the national recommendations

The table below sets out our assessment of the Council's progress in addressing the national recommendations and local proposals for improvement.

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p>R1 Improve corporate leadership and comply with Welsh Government policy on safeguarding through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the appointment of a senior lead officer who is accountable for safeguarding and protecting children and young people with corporate responsibilities for planning improvements; 2. the appointment of a lead member for safeguarding; and 3. regularly disseminating and updating information on these appointments to all staff and stakeholders. 	<p>Summary – Fully met</p> <p>The Council has improved corporate leadership and compliance with Welsh Government policy on safeguarding through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. appointing a senior lead officer (Director of Social Services and Housing) who is accountable for safeguarding and protecting children and young people with corporate responsibilities for planning improvements; 2. appointing a lead member for safeguarding (Cabinet Member for Social Services & Housing); and 3. regularly disseminating and updating information on these appointments to all staff and stakeholders. <p>The Council could consider the following options to further strengthen its arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that the Corporate Safeguarding Policy is more easily accessible from the main Council Intranet page and not solely through the Children's Services pages; • ensuring that Designated Safeguarding Officers' contact details are displayed prominently on service area intranet pages; • ensuring visibility of key officers and the lead member on intranet pages and in training materials; and • collecting ongoing data about staff and stakeholders' awareness of the key Corporate Safeguarding roles.

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p>Local Proposal for Improvement 2</p> <p>The Council should clarify who designated officers with responsibility for safeguarding are.</p>	<p>Summary – Fully Met</p> <p>The Council has clarified who the designated officers with responsibility for safeguarding are and this is outlined in the policy clearly as shown below:</p> <p>The Chief Executive</p> <p>4.1 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring arrangements for safeguarding of children and adults are effective across the Council. The Chief Executive is responsible for developing effective governance arrangements and ensuring there is an effective safeguarding policy in place.</p> <p>4.2 Through one to one meetings with the Corporate Director of Social Services, the Chief Executive is kept informed of relevant safeguarding issues.</p> <p>4.3 In addition, any exceptional matters relating to safeguarding could be reported to the G7 meeting by the Chief Executive. The G7 is a strategic meeting of the Chief Executives of the five Gwent Local Authorities, the Police and the Health Board.</p> <p>Lead Member for Safeguarding (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Wellbeing)</p> <p>4.4 The Lead Member for Safeguarding is responsible for providing political scrutiny to ensure the Council fulfils its duties and responsibilities for safeguarding. The Lead Member will chair the Corporate Safeguarding Board and support Elected Members to scrutinise and appropriately challenge the safeguarding performance of the Council.</p> <p>4.5 The Lead Member will be briefed on any sensitive cases that may be considered for Child or Adult Practice Reviews or may otherwise become a matter of public interest. The Lead Member will periodically visit front line services to meet with staff and managers</p> <p>Statutory Director of Social Services</p> <p>4.9 The Statutory Director of Social Services has final and ultimate responsibility for ensuring the Council has appropriate safeguarding measures in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Statutory Director is responsible for reporting the effectiveness of these arrangements on a corporate level to the Chief Executive, Corporate Management Team and to Elected Members.</p>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
	<p>4.10 The Statutory Director is the point of contact for all other Corporate Directors to report serious safeguarding concerns which may occur in their own service areas. The Statutory Director is responsible for ensuring appropriate action is taken including reporting to the Chief Executive and the Lead Cabinet Member as necessary.</p> <p>4.11 The Director delegates the lead responsibility for operational and strategic safeguarding to the Assistant Directors for Adult Services and Children's Services. The Assistant Directors ensure the Director is kept informed of safeguarding issues through one to one meetings and as the need may arise outside these meetings.</p> <p>4.12 The Director is responsible for providing an Annual Report to the Council and CSSIW on the progress and performance of Social Services which includes the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.</p>
<p>R2 Ensure there is a corporate-wide policy on safeguarding covering all council services to provide a clear strategic direction and clear lines of accountability across the council.</p>	<p>Summary – Fully Met</p> <p>The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy states that 'Safeguarding is Everybody's Business' and it covers;</p> <p>'all Council and education employees, Elected Members, Volunteers and contractors. While employees, Elected Members, volunteers and contractors are likely to have varied level of contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults as part of their duties, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have concerns.'</p> <p>Safeguarding is also a key priority within the Cabinet's commitments.</p> <p>The Council's policy was last updated in 2018 and reflects a range of Safeguarding related topics including modern day slavery, child sexual exploitation, counter terrorism and the risk of radicalisation, Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and these topics are covered in the training materials.</p> <p>The Council has recently introduced a self-assessment toolkit for all service areas to complete around safeguarding which reinforces the responsibilities of all service areas.</p> <p>Designated Safeguarding Officers are in all public facing service areas to help with distributed leadership on Safeguarding. These officers provide a lead on Safeguarding within their service areas.</p>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
	<p>The Council could consider the following options to further strengthen its arrangement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> revising its policy statement to enable the existing Designated Safeguarding Officers to be a council wide resource and not only appointed for deployment in specific service areas where there is direct contact with the public. This would better promote the Council's ethos that safeguarding is 'Everybody's Business'. revising its Corporate Safeguarding Policy to ensure that the role of Internal Audit, Audit Committee, Scrutiny and Cabinet are clarified.
<p>Local Proposal for Improvement 1 Develop a Corporate Safeguarding Policy that clearly specifies roles, responsibilities and procedures for safeguarding.</p>	<p>See narrative above</p>
<p>R3 Strengthen safe recruitment of staff and volunteers by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with safe recruitment policies cover all services that come into contact with children; creating an integrated corporate compliance system to record and monitor compliance levels on DBS checks; and requiring safe recruitment practices amongst partners in the third sector and for volunteers who provide services commissioned and/or used by the council which are 	<p>Summary – Partially met</p> <p>The Council has acted to ensure that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with safe recruitment policies cover all services that come into contact with children. It has created an integrated corporate compliance system to record and monitor compliance levels on DBS checks for staff.</p> <p>The Council has developed a useful draft Safer Recruitment policy that better reflects the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and should ensure that when recruiting staff and volunteers the Council is ensuring that safe recruitment is embedded consistently.</p> <p>The Council's Human Resources team has reviewed all posts and considered the level of DBS check required for all posts across all service areas and the HR team monitor any proposed changes to those agreed checks, for example, when post holders change.</p> <p>The Council sets out in its contractual agreements that commissioned services are required to undertake safe recruitment practices .</p>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p>underpinned by a contract or service level agreement.</p>	<p>However, at the time of our fieldwork we found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is not a council wide approach to monitoring the compliance of contractors with safe recruitment practices. Monitoring arrangements are set within service areas. The Council's safer recruitment policy was yet to be finalised, agreed and applied. • although the Council has developed an integrated system to oversee DBS checks and safer recruitment checks for employees it has yet to establish a central system to oversee those checks for volunteers and contractors. <p>As such, the Council has further work to do to fully address this national recommendation. In doing so, the Council should also look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that its monitoring systems enable tracking of safe recruitment for volunteers and contractors as well as staff; • strengthen its arrangements for monitoring that services commissioned by the Council undertake safe recruitment practices; and • ensure that all managers undertake training on the revised safe recruitment process and highlighting the need to ensure safe recruitment of volunteers and contractors.
<p>R4 Ensure all relevant staff, members and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ensuring safeguarding training is mandated and coverage extended to all relevant council service areas, and is included as standard on induction programmes; 2. creating a corporate-wide system to identify, track and monitor compliance on attending safeguarding training 	<p>Summary – Partially Met</p> <p>The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy places a responsibility on Corporate Directors to ensure that staff within their Directorates are appropriately trained to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns. The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy is provided in hard copy to all newly appointed staff and those staff must sign to confirm receipt of the policy.</p> <p>Although safeguarding training is not mandated for elected Members, the Council has taken proactive steps to ensure that Members receive basic safeguarding training. The Council has arrangements to ensure that those Members who are unable to attend those sessions are made aware of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding policy and training materials.</p>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p>3. in all council departments, elected members, schools, governors and volunteers; and requiring relevant staff in partner organisations who are commissioned to work for the council in delivering services to children and young people to undertake safeguarding training</p>	<p>However,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Council does not currently mandate safeguarding training to staff in all relevant services areas. As a result, the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officers group has developed a revised training framework with training appropriate to the level of contact staff have with children. This new framework will be implemented by the end of 2019. • Designated Safeguarding Officers currently deliver training in their service areas. Whilst this approach ensures that all staff, including those who do not have regular access to a computer, receive training, the Council has recognised that the recording of this training information has been inconsistent to date and is now acting to address this. • The Council's Safeguarding policy is less clear on the requirement to ensure that relevant staff in partner organisations who are commissioned/contracted to work on behalf of the Council in delivering services to children and young people should undertake safeguarding training. <p>As such, the Council has further work to do to fully address this national recommendation.</p> <p>In doing so, the Council should also look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that staff training is recorded consistently to enable refresher training to be undertaken in a timely fashion; • agree a minimum timescale within which staff, volunteers and contractors undertake basic initial training upon appointment; • ensure that its monitoring systems enable tracking of training for volunteers and contractors as well as staff; • report the take up of initial and refresher training in the revised training framework to the Corporate Safeguarding Board; • collate a percentage breakdown of safeguarding training (initial and refresher) compliance for staff in each service area and for volunteers and contractors; • explore the use of e-learning as part of its training framework; and • clarify how safeguarding training for contractors will be monitored.

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p>Local Proposal for Improvement 4 Ensure all elected members and staff who come into contact with children on a regular basis receive training on safeguarding and child protection issues and the Council's corporate policy on safeguarding. This should also include volunteers.</p>	<p>See narrative above</p>
<p>R6 Improve accountability for corporate safeguarding by regularly reporting safeguarding issues and assurances to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced and council-wide set of performance information covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benchmarking and comparisons with others; • conclusions of internal and external audit/inspection reviews; • service-based performance data; • key personnel data such as safeguarding training, and DBS recruitment checks; and • the performance of contractors and commissioned services on compliance with council safeguarding responsibilities 	<p>Summary – Partially Met</p> <p>The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy sets out that the Cabinet has delegated responsibility 'for monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across the Council' and the production of the Annual Corporate Safeguarding report to the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Board.</p> <p>The Corporate Safeguarding Board has a clear and comprehensive remit as set out in the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. The Board's terms of reference can be found in Appendix 1.</p> <p>A key aspect of the Board's responsibilities is to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across the Council and to act strategically to assure the Council that procedures for managing safeguarding concerns are robust.</p> <p>The Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report is published on the elected Members' Portal for information and can be 'called in' to scrutiny by any elected Member</p> <p>The Council has recently introduced a self-assessment process for Designated Safeguarding Officers to complete in their service areas. Those self assessments will not be returned until after the 2019 annual meeting of the Corporate Safeguarding Board. The Council acknowledges that it could use the Red, Amber, Green ratings provided in the self assessments to inform the 2019-20 Annual Corporate Safeguarding report as well as improvement actions across the Council during 2019-20.</p> <p>However,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is unclear how the Corporate Safeguarding Board discharges its full oversight and assurance remit given that it meets once a year to receive a draft of and agree the Annual Corporate Safeguarding report.

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Annual Safeguarding Board's report has not been called into scrutiny to date and neither Cabinet nor Audit Committee receive a report in relation to the effectiveness of Corporate Safeguarding arrangements. • the Corporate Safeguarding Board's report does not currently provide sufficient assurance to the Council that its procedures for managing safeguarding concerns are robust. The 2018 report focussed mainly on operational issues rather than the strategic overview that the Board is responsible for. • the data due to be reported in the Board's 2018-19 Annual report whilst relevant to Safeguarding does not reflect the broader safeguarding activity undertaken by the Council and does not as previously recommended; • provide benchmarking and comparisons with other Councils; • refer to the conclusions of internal and external audit / inspection reviews; • provide service-based performance data; • provide clear data on safeguarding training undertaken and also safe recruitment processes; and • outline the performance of contractors, partners and volunteers on compliance with council safeguarding responsibilities. <p>As such, the Council has further work to do to fully address this national recommendation to assure itself that it has robust oversight and assurance of the effectiveness of its safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>In doing so, the Council should also look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that the Corporate Safeguarding Board is supported to discharge its responsibilities effectively; • ensure effective oversight of the annual Corporate Safeguarding report to provide assurance; and • develop a wider set of performance measures as previously recommended to reflect the Corporate Safeguarding Policy's intentions and provide greater assurance around the operation of the policy.
<p>Local Proposal for Improvement 3 Improve the range, quality and coverage of safeguarding performance reporting to members to provide adequate assurance that corporate arrangements are working effectively.</p>	<p>See narrative above</p>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p>R7 Establish a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to undertake systems testing and compliance reviews on the council's safeguarding practices.</p>	<p>Summary – Partially met</p> <p>The Council has established a programme of regular safeguarding audits across schools which are undertaken on a three yearly cycle and those provide insight and assurance around safeguarding in schools. Summary reports are then provided to senior leaders on the outcomes of those audits.</p> <p>Internal Audit consider that safeguarding considerations are embedded in each of their audits.</p> <p>However,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apart from its approach to safeguarding audits in schools, the Council has not clearly established a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to test systems and compliance with the Council's Corporate safeguarding policy. • we did not find evidence of a regular mechanism for Internal Audit to share Safeguarding related issues with lead Corporate Safeguarding officers or to inform the Annual Corporate Safeguarding report, or the Audit Committee that governance arrangements for safeguarding are robust. • whilst the Council's annual governance statement process requires heads of service to provide assurance around staff being aware and receiving training around Corporate Safeguarding, this assurance only focusses on staff and does not provide assurance relating to volunteers and contractors so does not fully reflect the scope of the Council's own Corporate Safeguarding policy. <p>As such, the Council has further work to do to fully address this national recommendation.</p> <p>In doing so, the Council should also look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarify the role of Internal Audit and Audit Committee in relation to assuring the effective operation and governance of Corporate Safeguarding arrangements, including within the Corporate Safeguarding Policy; • ensure that relevant information and insight from Internal Audit's programme of work is shared and feeds into the Council's oversight and assurance framework for safeguarding including with the Corporate Safeguarding Board; and • provide safeguarding training and refresher training to Internal Audit Staff.

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Proposal for Improvement 5 Identify and agree an appropriate internal audit programme of work for safeguarding. 	<p>Partially met (see above narrative)</p>
<p>R8 Ensure the risks associated with safeguarding are considered at both a corporate and service level in developing and agreeing risk management plans across the council.</p>	<p>Summary – Not met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council does not include safeguarding as one of its Corporate Risks and it is not part of Children's Services risk register. • The Council has not provided clear evidence of safeguarding risks being considered at a either corporate and service level. In part, the Council considers that in Social Services and Education safeguarding is viewed as being embedded within the service areas' activities. However, evidence provided shows that there is limited contract monitoring that focusses on safeguarding aspects. • The Council's recently introduced self-assessment tool may provide some insight into risks that exist across service areas, but the Council has not yet articulated how it will use that evidence to develop its approach to safeguarding risks. <p>The Council has therefore not made progress in addressing this national recommendation.</p>

Appendix 1

Corporate Safeguarding Board

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The responsibility for maintaining an overview of safeguarding arrangements across the Council has been delegated to the Corporate Safeguarding Board by Cabinet.

The Main responsibilities of the Board are to ensure that robust arrangements for safeguarding children and adults are in place within and across the Council.

Membership of the Board:

- Lead Member for Corporate Safeguarding (Chair)
- The Designated Safeguarding Officers from each Service area
- Assistant Director – Children's Services
- Education Safeguarding Lead
- Service Manager – Safeguarding, Social Services
- Workforce Development Manager
- Legal Services
- Other Officers will be co-opted as required and agreed by the Group

Key responsibilities of the Board will be to:

- Assure Cabinet that the Council's procedures for safeguarding children and adults are robust.
- Ensure cross Directorate / interdepartmental working and corporate communication in relation to safeguarding is effective.
- Support the functions and duties of the Statutory Director for Social Services.
- Approve policies and guidelines for safeguarding for each Service area of the council and receive information about their respective performance management arrangements in relation to their safeguarding responsibilities to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensure the Designated Safeguarding Officers are supported to collaborate and share information and to identify any gaps in the Council's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Identify and resolve any barriers that could prevent the implementation of effective safeguarding procedures.

- Identify any gaps in Corporate policies and guidelines and ensure they are addressed.
- Ensure effective working relationships are maintained with the Regional Safeguarding Boards (Children's and Adults) and the Business Unit.
- Ensure appropriate training is available for Officers and Elected Members.
- Receive and consider corporate safeguarding performance information and identify any actions required.
- Receive and consider information about trends in relation to allegations of professional abuse and adopt action plans to respond to any issues should the need arise.
- Consider the implications of any Child or Adult Practice Review or Domestic Homicide Review and ensure that the Council responds effectively to recommendations as they may apply to the Council.
- Periodically review and update the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the content of the Intranet Portal.
- Produce an Annual Report.

Meeting conduct:

- The meetings will be held annually.
- The meetings will be chaired by the Lead Member for Corporate Safeguarding.
- The meetings will be administered by Children's Services Business Support.
- All members are able to submit items for consideration.
- Agenda, minutes and relevant papers will be circulated ahead of the meetings.
- Membership and Terms of Reference for the Board will be reviewed annually/or as required.

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Management Response

Appendix 2

Local Authority: Caerphilly County Borough Council

Report title: Corporate Safeguarding arrangements for children follow up

Issue date: June 2019

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Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
	<p>R3 Strengthen safe recruitment of staff and volunteers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">ensuring that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with safe recruitment policies cover all services that come into contact with children;creating an integrated corporate compliance system to record and monitor compliance levels on DBS checks;	Ensure that the Council can assure itself that safe recruitment is carried out across all relevant service areas, including the use of contractors and volunteers	Yes	Yes	<p>Implement Safer Recruitment Policy across the Council</p> <p>Internal Audit to monitor compliance in any audit work undertaken</p> <p>HR systems to be reviewed and improved</p>	<p>October 2019</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2019</p>	<p>Lynne Donovan</p> <p>Richard Harris</p> <p>Lynne Donovan</p>

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
	<p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> requiring safe recruitment practices amongst partners in the third sector and for volunteers who provide services commissioned and/or used by the council which are underpinned by a contract or service level agreement. 				Work with Procurement and Commissioning Officers across all Council services to develop a system to ensure compliance which can then be monitored	December 2019	Liz Lucas
2	<p>R4 Ensure all relevant staff, members and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring safeguarding training is mandated and coverage extended to all relevant council service areas, and is included as standard on induction programmes; creating a corporate- 	Ensure that induction and ongoing training is provided to relevant staff, members, contractors and volunteers so that all can deliver their responsibilities in relation to Corporate Safeguarding of children.	Yes	Yes	<p>Fully implement the Training Programme across the Council through DSO Group supported by Children's Services</p> <p>ITrent to be adapted</p>	December 2019 Review @ 6 & 12 months	Nicola Barrett

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
	<p>wide system to identify, track and monitor compliance on attending safeguarding training in all council departments, elected members, schools, governors and volunteers; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> requiring relevant staff in partner organisations who are commissioned to work for the council in delivering services to children and young people to undertake safeguarding training. 				<p>to record all training using agreed drop down options. Retrospective training to be recorded</p> <p>Work with Procurement and Commissioning Officers across all Council services to develop a system to ensure compliance which can then be monitored</p>	<p>October 2019</p> <p>December 2019</p>	<p>Lynne Donovan</p> <p>Liz Lucas</p>
3	R6 Improve accountability for corporate safeguarding by regularly reporting safeguarding issues and assurances to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced and	Provide a clear picture of the performance of the Council against its Corporate Safeguarding policy	Yes	Yes	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report will be presented to Social Care & Well Being Scrutiny Committee and to	July 2019 and ongoing	Gareth Jenkins & Committee Services

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
Page 70	<p>council-wide set of performance information covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benchmarking and comparisons with others; • conclusions of internal and external audit/inspection reviews; • service-based performance data; • key personnel data such as safeguarding training, and DBS recruitment checks; and • the performance of contractors and commissioned services on compliance with council safeguarding responsibilities 	and identify areas for further development.			<p>Audit Committee rather than being posted for information as it currently is.</p> <p>The Report will be posted for information on all other Scrutiny Committees and can be called in as appropriate.</p>		

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
Page 71	R7 Establish a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to undertake systems testing and compliance reviews on the council's safeguarding practices.	Provides internal assurance as to the effective operation of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.	Yes	Yes	Work with Internal Audit to review forward work programme and incorporate Corporate Safeguarding arrangements into audits going forward	September 2019 and ongoing	Richard Harris & Nicola Barrett
	R8 Ensure the risks associated with safeguarding are considered at both a corporate and service level in developing and agreeing risk management plans across the council.	Ensure that Corporate Safeguarding risks are effectively considered at a service and corporate level to allow appropriate action to be taken to address the identified risks	Yes	Yes	On the basis of the Review findings, the risks will be included on the Social Services Risk Register and the Corporate Director for Social Services will progress inclusion on the Corporate Risk Register through CMT.	July 2019	Dave Street, CMT & Gareth Jenkins

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WAO Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan – July 2019
 Reviewed 29th August 2019

APPENDIX 3

WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
R3	Safer Recruitment policy to be ratified	<p>Policy to be agreed by HR Strategy Group, CMT and Cabinet</p> <p>All managers to be trained on safer recruitment policy – training package to be developed and implemented</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>HR</p>	<p>Draft Policy is due to be presented to Education Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) on the 25th of September 2019. This will be followed by presentation at Corporate JCC, followed by Scrutiny and Cabinet.</p> <p>Training will be developed and implemented once policy is ratified</p>
	<p>DBS checks for volunteers and contractors</p> <p>Contractors compliance with safeguarding policy and their awareness of the policy</p>	<p>Task and Finish Group to look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DBS checks for contractors • Safeguarding training for contractors • Contractors access to safeguarding policy <p>Agree process of how this is to be monitored</p>	<p>Establishment of a Task and Finish Group to include Procurement / Commissioning/ HR/ Internal Audit/ Relevant DSO's</p>	<p>On going, membership and dates yet to be agreed, awaiting response from Liz Lucas and Lynne Donovan</p>

WAO Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan – July 2019
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WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
R4	Implement Training Framework	<p>Tiered approach to safeguarding training to be agreed by Board and written up in framework and disseminated via DSO for implementation across the LA.</p> <p>Tier 2 training package to be developed and agreed and delivered across service areas</p>	Training Task & Finish Group/ DSO's/ Managers/ Safeguarding Unit	<p>Draft Framework to be signed off by Corporate Safeguarding Board on the 16th of September , once agreed this will be disseminated via DSO's</p> <p>Tier 2 training package has been developed. There are 3 training sessions scheduled for the 8th, 9th and 21st of October to be delivered by Mike Portlock and Deb Lewis</p> <p>DOS' have been nominating staff from service areas to be trained to deliver Tier 2 training package- Understanding Safeguarding Children and adults (half day), dates for Train the Trainer sessions are 24th and 30th of October. Those nominated will attend both days and then form part of a delivery group, support by Deb Lewis, Mike</p>

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WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
				Portlock and Rhiannon Thorn
	<p>Backdating of training already completed to be inputted on to ITrent</p> <p>Development of Tracking system for training for staff, volunteers and contractors</p>	<p>Individual services areas to input training to ITrent that has already been completed. Managers to collate this data and ensure permissions in ITrent to record the training</p> <p>ITrent to be developed to incorporate codes in line with Safeguarding Training framework</p>	<p>DSO's with support from HoS and CMT</p> <p>HR</p>	<p>Update regarding backdating of training into Itrent is required at next DSO Practice Development Group</p> <p>Codes have been agreed to record the trained under the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework. HR are in the process of updating Itrent to support this. Meeting is being held on the 11th on September to assess progress</p>
	<p>Agree timescales for new starters, volunteers and contractors to undertake basic initial training</p>	<p>Ensure staff and volunteer induction processes include Corporate Safeguarding as a mandatory requirement</p> <p>Council tenders and contracts to make expectations on contractors explicit.</p>	<p>HR/ DSO's</p> <p>Procurement/ Commissioning/ Internal Audit</p>	<p>Corporate Safeguarding training Framework outlines that basic Safeguarding awareness is part of all inductions for staff and volunteers – Tier 1 training</p>

WAO Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan – July 2019
 Reviewed 29th August 2019

WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
	Training update to be reported to Corporate Safeguarding Board to monitor compliance in each service area- staff, volunteers and contractors	Quarterly Reports to the Corporate Safeguarding Boards and inclusion in the Annual Report.	Gareth Jenkins/ Nicola Barrett	This matter will go forward once training framework has been signed off ad codes implement in Itrent
	Explore e learning packages	Current e learning packages available to be explored	Training Task & Finish Group/ DSO's/ Managers/ Safeguarding Unit	<p>Caerphilly does currently have it packages to support the development of learning with the ability to track completion (Learning management system(LMS)</p> <p>Powerpoint presentation can be utilised along with knowledge test via snap survey (this was used for Mandatory Data Protection eLearning). Further exploration of this is required.</p> <p>RCT have an eLearning module but do have a LMS system to track completion.</p>

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 Reviewed 29th August 2019

WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
				<p>Leisure services use an e learning package (IHASCO), however this has cost implications. 3000 credits is a cost of £4500</p> <p>WFD have software to develop a video presentation (with voice over) that can be utilised for Tier 1 training/refresher of Tier 1. This could also be used to send to commissioned services as part of the contracting process, with the expectation that providers complete and record that the training is completed and this could form part of internal audit process.</p>
R6	<p>Increase frequency of Board Meetings</p> <p>Timings of Board meetings to be reviewed to comply with Scrutiny and</p>	<p>Corporate Safeguarding Board to meet quarterly of next 12 months to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan and frequency will then be reviewed</p>	<p>Gareth Jenkins/ Nicola Barrett</p>	<p>Completed</p>

WAO Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan – July 2019
 Reviewed 29th August 2019

WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
	Audit Committee deadlines			
	Annual Report to provide more robust assurance of safeguarding arrangements within the LA Bench marking of arrangements with other LA's	Annual report to include performance data regarding training compliance across staff, volunteers and contractors Key data set to be updated to include a wider set of data cross service areas Comparison data with other LA's to be sought to inform Annual report		Key data set to include more detailed performance data was agreed at last Board meeting- need to be updated to Corporate safeguarding Policy. Nicola Barrett to discuss with Gwent Counterparts comparison data to inform annual report at next safeguarding leads meeting on the 18 th of September
	Corporate Safeguarding to be included on the Risk Register	WAO Review Report and Action Plan to be included on Social Services Risk Register CMT to consider inclusion on the Council Risk Register	Gareth Jenkins Dave Street	Completed Ongoing consideration by CMT
	Policy to be made available on front page of the intranet, to include access to	Corporate Safeguarding icon to be visible on front page Links to be made in Policy and Service Area Tabs	Liz Lucas/ Nicola Barrett	Meeting scheduled for the 5 th of September to discuss

WAO Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan – July 2019
 Reviewed 29th August 2019

WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
	Annual Report and list of DSO's			
R7	Role of Internal Audit	<p>Links with other LA's as to how they undertake internal audits for Corporate Safeguarding</p> <p>Develop mechanism of internal audits, focus of audits, frequency etc</p> <p>Corporate safeguarding policy to be updated to reflect internal audit responsibilities</p>	Internal Audit/ Nicola Barrett	<p>Meeting held with Richard Harris on the 1st of August, links made with other LA's (Newport and Monmouthshire) Richard Harris in process of developing internal audit tool. Awaiting update from Richard Harris on progress with this.</p> <p>Policy will be updated once intern audit process is confirmed</p>
	Internal Audit to receive Corporate Safeguarding training	Team training session to be arranged		Booked for the 25 th of September
R8	Self-assessment tool to be implemented	DSO's to return completed Self-Assessment Tool by the 15 th of July, with attached action plans to strengthen corporate safeguarding arrangements across service areas	DSO's	Self assessment tools have been returned, to be reviewed and discussed at the next DSO Practice Development group on 21 st of October

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SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND OCTOBER 2019

**SUBJECT: WELSH GOVERNMENT – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN
REDUCTION EXPECTATIONS**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Scrutiny Committee of Welsh Government's expectation on all Council's in Wales to safely reduce the numbers of children Looked After and seek support for the proposed actions to be undertaken in Caerphilly in response.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The First Minister for Wales made a manifesto pledge to reduce the numbers of children Looked After in Wales by 2022.
- 2.2 In February 2019, Welsh Government advised that they would be visiting each Local Authority to discuss local plans to reduce Looked After numbers. Their visit to Caerphilly took place at the end of March 2019 and the Council was invited to submit a reduction plan to Welsh Government by the end of April 2019. Subsequently, Welsh Government amended the report template and the final version that was submitted in July is attached for information at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 In recognition of the challenges facing Local Authorities, Welsh Government announced additional Integrated Care Funding (ICF) specifically focussed on the reduction of the number of Looked After Children. This report includes details of how this funding will be utilised within Caerphilly.
- 2.4 The content of this report was presented to Cabinet on 18th September 2019 and was approved. In addition, Cabinet agreed that the 'Safe reduction of Children Looked After' would be included within Wellbeing Objective 6 of the Corporate Plan: *Support citizens to remain independent and improve their wellbeing*, when the Plan is reviewed next.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the content of this report and the Welsh

Government Template attached at Appendix 1.

- 3.2 Scrutiny Committee is requested to support the service developments detailed within this report aimed at achieving an overall reduction in Looked After numbers.
- 3.3 Scrutiny Committee is requested to note Cabinet's decision to include the 'safe reduction of children looked after' under Wellbeing Objective 6 of the Corporate Plan when that Plan is reviewed next.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure Scrutiny Committee is fully aware of the expectations of Welsh Government to reduce the number of children Looked After and the plans to achieve this within Caerphilly.

5. THE REPORT

Welsh Government Reduction Expectations

- 5.1 Committee Members will note that for the current financial year, the Council is predicting a continued rise in Looked After numbers because the proposed new services will not be fully implemented until the end of 2019/20.
- 5.2 Based on previous annual increases, it is predicted that by the 31st March 2020, the Council could be looking after 490 children. It is proposed that based on 490 children, we will aim to achieve a 10% (49 number) reduction by the end of March 2022.
- 5.3 As the attached template reports, we plan to achieve this reduction through a number of different ways including:
- The systematic review of all children placed with parents who are subject of Care Orders to consider revocation of the Orders
 - The systematic review of all children placed with relative foster carers on Care Orders where the Order could transfer to Special Guardianship
 - Reducing the number of children entering care through the development of Family Group Meetings and improved long term Family Support services
 - Increased use of Section 76 (voluntary) care placements for periods longer than 16 weeks
- 5.4 Welsh Government are concerned about the number of children Looked After placed out of county. Caerphilly's intention is to place children as 'close to home' as possible which can sometimes mean an out of county placement is preferable. For example, a child from Rhymney may be better placed in Merthyr or Ebbw Vale in order to maintain links with family and school than being placed with Caerphilly carers in Risca.
- 5.5 Committee are already aware that increased recruitment of foster carers in Caerphilly has resulted in a reduction of 27 independent fostering agency placements, the majority of which were out of area. It is also important to note that 46 children are placed with carers out of area who are actually Caerphilly approved foster carers.
- 5.6 Welsh Government also expect Local Authorities to reduce the numbers of children Looked After outside of Wales. Caerphilly currently has 10 children placed outside of Wales. This is a very low percentage of the total number (XX). Committee Members

will see from the attached report that there are no plans to change the placements of 8 of those 10 children because it would not be in the best interests of the individual children. The report also acknowledges that there will always be a need to place outside Wales for specialist services that may not be available in Wales.

- 5.7 Finally, Welsh Government expect to see a reduction in the number of children removed from the care of parents who have a learning disability. Caerphilly has a very robust process in place to assess the cognitive ability of parents and specialist assessments are completed wherever necessary. The number of children removed from parents with a diagnosed Learning Disability is not considered disproportionate in Caerphilly and as a result no specific actions are identified to address this. However, it is recognised that the development of enhanced family support services will assist children to remain at home where parents have learning difficulties (not disability).

Integrated Care Funding (ICF) Grant

- 5.8 To support the First Minister's Manifesto Pledge, Welsh Government has released additional ICF funding to support regional proposals to reduce Looked After numbers.
- 5.9 Working in partnership with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and the four other Gwent Local Authorities, a regional service model approach was agreed that could be delivered in each Local Authority area. This consists of four key strands:
- Family Group Meetings
 - Special Guardianship Supports
 - Enhanced 'Edge of Care' services and
 - Mediation services for children facing homelessness

Family Group Meetings

- 5.10 A Family Group Meeting is a way for families, including wider family and close friends to come together to discuss a concern or problem which involves the children or young people in the family. They can be held in a range of circumstances from help for a family early on when they are beginning to experience difficulties right up to when families are involved with Child Protection services and children may be at risk of becoming Looked After.
- 5.11 The aim of the Meeting is to make a plan to support the child or young person that everyone is engaged in and supports. Families can be 'experts' on themselves. They are often the best people to make safety plans for their children and the meeting is an opportunity for families to take control of the decision making in their lives, helping families to identify their own strengths and solutions to their difficulties.

Special Guardianship Support:

- 5.12 This proposal is aimed at delivering a consistent Gwent wide 'offer' of support to Special Guardians to both assist them in their caring role but also to assist the Courts in having a viable alternative to adoption and long term fostering.
- 5.13 If a child or young person cannot be cared for by their parent(s), Local Authorities have a duty to find permanent alternative carers for them. A Special Guardianship Order (SGO) provides a legally secure placement for a child until they reach the age of eighteen years. It can be a positive alternative to adoption because it retains the

child's sense of identity and belonging. The Special Guardians have Parental Responsibility to care for the child and make all the decisions about their upbringing.

5.14 The aim is for each Local Authority to 'offer' the following range of supports:

- Improved assessment and ongoing support
- Establishing education priority status for children subject to SGO's in each Local Authority
- Providing support to remain in education provision and enhance academic achievement (similar to that provided to children Looked After)
- Develop daytime and evening peer support groups for Special Guardians
- Provide a training programme for Special Guardians
- Offer out of hours telephone contacts in line with foster carers
- Organise family days, social events and activities
- Provide advice and assistance including signposting to other services
- Provide mediation to assist with new or existing contact arrangements
- Access to Psychology consultation and support

Enhanced Edge of Care Support:

5.15 Edge of Care Services are those aimed at preventing the need for a child to become Looked After and supporting care experienced children to be able to return home to their families wherever possible. Caerphilly has historically invested in this type of service through the development of the Intensive Support Team. This was enhanced last year through dedicated funding by Welsh Government and continues to be a priority specifically referred to in this new tranche of ICF funding.

5.16 The proposal is to expand the Intensive Support Team to include Psychology support, an Education worker, a children's Community Connector and additional Family Support Workers.

5.17 In addition, it is proposed to utilise service specific reserves to fund a team of Family Aides/Support Workers to offer practical parenting and emotional support to those families where parents have learning difficulties and where children can be supported to remain at home with the additional support. This support may need to be for longer periods of time but will reduce the need for removal.

Mediation support for young people facing homelessness:

5.18 The best place for young people to live is within their families but sometimes there may be difficulties which make it hard to live in the family home. Mediation is a structured process where individuals try and resolve differences and problems with the support of an impartial mediator.

5.19 Outcomes from successful mediation include:

- The young person can remain at home or return home with a level of support
- The young person remains at home or returns home temporarily whilst accommodation options are fully explored and a planned move is able to be achieved rather than moving in a crisis

- The young person is unable to return home but relationships within the family are positively repaired and maintained for the longer term

Risks for the Council

- 5.20 Children's Services are actively supporting Social Work Teams to manage more risks outside Court proceedings. We are encouraging Social Workers to support families to identify their own solutions where the parenting standards are considered to be 'good enough' and where it is safe to do so. We also intend to use voluntary care ie where there is no court order, for longer periods of time. Currently, there is an expectation from the Judiciary that court proceedings should be issued if a child has been in voluntary care for 16 weeks however, historically, voluntary care has been able to be used as a positive family support.
- 5.21 All of the above actions are likely to lead to criticisms from the Judiciary and CAFCASS if we subsequently have to issue court proceedings and it is important that Cabinet are aware of this risk.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

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

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

- 7.1 Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014
- 7.2 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

The content of this report contributes towards Well Being Objective 6: Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 8.1 The content of this report contributes to the following Well Being Goals:

- A resilient Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

The report is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act as follows:

- Long Term – the provision of safe care and accommodation for children in the greatest need is, and always will be, a key strategic priority for the Council. Improving outcomes for children Looked After will deliver longer term improvements for them individually.
- Prevention – Children's Services is committed to preventing the escalation of need and subsequent demand on higher tier statutory services through the delivery of early intervention and family support services.
- Integration – Service developments across Children's Services and the region are increasingly integrated with Health and other professionals eg. MyST, Gwent Attachment Service, Psychology support to Supporting Family

Change, Intensive Support and Fostering Teams

- Collaboration – the developments funded through the WG ICF funding have been agreed across the five Local Authorities and the Regional Partnerships.
- Involvement – all key stakeholders have been consulted and involved in the development of the WG Reduction Expectations Plan and service developments.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Council's full Equality Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct funding implications arising from this report. However, any increase or reduction in the number of children Looked After by the Council has a direct impact on the Children's Services and Social Services budget. In addition, reference needs to be made to the Welsh Government funding made available to support the reduction in Looked After Numbers through the Integrated Care Fund.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no personnel or HR implications arising from this report.

12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 The report is for information purposes and reflects the views of consultees.

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

Author: Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director – Children's Services
jenkig2@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Caerphilly County Borough Council Cabinet
Councillor Lyndon Binding, Chair of Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor John Bevan, Vice-Chair of Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Carl Cuss, Cabinet Member for Social Services
Christina Harray, Interim Chief Executive
Dave Street, Corporate Director – Social Services and Housing
Steve Harris, Head of Business Improvement and Section 151 Officer
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Social Services Senior Management Team
Children's Services Divisional Management Team

Attachments:

1. Welsh Government Reduction Expectations Template July 2019



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 IMPLICQATIONS

- 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

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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%	
% of adults who completed a period of reablement and have no package of care and support 6 months later	85.48%	64.44%	
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 people's 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

DRAFT

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.

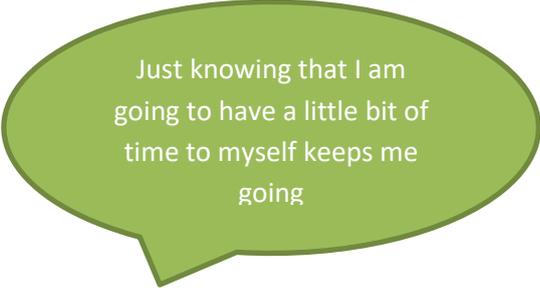
We recognise that it is important for people to be more self reliant and maintain their independence enabling them to participate fully in society and their local community.

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 ([LINK ???](#)) 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 was 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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