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Annual Director's Report on the Effectiveness of
Social Care Services 2013-2014

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1. Director's Introduction

As the Corporate Director Social Services I am pleased to present the fifth Annual Director's Report for Caerphilly County Borough Council's Directorate of Social Services.

The purpose of my report is to outline the challenges we have faced in 2013-14, how well we have delivered our services in the past year and what our priorities for improvement are for 2014-2015.

Like many public bodies the financial settlement for Caerphilly County Borough Council has been extremely challenging. However, this has not distracted the Directorate from its priorities and its ongoing commitment to improve the quality of social care services within the County Borough.

Increasingly we are delivering our range of services in conjunction with partners and 2013-14 was no exception to this. In terms of Adult services, working with the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), we opened the Rhymney Integrated Health & Social Care Centre. This was the culmination of more than five years of joint working. The facility provides a co-ordinated hub for health and social care services in the north of the borough.

In terms of Children's services a considerable amount of work has been done in moving us to a position where the Council's Cabinet was able to agree our participation in the South East Wales Adoption Service.

The Welsh Government have been very clear in that one of their major priorities is the integration of Health and Social Care services for older people with complex needs. To this end we are looking to maximise the opportunities the Rhymney Integrated Health & Social Care Centre provides and build on the very solid foundation offered by our participation in the Gwent Frailty Programme. At a more local level we are working with Health colleagues to determine how best to utilise the three Neighbourhood Care Networks that exist within the county borough.

In order to facilitate this integration, the Welsh Government have made available an Intermediate Care Fund. Working in partnership with the Health Board, the four other local authorities in the former Gwent area and third sector partners we have been successful in securing an amount of £8.1million to help us to transform our services for older people with complex needs across the region.

On the 1 May 2014 the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill received Royal Assent and became an Act. This Act will transform the way social care services are delivered across Wales, aiming to promote independence and providing people with more choice and control over

who, how and when services are delivered. In the main the Act will come into place in April 2016 but we are already beginning to reshape some of our services in anticipation of the new requirements.

Safeguarding remains at the very heart of everything we do. The Council is represented at a senior level on the Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board and the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board. During 2013-14 the Authority was inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and the Wales Audit Office in relation to our services for safeguarding children. We are currently waiting for the relevant inspection reports but any recommendations will be a major priority for 2014-15. In addition, there is a thematic review being undertaken of Operation Jasmine (a Gwent wide investigation into care homes), which will conclude in late 2014. Once again these recommendations will be key in us ensuring our citizens are safe.

In my report for 2012-13 I made reference to the demographic changes that are taking place within the County borough, with people living longer and having a greater level of need when they approach us for services. Unsurprisingly this trend is continuing and together with the financial constraints that are being faced means that we will have to continually evaluate the services we provide and how we provide them. This will mean that in many instances we will need to move away from traditional models of service to working in new ways and in close collaboration with our partners.

Caerphilly County Borough Council receives the majority of its funding from the Welsh Government through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG). As part of the financial settlement for 2014-15 the RSG for the Council was cut by 2.91%, which resulted in a cash reduction of £8.13m. The financial settlement also included an indicative further reduction in the RSG of 1.34% for 2015-16, equating to £3.67m. In the absence of indicative figures from the Welsh Government for 2016-17, the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) currently assumes a further cut of 1.34%. After factoring inflationary growth into the MTFP and other unavoidable service cost pressures (including estimated additional costs of £1m per annum to meet demographic pressures in Social Services), the Council is faced with a projected 3 year savings requirement of £28.04m (£14.64m in 2014-15, £6.46m for 2015-16 and £6.94m for 2016-17).

The 2014-15 budget agreed by Council on the 26th February 2014 included a range of agreed savings for the Directorate of Social Services totalling £2.06m. To protect frontline service provision the majority of these savings will be achieved through deleting vacant posts, reviewing 'back office' staffing structures, accommodation rationalisation and reducing some budgets where consistent under spends have been reported in recent years.

The budget strategy agreed by Council in February 2014 aims to deliver the projected savings requirement of £13.4m for 2015-16 and 2016-17 through two main strands. The first of these is efficiency savings of 3%, which will deliver approximately £5m. The second strand involves a review of discretionary services, with a view to identifying savings proposals totalling over £8m. The Directorate of Social Services will be

expected to contribute to these savings targets and this will present a major challenge at a time of increasing demand for the services that we provide.

Finally I would like to take the opportunity to thank all staff, carers and elected members for their commitment and support over the past year in helping to continue to improve our services.

Dave Street
Corporate Director Social Services

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2. Cabinet Member for Social Services

Following the Elections in May 2012, Councillor Robin Woodyatt was appointed as the Cabinet Member for Social Services. Since his appointment he has represented the Directorate on a number of key developments. Shown below are some of Cllr. Woodyatt's particular highlights of 2013-14:

The Rhymney Integrated Health and Social Care Centre

The Rhymney Integrated Health and Social Care Centre opened its doors to residents in March 2014, with HRH the Earl of Wessex officially unveiling the impressive new facility.

The centre, which serves the communities in the north of Caerphilly county borough, complements the range of health and social care services currently provided from Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr in Ystrad Mynach. In addition, the centre acts as a base for the Health Board and Council staff working in the north of the county borough who provide care to children, older people, and people receiving mental health support.

The facility offers services including both Rhymney GP practices, a dental practice, optometry suite, pharmacy, outpatient clinics and social services day facilities all under one roof. There are also 12 in-patient beds, two of which are designated for palliative care.

Ty Ni

Ty Ni (Our House) is a Residential Children's Home that was opened in October 2013. The home is situated approximately two miles from Caerphilly town centre and provides accommodation for up to 5 young people of either gender aged from 13 to 17. The Home works in partnership with young people, parents and social workers to provide high quality, imaginative and flexible programmes of care to young people who are being looked after by the local authority.

The primary task of the children's home is to provide a stable, structured, caring environment that will enable young people to feel safe and supported while helping them to develop the skills needed for a successful transition into adulthood.

Ty Croeso

Ty Croeso was formerly used as a temporary accommodation for homeless families. In 2013-14 a decision was taken to refurbish the building to accommodate single people that present to the authority as homeless and where we have a statutory duty to assist them.

The refurbishment took 12 months to complete and has been fully funded by the local authority with an investment of over £400,000. The building boasts 10 single persons bedrooms that have been delivered to Welsh Government's temporary accommodation standards. This

investment is a testament to the commitment to meeting the housing needs of our residents and in these austere times is a very real example of how the authority, in collaboration with our partners, are committed to delivering for our communities.

Ty Osborne

In December 2013, United Welsh and Caerphilly County Borough Council officially opened Ty Osborne, a new supported housing project for people with mental health issues. Ty Osborne offers 24-hour support for up to eight people and provides high quality accommodation and support for local people, promoting and developing independence and the skills to enable them to move on into independent living. The site has been dedicated to Paul Osborne, Commissioning Manager for Mental Health Services at Caerphilly County Borough Council, who campaigned tirelessly for improved mental health services in the County borough and died before the scheme was finished.

Looking forward to 2014-15 Councillor Woodyatt has outlined that his key priority will be to continue to work with the Social Services Directorate to balance an ever-tightening budget and endeavour to mitigate the impact that the difficult economic climate will have on service delivery. Cllr. Woodyatt is confident that through continuing to develop imaginative and innovative solutions to delivering social care this can be successfully achieved.

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3. Collaboration and Partnership Working

There has been considerable discussion in Wales about the sustainability of Social Services and great emphasis has been placed on better collaboration between public services. Some examples of where the Directorate has been involved in collaborative or partnership ventures over 2013-14 is shown below:

The South East Wales Adult Placement 'Shared Lives' Scheme is a partnership venture with Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Newport, Monmouth and Merthyr Tydfil local authorities. Caerphilly is the host of this scheme. Throughout its second year in operation we have seen an increase in the client groups accessing the service, particularly in respect of sessional support with some authorities nearing their target for usage. Carers continue to be recruited at a good rate from all walks of life, following an intensive assessment and induction training.

The scheme has developed a range of digital stories, which can be viewed on the Caerphilly county borough council YouTube site.

Building on the Mental Health Strategy, we have agreed with partners in ABUHB, Blaenau Gwent, Newport, Monmouthshire and Torfaen local authorities to focus on exploring models for improving the pathway for people and their carers when accessing mental health services. As a result of this joint work, we were successful in accessing funding from the Welsh Government and have since appointed a Project manager to lead on the integration of Mental Health services and a Commissioning manager to look at opportunities for joint commissioning.

Work has already taken place with our partners on examining the journey through the current services, and developing new principles and ways of working. This work will continue to be a priority for us in 2014-15 with the establishment of a partnership team to 'test' all new developments.

The Community Resource Team (CRT), which underpins the Gwent Frailty Programme, continues to develop alternative ways of working to prevent unnecessary admission to hospital, or emergency respite placement, and aid timely discharge from hospital. The team has piloted a number of new ways of working with the Medical assessment unit in Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr, which has seen significant improvements in patient flow and allowed medical governance to be managed. A specific Occupational Therapy post has been established to coordinate this work and improve outcomes for individuals. The scheme continues to receive a high level of praise for their work.

The Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board is a multi agency partnership comprising of statutory representatives from the 5 Local Authorities, Gwent Police, Wales Probation Trust, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and the ABUHB. The Board is currently chaired by Caerphilly. This arrangements will continue for 3 years to ensure consistency and enable the Board to build on the recent

work undertaken to ensure the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill and the focus on prevention, with appropriate outcomes that can measure the impact made by the Board.

Towards the end of 2013-14 the Welsh Government gave partners the opportunity to make a bid to the Intermediate Care Fund. This fund offered both capital and revenue money for one year (2014-15) with the aim of looking at integrating services primarily around older people with complex needs. The conditions of the grant were very clear that bids had to be agreed across the five local authorities, Housing Associations, the Voluntary sector and Health Board. Accordingly, a range of bids were submitted and supported. Some of those supported includes the development of 'step up beds' in a variety of settings, a medication management scheme, community connectors across Neighbourhood Care Networks, a small team of multi-agency staff to implement new Continuing Health Care Guidance, rapid access to equipment and adaptations to promote safety and facilitate hospital discharge, Dementia Care Services and an Early Supported Discharge Scheme for people with neurological conditions. The implementation of these schemes, review and evaluation of impact will be a priority in 2014-15.

The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) continues to develop effective partnership working involving the key statutory agencies of Health, the Police, Probation and the 5 Gwent Local Authorities together with third sector partners. The work of the Board is underpinned by a set of sub-groups taking lead responsibility for key areas of safeguarding business. In addition, each Local Authority area has established a Learning and Review Group where operational issues can be considered and thematic audits undertaken. The audit theme for 2013-14 was 'Neglect' and the key learning will be developed into an action plan for the Board moving forward into 2014-15.

The plans to develop a Regional Adoption Service in order to meet the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill continued to make considerable process throughout 2013-14. Early in the year, it was agreed that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council would host the new service on behalf of the Gwent Local Authorities and the new service name was agreed as the South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS). With considerable support from Council Officers including Finance and Human Resources, funding was confirmed and staff transfers into the new service to place. The new service will be fully operational from 1st April 2014.

A Children and Young People Partnership Board has been established by ABUHB in partnership with the 5 Local Authorities to provide strategic direction to the development and delivery of co-ordinated services for vulnerable children, young people and their families. Although still in its infancy, the Partnership has identified key priorities for its future work including a review of services for emotional well-being and mental health across the region.

Joint Workforce Development Team

In my report for 2013-14 I made reference to the fact that the integration programme between Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Social services departments did not proceed as intended. However, one aspect of the work that did proceed was the establishment of a joint workforce development team. Over the year we have appointed a Joint Team Manager for the service and are now offering courses to staff across both Councils, and to the independent and third sector in both areas. This joint service has had a considerable impact on the way we deliver training and has not only allowed us to increase our capacity to offer training courses but has allowed us to utilise our training budgets in a more effective way. Some examples of which are:

- The development of a single On-line event finder covering both Authorities allows individuals to book onto training courses on-line
- A joint approach to training needs analysis which informs the annual training calendar. This has brought about economies of scale and efficiencies
- An increase and wider choice of training opportunities
- A Joint Strategy, Plan and bid for Welsh Government funding. Again this has secured economies of scale and delivered efficiencies
- One Joint Social Care Partnership. This has given both authorities a stronger voice in terms of relationships with commissioned services and training providers
- A standard approach to training new social workers providing both Authorities options/choices to meet local needs, learning from each other, and shared representation on partnerships with Universities.
- Best practice in essential training delivery secured through 'taking the best from both'.

We are committed to continue to work with a wide range of partners; be that local, regional or national, to deliver a range of modern social care services that our residents expect in the 21st Century.

4. Our Achievements in 2013 - 2014

In last years report we made a commitment to you to make improvements in a number of key areas. These areas are shown below. I am confident that the improvement actions taken in 2013-14 have made a real difference to the lives of people who use our services.

4.1 Overarching Achievements

Promoting Quality Services

Over the year a range of partners across Caerphilly county borough have come together to consider how, through improved access to information, communities and individuals can better help themselves. A proposal to incorporate this work into the corporate website redesign was approved by management teams within the Council and work started in late 2013. The work being undertaken forms part of our commitment to the Empowering Communities agenda.

We have also been working hard to develop the support that is available in the community through volunteers and befrienders for older people and for people with a physical and/or learning disability. We are already starting to see real benefits from the positive feedback received from service users and their families.

The Community Connector pilot presents another exciting opportunity for us to be able to be more responsive to people who contact Social Services whose needs can be met by services or organisations within their local communities. The pilot commenced in late October 2013 with one Community Connector and a further joining in December 2013. A third is being planned for 2014-15. So far over 50 people have been engaged in the pilot and extensive area mapping has been undertaken to determine the availability of community based services and resources.

A recent addition to the Community Resource Team has been the recruitment of a falls coordinator. This post will initially focus on working with care homes to reduce the number of people who fall and subsequently prevent hospital admission. Activity of our Emergency Care at Home service has also seen an increase following the recruitment of additional staff as identified in local commissioning plan.

Service User and Carer Engagement

One of our priorities for 2013-14 was to develop a more consistent approach to participation, consultation and engagement. To help us do this a Service User and Carer Engagement Strategy has been developed. The strategy recognises the potential that high quality engagement

has to improve the way in which the Directorate works and describes the approach that the Directorate will take in engaging with service users, carers and members of the public in its planning and development activities. The strategy is the first stepping stone of a 3 year journey which will build on current good practice and seek a year on year improvement in the quality of engagement activities undertaken with our service users, carers and stakeholders.

Financial Stability and Resources

The Directorate of Social Services has a strong track record of managing expenditure within its approved budget. This has continued during the 2013-14 financial year with the Directorate reporting an under spend of £1.9m against an approved budget of £75.58m. This level of under spend is higher than in previous years and is largely due to a number of savings being delivered in advance of the 2014-15 financial year to address budget cuts arising from reductions in Welsh Government funding.

The financial outlook is challenging with Social Services savings of £2.06m already approved for the 2014-15 financial year. Budget reductions for future years will also impact on the Directorate and work is already underway to develop a range of savings proposals to meet anticipated savings targets.

Single Plan 'Caerphilly Delivers'

In April, 2013 the Caerphilly Local Service Board and Caerphilly County Borough Council approved the Single Integrated Plan. This Plan is called "Caerphilly Delivers" and was developed in partnership with ABUHB, Gwent Police and Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations. This plan replaced a number of previous strategic plans including the Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy and is the overarching strategic document the Directorate is working towards achieving over the coming years.

"Caerphilly Delivers" aims to improve the quality of life for our communities by concentrating on the major issues and challenges, especially focussing on prevention and early intervention with those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged. The Social Services Directorate is particularly involved in the Safer and Healthier Caerphilly Outcome themes of the Plan to ensure that people are supported and protected to lead safe, fulfilled and independent lives in their own communities. This Directors Report details the many of the successes that have been achieved in 2013-14.

4.2 Adult Services

What We Do

Adult Services has the responsibility for the service areas of Older People, Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health for Adults and Older People and Substance Misuse. This also includes the cross cutting themes of the support of carers and the protection of vulnerable adults, assessment and care management, emergency out of hours services, Occupational Therapy, Rehabilitation Officers for the Visually Impaired, Frailty Programme, provision of equipment and adaptations and direct service provision e.g. domiciliary, day and long-term care. These services are delivered to the community in partnership with other statutory bodies such as ABUHB, Housing, CSSIW and Gwent Police.

In addition to direct service provision Adult Services also commissions significant levels of services from the independent and voluntary sector.

FACT: Did you know that in 2013-14 over £52million was spent on Adult Social Care services in Caerphilly county borough.

Challenges Facing Us

Challenges arising from demographic changes and, in particular, an ageing population are well known. Information shows that the population aged 65+ within the county borough will increase by 25.6% by 2020 and by 50.4% by 2030. In addition, the number of people predicted to have early onset dementia or dementia is also anticipated to increase by 29.4% by 2020 and 78.2% by 2030.

Similarly an anticipated increase in unpaid carers of 25.6% and a 26.8% increase in people with a learning disability by 2020 will bring significant pressures.

It is evident that the demographics changes predicted are no longer something that will occur in the future, the changes are happening now and having a substantial impact on both the numbers of people presenting themselves for service but also in the extent of their dependency and the level of services they require to meet their needs.

Changes in health provision including reduced lengths of stay in hospital were calculated on an increase in preventative community based services, primarily around domiciliary care and reablement to enable demand to be controlled, admissions reduced and discharges managed. The targets within 'Clinical Futures' in relation to Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr will increase the demand for community services, and in particular domiciliary care services.

As well as the pressures from additional demand, the reviews of Continuing Health Care clients by Health will see a proportion of these clients returning to social care for funding. Demand for learning disability services continues to grow and the authority is aware of a significant number of elderly parents currently caring for young adults who have a learning disability.

There will continue to be financial constraints over the next three to five years. Although the division has managed these pressures very well over recent years, the financial pressures are real and significant. The Adult Services division will only be able to support growth in services to meet the increased demand by reshaping and modernising existing service provision. To this end a number of proposals are in place and the division will be focussing on an updated medium term financial plan.

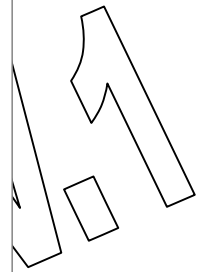
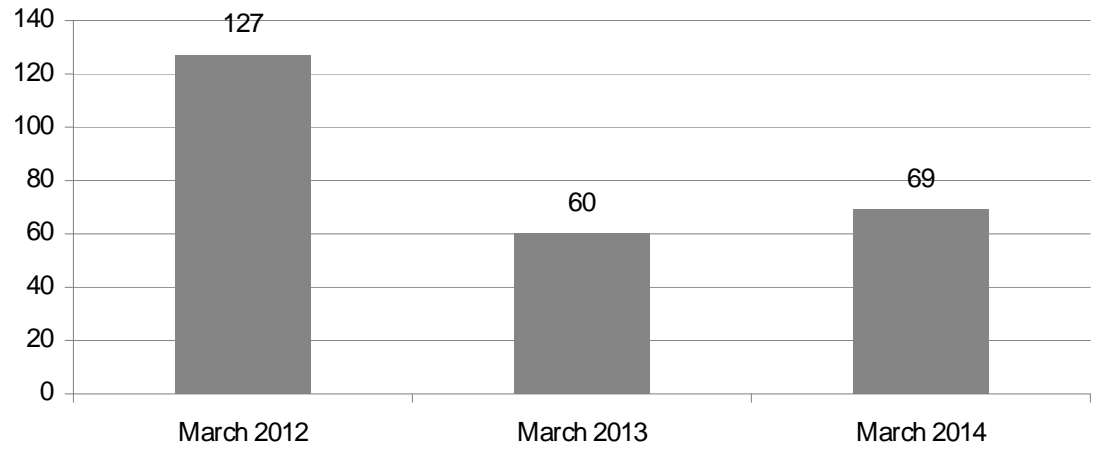
Finally, none of the challenges that we face are achievable without being able to recruit and retain an adequately skilled, knowledgeable and motivated workforce. Staff within Adult Services remains its best asset. Vulnerable adults in the borough depend on staff to provide sometimes very intimate services in a professional, sensitive and dignified manner. Adult services will continue to work with colleagues to ensure we are able to recruit, train and retain the best staff.

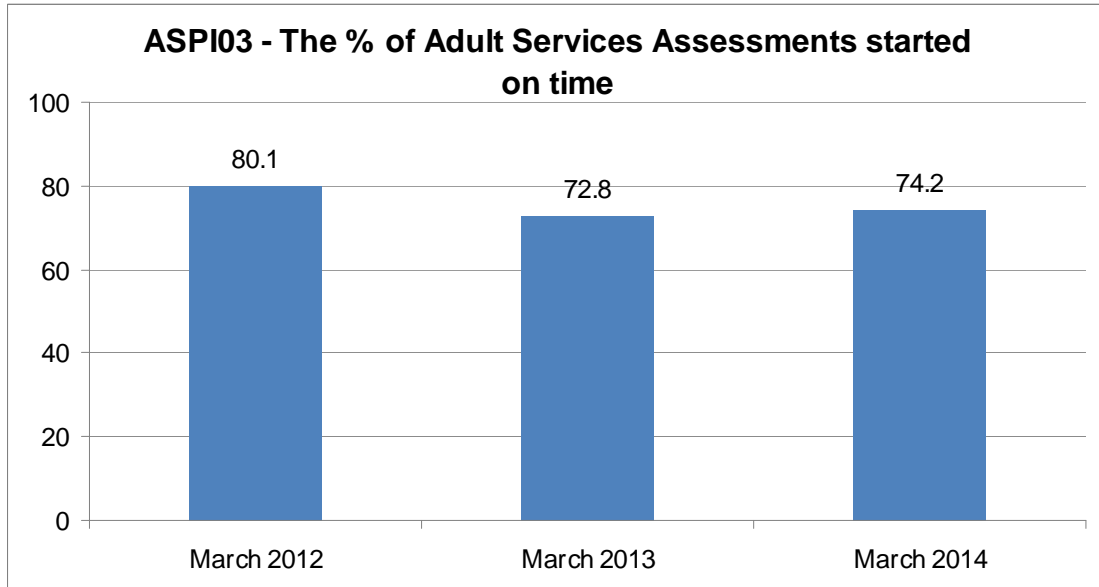
What we did in 2013 - 2014 and what difference it made

Improve the timeliness and quality of assessments

Improving the timelessness of assessments has been a consistent priority for us. Feedback from individuals in respect of the timeliness of assessments illustrates this is only part of the process and can be dependent on individual circumstances. Practices is continually developing in relation to engagement with people regarding completion of assessments and during 2013 different forms of recording were being considered by the Systems Thinking and Redesign Team (START) to inform future practice.

ASPI02 - No. of Adults waiting for an Assessment outside of the timescale (28 days)





In 2013-14 the Mental Health Measure was implemented as required. There is new guidance being issued in respect of Continuing Health Care and with partners we have successfully attained funding from the Intermediate Care Fund for a small team of multi-agency staff to provide training for all staff on the new guidance which has clear timelines for assessments.

Access to Services

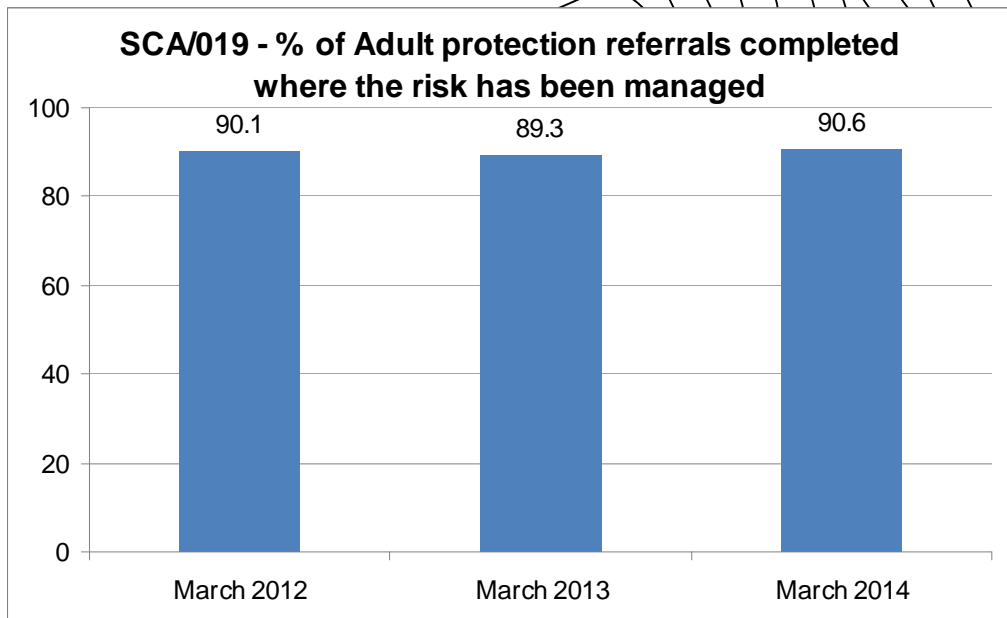
Work to enhance the Council's website to allow citizens to access information about what facilities, groups and services exist within their immediate communities has been a key activity throughout the year. To support this work we have also appointed three community connectors to identify key organisations or groups within the county borough, to which we can signpost people. The post holders are currently developing a directory of resources which will be accessible via the Council's website. The addition of the Community Connector posts has helped us to prepare for the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act which requires us to provide people with advice and information, enabling them to help to resolve their own problems through using community resources, and more importantly improving their wellbeing and reducing isolation and loneliness.

The Division has also seen an increase in the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter to provide information about services and how to access them. We have also developed a range of digital stories covering areas such as Protection of Vulnerable Adult, the South East Wales adult Placement Scheme, How to make a complaint, the Assessment beds Service and Residential Care. All can be viewed on YouTube.

FACT: Did you know in 2013-14 there were 27,983 contacts recorded by the Adult Services Duty and Information Team.

Safeguarding Vulnerable People

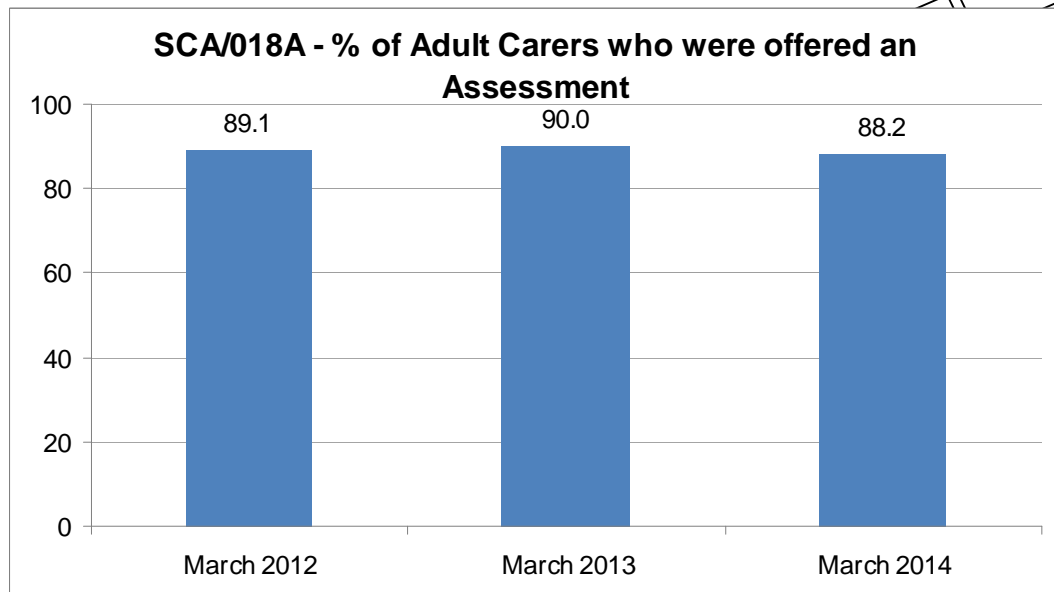
The joint Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) Coordinator post, funded by Caerphilly county borough council and ABUHB was evaluated in 2013 and is now a permanently jointly funded position. This post continues to facilitate the sharing of skills between Health and Social care practitioners who are employed to protect vulnerable adults. It also provides essential nursing knowledge to the POVA Team to enhance the POVA advice service, and the coordination of referrals and completion of investigations.



Supporting Carers

Our Local Carers Strategy and the Gwent Partnership Carers Information & Consultation Strategy was launched during 2013 and work started in earnest on the first year of a 3 year action plan. This first year has seen the production of an e-learning tool for staff with regards to raising awareness of Carers needs, identifying solutions and the support available. This will be available from Autumn 2014. A General Practitioner (GP) Local Enhanced Service has also been developed in recognition of the central role played by a GP in identifying and supporting Carers. In 2013-14, 56 General Practices have signed up to this service.

A significant commitment during the year has been given to helping identify Carers and to support them through the provision of information and advice. Information stands have been set up at various events and posters have been displayed in prominent locations throughout the Borough and in health settings.



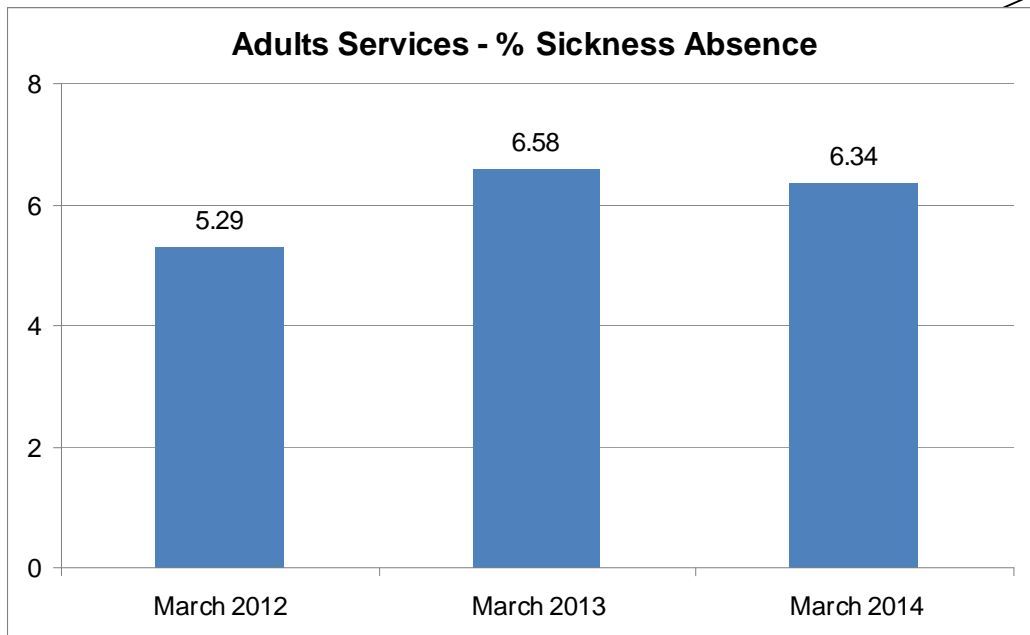
In collaboration with Barnardos, Young Carer awareness was delivered in schools through the County borough. As a result 25 new Young Carers were identified and links were developed with Education Welfare Officers and education staff to raise awareness in identifying and supporting Young Carers before they reach crisis point.

Collaboration and Commissioning

In 2013-14 we made the decision to move to a single commissioning team for the Directorate. Previously this function was carried out separately by Adults services and Children's services. As well as making some financial efficiencies, this change will ensure that we are able to consistently commission and evaluate our services as well as removing some of the barriers that young people face when moving from Children's to Adult services.

Workforce Management and Development

The sickness absence rate as at March 2014 was 6.34%, a decrease from the March 2013 figure of 6.58%. Whilst we are pleased with this result we recognise that the hard work needs to continue to further improve on this figure.



4.3 Children's Services

What We Do

The Children's Services Division provides a range of services to children, young people and their families. Some of these services are provided directly by Children's Services staff, others are commissioned services from voluntary agencies or are provided in partnership with the other statutory agencies. The aim of Children's Services is:

"To safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who are in need to enable them to reach their full potential, and to maximise their life chances."

Children's Services aims to ensure that all children and young people assessed as being 'in need' within Caerphilly should have the opportunity to:

- Grow up physically and emotionally healthy throughout their childhood and adolescence and into adulthood
- Be safe from harm, abuse, exploitation and discrimination
- Have a strong sense of identity and self esteem
- Gain from education and achieve fulfilling training/employment
- Acquire personal and social skills that enable them to contribute to and behave well in their communities
- Have their views sought and considered when decisions are made about them

FACT: Did you know that in 2013-14 over £18million was spent on Children's services in Caerphilly county borough.

Challenges Facing Us

All of the services provided by the Division are determined and shaped by primary legislation or/and statutory guidance. This provides a range of constraints and challenges for the Division.

National Government settlements to local authorities are likely to continue to reduce putting further pressure on budgets. It is unlikely that local authorities will be able to support growth in services to meet increased demand unless they are able to make significant efficiencies

within existing service provision. Consequently local authorities will need to reconfigure services to meet increasing demand. The Division has been working hard to meet the requirements of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and a number of service areas are proposed to be reconfigured during 2014 in order to meet these demands.

During the first Quarter of 2014, the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW) visited Caerphilly to undertake the National Inspection of Looked After Children and the Welsh Audit Office visited to undertake their National Safeguarding Audit. Both Inspection Reports are expected to be shared early in 2014-15.

The plans for implementation of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act will require Social Services to be clear in its responsibilities and work effectively with colleagues across the authority to meet the requirements.

What we did in 2013-14 and what difference it made

Assessment and Care Planning

One of our priorities was to review the Assessment document and business process on the IT system known as the Integrated Children's System (ICS). This has now been completed and the assessment document has been updated on the system following consultation and in partnership with other local authorities. It has been updated to clearly record parents/child's view and the parenting assessment completed on a family when/if required.

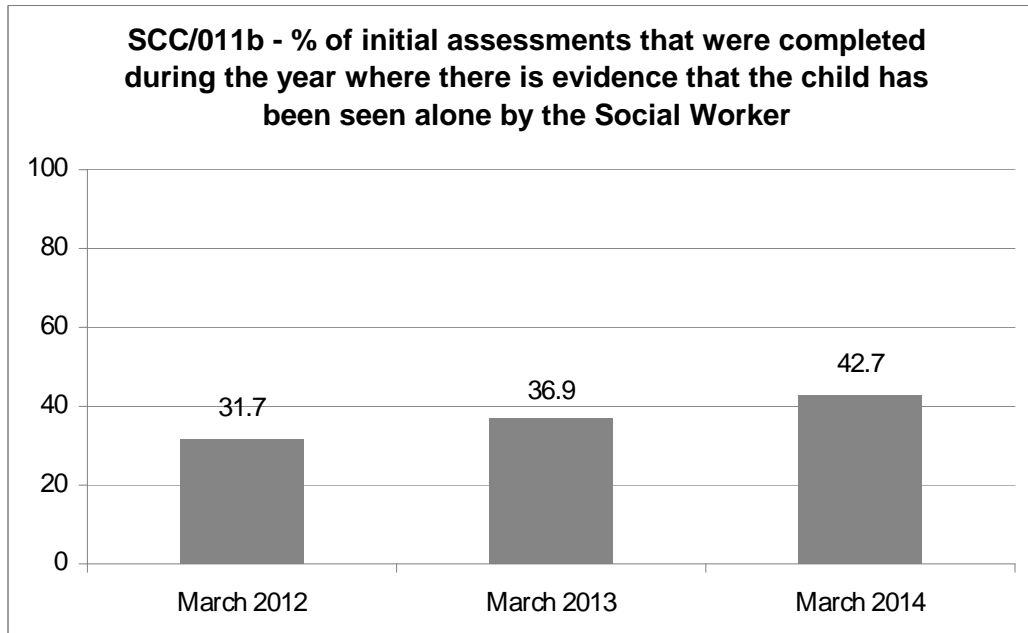
The national review of the Family Justice system in England and Wales led to the implementation of a revised Public Law Outline. This became operational in September 2013. The work undertaken to review the Assessment process will hopefully alleviate different documents having to be presented within the court arena. Courts will now accept Caerphilly's Core Assessment, which includes the Parenting Assessment. A range of assessment training has been provided to staff during the year.

Assessment and Care Planning processes are core to the delivery of effective Children's Services and as a result this will remain a strategic priority for the Division in 2014-15.

FACT: Did you know in 2013-14 there were 12,320 contacts received by Children's Services.

Service User Involvement

A fundamental requirement of all assessment and care planning undertaken is that the child or young person, together with their family, is involved in the planning to meet their agreed needs. Wherever appropriate to do so, children and young people are seen alone during the assessment and all relevant family members are encouraged to participate in this activity.



By encouraging children and young people to participate in the planning for them, we are ensuring that we are listening to them and reflecting their views in the delivery of support services aimed to meet their identified needs. Children and young people are actively encouraged to access the Independent Advocacy Service and the Divisional Management Team receive regular feedback from any complaints that may have been made in order to learn the lessons and continually improve the delivery of quality services. The involvement, engagement and participation of service users will continue to be a priority for the Division in 2014-15.

Range of Services

Concluding the review of services for disabled children and young people was a key priority for Children's Services in 2013-14. As planned, Blackwood Resource Centre transferred back to Children's Services and significant improvements continue to be implemented as a result. During the year discussions have commenced with Education, Health and third sector partners to scope the possibility of further improvements for children and young people through the integration and co-location of key services. These proposals will continue to be developed in 2014-15.

The planned evaluation of the Team Around the Family (TAF) service has been very positive and it is demonstrating that the co-location with Children's Services Contact and Referral Team is preventing cases escalating to Social Services involvement. Additional Families First funding was provided to Social Services to establish the Supporting Family Change pilot project and an evaluation of this service will conclude early in 2014. Subject to funding continuing, it is proposed that TAF and Supporting Family Change are merged to become one service able to provide assessment, co-ordination and direct work.

The new purpose built residential unit for children and young people called Ty Ni was completed and opened in October 2013. Ty Ni offers additional bed capacity including a semi-independent flat aimed at supporting independent living skills. Young people placed in the unit have been really pleased with the new accommodation.

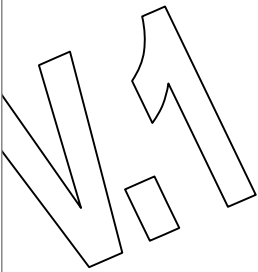
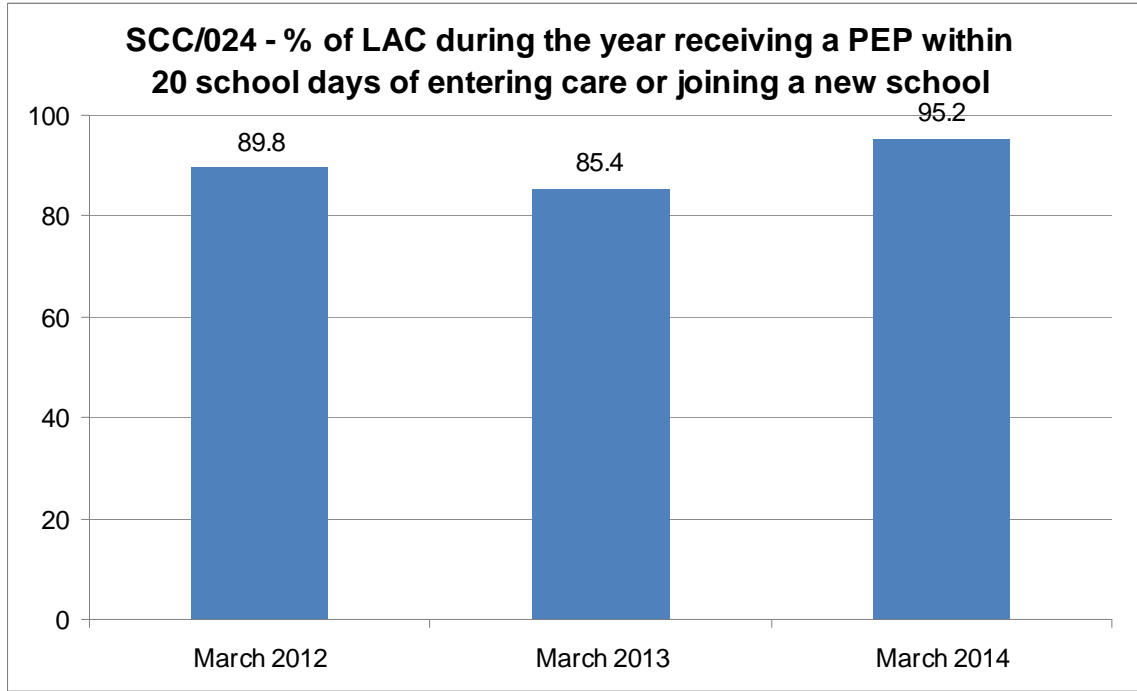
The proposed new Regional South East Wales Adoption Service has been established and will become fully operational from 1st April 2014.

A key priority identified for 2013-14 was the establishment of a Sixteen Plus Team incorporating the Leaving Care Service and responding to young people assessed as being in need due to the risk of homelessness. The new Team has been operational since September 2013. The Personal Advisor Service was brought in house and funding has been secured to recruit a fourth Personal Advisor on a permanent basis from 1st April 2014. In addition, a Homelessness Protocol has been developed with Housing Services. The protocol has ensured improved relationships between Housing and Children's services and is working to prevent young people being placed in Bed and Breakfast by ensuring appropriate support is offered. The Sixteen Plus Service is now responsible for the 'Shout Out Group' for Looked After Children and young people. This group meets on a monthly basis with set themes to discuss and activities.

The Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) covering Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent has been established and is located within Caerphilly.

Promoting Independence and Social inclusion

The key priority for Children's Services in 2013-14 was to ensure that Personal Education Plans for all looked after children were in place within statutory timescales. Through working in partnership with Education colleagues and the Independent Reviewing Service, performance for 2013-14 has continued to improve to 95%.



DATA

5. Our Priorities for 2014-2015

To be successful all organisations must prioritise their focus as all have resource constraints and limited time. It is critical that organisations spend their time and money on the most important areas that can drive success. In order to set meaningful priorities all organisations must have accurate, up-to-date and relevant data about their business. The information this Directorate considers when setting its priorities is wide ranging. For example, we use statutory and local performance indicators, feedback and complaints from our service users, the experience of our staff and what our regulators tell us about our services. All of this information helps us to decide where we should turn our focus of attention.

Set out below are the Directorates priorities for 2014-2015. I hope after reading each of the priorities it is evident why we have identified these areas as being in need of improvement or development and what we hope to achieve is clear.

5.1 Overarching Priorities

Integrated Services with Health

The purpose of developing integrated services is to improve care and support for people. This means ensuring people have more say and control over the care they receive. People should experience care and support that is seamless. Integrated services aim to ensure easy and rapid access to services and support that are effectively co-ordinated and simple to use. This requires integrated working between local authorities, health and housing, with the third sector and independent sector. With this in mind the Directorate over 2014-15 will work with its partners to start the journey of:

- Shaping services around a common understanding of the outcomes important to the person.
- Strengthening person centred service planning, co-ordination, and delivery - increasing the focus on prevention and rapid intervention.
- Strengthening the development of community-based models of care to enable people to remain at home, avoiding unnecessary hospital admission or long-term residential care.
- Ensuring people are not delayed unnecessarily in hospital and can return home, supported by an appropriate package of care and support.
- Removing barriers that have prevented effective collaboration.

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill will give people a stronger voice and real control over the social care services they use. It will drive the development of new models of service to maintain and improve the health and well-being of people. There will also be a stronger focus on preventative and early intervention services. Meeting the requirements of the Bill over the coming year will be a key priority for the Directorate.

Equalities and Welsh Language.

These issues are a fundamental part of Social Services work, not only in how we deal with service users themselves, but also in terms of how we deal with their families, our own staff and co-workers from partner agencies. The Directorate works closely with the corporate Equalities and Welsh language team in the Council to ensure that staff are given training opportunities on a range of subjects from disability or race awareness to language classes in Welsh or British Sign Language.

The related work and actions that we are committed to doing in 2014-15 can be found in the Council's "Equalities in Service Improvement Plans Self-evaluation Report" available online at www.caerphilly.gov.uk/equalities on the Assessing the Services page. This also contains the Social Services update on progress against the targets of "More Than Just Words": the strategic framework for Welsh language services in health, social services and social care).

5.2 Adult Services

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

A key objective of the Division is to prevent and reduce the risk of significant harm to vulnerable adults from abuse or other types of exploitation, whilst supporting individuals in maintaining control over their lives and in making informed choices. This year we will focus our efforts on:

- Prevention and reshaping the Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board to reflect this.
- Preparing for the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill and the new duties placed upon us.
- Review current working practices to create capacity for staff when dealing with POVA advice.
- Learn from the Independent review of Operation Jasmine, together with any reports we receive from our regulators.

Supporting Carers

Our Health and Social care systems depend heavily on those undertaking a caring role. However, caring can take its toll both physically and emotionally, with the carer's own health and well-being suffering as a consequence of their caring responsibilities. It is vital that carers are identified and supported at the earliest stage possible so that they have access to the support needed. With this in mind this year we will:

- Promote and recognise the role of carers and support them in their caring role, preventing care breakdown.
- Prepare for the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill in terms of carer assessment.
- Review the way we engage with carers by looking at different ways of working and developing volunteers for carers.

Collaboration and Commissioning

To ensure the necessary improvements in Social care services it will be more important than ever to have appropriate and robust collaborative and commissioning arrangements in place. In order to do this we will seek to:

- Maximise the opportunities for collaboration to increase opportunities to access funding e.g. Intermediate Care Fund
- Develop integrated commissioning strategies.

Medium Term Financial Plan

The financial pressures faced in 2014-15 are significant, but not impossible. In order to meet these challenges we will:

- Implement the agreed budget savings for 2014-15 and achieve a balanced budget.
- Develop options for achieving further efficiencies for 2015-16 and 2016-17 in order to meet the reduced budget settlement from the Welsh Government.

Workforce Planning

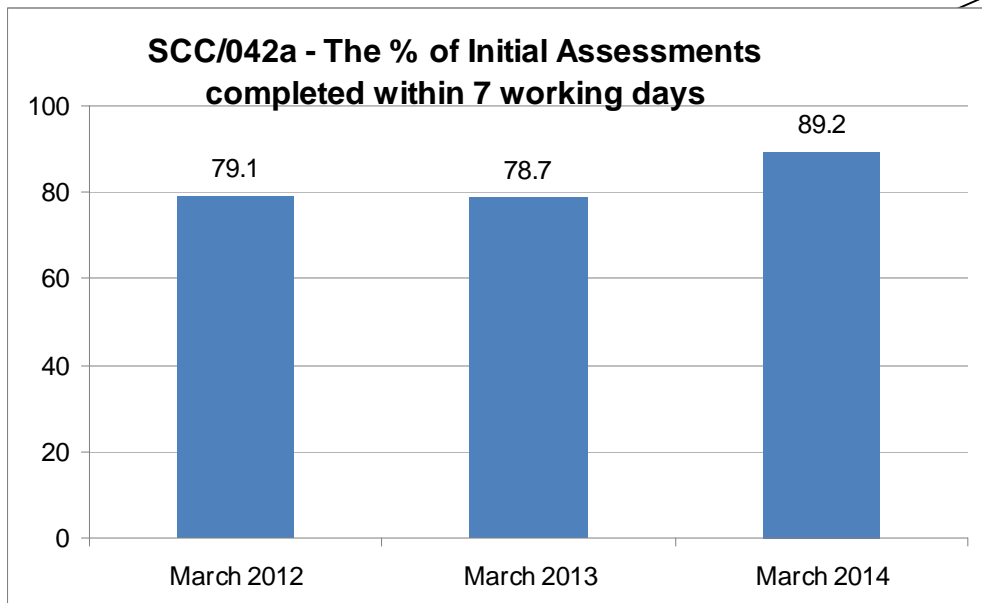
Workforce Planning is a continual process used to align the needs and priorities of the organisation with those of its workforce to ensure it can meet its legislative, regulatory, service and organisational objectives. Given the significant changes that are on the horizon for the Social care sector, in 2014-15 will look to:

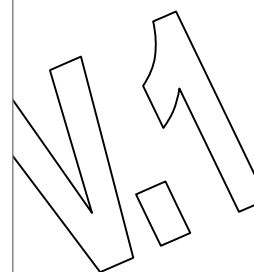
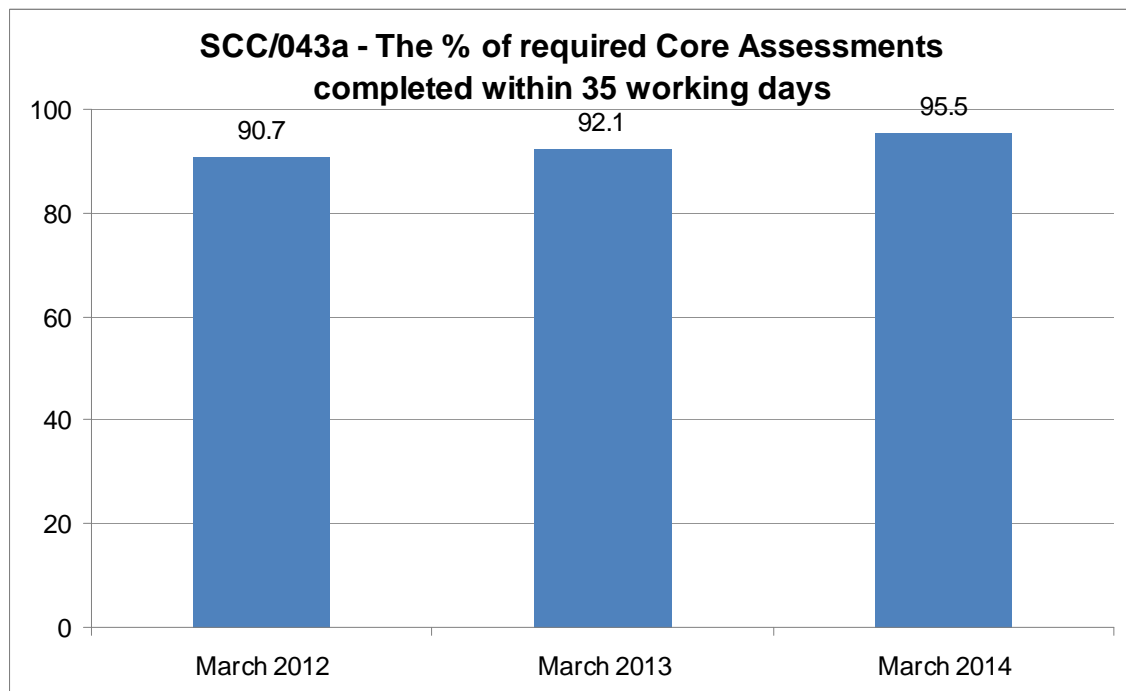
- Review our workforce in terms of the skills required to meet the needs of residents, this needs to be flexible in terms of changes in legislation, identification of good practice and registration requirements
- Learn from the Systems Thinking and Redesign Team (START) experiment to identify what skills are needed and the ratio of professional qualified staff to non-professional qualified staff.
- Have sufficient training in place to enable staff to be redeployed and gain any new skills as required.

5.3 Children's Services

Assessment and Care Planning

As stated earlier, we will continue to ensure that children and young people who come into contact with Children's Services receive a quality and timely assessment of their needs, and good quality outcome focused plans which aim to achieve the identified outcomes for children and young people. We will need to continue to ensure that staff are equipped with the skills that they need to do their job well and that the 'systems' that are in place are not bureaucratic and fit for purpose. Accordingly, ensuring the quality and effectiveness of assessment and care planning, that assessment and care planning is understood by staff, partners and families, and that everyone understands their role within care planning will continue to be a key priority in 2014-15.





Service User Involvement

Children, young people and their families need to be central to the development of their assessment and support plans so that they can make an active contribution to improving their lives. In order for this to happen, service planning needs to actively encourage the involvement and the participation of service users so that services are provided to meet their identified needs. Accordingly, ensuring children, young people and their families participate in the development of their assessments, plans and service development will continue to be a key priority in 2014-15.

Information

We will look at ways of making our website more user friendly and informative for members of the public and professionals, therefore, over the coming year we will aim to improve the design and layout of our website to make it more user friendly and informative for members of the public and professionals. This will form part of a Corporate wide review of the Council's internet site.

Knowing where and how to get hold of the help a person may need when they or someone they know may be at risk is vitally important and will be integral to the implementation of the Social Service and Well Being (Wales) Act. Accordingly, a key priority for the Division will be to develop one point of contact for requesting a service and providing support for children and adults.

Services

Following the evaluations of both the Team Around the Family and the Supporting Family Change projects, we believe that these vital early intervention and preventative services would be enhanced by being reconfigured into one delivery unit. This will ensure that assessments, direct work and co-ordination of other services can be managed by one team thereby ensuring delivery of a seamless service. As a result our priority will be to reconfigure the Team Around the Family and Supporting Family Change Projects.

The newly created South East Wales Adoption Service became operational on 1st April 2014 and will require the ongoing support of strategic managers and operational staff to ensure it is successful. Adoption will continue to be a Corporate Priority for the Council and as such we need to ensure that the new service delivers and meets the need for Caerphilly children.

A key strategic priority for the Division and for the Council is the continued recruitment of sufficient Foster Carers to meet the needs of children and young people Looked After by the Local Authority. Working in partnership across the SEWIC region will ensure that we maximise on opportunities for collaboration around marketing and recruitment processes.

The contract for commissioned Family Support Services is due to expire and the tendering process has commenced. The Service Specification has been revised to more accurately reflect need and demand across the County Borough and it is anticipated that the process will conclude in the early autumn 2014.

Through the use of invest to save funding a pilot project was established within Children's Services to provide crisis intervention support to children, young people and families on the verge of breakdown which previously often resulted in children entering the Looked After system. As a result the Immediate Response Team was established and has been positively evaluated resulting in the proposal to permanently establish the Team. Permanent staff contracts will be awarded during 2014.

Quality Assurance

In preparing for the CSSIW Looked After Children Inspection, a number of development opportunities were identified and a key priority was recognised to be the need to establish robust and consistent Quality Assurance mechanisms. In addition the challenges of responding to the demands of the Family Justice Reforms require increased oversight and quality checking of all documents submitted to Court. Case file audits, thematic audits and audits of staff supervision will be included in the developing framework and will assist the Division to continue to improve service provision and delivery.

Promoting Independence and social inclusion

Young people Leaving Care are a particularly vulnerable group and ensuring we keep in touch and offer responsive support services will continue to be a key strategic priority for the Division through the Sixteen Plus Team. Additional legislative requirements for Care Leavers aged eighteen plus years including remaining in foster care if they are in full time education are covered under the 'Reconnect to Care' guidance. We are committed to ensuring our young Care Leavers are supported to access services and achieve their potential.

Financial Stability and resources

In order to meet the budgetary savings requirements outlined in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) we must reconfigure services. The proposed reconfiguration will include:

- Ensuring sustainability of services and teams in the longer term
- Minimising transfer points for families
- Potential development of an Integrated Disability Service
- Merger of two Fostering Teams and
- Implementing a single contact and referral service across Adults and Children's Services

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6. Conclusion

2013-14 was extremely challenging for everyone working within Social Care in Caerphilly county borough. The impact of the financial climate is well known and staff have done well to make savings of over £2million pounds whilst minimising the impact on front line services delivery. The continuing financial challenges, demographic pressures and the preparation for the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act means that 2014-15 will be an extremely challenging year for all of us delivering Social Services in Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Despite this I am confident to report that this Social Services Directorate continues to perform well and that we have continued to deliver improvements to people's lives and begun our journey to transform the way we deliver our services.

Although we have had to make some hard decisions in 2013-14, through strong leadership, effective stewardship and commitment from all teams, we have continued to deliver efficient, effective and safe services to the residents of Caerphilly county borough while maintaining a balanced budget.

I continue to be confident that with the support of everyone involved in the delivery of social care services we will be able to meet these challenges and ensure that our services continue to meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable members of our communities.

7. Further Information

If you would like further information on any aspect of this report please contact:

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This report is also available in large print, Braille or other language formats upon request.

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