



Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Performance Evaluation Report 2014–15

Caerphilly County Borough Council
Social Services

October 2015

This report sets out the key areas of progress and areas for improvement in Caerphilly County Borough Council Social Services for the year 2014–15

Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2014 - 2015

Local Authority: Caerphilly County Borough Council

This report sets out CSSIW's evaluation of Caerphilly County Borough Council's performance in delivering its social services functions.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The council has continued to take a structured and planned approach to develop and transform services in readiness for the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (SSWB Act), and this is also reflected in the objectives set out in the local single improvement plan. The annual report of the director of social services provides a comprehensive picture of the current status of social services in Caerphilly. This includes reflection on the previous year's priorities and achievements and areas for development in the year ahead. It identifies that the department is on track to achieve the medium term financial plan, although this is within recognised limited resource and has become more reliant on successful bids for additional funding and grants.
- 1.2. Solid foundations built in the previous year have enabled the council to make progress in both adult and children's services. Clear planning has set the direction for prioritising, review and development of new services reflecting local need and national legislative change. This has involved restructuring existing teams and services as well as exploration of new ways of working. This includes working with local authority, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and third sector partners.
- 1.3. The corporate management structure and governance arrangements provide support to enable social services to continue development, and the introduction of a new quality assurance framework should enhance oversight of the service as a whole.
- 1.4. The council works constructively with regulators and has made good progress in relation to areas for improvement in CSSIW's performance report 2014-2015. The council has continued to work with regional partners in both health and third sector to build on strengths and trial new ways of working. Continued development of these relationships will be crucial to successful working and implementation of the SSWB Act.
- 1.5. Continued support at corporate level for equality and the Welsh language is evident within the director's report and there is progress towards meeting the requirements of "More than Just Words", the Welsh

Government's strategic framework for Welsh language services in health and social care.

2. Response to last year's areas for improvement

Identified improvement last year	Progress in 2014-15
The council should develop the commissioning strategy for older people	This has not yet progressed. Although in our engagement meetings CSSIW has been advised that there were discussions with ABUHB regarding the feasibility of an integrated commissioning strategy, this is no longer being progressed hence the authority will produce its own.
The council should interrogate the reasons for delayed discharge and put in place strategies to monitor and improve the progress of this	Significant improvement has been achieved in this. A range of causes of delayed discharge were identified and strategies adopted to improve this.
The council should continue to develop methods for supporting and developing skills of foster carers	The council has introduced a range of methods to increase recruitment of foster carers.
<p>The council should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine factors contributing to the rise in children placed on the register; and • Continue to develop outcome measure for new services 	<p>This has been reviewed by the head of service and no specific reasons identified. A few large sibling groups potentially contributed to this.</p> <p>Participating in development of outcomes for children's services pilot area for national project.</p>
The council should continue to develop method/frameworks for quality review	A framework for quality assurance has been developed and due for implementation 2015-16.
The council should continue to develop mechanisms to improve corporate oversight	Improving governance board in place overseeing and monitoring the local authority action plan.

3. Visits and inspections undertaken during the year

- 3.1. Site visits and inspections provide CSSIW with an opportunity to speak with people who receive services, their families and staff who manage and work in the services. During 2014-15, site visits were made to:
- Listen Engage Act Participate (LEAP) project
 - Participated in the Wales Audit Office review: Independence of older people
- 3.2. CSSIW also met with senior officers of the council throughout the year to review social services performance and discuss progress with the areas for improvement identified in last year's performance evaluation. The council was helpful in its engagement with CSSIW and readily facilitated access to enable site visits to take place.
- 3.3. During the year, CSSIW also undertook inspections of regulated services run by the council and by independent operators. This included reviews of the in-house fostering service. Details on these are contained in published reports and available on CSSIW's website.

4. Areas for follow up by CSSIW next year

- 4.1. A number of specific areas for improvement have been identified in the body of this report. The council's progress in relation to these will be discussed with the council during regular engagement meetings in the coming year. Specific areas for follow up will include:
- Visit to children's disability team
 - Visit to the older people's team
 - Meeting with community connectors
 - Meeting with carers
 - Meeting with providers of services commissioned by the council.

5. CSSIW inspection and review plan for 2015 -16

- National review of domiciliary care
- National review of services for people with learning disabilities

- National review of care planning for looked after children.

6. The extent to which the experiences and outcomes for people who need care and support are improving their wellbeing

Adults

Overview

- 6.1. In order to ensure people obtain the appropriate support and advice in a timely manner, the council has continued to develop and reconfigure adult services in line with the annual priorities identified in the previous year's director's report. There is recognition of increased demand on services due to demographic change and identification of key areas of impact on resource, for example increased numbers of people with dementia care needs and people with complex care needs. There has been continued exploration and development of new ways of working to improve efficiency and efficacy of services provided and to support individual choice and independence, within a financially constrained environment. Examples include:
- A single point of contact for social care services was implemented at the beginning of the year. The name of the team 'Information, Advice and Assistance' provides a message regarding the aims of the contact centre: to direct and advice people in response to their needs and promoting independence. In support of this goal community connectors and carers support workers are also placed within the team with an aim to provide information and signposting to enable independence. The council should monitor progress with this.
 - A 'simple provisions tool' has been implemented enabling social work staff to provide basic aids to people without the need for more complex assessment and referral systems. This was implemented as a result of learning from a pilot project commenced in 2014, which aimed to provide a less bureaucratic and more responsive service. The council should consider methods of monitoring the success of this.
 - The council's website has been redesigned in consultation with local people. While this signposts people to support and advice from social services, navigating the website could be challenging for some groups due to the complexity and range of information available. Social services aims to provide a directory of information to signpost people to alternative services, and the council should consider follow up

consultation to determine whether this provides a suitable accessible route to information.

- 6.2. In 2013-14 the council had the highest rate of delayed transfers of care in Wales. This was an area which social services were aware of and had begun to interrogate in order to identify the underlying reasons and to improve discharge arrangements where social services support is required. This included work to improve communication with all the local discharging hospitals as the number of acute discharging hospitals was identified as a contributory factor. Dedicated practitioners were appointed within the joint hospital discharge service to provide assessment and liaison with health colleagues. In addition, monthly meetings were held between the assistant director for adult services and hospital discharge to identify specific delays for individuals. The local authority describes being more proactive in challenging health on 'coding' to ensure that reasons for delays are accurately recorded. The outcome of these interventions has been successful with delays substantially decreased from 12 per 1,000 population in 2013-14 to five in 2014-15.
- 6.3. In response to an increased need to support people in their own homes, there has been additional investment in development of existing services. The capacity of the community resource team has been increased to meet rising demand, with recruitment of a falls coordinator to the team to reduce falls and subsequent hospital admissions. Recruitment of additional staff to the emergency care at home team has also been undertaken as set out in local commissioning plan. Reablement facilities have increased through provision of assessment beds within a local authority care home.
- 6.4. The council retains a number of in-house services. Review of these has commenced in response to changing needs within the local community and in line with the independence agenda and budgetary priorities. Day service provision has been reconfigured as part of a review of discretionary services. Resources have been redirected to develop community connectors to work on a one to one basis with people. Social services report positive feedback from this. Monitoring success should be considered in order to learn and to contribute to future development.
- 6.5. Reconfiguration of residential care home accommodation has been undertaken to accommodate additional people with dementia care needs. This has included developing new approaches to dementia care with the services in consultation with specialist dementia care support. Regulatory inspection noted improvements in services but also highlighted the need to improve formal quality review of the services to monitor progress.

- 6.6. Service development has continued to reflect the work undertaken in 2013-14 using a 'systems thinking approach' to redesign and test new approaches to working. This includes extension of a pilot in the south of the borough for older people's services and a pilot in mental health services in the north of the borough. These support an outcomes based approach to services and there is evidence that the projects are closely monitored to develop learning and build on strengths. Additional detail in relation to CSSIW's site visit to the mental health project is set out in the prevention and early intervention section of this report.
- 6.7. In relation to the council's ongoing support for individuals, 2014-15 performance indicators demonstrated a decrease in the number of reviews undertaken for adults who are in receipt of a care plan. This has declined over a four year period from a peak of 97% in 2012-13 to 90% in 2014-15, but the council does continue to outperform similar local authorities and remains above the national average.
- 6.8. The authority has well established adult safeguarding arrangements which are subject to ongoing review and streamlining to improve the service. In 2014-15 this has included the addition of a jointly funded post between health and social care of a health protection of vulnerable adults (PoVA) co-ordinator, due to the high number of outstanding and historic safeguarding referrals requiring investigation by a lead officer from health.
- 6.9. Caerphilly social services is a member of the regional adult safeguarding board (the director currently chairs this) and in the last year a post has been secured to implement the actions arising from the external review of the board's functions in 2013-2014. Some progress has been made in terms of reshaping the sub groups of the board. The board will need to consider how this is further developed in relation to new powers and regulations in the future.
- 6.10. There has been a decrease in adult protection referrals where risk has been managed from 91% in 2013-14 to 87% in 2014-15. While CSSIW has been advised that the Gwent-wide board has undertaken training and work in relation to thresholds, the difference in the percentage of referrals where risk has been managed ranges from 84% to 100% within the region. This is an area which partners on the board should explore to share learning and gain a greater consistency.

Key National Priorities (adults)

Preventative and early intervention services

6.11. The council retains a commitment to early intervention and preventative services. This includes local arrangements and working with partners within health, social care and third sector to develop existing services and explore new methods of support. This includes:

- Frailty model - the regional model for prevention of hospital admission and early discharge has been reviewed independently and is seen to be providing a positive contribution to services.
- Development of assessment/reablement beds within local care homes.
- START project - involving an integrated health and social care team to simplify access to support and advice and focus on individual outcomes. The service includes the older person's team in the south of the borough and we are advised that this is the trajectory for older person's services within the borough. CSSIW will undertake a site visit to the service in 2015-16.
- LEAP project currently operating in the north of the borough. The pilot project is undertaken on behalf of the Gwent mental health and learning disability partnership board; it is a responsive service using an outcome based approach to people who requiring support for their mental health needs. During a recent site visit to the service CSSIW received positive feedback from the small number of service users we met. There was evidence of signposting to relevant support of a preventative nature.
- Community connectors working within the 'front door' and liaising with the over 50's coordinator to map out networks and support available across the borough to enable staff to signpost people to the most appropriate support for their needs.
- Co-location of Age Concern and the joint hospital discharge team which is seen to have played a significant role in reducing delays in hospital discharges.

6.12. Performance indicators indicate these initiatives are having an impact of supporting people to maintain or regain their independence. People supported within the community have decreased for the fourth year from 144 per 1,000 population in 2011-12 to 109 in 2014-15. In the same period, the rate of people per 1,000 population supported in care home accommodation reduced from 20 in 2011-12, to 16 in 2014-15.

- 6.13. The number of adult carers identified has decreased from 1,454 in 2013-14 to 764 in 2014-15. The percentage of carers who had an assessment in their own right increased from 22% in 2013-14 to 30% in 2014-15. This is slightly lower than similar authorities and the national average. A dedicated support worker is in post to undertake assessments, work differently with carers and while there is an indication of positive impact in terms of the number of assessments undertaken, the council should establish why there is a decrease in the number of carers identified to ensure that people are supported in their caring role.

Integration of health and social care services for older people with complex needs

- 6.14. The council has continued to work with health partners in developing services for older people with complex needs which link closely with the preventative agenda. The START project described above is an example of this with social care staff working closely with district nursing and commissioned domiciliary care services to support people. The ongoing development of the frailty model and the addition of a falls coordinator will assist people with health and social care needs.
- 6.15. Intermediate care funding was obtained to fund assessment beds in local authority dementia care provision, and a further six beds within the north resource centre have been identified as step up assessment beds. Pharmacists are now based within the community resource team reviewing medication. The commissioning team work closely with health partners in monitoring and driving up standards within nursing home services, and CSSIW has observed improvements within regulated services as a result of this.
- 6.16. An area for improvement in last year's performance evaluation was the need for a joint commissioning strategy for older people. This is yet to be achieved. The director indicates that this is a priority for social services and whilst it was envisaged that this would be undertaken on a regional basis within the health board footprint, a local strategy is being developed in the interim.

Areas of progress

- Continued development of outcomes based approaches to service provision
- Working in collaboration with health
- Reconfiguring services in relation to need

- Pursuit of preventative services and supporting people in their own homes
- Significant improvement in tackling delayed discharges.

Areas for improvement

- The council is aware that there is a need to progress the joint commissioning of service for older people and this should be prioritised with health partners
- Take forward recommendations outlined in CSSIW's report following a site visit to LEAP and the relevance of these for other service within social services.

Children and young people

Overview

- 6.17. The council has developed a commissioning strategy for children's services. This reflects legislative change, aims to respond to local need and sets out objectives, actions and timescales for achievement of these. The four key objectives set out in the five year plan include prevention, risk management and early intervention and clear strategies for fostering arrangements which consider outcomes for the individual. The document includes a commitment to working with a range of partners to achieve these goals. Close links with preventative services and structures have been put in place to support the actions set out in the plan. The council will need to ensure that progress in relation to these goals is monitored within the new quality review framework.
- 6.18. The council has maintained strong performance in children's services. Referrals on which a decision was made within one working day was 100% with 93% of initial assessments completed within the required timescales compared to the national average of 76%. Of those referrals that progressed for assessment, 76% were seen by a social worker; this represents a decrease of 4% points from the previous year in the context of reduced numbers of referrals, however remains above the national average. The remainder of assessments were allocated to persons other than a social worker. Staff were reported to be well supported by experienced colleagues and referral rates were comparable to similar authorities and slightly below the national average.

- 6.19. The council is proactive in developing an outcome based approach to services, acting as a pilot area for the new outcomes based assessment process supported by the Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA). Lessons learned from this should provide a baseline locally and nationally for developing this approach.
- 6.20. Regional safeguarding arrangements are well established with the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board. This includes an accessible website and opportunities for learning shared regionally. On a local level the council performs well, last year within the upper quartile for Wales and this year initial child protection conferences, core group meetings and child protection reviews held within statutory timescales were 98%, 99% and 99% respectively. This remains above the Welsh average and comparator authorities.
- 6.21. In 2014-15 the Wales Audit Office undertook a review of local authority arrangements to support safeguarding of children, which found that corporate governance, accountability and management arrangements for overseeing whether the council is meeting its safeguarding responsibilities to children have some weaknesses which the council is addressing. The council was responsive to these comments and established a task group led by the assistant director for children's services. The focus has been on the development of a local safeguarding policy (the council had previously referred to the all-Wales Policy and Procedures); the final draft is intended for presentation to the council mid-2015. CSSIW will follow progress of this through our engagement meetings.

Key national priorities

Preventative and early intervention services

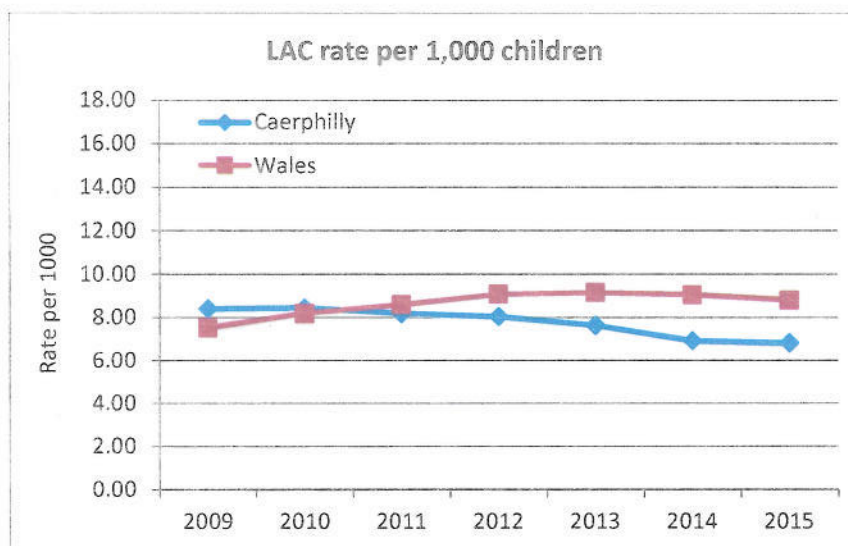
- 6.22. In line with adult services the council is actively pursuing a model of prevention and support which is set out in its strategy referred to previously. Changes to the structure of children's services to deliver this strategy have continued from those already commenced in 2013-14. This includes consolidation of the Team Around the Family (TAF) within the Families First programme which has recently moved within social services management. It is envisaged this will further enhance communication and support the strategy for children's services moving forward. A strategic board for Families First includes key partners from social care, health and education.
- 6.23. The development of 'a single point of contact' for information advice and support for children and adult services has built on the previous year's

work in children's services, linking with preventative services and developing signposting to relevant support and mechanisms for early intervention. Performance data indicates this approach may be having an impact, with the number of referrals reducing from 2,237 in 2013-14 to 1,907 in 2014-15, with the re-referral rate reducing from 24% to 20% in the same period.

- 6.24. Flying Start services are located within the education department working closely with social services with a single strategic management board. While the assistant director for children's services reports good working relationships, the council should examine the effectiveness of these arrangements and identify opportunities to further align services for children to maximise their impact.
- 6.25. Regulatory inspections of the local authority's own nursery provision providing Flying Start show a positive picture of services.

Looked after children

- 6.26. There has been a year on year decrease in the number of children who are looked after in Caerphilly with the rate of looked after children (LAC) per 1,000 population reducing from eight in 2011 to 6.77 in 2015, below the Wales average of 9. Numbers of looked after children decreased further by four children during 2014-15. The children's service commissioning strategy and position statement for children's services (2015-20) highlights a decreased number of looked after children, and attributes this to implementation of a resource panel which considers options for children and young people who are likely to become looked after, and allows for consistency of decision making.



Numbers of LAC as at 31 March

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Caerphilly	332	333	322	314	296	267	263

- 6.27. The council maintained good performance in relation to its support for looked after children. This included 100% of first placements of looked after children with a care plan in place. While the authority remains within the top quartile in Wales for statutory visits being undertaken to looked after children, there was a decline in performance from the previous year (96% to 91%) in the context of an increased number of statutory visits required. This remains above the Welsh average of 88%.
- 6.28. The council has expressed a commitment to driving up academic achievement for children in its care, and has in the main maintained its previous level of performance. Children experiencing changes of school have remained stable at 9%. This is below the national average and compares favourably to similar authorities. Attendance levels for LAC compares well with comparable local authority areas. Academic achievement is demonstrated in looked after children over the age of 16 gaining external qualifications and remaining in the upper quartile for Wales.
- 6.29. The council has implemented a multi agency panel to determine actions in relation to plans for permanency, in order to provide a consistent and structured approach to planning support and actions for looked after children. The Children's Strategy 2015-20 indicates this panel will consider planning for all looked after children prior to their second review; within four months of becoming looked after. The council will need to monitor the success of this strategy.
- 6.30. Adoption services are accessed via a regional service hosted by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. This had been extended to encompass the five Gwent authorities with the addition of Newport and Caerphilly adoption services within the region. This was a development from a previous 'tri-partite' arrangement. While our engagement meetings established that there had been challenges in terms of staff adjusting to the new ways of working, this had been a positive arrangement. In terms of securing permanency the council reports successful adoption exceeding its target.
- 6.31. As outlined in the areas of improvement the council has taken an active approach in recruiting foster carers to increase the range of support

opportunities for children. This involved a range of initiatives including an increased presence in the community via posters in GPs and canteens etc. Evening events and weekend events are planned to encourage a more strategic approach to ensure the campaign is publicised.

Areas of progress

- Move to a regional adoption service
- Successful recruitment of foster carers
- Introduction of a comprehensive strategy for children's services
- Ongoing restructuring and review in line with need and national legislation
- Participation in developing the national outcomes framework.

Areas for improvement

- Ensure the new quality assurance framework reflects methods of monitoring progress of the children's strategy.

7. The extent to which leadership, governance and direction for the council is promoting improvement in outcomes and wellbeing for people who need care and support

- 7.1. The senior management team within social services remains stable. This has enabled continued development of new structures to reflect the directorate's objectives and refocus resources to reflect local need, and support ongoing national legislative change. The addition of public protection to the director of social services' portfolio of responsibilities should improve links with the social care and wellbeing agenda, but there are risks that this could detract from some of the more pressing issues regarding reshaping frontline services.
- 7.2. Restructuring of teams and consolidation of management posts has enabled financial savings, without demonstrable negative impact on the service provided. Ongoing resource management in terms of workforce and structure is recognised to be key in achieving the council's medium term financial plan. The director sets out a summary of workforce and outlines consideration of this in achieving plans.

- 7.3. The director reports that social services has remained within budget and delivered savings targets set out for the year along with identifying savings for 2015-16. The director highlights that the saving proposals leave little room for manoeuvre and an increasing reliance on ongoing specific grant funding.
- 7.4. At a corporate level the Wales Audit Office's annual improvement report highlights good use of resources, good financial and governance arrangements with clear plans and priorities in place for annual improvements. Annual improvement plans set out actions required to achieve the council's overarching priorities as well as to those specific to social services.
- 7.5. The Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee meets regularly; this is viewed by regulators to have improved in providing challenge, but there is still room to develop this further. The council should consider how the meetings of this committee are structured to ensure that time allocation presents full opportunity for debate and discussion for all agenda items.
- 7.6. Work has continued in order to develop the corporate parenting group and its role is recognised as being crucial in order for the council to maintain its statutory responsibilities in relation to children. Discussion about children's representation on the group has continued, but this has not been achieved to date. However, a representative from children's advocacy services on the panel provides a direct link for consultation with children and young people. The assistant director of children's services confirmed that this is a work in progress and a senior manager who leads the young people's 'Shout out' group is working to improve this.
- 7.7. While social services has maintained audit and review of its services, the introduction of the new quality assurance framework should provide a structured approach for review and ongoing development of services, and contribute positively to the overall governance structure within the council.
- 7.8. The council takes a proactive approach to partnerships and commissioning arrangements within adult and children's services. This includes a broad range of projects and initiatives working with health, regional social service departments and third sector organisations to streamline and develop services. For example in adult services, the LEAP project includes working with health and third sector partners. CSSIW's site visit to the service highlighted opportunities for potential to develop third sector relationships further when the project is extended. The joint workforce development team in partnership with Blaenau

Gwent social services is a further example of good partnership initiatives. The authority is exploring how this initiative could be rolled out further.

Areas of progress

- Progression with implantation of the Gwent-wide strategy for mental health and learning disability.

Areas for improvement

- Continue to develop scrutiny arrangements
- Corporate parenting board to demonstrate clear methods for consulting with children and young people.

