

Pecyn Dogfennau Cyhoeddus

Penallta House,
Tredomen Park,
Ystrad Mynach,
Hengoed CF82 7PG

Ty Penallta,
Parc Tredomen,
Ystrad Mynach,
Hengoed CF82 7PG



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Am unrhyw ymholiad yn ymwneud â'r agenda hwn cysylltwch â Joanne Thomas
(Rhif Ffôn: 07714 600912 Ebost: thomaj8@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Dyddiad: Dydd Mercher, 16 Tachwedd 2022

I bwy bynnag a fynno wybod,

Cynhelir cyfarfod aml-leoliad o'r **Pwyllgor Craffu'r Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol** yn Nhŷ Penallta, a thrwy Microsoft Teams ar **Dydd Mawrth, 22ain Tachwedd, 2022** am **5.30 pm** i ystyried y materion a gynhwysir yn yr agenda canlynol. Gall Cynghorwyr ac aelodau'r cyhoedd sy'n dymuno siarad ar unrhyw eitem wneud hynny drwy wneud cais i'r Cadeirydd. Mae hefyd croeso i chi ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y cyfarfod, mae angen o leiaf 3 diwrnod gwaith o rybudd os byddwch chi'n dymuno gwneud y naill neu'r llall. Bydd gwasanaeth cyfieithu ar y pryd yn cael ei ddarparu ar gais.

Gall aelodau'r Cyhoedd neu'r Wasg fynychu'n bersonol yn Nhŷ Penallta neu gallant weld y cyfarfod yn fyw drwy'r ddolen ganlynol: <https://civico.net/caerphilly>

Bydd y cyfarfod hwn yn cael ei ffrydio'n fyw a bydd recordiad ar gael i'w weld drwy wefan y Cyngor, ac eithrio trafodaethau sy'n ymwneud ag eitemau cyfrinachol neu eithriedig. Felly, bydd delweddau/sain yr unigolion sy'n siarad ar gael yn gyhoeddus i bawb drwy wefan y Cyngor: www.caerffili.gov.uk

Yr eiddoch yn gywir,

Christina Harrhy
PRIF WEITHREDWR

AGENDA

Tudalennau

1 I dderbyn ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb

2 Datganiadau o Ddiddordeb.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



Atgoffi'r Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion o'u cyfrifoldeb personol i ddatgan unrhyw fuddiannau personol a/neu niweidiol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw eitem o fusnes ar yr agenda hwn yn unol â Deddf Llywodraeth Leol 2000, Cyfansoddiad y Cyngor a'r Cod Ymddygiad ar gyfer Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion.

I gymeradwyo a llofnodi'r cofnodion canlynol:-

- | | | |
|---|--|-----------|
| 3 | Pwyllgor Craffu Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a gynhaliwyd ar 11 Hydref 2022. | 1 - 6 |
| 4 | Ystyried unrhyw fater a gyfeiriwyd at y Pwyllgor hwn yn unol â'r drefn galw i mewn. | |
| 5 | Blaenraglen Waith Pwyllgor Craffu Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol. | 7 - 20 |
| 6 | I dderbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiadau* Cabinet canlynol:- 1. Final Report from the Task and Finish Group on Tackling Mental Health Issues Post Pandemic. – 19 th October 2022. <i>* Os oes aelod o'r Pwyllgor Craffu yn dymuno i unrhyw un o'r adroddiadau Cabinet uchod i gael eu dwyn ymlaen ar gyfer adolygiad yn y cyfarfod, cysylltwch â Jo Thomas, 07714600912, erbyn 10.00 a.m. ar dydd Gwener, 21 Tachwedd 2022.</i> | |
| 7 | Adroddiad Blynyddol Cyfarwyddwr y Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol a Thai ar gyfer 2021/22. | 21 - 48 |
| 8 | Gwasanaeth Troseddau leuenctid Blaenau Gwent a Chaerffili - Cynllun Cyfiawnder leuenctid 2022-2024 ac Arolygiad o'r Gwasanaeth Troseddau leuenctid. | 49 - 144 |
| 9 | Lleoedd Gwag ar gyfer Aelodau Cyfetholedig Pwyllgor Craffu'r Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol. | 145 - 148 |

Cylchrediad:

Cynghorwyr: C. Bishop, A. Broughton-Pettit, D. Cushing (Cadeirydd), M. Chacon-Dawson (Is Gadeirydd), R. Chapman, Mrs P. Cook, K. Etheridge, M. Evans, D.C. Harse, T. Heron, L. Jeremiah, Mrs D. Price, J.A. Pritchard, J. Rao, S. Skivens a A. Leonard

Defnyddwyr a Gofalyddion:

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Aneurin Bevan: A. Gough (ABUHB)

A Swyddogion Priodol

SUT FYDDWN YN DEFNYDDIO EICH GWYBODAETH

Bydd yr unigolion hynny sy'n mynychu cyfarfodydd pwyllgor i siarad/roi tystiolaeth yn cael eu henwi yng nghofnodion y cyfarfod hynny, weithiau bydd hyn yn cynnwys eu man gweithio neu fusnes a'r barnau a fynegir. Bydd cofnodion o'r cyfarfod gan gynnwys manylion y siaradwyr ar gael i'r cyhoedd ar wefan y Cyngor ar www.caerffili.gov.uk ac eithrio am drafodaethau sy'n ymwneud a g eitemau cyfrinachol neu eithriedig.

Mae gennych nifer o hawliau mewn perthynas â'r wybodaeth, gan gynnwys yr hawl i gael mynediad at wybodaeth sydd gennym amdanoch a'r hawl i gwyno os ydych yn anhapus gyda'r modd y mae eich gwybodaeth yn cael ei brosesu.

Am wybodaeth bellach ar sut rydym yn prosesu eich gwybodaeth a'ch hawliau, ewch i'r Hysbysiad Preifatrwydd Cyfarfodydd Pwyllgor Llawn ar ein gwefan <http://www.caerffili.gov.uk/Pwyllgor/Preifatrwydd> neu cysylltwch â Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol drwy e-bostio griffd2@caerffili.gov.uk neu ffoniwch 01443 863028.

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol



SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY 11TH OCTOBER 2022 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor D. Cushing –Chair

Councillors:

A. Broughton-Petitt, M. Chacon-Dawson (Vice-Chair), P. Cook, K. Ethridge, M. Evans, D. Harse, T. Heron, L. Jeremiah, A. Leonard, J. A. Pritchard, D. Price, S. Skivens.

Councillor: E. Forehead. (Cabinet Member for Social Care).

Co-Opted Members: Vacant.

Together with:

Officers: Officers: G. Jenkins (Assistant Director–Children’s Services), J. Williams (Assistant Director- Adult Services), M. Jacques (Scrutiny Officer), J. Thomas (Committee Services Officer), J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer), R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer).

Also in attendance: J. Welham (Regional Programme Director), Dr J. Hill (Regional Clinical Director, MyST Regional Programme), Phil Diamond (Head of Regional Partnership Team).

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be made available to view via the Council’s website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here To View](#).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C. Bishop, J. Rao and D. Street (Corporate Director – Social Services and Housing) and A. Gough – Health Board Representative.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None Received.

3. MINUTES – 6TH SEPTEMBER 2022

RESOLVED that subject to an amendment relating to a point of clarification on page 3,
Page 1

item 7, Para 4 the word 'unmet' be added to the sentence to read 'The Scrutiny Committee was informed that 'unmet' need for domiciliary care currently stands at 512.3 hours per week, which represents 67 people within the community and 3 people in hospital and a subsequent amendment to Page 3, Item 8, Para 5 – in that the word 'no' had been omitted from the sentence. The sentence to read "A Member raised a number of questions in relation to the report and stated that it was in no way a criticism of the staff and resources."

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee held on 6th September 2022 (minute nos. 1-6) were approved 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

Mark Jacques - (Scrutiny Officer) introduced the report that informed the Committee of its Forward Work Programme planned for the period October 2022 to March 2023.

Following consideration of the report and amendments suggested by the Scrutiny Officer and Cllr J. Pritchard it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of electronic voting this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that with the removal of The Review on Day Services report from the November meeting and the addition of a report on Aids and Adaptations be added to the January meeting the Forward Work Programme as appended to the meeting papers be published on the Council's website.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

6. REGIONAL MARKET STABILITY REPORT 2022-2025

Councillor E. Forehead the Cabinet Member for Social Care introduced the report which informed the Scrutiny Committee that each Regional Partnership Board in Wales is required to publish a regional overview of the stability of the commissioned services in the area. The report included the current position of the registered services in Gwent with a specific focus on the relative 'stability' of the services commissioned. This is known as a "Market Stability Report" (MSR).

The Scrutiny Committee were advised the purpose of the report was to seek Members view prior to being referred to Council for a decision.

The report seeks the views of the Scrutiny Committee Members with reference to:

- 3.1.1 As required under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA) accept and agree the Market Stability Report for the local authority area.

3.1.2 The LA continue to engage with Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and support the development of the regional Area Plan, where actions will be identified setting out how priorities will be addressed.

The Chair thanked Councillor Forehead for the introduction and welcomed Phil Diamond Head of Regional Partnership Team to the meeting and discussion ensued.

A Member made reference to the section of the report which informed the Scrutiny Committee that there are a number of vacancies in care homes, some at only 40 percent occupancy, and the possibility of them having to close due to it no longer being financially viable to remain open. Also, the issue with domiciliary care being overwhelmed with many packages, particularly complex care packages which require many hours of domiciliary care that are not currently being able to be provided. The Member requested information on whether these two issues could be resolved together by persuading service users with complex requirements that are currently choosing to remain at home, that care homes would be more appropriate for their needs. The Member suggested that this could then be an opportunity to provide domiciliary care hours to persons who are currently unable able to access any hours.

In response the Head of Adult Services, Jo Williams, informed the Scrutiny Committee Members, that one of the winter plan initiatives is the Health Board is currently looking to commission 80 beds across residential and nursing homes, which will be used to temporality allocate to people who are currently unable to leave hospital as they are waiting for care packages. Care homes currently have the opportunity to submit tenders to advise how many beds they are able to block book for this purpose. This would assist them to be financially more sustainable. However, there remains a staffing crisis within care homes, therefore a lot of the vacancies they have is due to them not have the staff. The Authority is working with care homes, who have advised their costs are going up a couple of hundred percent due to fuel costs which is impacting on their viability.

Phil Diamond informed the Scrutiny Committee Members, that as part of the Population Needs Assessment engagement has been made with a large number of people across Gwent. Normally the preferable option with people is to be able to stay in their own home for as long and as safely as possible. However, there are some instances where this isn't possible.

In response to a Members query The Head of Children Services Gareth Jenkins informed the Scrutiny Committee the reason for more children being taken into care compared to other years, is because there has been an increase in both numbers and complexity post COVID. Therefore, due to an increase in assessments this has resulted in, increased packages of care and children looked after within Caerphilly. The Officer did assure Members, that numbers have not significantly increased and have remained stable within the past two and a half years. However, a factor to the increase is due to the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children that are being taken in through the National Transfer Scheme. The Officer also advised Members, that the cost has increased, this has been driven by the market and the lack of available placements for some children. The Scrutiny were assured that Caerphilly is not alone in this situation and there is a national crisis regarding placements for children.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of electronic voting this was unanimously agreed.

7. REGIONAL INTERATION FUND

Councillor E. Forehead the Cabinet Member for Social Care introduced the report which informed The Scrutiny Committee Members that the Regional Integrated Fund (RIF) is a mechanism by which the WG intends to fund the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) in the future. The report explained this new concept of tapering funding and outlines the financial challenges and pressure to the Authority over the next five years. Councillor Forehead drew Members attention to the consequences of this tapering in section 5.5 of the report, which

outlined the financial consequences for Caerphilly in terms of Caerphilly specific schemes and regional schemes, if agreed it could ultimately require the Authority to allocate further growth funds to Social Services or the schemes would need to be taken down. Alternatively, other services in social care would need to cease to continue the funding.

The Chair thanked Councillor Forehead and Members were afforded the opportunity discuss the report and to ask the Officers questions.

Members expressed concerns regarding the tapering arrangements set out in section 5.5 and 5.52 of the report. There were further concerns regarding whether money could be withdrawn at any time from the regional schemes should any Local Authority within the Regional Partnership wish to do so. A Member sought clarification on whether this was a way in which WG can ensure that LA's take part in schemes that are on WG's agenda rather prioritise agendas within each LA. Clarity was also sought on whether once the funds start to diminish from WG will the LA's be expected to invest their own funds into whichever scheme is in place under the tapering arrangements.

Jo Williams advised the Scrutiny Committee the funding comes with clear guidance and how it is to be used which is specified within the report in terms of priority groups and how the funding is allocated. WG is being clear that any future funding modules will come through the RPB. The Officer explained that if any future funding is allocated then it is important the LA understands the evaluation criteria and what Caerphilly consider the regional priorities to be with the defined areas.

Concerns and clarification were also sought regarding 5.2 which relates to Caerphilly specific schemes and the funding being almost halved in the next six years. The Chair requested that the Cabinet Member arrange for a letter to be sent to WG to highlight the concerns and disagreement by the Scrutiny Committee Members. Councillor Forehead assured the Chair and all the Members it was her intention to send a letter to the Minister highlighting all the concerns. The Scrutiny Committee thanked Councillor Forehead.

Having fully considered the report, the Social Services Scrutiny Committee noted the contents.

8. MyST PRESENTATION.

The Scrutiny Committee welcomed Mrs Jennie Welham (Regional Programme Director) and Dr Jael Hill (Regional Clinical Director, MyST Regional Programme) who presented the Scrutiny with an update on 'My Support Team'.

The Scrutiny were updated on the progress of the MyST Team since June 2021 and the team is now a fully operational regional programme.

The Scrutiny noted that the team currently have 15 intensive cases on their community caseload and 9 in their residential caseloads. Dr Jael Hill and Jennie Welham shared with the Scrutiny Committee a young person's story with whom the team have been working with to move from residential care into a community therapeutic foster care home, and the progress the young person has made since being involved with the team. A video was also provided which shared foster carers experiences.

The Chair thanked colleagues for delivering the presentation and invited any questions for the Members.

Both the Chair and Councillor Heron requested that their admiration and recognition for the valuable work carried out by foster carers be noted.

In response to Members queries the Scrutiny Committee were informed that Caerphilly currently has one Therapeutic Carer, but the team is hoping to recruit a further three as soon

as possible. The Scrutiny Committee noted that carers are usually recruited through other carer referrals. Dr J. Hill advised Members that Therapeutic Carers work alongside the clinical staff and receive the same training.

Following consideration and discussion, the presentation was noted.

9. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (MONTH 5).

Councillor E. Forehead the Cabinet Member for Social Care introduced the report which provided the Scrutiny Committee Members with details of the projected revenue expenditure for the Social Services Directorate for the 2022/23 financial year and its implications for future financial years.

The Members noted the reasons behind the projected overspend of £804k for Social Services in 2022/23, inclusive of transport costs and the potential implications of this projected overspend on Social Services reserve balances and for future financial years.

The Chair thanked Councillor Forehead, and the Scrutiny Committee Members were afforded the opportunity to ask the Officers questions.

In response to concerns highlighted by a Scrutiny Committee Member regarding the £400,000 overspend in relation to out of county care and what the Authority is actively doing to recruit foster carers within the Borough. Gareth Jenkins advised Members that recruitment of foster carers has always been a challenge. Caerphilly has taken part in expensive campaigns to recruit foster cares however, reinforcing what was confirmed in the earlier presentation often the best way of recruiting foster carers is by recommendations from other carers. There is a presence most weekends in supermarkets throughout the Borough. The financial rewards for the mainstream carers within Caerphilly is very competitive. Unfortunately, the greatest issue is not having enough carers. The Officer advised Members that during the pandemic a number of children were placed into residential care who would ordinarily have been placed with a foster carer. The Officer also highlighted that Caerphilly currently have 35 children in residential care which is the highest Caerphilly has ever been. The Officer informed the Members that WG policies are trying to eliminate profit from children's care.

The Officer advised Members that Caerphilly are looking at expanding their own Residential Provision and that there is a Complex Needs Panel that meet monthly which carry out reviews of all the children that are out of county in residential care and set plans accordingly to move them to a family setting should it be safe to do. The Officer assured Members that all children aged over fifteen and a half that are currently in residential care have a very clear plan in place on reintroducing them back into the community with a range of supported accommodation to allow some level of independence.

Having fully considered the report, the Social Services Scrutiny Committee noted the contents.

The meeting closed at 7.11pm.

Approved as a correct record, subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on the 22nd November, 2022.

CHAIR

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol



SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND NOVEMBER 2022

**SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD
WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND
CORPORATE SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the Social Services Scrutiny 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 stakeholder.

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 at the scrutiny committee meeting on Tuesday 11th October 2022. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period November 2022 until March 2023.

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. The 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, which presents the current status as at 31st November 2022. 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. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 As this report is for information only an Integrated Impact Assessment is not necessary.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

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

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer jacqu@carphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services and Housing

Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/ Monitoring Officer
Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,
Legal Services
Councillor Donna Cushing, Chair of Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Marina Chacon-Dawson, 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

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

Forward Work Programme - Social Services

Appendix 1

| Date | Title | Key Issues | Author | Cabinet Member |
|------------------|---|--|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 22/11/2022 17:30 | Annual Report of the Director of Social Services | | Street, Dave; | Cllr. Forehead, Elaine; |
| 22/11/2022 17:30 | Annual Funding for the Youth Offending Service | To give an update on the annual grant funding from the Youth Justice Board. | Jenkins, Gareth; | Cllr. Forehead, Elaine; |
| 22/11/2022 17:30 | Co-opted Members Social Services Scrutiny Committee Vacancies | Following the Local Government Elections in May 2022 the three co-opted member positions became vacant. Council agreed in May 2017 the process for appointment of non-voting co-opted members. It was also agreed that a Co-opted Member Appointments Sub-Committee would be established to consist of the Chair, Vice Chair and one nominated committee member. | Forbes-Thompson, Cath; | Cllr. George, Nigel; |
| 24/01/2023 17:30 | Day Services | Key issues are learning from the experiences of the pandemic and developing services for the future. This will require significant changes to the way services have traditionally been provided on a Monday-Friday building based provision, to a mixed provision of community activities including work based options and building based sessions | Street, Dave; | Cllr. Forehead, Elaine; |
| 07/03/2023 17:30 | Aids and Adaptations Report | Outlining the priorities adopted. Waiting lists. Sufficient workforce? | Williams, Jo; | Cllr. Forehead, Elaine; |

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwiadol

| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|--|---|--|------------------------|
| 16/11/2022 13:00 | Notice of Motion - Wyllie Bends | For Cabinet to consider the proposals put forward by Cllr. Janine Reed/Cllr. Jan Jones. | Emma Sullivan - Cllr. Jan Jones/Cllr Janine Reed | |
| 16/11/2022 13:10 | Street lighting | Review of current street lighting part night lighting policy in view of increasing carbon reduction targets and the declared climate emergency. | Marcus Lloyd; | Cllr. Julian Simmonds; |
| 16/11/2022 13:20 | Redevelopment of the former Ty Darran Care Home by Caerphilly Homes | For Cabinet to approve the contract, cost plan, procurement, design and environmental credentials of the scheme. | Jane Roberts-Waite; Nick Taylor-Williams Nick; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 16/11/2022 13:30 | Caerphilly Homes (Development) Forward Work Programme | To discuss the next set of sites that will be brought forward as part of the Caerphilly Homes development programme and Caerphilly Homes governance arrangements. | Nick Taylor-Williams; Jane Roberts-Waite; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 16/11/2022 13:40 | The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Ecosystem Resilience Duty | To consider and approve a report on the actions taken to help maintain and enhance biodiversity prior to publication in accordance with the biodiversity duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. | Robert Hartshorn; Philip Griffiths; | Cllr. Chris Morgan; |
| 30/11/2022 13:00 | Corporate Performance Assessment 2021/22 | To provide members with a high-level position of the Councils performance for 2021/22 | Sue Richards; Ros Roberts; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner |
| 30/11/2022 13:10 | Draft Self-Assessment Report for 2021/22 | To consider and agree the Self-assessment for 2021/2022 as required by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 | Sue Richards; Kath Peters; Ros Roberts; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner |

| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 30/11/2022 13:20 | Update on Decarbonisation of fleet vehicles & policies | An update on progress with work to transition our fleet to electric vehicles, including details of phase I of the infrastructure works, with recommendations on policies relating to the use of Council charging points by employees and residents. | Paul Cooke; Sue Richards; | Cllr. Jamie Pritchard; |
| 30/11/2022 13:30 | Cyber Security Strategy | To recommend endorsement and implementation of the Strategy. | Liz Lucas; Ian Evans; | Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 30/11/2022 13:40 | Programme for Procurement | To extend the Council's existing Programme for Procurement, which is due to expire in May 2023 for a period of up to 12 months to consider and where applicable incorporate aspects of the UK Procurement Bill and Social Partnership & Public Procurement (Wales) Bill in the Council's new Procurement Strategy (the new Procurement Strategy will replace the existing Programme for Procurement). | Liz Lucas; Ian Evans; | Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 30/11/2022 13:50 | Education Strategy | For Cabinet to consider and approve the Education Strategy proposed from September 2022 – August 2025. | Keri Cole; Paul Warren; | Cllr. Carol Andrews; |
| 30/11/2022 14:00 | Christmas Closedown arrangements | For Cabinet to consider the proposals for the Christmas closedown arrangements. | Lynne Donovan; | Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 14/12/2022 13:00 | A468 / B4600 Bedwas Bridge Roundabout improvement | The use of CIL funding to initially secure the land necessary to deliver improvement to the Bedwas Bridge Roundabout at the A468/B4600 | Mark S Williams; Marcus Lloyd; | Cllr. Julian Simmonds |
| 14/12/2022 13:10 | Agile Working Policies | For Cabinet to agree HR policies to support agile working. | Lynne Donovan | Cllr. Nigel George; |

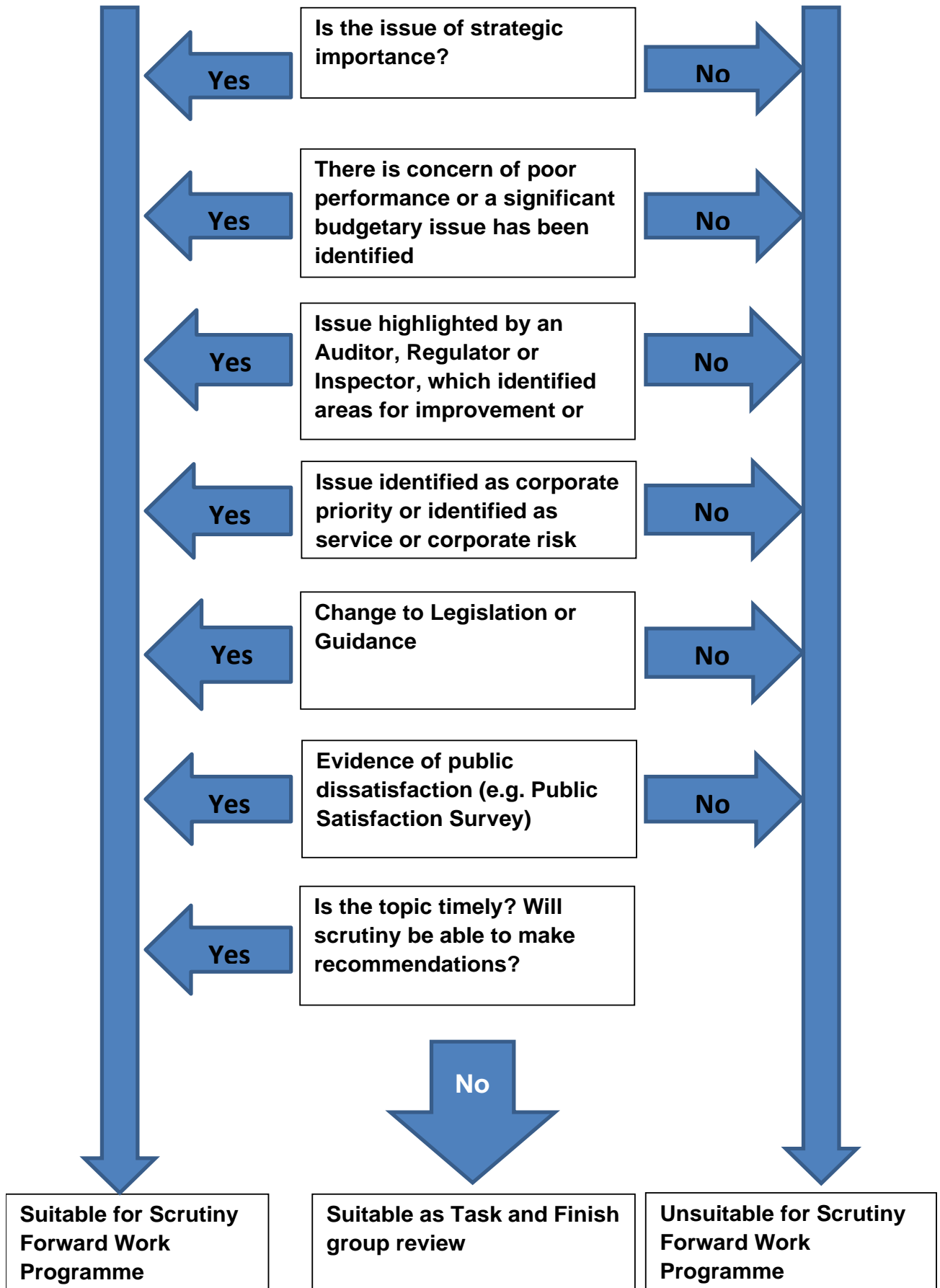
| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| 14/12/2022 13:20 | Low Cost Home Ownership (Decision) | The LCHO (Low Cost Home Ownership) report will document the formulation, implementation and the publication of a new policy which governs the process by which the Council will sell homes to people living and/or working in the borough wanting to access homeownership but cannot afford to do so without some form of public subsidy. | Nick Taylor-Williams; Jane Roberts-Waite; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 14/12/2022 13:30 | HRA Charges (Rent Increase) | Members to agree the level of rent increase for council tenants effective from April 2023. | Lesley Allen; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 14/12/2022 13:40 | Council Tax Base 2023/24 | For Cabinet to agree the calculation of the Council Tax Base for the 2023/24 financial year. | Sean O'Donnell; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner; |

| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|--|---|------------------|---|
| 18/01/2023 13:00 | Draft Budget Proposals for 2023/24 and Updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) | To present Cabinet with details of the draft budget proposals for the 2023/24 financial year and an updated MTFP, to allow for a period of consultation prior to final decision by Council on the 28th February 2023. | Stephen Harris; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner; |
| 25/01/2023 13:00 | Pontllanfraith Indoor Bowls | To provide an update on the management of the Islwyn Indoor Bowls Centre and to recommend a revised approach moving forward. | Mark S Williams; | Cllr. Chris Morgan;/Cllr. Nigel George; |
| 08/02/2023 | No items currently scheduled | | | |
| 22/02/2023 13:00 | Budget Proposals for 2023/24 and Updated Medium -Term Financial Plan (MTFP) | To seek Cabinet endorsement of the 2023/24 budget proposals prior to final determination by Council on the 28th February 2023, and to note the updated MTFP. | Stephen Harris; | Cllr. Eluned Stenner; |

| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|--|--|--|----------------------|
| 22/02/2023 13:10 | HRA Business Plan 2022/23 | To update Cabinet on the latest Housing Business Plan position in advance of submitting the plan to Welsh Government by 31/3/23, which is a requirement under the terms of the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) grant. The Housing Business Plan is a 30 year plan and will include rental increase assumptions and forecasted borrowing requirements to enable the HRA to maintain viability while meeting its core objectives. | Lesley Allen; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 22/02/2023 13:20 | Empty Property Grant Approval (Decision) | The new Welsh Government National Empty Property Grant Programme will launch in September 22 and ask for bids from LAs to issue grants up to a Max of £25K to owner occupiers to bring empty properties back into use. Caerphilly Homes will administer the grant for Caerphilly with an expectation that in years 2 and 3 of the 3 year programme, there will be a 35% contribution from each participating LA. The grant will be awarded on a first come first served basis. | Nick Taylor-Williams; Claire Davies; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 22/02/2023 13:30 | Decarbonisation Action Plan | To update members on progress with the Authority's decarbonisation action plan which sits under the overarching decarbonisation strategy | Paul Rossiter; Paul Cooke; Allan Dallimore; | Cllr James Pritchard |
| 08/03/2023 13:00 | Biodiversity and Grass Cutting Regimes | To seek Cabinet approval in relation to proposals to enhance and promote biodiversity in our grass cutting regimes across the county borough and following consultation with local members. | Mike Headington; | Cllr. Chris Morgan; |

| Meeting date: | Report title: | Key issue: | Report author: | Cabinet Member: |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 08/03/2023 13:10 | Empty Homes Strategy (Decision) | To seek Cabinet approval of the proposed strategy | Claire Davies; Mark Jennings; | Cllr. Shayne Cook; |
| 22/03/2023 13:00 | No items currently scheduled | | | |

Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation



Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol



SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 22ND NOVEMBER 2022

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING FOR 2021/22

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF 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 my Annual Report of the Director of Social Services and Housing for 2021/22.
- 1.2 To seek the views of the Committee on my report prior to the presentation of the report to Council on the 13th December 2022.

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.
- 2.2 Once my report has been considered by Scrutiny it will make its way to Council and once adopted will be forwarded to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and made available to the public via the Councils website.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the contents of my Annual Director's Report for 2021/22 prior to its submission to Council on the 13th December 2022 for its adoption.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

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

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1. This report is an opportunity for the Statutory Director of Social Services and Housing 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 the financial year in question.
- 5.3 The early part of 2021/22 saw the Directorate continue to focus on the challenges and subsequent recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic. As the pandemic situation improved the Directorate was slowly able to go back towards its normal business, although it must be acknowledged that not all services are back at pre pandemic levels.
- 5.4 The significance of partnership working continues to grow across Health & Social Care. The Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) continues to grow in significance, both in implementing Welsh Government policy and in terms of the grants provided to assist with capacity and new models of care. Scrutiny Committee continues to receive regular reports on the work of the RPB and its associated sub groups
- 5.5 As is referenced in the main body of my Director's report the staffing challenges faced by the Directorate are becoming significant, particularly in relation to care staff employed by both the authority and our independent sector partners. Additionally, vacancies amongst social workers and occupational therapists are also an issue which is impacting directly on service delivery.
- 5.6 The report lays out how we addressed our key priorities for 2021/22 and what our priorities are for 2022/23.
- 5.7 Once again I would like to put on record my gratitude to all of the staff in the County Borough who have played a part in delivering Social Services, whether they be employees of the Council or staff employed by our Independent or third sector partners.

5.8 Conclusion

Following presentation to Council on 13th December 2022, my 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. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report has no decision-making requests and an integrated impact assessment does not apply.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The priority areas for development set out within my Annual Director's Report are aligned with the Social Services Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the Directorates revenue budget. Much of the Directorate's response to the pandemic was enhanced by grant funding from Welsh Government. As the Directorate transitions from this grant funding, it will inevitably increase pressure on our revenue budget.
- 8.2 Likewise one of the consequences of the pandemic response is likely to be a continued increase in demand for social services across adults and children's services. Once again, this will increase pressure on our core revenue budget.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 In order to produce my 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 my report where relevant.

11. STATUTORY POWER

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

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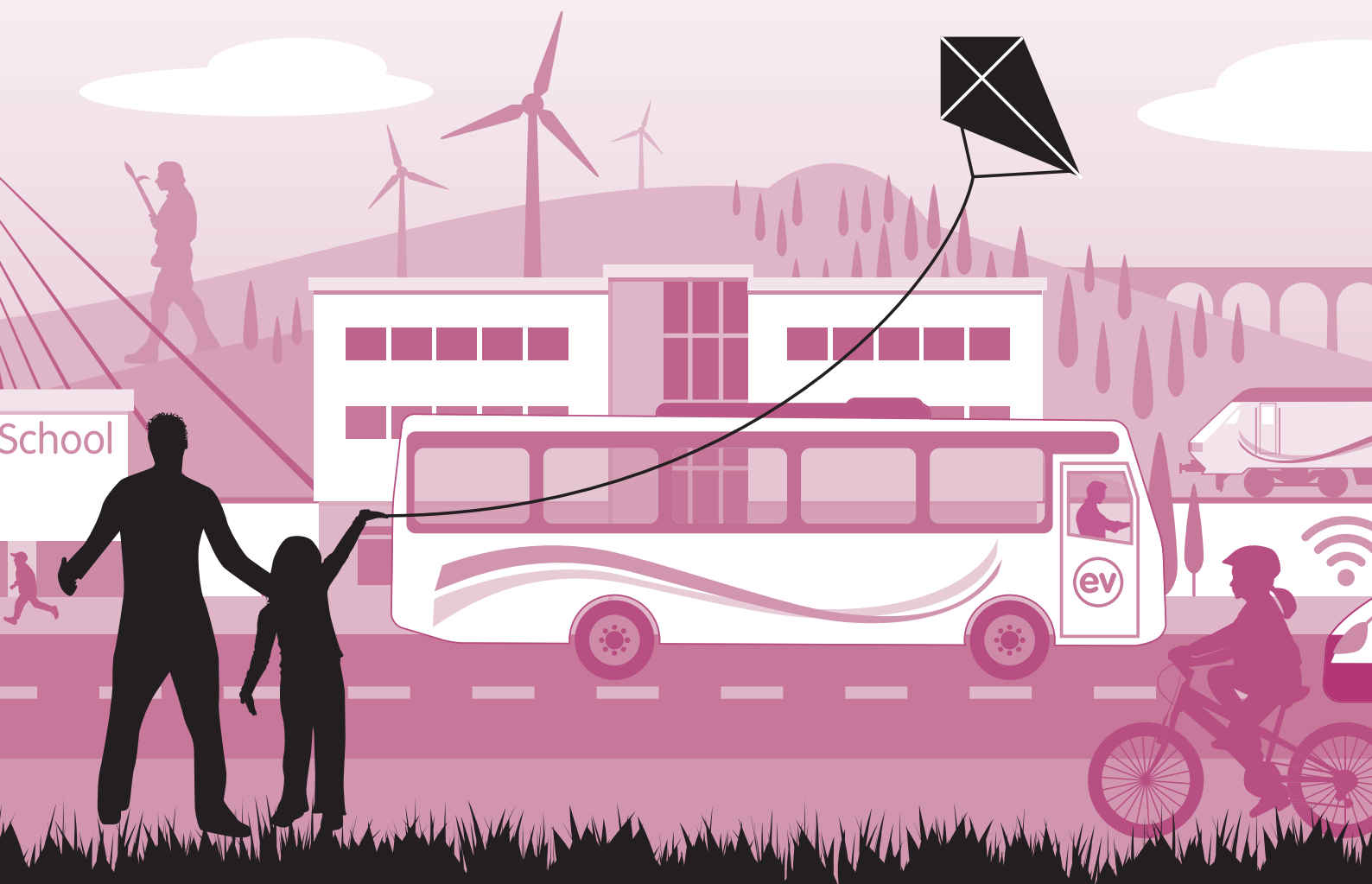
Consultees: Cllr Donna Cushing, Chair Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Marina Chacon-Dawson, Vice Chair Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Elaine Forehead, Cabinet Member for Social Care
Christina Harray, Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Jo Williams, Assistant Director Adult Services
Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director Children's Services

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Annual Report of the Director of Social Services & Housing 2021/2022

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

Caerphilly County Borough Council

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL
SERVICES & HOUSING
2021-2022



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1

Introduction

I am pleased to present my Annual Report as the Statutory Director of Social Services and Housing for 2021-22. My Annual Report for 2020/21 centred very much on how the Directorate responded to the unprecedented challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and how we tried to maintain services to our most vulnerable citizens.

Whilst the early part of 2021-22 still required us to prioritise our resources to the covid response, the latter part of the year saw an easing of the covid situation and the first steps back to some kind of normality.

Unsurprisingly the pandemic has left us with a significant backlog of requests for assessments/services that we now need to address. One of the key challenges that has emerged for both ourselves and our independent sector partners is the difficulty in recruiting and retaining care staff. As the pandemic drew to a close a number of carers took the opportunity to retire or to move onto pastures new, and replacing them in adequate numbers, has proved a real challenge. In addition significant number of vacancies in the retail and hospitality sectors means competition for good quality staff is fierce. We are working hard locally, with other local authorities and with Welsh Government to try to rectify what is a UK wide problem.

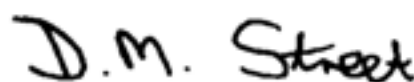
Despite a significant number of challenges the Directorate's performance has been strong throughout the financial year and we have been able to return to some of our performance reporting mechanisms. This report also highlights how we addressed our key priorities for 2021-22 and our priorities for 2022-23.

A positive development for us has been the introduction of our Caerphilly Cares service which was a part of the Council's response to the pandemic. Caerphilly Cares has taken the basic principles of the Social Services Wellbeing Act (holding meaningful conversations and strength based assessments) and applied them to anyone who contacts the Authority for help and support. This ensures we get a better understanding of why people are in need of support and whether that support needs to come from Social Services or the broader Authority.

Partnership working has become increasingly significant in providing social care services. The Gwent Regional Partnership Board has received sizeable amounts of grant funding to develop new and intergraded service models across Adults and Children's services.

I would like to thank all of the staff involved in delivering social services across the County Borough, whether they work for the local authority, independent sector or the third sector. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of unpaid carers for their tireless efforts.

I have no doubt that 2022-23 will bring its own challenges, but I truly believe that the Directorate is well placed to deal with whatever comes our way.



Dave Street

Corporate Director for Social Services & Housing

2

Director's summary of performance

As a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, local authorities have been required to submit 'check point data' to monitor the impact of the pandemic particularly in relation to work load demands and staff resourcing including absences. At the same time, Welsh Government has undertaken a review of the national performance data set and have implemented a National Performance Framework that will be reported on at the end of 2022-23 financial year.

However, the Directorate Performance Assessment (DPA) for the first 6 months was presented to the Council's Social Services Scrutiny Committee on 8th March 2022 and the key messages were as follows:

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 Care Inspectorate Wales and the Wales Audit Office during the period has included:





Adult Services

The numbers of people receiving services remains fairly constant however, due to the national shortage of domiciliary care workers, at the time of writing this report there were 74 people waiting for the provision of a care package. This figure has fluctuated through the year and has been as high as 123 people, which has had an adverse impact on our ability to discharge people from hospital.

There has been a significant increase in the demand for referrals to the Community Occupational Therapy team, which has placed significant pressure on staff and our ability to provide equipment and adaptations in peoples own homes.

There was a slight reduction in the number of assessments completed due to complexity of the cases and staff absences due to Covid.

Children's Services

For Children's Services, the numbers of referrals progressing for assessment remained relatively stable however, complexity of the issues presented has been increasing. The numbers of children included on the Child Protection Register and the number becoming Looked After were also reported to be stable at this time.

Overall performance was noted to be positive with no exceptions to report. The end of year Directorate Performance Assessment 2021-22 report can be found on the Caerphilly County Borough Council website.

3

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.

The most important way of ensuring people's voices are heard and listened to is through every contact that our staff have with service users. This starts from first point of contact with the Directorate. Our staff have all received Collaborative Communication training to provide them with the skills to have meaningful conversations to identify 'what matters' to people including the personal outcomes the individual wants to achieve and the support networks they may already have in place to rely on to meet these outcomes. Any plans to provide care or support are co-produced to ensure people's voices and choices are recorded and responded to appropriately.

As referenced in my introduction to this report we have also applied the principles of the Social Services and Well-being Act to broader Council services via the implementation of our Caerphilly Cares Services. This ensures that people's voices are central to all Council contacts, and activities such as strength based assessments are becoming embedded in the broader Council offer.

All of our Regulated services are registered under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act (RISCA) 2016 and inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). In line with requirements, all our registered services have completed Quality Assurance Reports which are submitted to CIW. Routine inspections of care homes have continued and the inspection reports are all available on the CIW website.

Engagement meetings have continued to be held with the CIW link Local Authority Inspector and the Senior Management Team.

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 2021-22, the Directorate received 135 complaints. The Social Services Complaints and Information Team put significant effort into attempting to resolve issues to the customer's satisfaction at Stage 1 of the process and it is really positive to report that the majority of complaints are resolved at this stage.

The Complaints and Information 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 135 complaints received at Stage 1, the following outcomes were noted:

- **7 were closed with 4 being withdrawn by the complainant and 3 being referred to other ongoing processes i.e. ongoing legal proceedings**
- **9 complaints were upheld**
- **1 complaint was partially upheld**
- **117 complaints were not upheld**
- **1 complaint was ongoing at the year end**

Of the 9 complaints upheld:

- **3 related to Adult Services**
- **1 related to Children's Services and**
- **5 related to the Corporate Complaints Procedure**

The Directorate received 9 requests to progress complaints to a Stage 2 formal investigation. In addition, there were 14 contacts by our customers to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) - the same number as in the previous year.

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. In 2021-22, 126 compliments were received, of which 83% related to Adult Services and 17% related to Children's Services. This is not unusual given the nature of the services being delivered by the two areas.

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.

The 2021-22 Annual Review of Complaints Report was presented to Scrutiny Committee on 14th June 2022 and can be accessed via the Caerphilly County Borough Council website.



4

Promoting and improving the wellbeing of those we help

As stated in Section 3 above, staff within Caerphilly's Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service are trained to undertake 'meaningful conversations' with service users, their families, and carers about what really matters to them.

'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.

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.

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 were the first Local Authority to develop a statutory Parent Advocacy service jointly funded by Families First. Welsh Government subsequently provided funding to pilot the roll out of the model across the other four Gwent Local Authorities.

Supporting people to retain or regain their independence is a key objective for all who work within Social Services.

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.

Adult Services have introduced an assessment service for domiciliary care to look to promote people's independence where ever possible using a 'Reablement' approach. This has enabled people to be discharged from hospital and be assessed in their own homes.

In addition, we have worked with the Health Board to have access to their domiciliary care run to discharge people from hospital who require a large package of care. Thus we have reduced their length of stay and enabled them to return their own home which is what they want for their wellbeing.

We have opened a coffee shop staffed by 12 individuals with a learning disability who previously attended day services. Plans are underway to employ these people on the Council's terms and conditions.

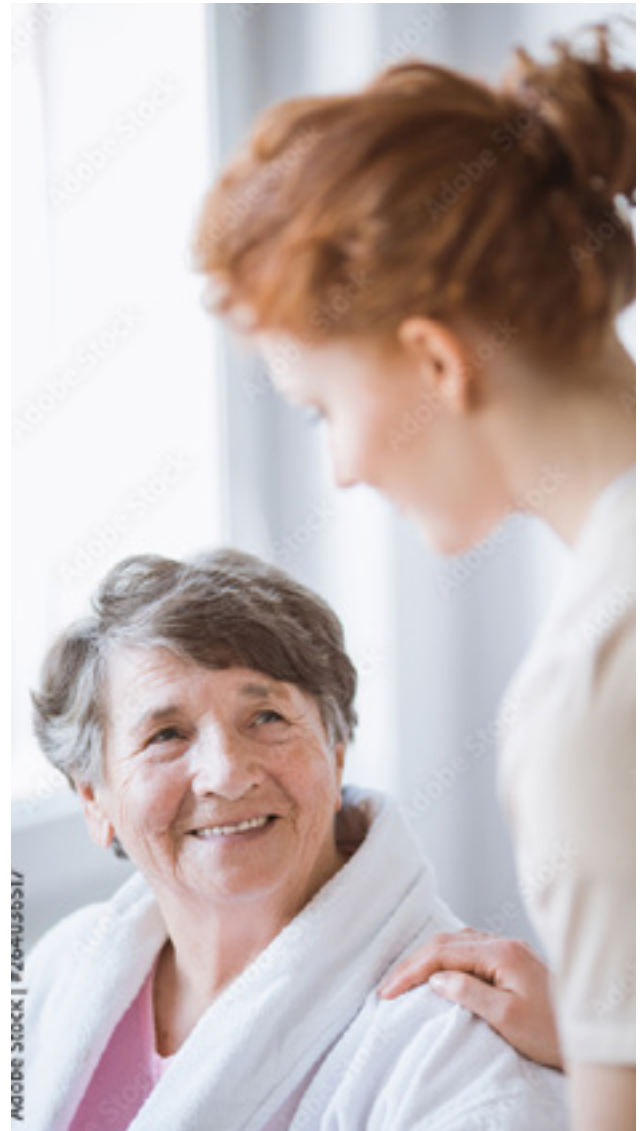


How we addressed our priorities for 2021-22:

- We transferred our Community Connectors and Volunteer coordinator to Caerphilly Cares to focus on prevention and enabling people to be part of their community.
- We included all our registered services on DEWIS so people can search for vacancies in Care Homes and access inspection reports.
- We established a group of parents of people with autism to help inform our practice.
- We held joint training sessions with the Health Board to enable staff to have different conversations with people to better understand their desired outcomes.

What are our priorities for 2022-23:

- To embed the intake model of assessment for care to promote people's independence, choice and control.
- To increase the take up of Direct Payments to allow individual's choice of how their care and support is delivered to best meet their needs.
- To share learning to support colleagues with the national roll out of Parental Advocacy in Children's Services.



5

Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

Caerphilly 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.

The principle focus of partnership activity for the Directorate has been the Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB). This Board, established under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 brings together key representatives from the five Local Authorities in Gwent alongside representatives from the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Third Sector, Providers and Citizens.

The RPB is supported by a range of strategic groups all of which have their own forward work programmes and are primarily supported via funding from Welsh Government grants.

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. MyST is a specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) delivered by the Local Authorities and the Regional Programme Director and Business Support are hosted by Caerphilly.

The Gwent wide Attachment Trauma Service has continued to offer 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.

In response to increasing demand and complexity of children's care placements, Children's Services sought Corporate and Political approval to expand in-house residential care provision including two additional children's homes, supported accommodation for young people Leaving Care and a house for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. These plans will be further developed through 2022/23.

Across Adult Services, we continue to develop our services to prevent unnecessary admission to hospital and facilitate a safe timely discharge for individuals who have to be admitted. The Community Resource Team (CRT) has placed community staff in Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr to work with individuals, their families and Health professionals. Initiatives include access to the Health Board's Domiciliary Care runs and the development of 'step closer to home' beds in care homes for temporary placements to prevent people staying in hospital once they are medically stable.



We have recognised that increasing numbers of people are experiencing lower level mental health issues and they were falling between existing services. In response we have developed a Team to address this gap. The Team work with people with anxiety, low mood, low self-esteem and related issues. The Mental Health Workers provide emotional support throughout interventions and individuals are able to access the service by telephone during office hours. The service also supports individuals with housing, income, benefits, employment and healthy living where necessary, all utilising a wide variety of statutory, voluntary and third sector agencies.

During the year, as part of the Council's Place Shaping Programme, Cabinet agreed to allocate capital funding to develop two new respite facilities – one for adults and one for children. These developments will replace and increase existing provision to continue to support parents and carers in their unpaid caring roles.

How we addressed our priorities for 2021-22:

- We expanded the Home First ethos to include Prince Charles Hospital in Merthyr Tydfil and secured funding to expand the service to cover the Grange University Hospital
- We implemented the nationally agreed 6 pathways in respect of Discharge to Assess and Recover to improve outcomes for individuals
- We supported unpaid carers, using the small grants scheme. Issued 194 leisure memberships 28 of which were to young carers
- Increased the number of unpaid carers on our mailing list from 1303 to 1727 organised numerous events and individual activities in which 1388 people participated.
- We supported the expansion of the MyST service into Newport to complete the regional development.

What are our priorities for 2022-23:

- To work with the Health Board to increase capacity in the community
- To work with regional colleagues to develop a framework to support unpaid carers.
- To progress the development of the respite houses for adults and for children.
- To expand children's residential care and supported accommodation for young people across the Borough.
- To continue to support the National Transfer Scheme by offering accommodation for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

6

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 Council wide Corporate Safeguarding Board is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Social Services.

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 in place. Each service area has an identified Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and periodic practice development groups are held to support the DSOs.

The Corporate Safeguarding Board produces an Annual Report for Elected Members and the 2021-22 Report presented to Scrutiny Committee on 14th June 2022 can be accessed via the website.

The arrangements for improving safeguarding policies, procedures and practice across the region are led by the South East Wales Safeguarding Boards (SEWSCB and 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.



Within the Council, responsibility for children's and adults safeguarding sits 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. The new All Wales Safeguarding Procedures were implemented in 2020 and are now fully embedded across the Directorate. A National Safeguarding Training Framework is scheduled to be implemented at the end of 2022.

How we addressed our priorities for 2021-22:

- We embedded the new All Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- We introduced a Corporate Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool for all Council Service areas.

What are our priorities for 2022-23:

- To continue to embed learning from Adult and Child Practice Reviews.
- To review the priorities of the Regional Safeguarding Board's 3 year Plan.
- To implement the National Safeguarding Training Framework from November 2022.
- To progress the development of the Council wide Learning Management System (LMS) to record safeguarding training attendance and compliance - which was delayed due to the Covid pandemic.
- To respond to any findings from Internal Audit following their review of the Corporate Safeguarding Self-Assessment processes.



7

Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society

Supporting children Looked After 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.

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. 50% of Care Leavers continued to be 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. We have embedded the DEWIS information system so people can access information for themselves 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Enabling all adults to achieve their outcomes has been a key feature in the delivery of alternative day services in response to the Covid pandemic. The learning from delivering services in a different way that meets individual needs will be a key component of the commissioned independent review to re-design and transform day services going forward.

The opening of a coffee shop staffed by individuals who previously attended day services has been very well received and is used regularly by local residents. This is a great example of what can be achieved by delivering services differently.



How we addressed our priorities for 2020-21:

- 10 individuals achieved an accredited course in Customer Skills .
- All individuals who work in the coffee shop have accessed Level II Food Hygiene training.
- We launched the young carers ID card, 38 issued already.
- What are our priorities for 2022-23?
- Commission an independent organisation to produce a model of day services for the future.



8

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 children Looked After, 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.

Within Adult Services, we continued to recruit 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 have continued to facilitate 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 recognised that we had more work to do on supporting relationships and this became 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 continue to run a radio recruitment campaign which has helped us increase the enquiries we receive but we continue to see the highest rate of enquiries comes from ‘word of mouth’ recommendations from existing foster carers. We are fully engaged in the Foster Wales developments for recruitment, retention and support services for foster carers.

Recruitment of all staff but particularly Qualified Social Workers is a significant and growing challenge and Caerphilly support the national approaches being undertaken by the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) and Social Care Wales (SCW).



How we addressed our priorities for 2020-21:

- We developed the mental health project arm of South East Wales Shared Lives Scheme and expanded the pilot area from Newport to Caerphilly. The Health Board are now full partners in the scheme.
- We promoted membership of My Mates for people with a learning disability to develop personal relationships and friendships.
- We provided respite opportunities via the Summer of fun and the Winter of Wellbeing schemes for over 100 carers.
- We continued to second staff to undertake the Social Work Degree.

What are our priorities for 2022-23:

- Further expand South East Wales Shared Lives Scheme to provide a service for older adults with mental health problems.
- Work with partners to develop mechanisms to allow individuals to establish and maintain friendships.
- Continuation of the secondment scheme for staff to undertake the Social Work Degree.



9

Working with & supporting people to achieve greater economic wellbeing, have a social life & live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

Children's Services actively support children Looked After Children 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.

Children's Services have a well established operational 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. As stated in Section 5, we intend to expand our in-house provision of children's homes and other accommodation options to meet the needs of our children and young people.

The Council is 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.

Within Adult Services care homes, you can see many different displays and themes reflecting people's earlier 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.

With our partners we expanded 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. We are committed to this alternative model of accommodation.



How we addressed our priorities for 2021-2022:

- We planned the development of the Mill Road flats for independent living for adults with a disability. However, building work was delayed due to the pandemic and issues with drainage on the site.
- We opened a coffee shop, staffed by individuals who previously attended day services to enable us to move towards employing people with a learning disability.
- We contributed to the development of regional plans for shared residential provision for young people in crisis.

What are our priorities for 2022-23:

- To employ people with a learning disability on the council's terms and conditions.
- To commence the building work on the Mill Road flats - we anticipate contractors being on site January 2023.
- To expand children's residential care and supported accommodation for young people across the county borough (also in Section 5).

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 has been relatively stable with good staff retention. However, as previously referenced, we are seeing increasing challenges in recruiting to specific posts across both Adult and Children's Services and increasing pressures around retention due to significant competition for key staff from other Local Authorities and broader opportunities for staff within the hospitality and retail sectors. Increasingly Local Authorities across Wales are finding it difficult to compete with the terms and conditions being offered.

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 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. There are significant demand and supply challenges for staff to deliver Domiciliary Care and this is a UK wide crisis.

We continue to second staff to undertake the Social Work Degree.

Our financial resources and how we plan for the future

Despite the various challenges and ambitions that are outlined in this report the Directorate has once again operated within its allocated budget. 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.

The most significant growth in demand during 2021-2022 has continued to be in the following areas:

- **Independent sector residential care for children.**
- **Long term care for older people.**
- **Domiciliary care to support people in their own homes.**
- **Supported living for people with learning disabilities.**

Brexit, the Covid pandemic and the crisis in Ukraine have all contributed to the financial pressures being faced by the UK Government, Welsh Government and Local Government and whilst the financial situation for 2022-23 looks to be stable, there are significant concerns for 2023 and beyond.

Ongoing reliance on time limited grant funding streams from Welsh Government, usually paid via RPBs, undermines longer

term sustainability. Whilst the transition of the Integrated Care Funding (ICF) to the Regional Integration Fund (RIF) has afforded a short period of no change to the current funding arrangements, Welsh Government's intention is for RIF funding to taper incrementally with the expectation that Council funding will meet the increasing shortfalls in funding. This position is being challenged across Wales.

Our partnership working, Political and Corporate leadership, governance and accountability

Part 9 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act places a key emphasis on partnership working and to this end the Directorate is a key partner 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 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.

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.**
- **A joint Regional Safeguarding Board covering all partners across Gwent.**
- **A Shared Lives scheme run on behalf of six Local Authorities and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.**
- **A joint regional Adoption Service and**
- **A Regional MyST Programme.**

Political support for Social Services in Caerphilly remains strong. 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 who sits on the Council's Cabinet and also attends the Social Services 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.

11

Conclusion

2021-22 was an extremely challenging year for everyone connected with Social Services in Caerphilly. The restrictions and safeguards in the early part of the year meant that the response to the pandemic was very much at the front and centre to everything we did. As the year progressed and the country began to move out of Covid restrictions the focus has been on stabilising our services delivery and dealing with the inevitable backlogs that occurred during the height of the pandemic.

2022-23 will bring its own challenges as we move back to normality and some disruption to our normal ways of operating

are inevitable. We are already experiencing significant workforce issues, and these together with the economic challenges likely to be faced throughout the UK, are inevitable. Consequently we will need to work closely with our key partners internally and externally in order to be able to meet the demands that are likely to be made of us.

I am confident that by showing the same commitment and resilience that got us through the pandemic Caerphilly Social Services will be well placed to meet the needs of service users and carers within the county borough.





Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.
This document is available in Welsh, and in other languages and formats on request.



SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND NOVEMBER 2022

**SUBJECT: BLAENAU GWENT AND CAERPHILLY YOUTH OFFENDING
SERVICE - YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2022-2024 AND YOUTH
OFFENDING SERVICE INSPECTION**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND
HOUSING**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide updates to Scrutiny Committee on the joint Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) in relation to:
- The 2022-2024 Youth Justice Plan and
 - An overview of the Inspection of the YOS by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP)

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly YOS is hosted and managed by Caerphilly County Borough Council and the YOS Manager is jointly supervised by the Heads of Children's Services in both Local Authorities.
- 2.2 Production of a Youth Justice Plan is a statutory requirement under Section 40(4) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 2.3 Youth Justice Plans are produced and submitted to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) for England and Wales. The YJB monitors the operation of Youth Justice Services, a responsibility that is not devolved to the Welsh Government. The Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Youth Justice Plan, attached at Appendix 1, has been produced in full consultation with all statutory partners.
- 2.4 HMIP undertook a full Inspection of the YOS in May 2022 and their final report, attached at Appendix 2, was published in October. The Inspection concluded that the overall rating for the Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly YOS was 'Good'.
- 2.5 Both the Youth Justice Plan and the HMIP Inspection Report are being presented to Scrutiny Committee for information purposes only in both Local Authorities.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the content of the 2022-2024 Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Youth Justice Plan and the HMIP Inspection Report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 For Scrutiny Committee to be aware of the work of the YOS and be assured that the Service is fully compliant with statutory requirements.

5. THE REPORT

Youth Justice Plan 2022-2024

- 5.1 The attached Youth Justice Plan provides a review of the previous Plan for the 2018-2021 period including an overview of performance of the YOS against national performance indicators. The Plan focuses on the following key areas of youth justice work:
- First Time Entrants (FTE's) – the aim of the YOS is to divert children away from court sanctions and the numbers continue to reduce year on year
 - Reoffending rates – the YOS continually monitor and report on reoffending
 - Custody rates – during the reporting period, no child has been in custody
 - Education provision – ensuring children are receiving appropriate support to access education and training
 - Disproportionality ie over or under representation of any group of children in the cohort
 - Resettlement – planning for children to return to their communities following custody – as stated there have been no cases.
- 5.2 The Youth Justice Plan is a very detailed document and although it is presented for information only, if Scrutiny Committee Members have any particular issues, these can be raised directly with the Head of Children's Services.

HMIP Inspection Report

- 5.3 HMIP commenced their Inspection fieldwork in May 2022 and the final Inspection Report was published in October. The report contains the following key findings:
- The YOS has a clear focus on prevention, diversion and early intervention at the core of the service's values.
 - The service has an impressive learning culture in place and are continuously seeking to improve the services they provide.
 - Case management was a particular area of strength for the service, with Inspectors noting the work with children subject to cautions or community resolutions (out-of-court disposals) as a particular highlight – with three out of four elements inspected being rated as 'Outstanding'.
 - Inspectors were impressed with the excellent facilities available at the YOS, particularly the safe and calming office base for both children and staff. The health provisions available to the children were also of a high standard, with access to mental health specialists, substance misuse workers and speech and language therapists.
 - The Inspection identified five recommendations which have formed the basis for the YOS Action Plan endorsed by the YOS Local Management Board.

- 5.4 The Inspection recommendations are as follows:
- 5.5 The Chair of the YOS Management Board should:
- make sure that board members are actively engaged in setting the direction and vision for the YOS
 - review the format and purpose of the Bureau and ensure that it has the relevant information and input from the necessary agencies, so that out-of-court disposals meet the needs of the child.
- 5.6 The Management Board should:
- challenge the Probation Service to ensure that it provides the appropriate provision to the YOS.
- 5.7 The YOS Service Manager should:
- review the service offered to victims and make certain that all who want to engage are enabled to do so
 - improve the quality of services to promote children's desistance and manage their risk of harm to others

6. ASSUMPTIONS

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

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct funding implications for the Council arising from this report. However, Scrutiny Committee is asked to note that Youth Justice Board funding is reliant on the submission of a robust Youth Justice Plan.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. CONSULTATIONS

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

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

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Social Services Senior Management Team
YOS Local Management Board
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Attachments:

Appendix 1: Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Youth Offending Service – Youth Justice Plan for 2022 - 2024

Appendix 2: HM Inspectorate of Probation – Inspection of Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Youth Offending Service – September 2022 (published October 2022)

NB: Please note that these reports may not be fully accessible, if you experience any issues or would like to receive this in an alternative format please contact the report author.

**GWASANAETH
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**YOUTH
OFFENDING
SERVICE**

**Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending
Service (YOS)**

Youth Justice Plan 2022 - 2024

| | |
|---|--|
| Service | Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) |
| Service Manager/ Lead | Michaela Rogers |
| Joint Chairs of YOS Local Management Board (LMB) | Gareth Jenkins and Alison Ramshaw |

July 2022

Ysbrydoli, ysgogi a chefnogi plant i fyw bywydau di-drosedd.
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Foreword

As joint chairs of the Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) Local Management Board (LMB) we are pleased to set out this two-year strategic partnership plan. This 2022/2024 plan sets out our ambitions and key priorities which have been informed by, and developed from, consultation, our continuing good performance and our knowledge and experience from lessons learnt.

As a partnership we have a strong ethos of “Child First”, which we know can enhance lives, reduce offending, promote safer communities and lead to fewer victims, as evidenced in the “Child First Justice: The research evidence-base” report from Loughborough University. The partnership also has at the heart of its work the vision of the All Wales Youth Justice Strategy “Children and Young People First” with a focus on the five priorities identified in the strategy.

In May 2022 the YOS was inspected by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). The YOS achieved an overall rating of “Good”. This was a fantastic achievement and we await the full final report which is expected to be publicised in September 2022. There are some development areas already identified from the inspection process which have been included in this plan, but any further learning from the wider report once known will also be considered over the next 6 months.

On behalf of the LMB we would like to thank the staff and volunteers working within, and supporting, the YOS, who are essential to the service, for their outstanding work and support to children and families. We acknowledge that the achievements of the partnership are only made possible through their hard work, commitment and dedication.

Gareth Jenkins and Alison Ramshaw
Joint Chairs of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Local Management Board (LMB)

1. Introduction, vision and strategy

The strategic aim of the Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) partnership remains focused on preventing offending and reducing reoffending by children. This will be achieved by the delivery of integrated services that ensure children are safeguarded, the public and victims of crime are protected and those who enter the youth justice system are supported with robust risk management arrangements. Children will be supported to reintegrate into their local communities without offending and wherever possible with support from their families.

There is also a clear understanding that the role of the Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS and its partners is to have a strong preventative role in reducing the risks of children entering the youth justice system. The YOS and its partners invests and believes strongly in the strength of prevention, early intervention and diversion to support children and families

The YOS Vision Statement is:

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Inspiring, motivating and supporting children to live crime free lives.

They will do this by:

- Preventing and diverting children from anti social and offending behaviour
- Valuing the diversity of children and help them to achieve better outcomes
- Ensuring children are kept safe and the risk to the public is minimised
- Providing effective support to families and victims engaged with the service whilst working to ensure safer, inclusive communities
- Ensuring restorative practice ethos, principles and approaches are embedded in every aspect of YOS service delivery
- Investing in staff and volunteers to ensure a professional, skilled and knowledgeable workforce
- Working in partnership

This plan will also support priorities within:

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008
- Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO)
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022
- Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000
- Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Criminal Justice Act 1991
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Leaving Care Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Housing Act (Wales) 2014
- Mental Health Act 1983, as amended by the Mental Health Act 2007
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Health and Social Care Bill 2011
- Education Act 2002
- Youth Justice Board (YJB) National Standards 2019
- YJB Strategic Plan 2021-24
- The Gwent Police and Crime Plan 2021-25
- The Local Authorities Future Generations Wellbeing Plans
- Gwent Safeguarding Board Strategic Plan 2020-23
- Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales November 2020
- The Local Authorities Safer Communities Plans
- Children & Young People First - the Welsh Government and the Youth Justice Board's joint strategy to improve services for children who offend or those at risk of offending
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

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- Welsh Language Minimum Standards
- Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

2. Local context

The Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS is a dual local authority YOS covering both the Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly areas in Gwent, Wales. Gwent is made up of 5 local authorities in total. Please see attached below some demographic information regarding both local authorities.



CCBC

Demographics.docx



BGCBC

Demographics.docx

The YOS is part of Children's Services in Caerphilly County Borough Council, which sits within the wider Social Services Directorate. Caerphilly County Borough Council has "hosted" the YOS since its creation on behalf of both local authorities. Whenever the YOS audits the number of children it engages with the split is usually based on or around the 70% (Caerphilly) and 30% (Blaenau Gwent) figures, give or take a percentage or two.

3. Child First

The YOS demonstrates a creative, adaptable and flexible approach to its service delivery. The work of the YOS has evolved considerably, with the awareness and embedding of many approaches when engaging with children and families evidenced from research, theories, thematic inspections, pathfinders and evaluations. These approaches include desistance theory, relational approaches, trauma informed practice, adverse childhood experiences, equalities and diversity, the importance of "play", strengths based/building on resilience, children's rights, child centred practice, constructive resettlement and contextual safeguarding.

The YOS ensures a child centred, strengths-based approach which encompasses trauma informed practice. Restorative Justice/Approaches are an integral theme throughout its delivery along with the voice of the child being heard, offers of advocacy services and a rights-based ethos. Supporting children to reach their aspirations and full potential underpins everything the YOS does. All engagement is based on the child's best interests, positivity, built on trust whilst promoting desistance and best outcomes. The YOS is always focused on reviewing and improving their direct work and engagement skills in response to messages from desistance theory and approaches, attachment theory and trauma informed practice. The desistance thematic inspection by HMI Probation called "Desistance and children" published in May 2016 stated that "Desistance is the process of abstaining from crime amongst those who previously had engaged in a sustained pattern of offending'. In the report they confirmed that personalised approaches work best based on a good understanding of the individual's needs, history and circumstances. The YJB AssetPlus assessment framework also helps the YOS to personalise individual desistance support for children. All members of staff in the YOS are trained in desistance theory and an action plan was developed to

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respond to the recommendations from the inspection. The YOS has also embedded desistance and trauma informed practice principles by:

- Ensuring positive engagement and building trusting relationships are at the start of all interventions/plans – “good beginnings”
- Strength based, personalised, individual approaches
- Increasing self assessment completion
- Embedding approaches and recording methods such as:

| CPR | PACE | ACORDS | CRISS |
|----------------|-------------|--|------------------|
| Consistency | Playfulness | Aim – Human needs, good lives model etc | C - check in |
| Predictability | Acceptance | Content – Good lives wheel etc | R - review |
| Reliability | Curiosity | Outcome – what did the child learn? Grounding techniques etc | I - intervention |
| | Empathy | Risk of harm – any additional risk issues? | S - summary |
| | | Diversity – Any needs? Literacy? Learning styles etc? | S - set tasks |
| | | Safeguarding – Any issues? | |

4. Voice of the child

Participation empowers children by allowing them to influence decision making and bring about change. This empowerment can mean a great deal to the children who engage with the YOS, who can often feel that their voices are not heard and that they have no control over decisions that affect their life. The YOS has embedded practice which ensures participation is inherent in its daily delivery covering a large number of its processes, procedures and functions.

Childrens participation is encouraged throughout the YOSs engagement, assessments, reports, attendance at Police Stations, Panels or Court. They are also involved in reviews for statutory orders and voluntary interventions. This is both during and after YOS engagement. Feedback from interventions is always gathered. This can take place in written format or via the YOSs online tool ‘Viewpoint’. These feedback tools help find out children’s views about different aspects of their engagement with the YOS to help the YOS achieve effective participation by, and with, children the YOS has a dedicated Children’s Rights Champion.

The YOS also creates a Quarterly Participation Report which includes the voices of children which it shares with the LMB, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders. The YOS is a very reflective service and has a strong participation belief and practice at its core which is explained in its Participation Policy including the Easy Read version. Please see attached:

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Participation Strategy
2022-25.docx



Easy Read YOS
Participation Strategy

5. Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

Caerphilly County Borough Council is the host and employing local authority (LA) for the YOS. The Chief Executives' of both local authorities delegated chairing responsibilities of the YOS Local Management Board (LMB) to the Heads of Childrens Services. Strategic management is provided by both LA Heads of Children's Services who are the Joint Chairs of the LMB and who provide joint professional supervision for the YOS Service Manager.

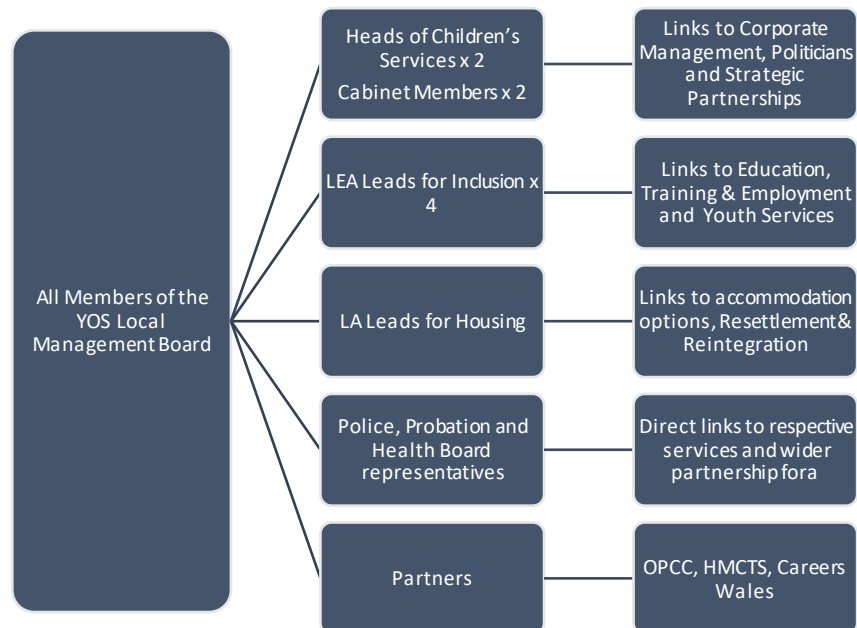
The LMB provides governance to the YOS. The LMB is a high-level strategic group made up of key officers that are responsible for the strategic management of services, which are designed to prevent and reduce youth crime and anti social behaviour. The LMB meets quarterly and continues to scrutinise the YOS's resources, performance, participation feedback, acknowledge good performance and develop actions for improvement when necessary.

All statutory partners are represented (Police, Probation and Health) and these partners all second staff to the YOS as part of partnership and funding arrangements. LA representation is through Children's Services, Education, Youth Inclusion/post 16 provision, Youth Service, Housing and Cabinet Members for both LA's. Additional representation is provided by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) & Careers Wales. The Board is well attended by statutory partners and other agencies and any attendance issues are addressed by the Chairs quickly

The LMB undertakes annual reviews of its strategic and operational links between the YOS and its partnership structures, agencies and plans. Please see attached and below:



LMB Mapping
Exercise April 2022 2.0



The YOS LMB is accountable to both local authorities Health, Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's, which the Chairs or their representatives attend. In addition, members of the LMB report to their own individual agency / body Scrutiny Groups. Arrangements to report on the performance of the YOS to Local Authority Members, Police, Probation and Health are carried out by the respective agency representative. The YOS is positioned within both authorities Children Services divisions and reports to both Heads of Children's Services who jointly chair the LMB and jointly line manage the YOS Service Manager.

The LMB takes an active role in ensuring that children at risk of entering, or those already involved in, the youth justice system have access to universal and specialist services within the YOS areas and that partner agency's recognise and maintain responsibility for contributing to the reduction of offending by children. This plan will be monitored by the LMB and there will continue to be a level of support and oversight from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) Cymru team. A YOS Workforce Development Strategy has been developed and reviewed to support the delivery of this plan.

The YOS Service Manager and both local authority Heads of Service sit both on the Regional Safeguarding Children Board and its Case Review subgroup. The YOS Service Manager also sits on the Safer Gwent Board, the Gwent Criminal Justice Strategy Board and both local authority Corporate Parenting Groups. The YOS Service Manager is currently the Chair of YOT Managers Cymru (YMC) and attends the Wales Youth Justice Advisory Panel and the Pan Wales Covid-19 Meetings linked to their YMC chairing responsibilities.

6. Resources and services

Responsibility for resourcing the YOS is shared between the Youth Justice Effective Practice grant, statutory partners' contributions, the grant from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and the Children and Communities Grant (CCG)

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from the Welsh Government. YOS also oversees the local authority budgets provided to meet the costs of children remanded to the secure estate.

The YOS uses their grants, partner contributions and all other available resources to deliver personalised, individualised engagement and interventions for children and families, to meet its statutory aims and responsibilities, complete actions and maintain or improve performance areas within this plan and to help children and families to achieve the best outcomes along with their aspirations.

The following table summarises the total YOS budget for 2022/23 and sources of funding:

B5: YOT budget
Costs and Contributions

| Agency | Staffing Costs | Payments in kind | Other delegated funds | Total |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Youth Justice Board | 397,745 | 0 | 61,561 | 459,306 |
| Local Authority | 675,422 | 0 | 104,539 | 779,961 |
| Police | 143,690 | 0 | 22,240 | 165,930 |
| Police and Crime Commissioner | 79,150 | 0 | 0 | 79,150 |
| Probation | 4,763 | 0 | 737 | 5,500 |
| Health | 54,049 | 0 | 8,365 | 62,414 |
| Welsh Government | 245,002 | 0 | 0 | 245,002 |
| Other | 31,992 | 0 | 4,953 | 36,945 |
| Total | 1,631,813 | 0 | 202,395 | 1,834,208 |

7. Progress on previous plan

There were 31 actions in the delivery plan linked to the YOS 2021-23 Youth Justice Plan. Out of the 31 actions, 22 were fully completed and 9 actions were in progress or not started. These actions have either been carried over and incorporated into this 2022-24 plan if required or will be completed as part of normal service delivery. Please see attached for further details:



Blaenau Gwent &
Caerphilly YOS Impro

8. Performance and priorities

Thirty-five children were cautioned or convicted in 2021/22 and were responsible for 67 offences. There has been a decrease of 19 children when comparing the previous year (2020/21) where 54 children were cautioned or convicted of a criminal offence and were responsible for 140 offences.

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Some children had multiple Youth Cautions (YCs), Youth Conditional Cautions (YCCs) or sentences and as a result the 35 children were responsible for 37 outcomes. The average number of offences for the cohort was 1.91 offences. The highest number of offences recorded for one child was 5 offences.

The majority of the cautioned or convicted children were male, 33 out of the total 35 children (94%) and there were 2 females (6%).

Most of the cautioned or convicted children were white (94%). There was one child that identified as Any Other Mixed Background (3%) and one child that identified as Italian (3%).

Of the children who were cautioned or convicted the majority were aged 16 or under (62.86%), however children aged 17 were cautioned or convicted the most. The ages were 2 at age 12 (5.72%), 6 at age 13 (17.14%), 2 at age 14 (5.72%), 6 at age 15 (17.14%), 6 at age 16 (17.14%) and 13 at age 17 (37.14%).

Of the children who were cautioned or convicted 8 children (22.86%) were Children Looked After (CLA) at the start of the intervention, with 3 placed in residential care (37.5%), 1 living with family (12.5%), 2 children placed in supported accommodation (25%) and 2 children being placed in foster care (25%).

Quarterly reports are submitted to the LMB regarding the performance of the YOS and comparisons are made against Gwent, Wales and the YJB YOS Family for the National and Welsh indicators (where applicable). Regular updates and discussions on the YOSs performance form part of the LMB quarterly agenda and regular internal managers meetings focusing on performance are held within the YOS.

The performance of the YOS is discussed below and the most up to date information has been used to provide information and context around the performance indicators. Where possible the most recent data has been used with comparisons to previous data referenced where possible.

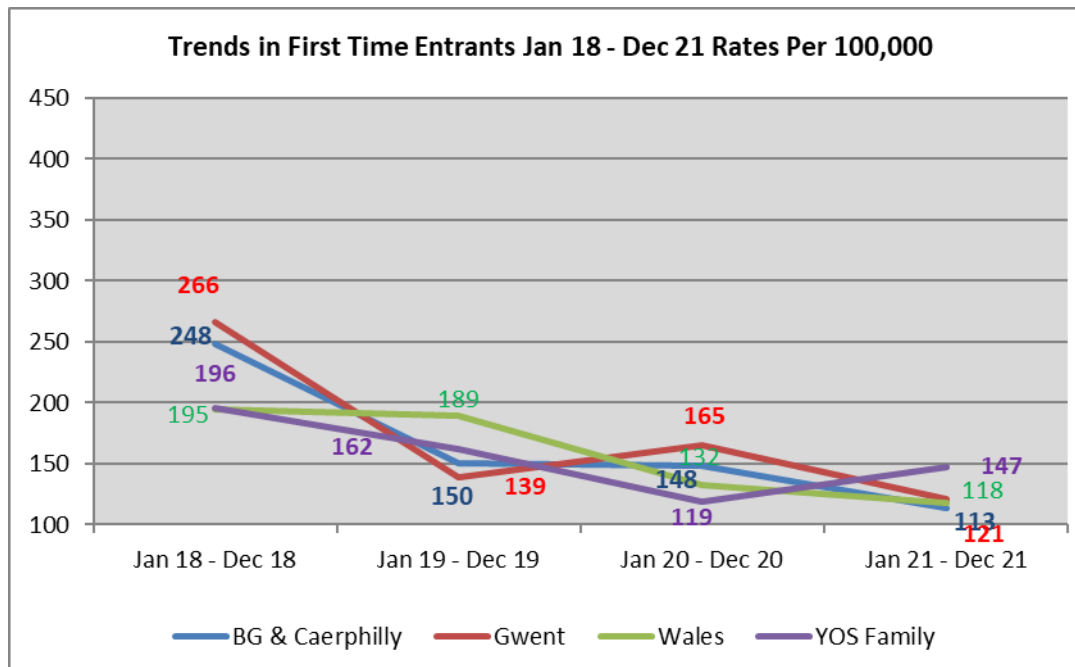
First Time Entrants (FTE's)

The YOS Management Team continually scrutinise the FTE figures and inform the LMB of the findings to allow them to provide oversight to ensure that children are being dealt with appropriately by the agreed processes within Gwent, along with the correct proportionate disposals being administered through robust partnership working including the provision of effective interventions to prevent further offending behaviour.

The YOS Performance and Information Manager is continuing to work to resolve a discrepancy with the YOS information held on the database compared to the information which is extracted from the Police National Computer (PNC). For the past several quarters there has been a notable difference in the reported and publicised figures by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) compared to Youth Offending Service (YOS) records. The YJB FTE data is sourced directly from police information held on their databases.

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When there is a disproportionate figure published by the YJB this has a negative impact on how the YOS performance is perceived. It is hoped that greater accuracy of the data held by both agencies can be achieved resulting in a true reflection of FTEs.



During the period April 2021 to March 2022 local data indicates that there were 29 FTE's. One FTE identified as female with the remaining 28 identifying as male. All the children were white except for one child who identified as mixed ethnicity.

Of the children that became an FTE 14 had not previously received a Community Resoluion (CR) which would have prevented them from becoming an FTE, due to either the seriousness of the offences, similar/likeminded offences, offences committed in a short period of time, appearances in Court and/or difficulties in enagement with YOS interventions.

Reoffending

The service has strong partnership links with Children's Services and the police. The YOS is represented at monthly Integrated Offender Management (IOM) meetings. Additionally, the service is represented within the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) meetings and monthly Youth 2 Adult (Y2A) meetings with Police and Probation colleagues. All of these connections ensure robust oversight of children who are most at risk of re-offending. Strong multi agency partnership links allow the service to provide crime prevention programmes in local communities, such as the Phoenix Project, Fearless and the Cars and Consequences programme. The vast range of interventions available means the YOS can best reflect the preferred learning style of the child.

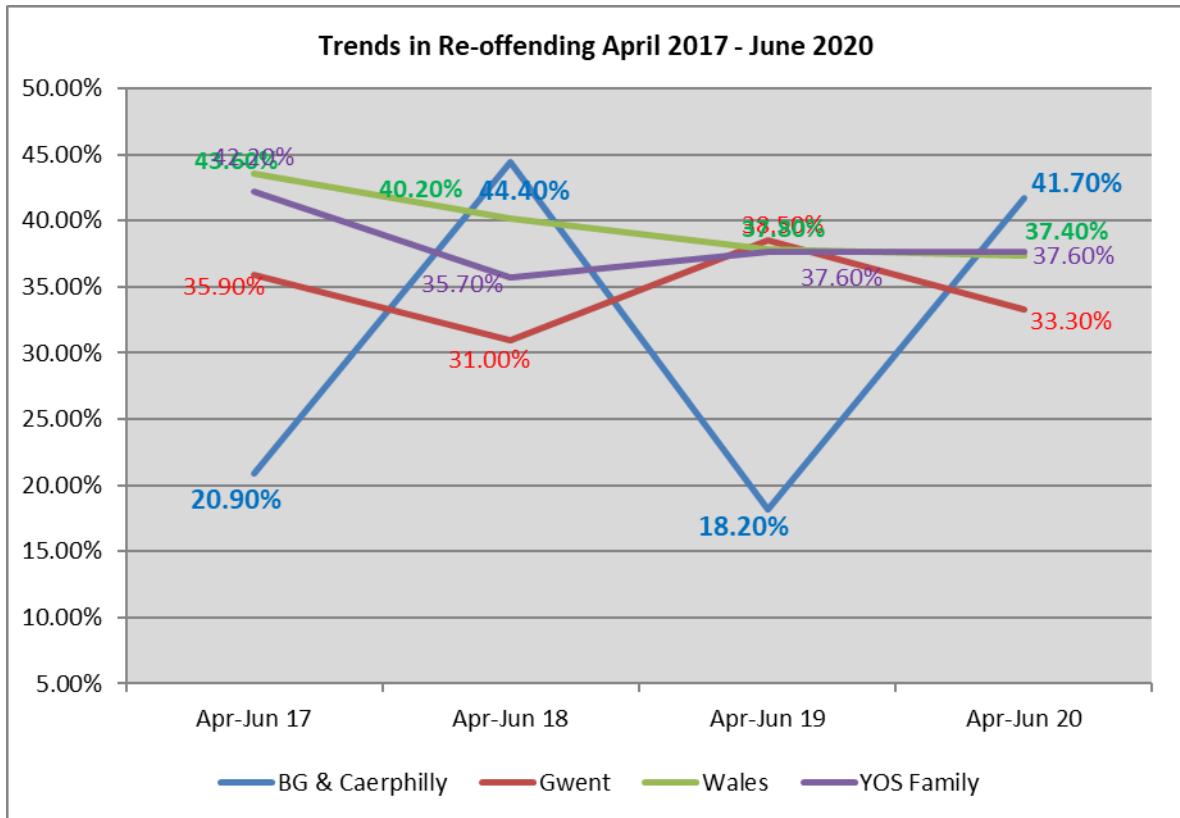
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Restorative Justice continues to remain a priority. The YOS prides itself on its excellent victim services, which has resulted in excellent victim satisfaction rates and positive outcomes for children and victims. The YOS works to the Restorative Justice Council's (RJC) principles of restorative practice which sets out the core values that should be held by all practitioners in the field. The YOS undertakes annual compliance audits against the "Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales November 2020" and the "Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent's Victim Charter", which set out minimum standards for support to victims.

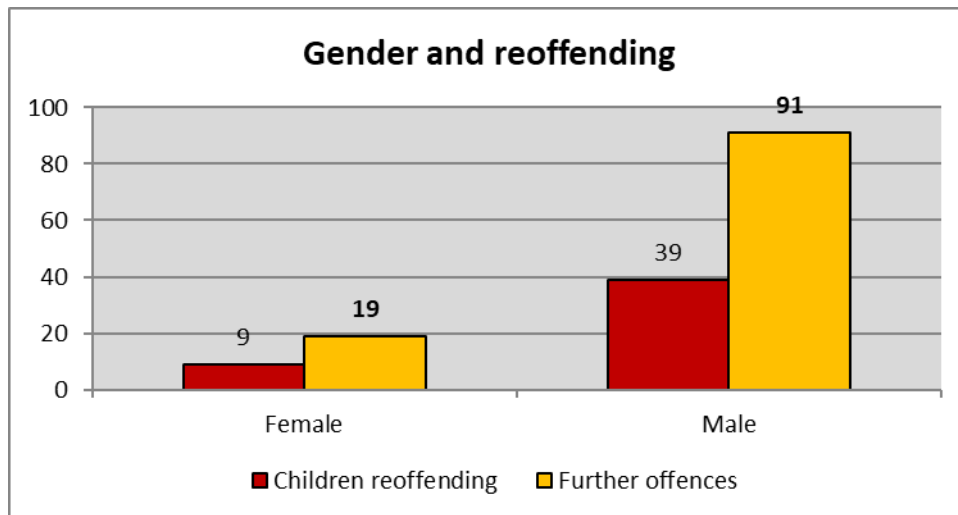
The development of exit strategies remains a significant strength for the YOS. "Good endings" allows the child to continue with the positive changes made after YOS intervention has ended, but they continue to feel supported in the community. It is imperative that the exit strategies are sustainable within the community. The YOS strongly advocates that case closure does not mean the end of relationships as good endings promote desistance and decrease risk.

The YOS has also identified that Children Looked After (CLA) are a disproportionate and vulnerable cohort of children when examining its first time entrant and reoffending data. The YOS has a funded part time CLA Worker in the service to work directly with these children.

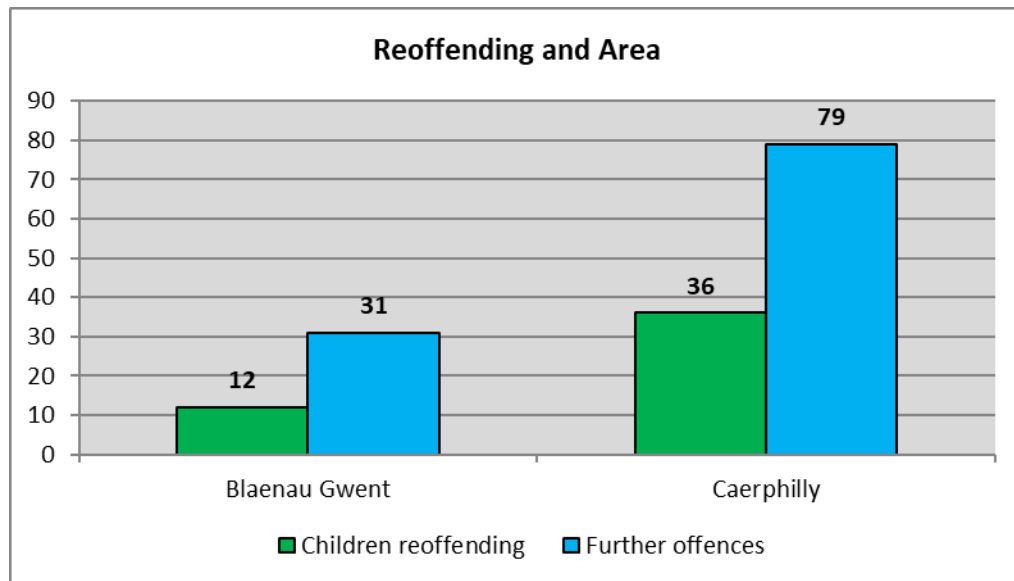
The YOS has dedicated, skilled, and experienced staff members and volunteers trained in delivering a wide range of targeted and structured programmes aimed at reducing re-offending. This includes recognising and responding to areas of Diversity and Speech Language and Communication needs. YOS staff also attended training focusing on LGBTQ+, AIM3 and the YJB Enhanced Case Management (ECM) trauma informed practice programme. The YOS also has a Managing Anger Programme (MAP), Prevention of Burglary resource and Prevent, a tailored programme to tackle anti-social behaviour. Over the past 24 months the YOS has focused on reviewing and improving their direct work and engagement skills in response to messages from desistance theory and approaches, attachment and trauma informed practice. This will all help promote engagement and ensure the needs of all children are being met along with addressing risk areas.



During the period April 2021 to March 2022 48 children reoffended, committing a further 110 offences, of these children 24 were Children Looked After (CLA).



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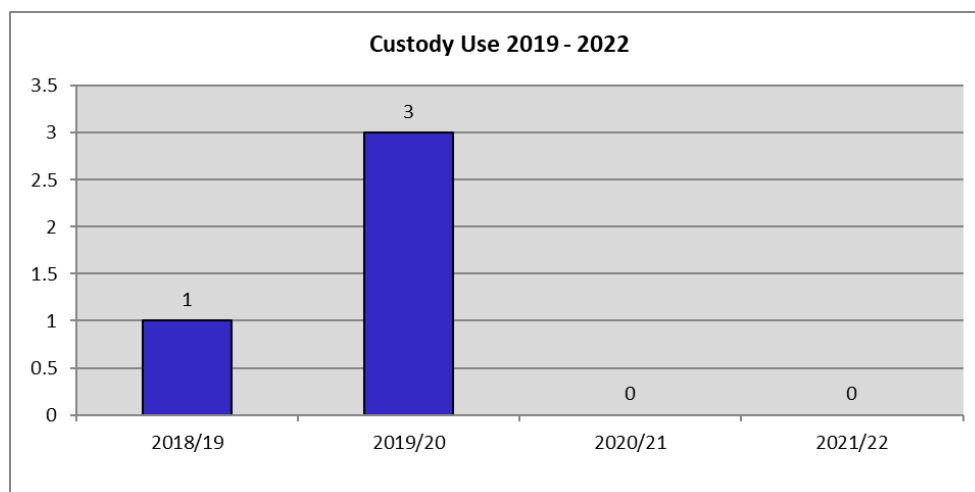
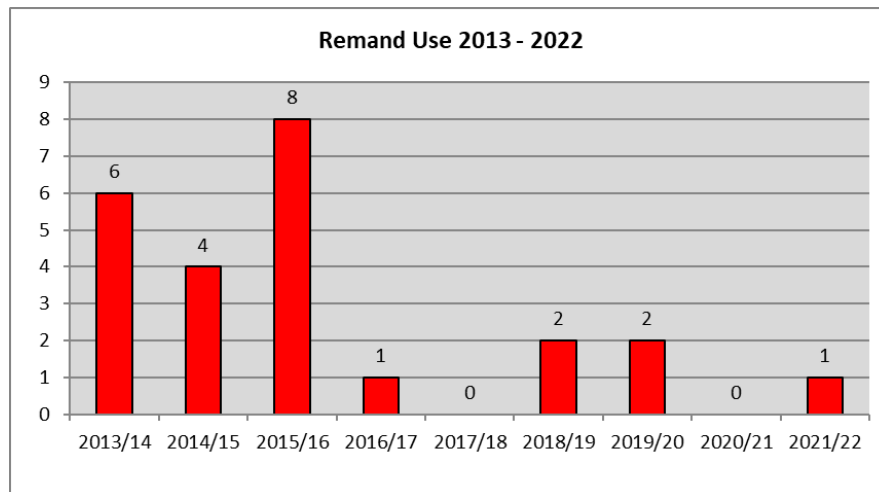
Use of custody

The YOSs Resettlement and Reintegration Panel (RRP) partnership celebrated its eighth anniversary in May 2022. Formed in May 2014, the successful partnership, coordinated by the YOS, provides additional support and great opportunities to children who have previously offended to prevent reoffending and achieve successful outcomes for children. The panel has achieved impressive outcomes by ensuring better services are available to children, helping them to reach their goals and aspirations for the future, and ultimately reducing their offending behaviour by supporting a more productive and positive lifestyle. By working alongside a framework called “The Seven Resettlement Pathways” and “Constructive Resettlement”, which are Youth Justice Board and Welsh Government initiatives, the RRP aims to ensure a child leads a crime free life after their involvement with the Youth Justice System. The Resettlement Pathways include accommodation, education, employment and training, health, substance misuse, family services, finance/ benefits/ debt and transitions. The YOS and its partners monitor the YOS and partners responses to the recommendations within the “Joint thematic inspection of resettlement services to children by Youth Offending Teams and partner agencies” through the panel.

The YOS Case Managers ensure that when a Pre-Sentence Report (PSR) is requested by the Courts that there are robust community alternatives proposed to mitigate against the use of custody. During 2020/21 and 2021/22 there were several cases which were deemed to be at risk of custody however, robust alternative community sentences were proposed resulting in the children receiving community sentences.

The YOS has only had 1 child remanded to Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) in 2021/22. They have also had no children sentenced to custody over the past two years.

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Education

The YOS works closely with partners in both education authorities to enable each child to receive their entitlement of 25+ hours of education per week in an appropriate education setting. Links with dedicated members of staff in both local authorities have helped to manage issues before they are allowed to develop, thus ensuring more positive outcomes for children. Staff meet regularly in multi agency meetings to share information and contribute to Individual Support Plans. Meetings include monthly Children's Services meetings, Risk Panel Meetings, Problem Solving Groups, Resettlement and Reintegration Panel and Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS) panels.

The introduction of the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Act places responsibilities on the Education Directorate and providers of education for all children up to the age of 25, who require additional support to remain in education or training from September 2021. Some children engaged with the YOS are currently supported by the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice and receive annually reviewed statements, it will therefore be important for YOS staff and education practitioners to ensure a clear understanding of the implications of

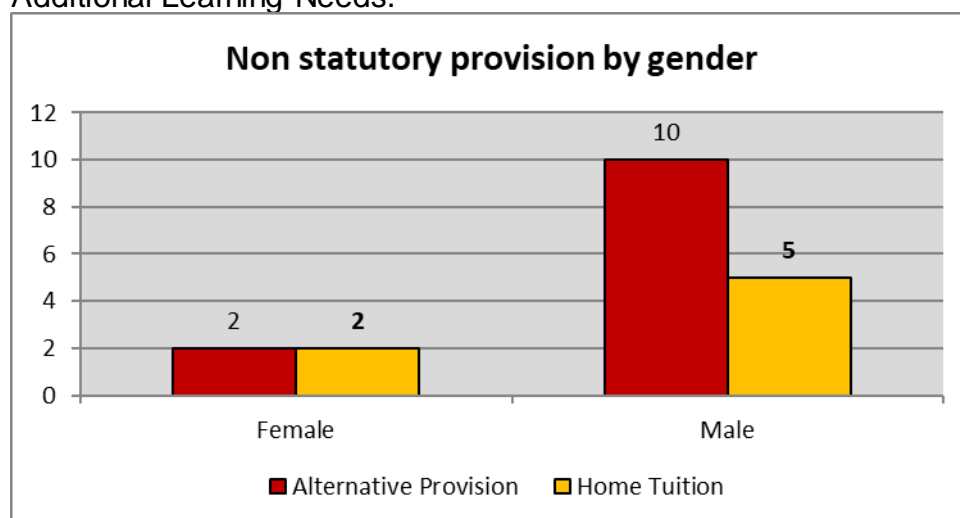
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this Act to ensure that children have their support needs assessed and addressed under the Act.

Over the next 12/24 months the YOS has committed to developing and implementing a Literacy & Numeracy Strategy. Training will be provided for YOS staff on addressing numeracy and literacy needs when assessed/identified and raise awareness of what local resources are available to support improvements when required. The YOS recognises that literacy and numeracy level identification, information gathering and recording on AssetPlus needs to be completed and reviewed at every assessment stage and inform planning.

The YOS recognises the benefits of having direct access to both local authority's education databases to allow them to directly extract information in a timely manner to inform their assessments and planning. Discussions are ongoing regarding this area of work. Access and provision of training to databases such as Tribal, Capita One, SIMS, and Strive etc. will allow the YOS to extract enrolment, numeracy, literacy, attainment, behavioural and attendance information.

During the period April 2021 to March 2022 there were no children of school age on non statutory interventions who were classed as NEET. There were 12 children enrolled in alternative provision and 7 children who were receiving Home Tuition. No children were permanently excluded and 6 children had a statement of Additional Learning Needs.



All children receiving an alternative provision or home tuition identified as White.

During the period April 2021 to March 2022 there were no children of school age on statutory interventions who were classed as NEET. There was child enrolled in alternative provision and no children who were receiving Home Tuition. The child enrolled in an alternative provision was male, identified as White and was a Child Looked After.

Over represented children

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During April 2021 to March 2022 there were 354 interventions open to the YOS; this relates to 310 children open on prevention cases, out of court disposals (OOCs) and court interventions including Criminal Behaviour Orders.

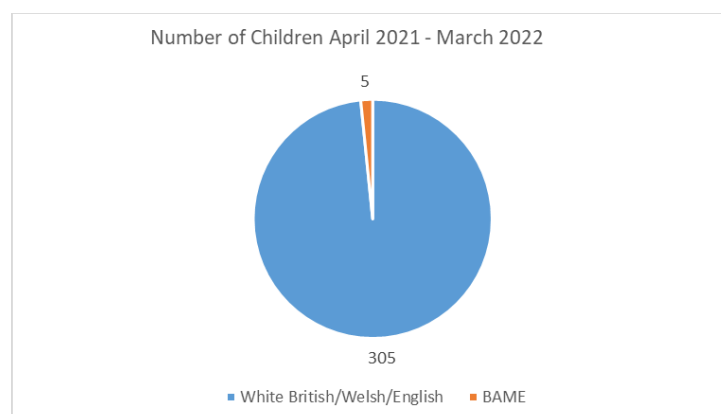
This represents an increase of 91 when comparing the previous year's interventions where there were 263 interventions. There were 310 children which represents an increase of 74 children compared to last year where there were 236 children.

Out of the 310 children, there were 305 children who identified as 'white'; either White Welsh, British or European. There were 5 children who identified as BAME, which equates to 1.61% of the entire cohort. The 5 children were 4 males and 1 female. This represents a decrease of 1 child identifying as BAME compared to the previous year where there were 6 children.

The YOS data demonstrates that children identifying as BAME are underrepresented. However, it should be noted that the 5 children are included from all interventions and 2 of the 5 children received a Community Resolution, which on Police systems would account for them receiving a No Further Action outcome and would not be included in the YJB counting rules and one child was on a Prevention Programme.

The YJB counting rules looks at statutory interventions and when specifically looking at statutory interventions, Youth Cautions and above, there were 37 children in the cohort and there were two BAME children, which equates to 5.4% of the cohort. This demonstrates that the children identifying as BAME in the statutory cohort are overrepresented.

All five children were from Caerphilly, there were no children who identified as BAME from Blaenau Gwent.



| CASE NUMBER | Ethnicity | Gender |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Any Other Mixed Background | Male |
| 2 | Any Other Asian Background | Female |
| 3 | Indian | Male |
| 4 | Other Mixed Background | Male |

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| | | |
|---|---------|------|
| 5 | Italian | Male |
|---|---------|------|

The 5 children were responsible for 7 interventions, one child offended and had multiple interventions throughout the year.

Out of the 5 children discussed above, two children became a First Time Entrant during the financial year. Both children had received CR's previously and therefore had received all alternative options. Of the other three children none are part of the youth justice system which is positive as 2 received a CR outcome and the third was dealt with via a prevention programme. This demonstrates that all children were appropriately dealt with. The outcomes for the 5 children demonstrate that they are not unfairly being escalated through the YJS.

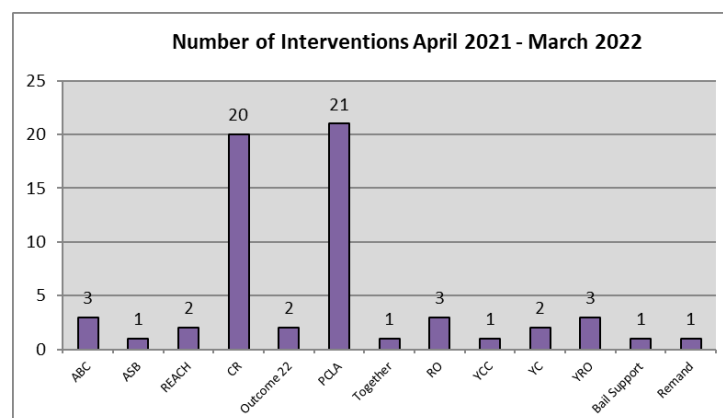
Gypsy/Roma/Traveller Community

During the period March 2021 to April 2022 there was 1 child identified as being from the Roma, Gypsy and Traveller Community.

The child was a male aged 13 from the Ebbw Vale area. He was referred to the YOS for a Prevention Programme.

Children Looked After

During the period March 2021 – April 2022 there were 55 children who were Children Looked After. There were 22 females (40%) and 33 males (60%). Of the 55 children there were 40 (73%) from the Caerphilly area and 15 (27%) from the Blaenau Gwent area. The 55 children were responsible for 61 interventions and committed 43 offences. The highest number of offences committed was for Criminal Damage.

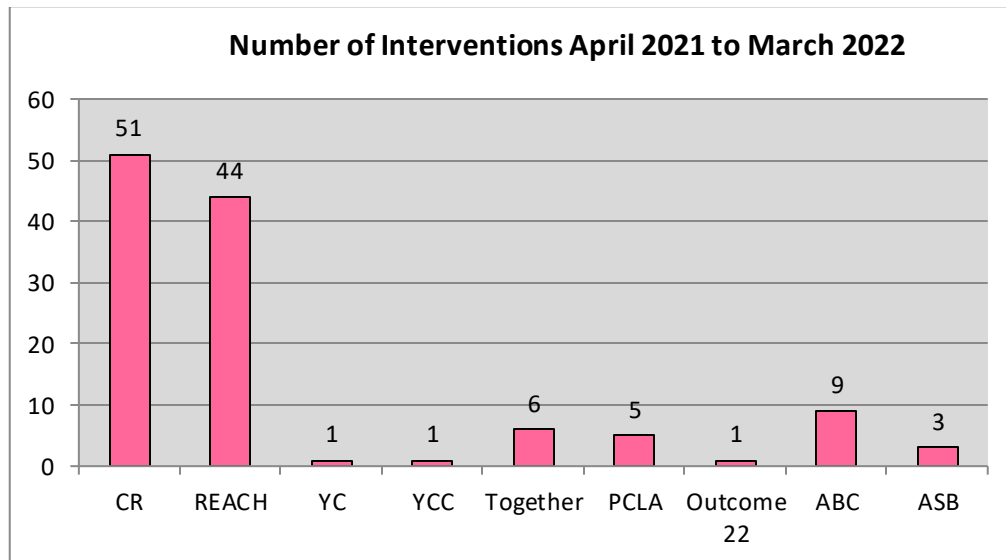


Girls

During the period March 2021 – April 2022 there were 116 children who were girls. Of the 116 children there were 88 (76%) from the Caerphilly area and 28 (24%) from the Blaenau Gwent area. The 116 children were responsible for 121

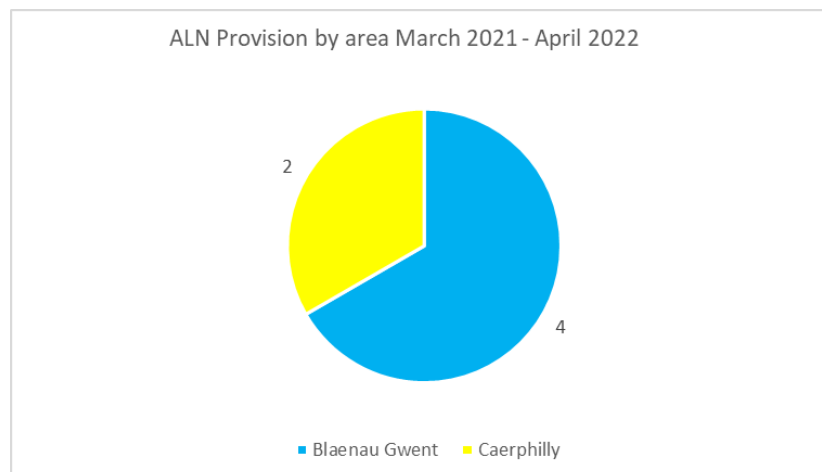
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interventions and committed 60 offences. The highest number of offences committed was for Common Assault.



Additional Learning Needs Provision

During the period March 2021 to April 2022 there were 6 children subject to a Statement of Additional Learning Needs. Two children were from Caerphilly and four from Blaenau Gwent.

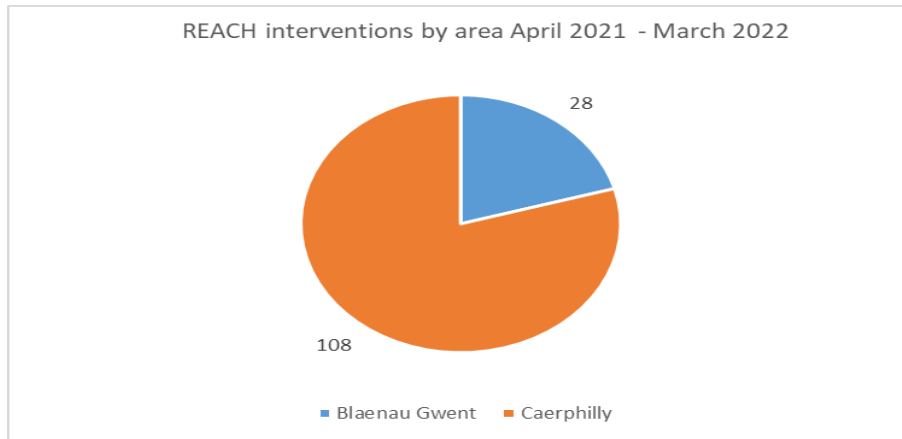


Prevention

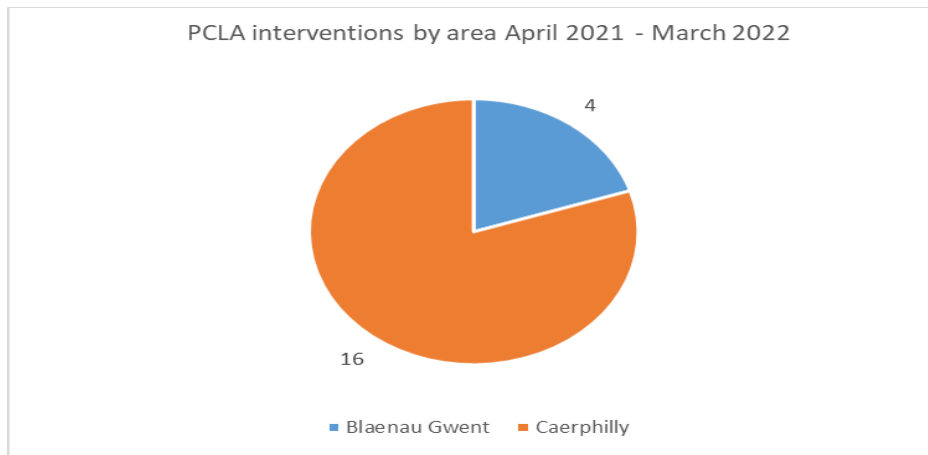
During the period April 2021 – March 2022 there were 136 Prevention programmes open to the YOS.

REACH interventions

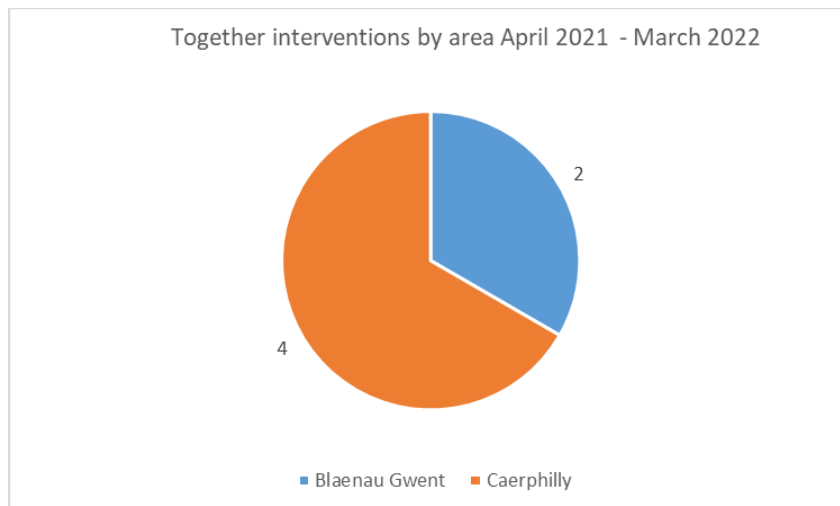
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Protocol to Reduce the Prosecution of Children Looked After (PCLA) interventions



Together Project



Road to Learning Project

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01.04.2021 – 31.03.2022

- Number of children receiving a non substantive outcome Community Resolution (CR) for motoring offences = **14 children**
- Number of children being prevented from FTE as a result of the CR = **13 Children**
 - 1 child had previously received a Youth Caution for Possession of a Knife.
- Number of children reoffending – Whether a motoring offence = **0 children**
- Number becoming FTE's as a result of reoffending = **0 children**
- Number of children referred from court for the CR = **0 children**

Serious Violence & Exploitation

During the period April 2021 to March 2022, excluding prevention cases there were 272 offences committed by children open to the YOS who subsequently received an outcome. These 272 offences were linked to 194 interventions which relates to 172 children.

This represents a decrease of 56 offences on the previous year where there were 328. Also, the interventions decreased by 20 from 204 in 2020/21 to 194 in 2021/22.

During the financial year April 2021 to March 2022 there was one child from the Blaenau Gwent area who received a Restraining Order. The Restraining Order was granted for the following reason:

- The child received a Restraining Order as a result of threatening communication towards his ex-girlfriend's friend. The child received a twelve-month Restraining Order.

Out of the 272 offences there were 43 serious violent offences.

- Possession of Offensive Weapon = 5 offences
- Possession of Knife/blade = 2
- Possession of Firearm/Imitation Firearm = 2
- Affray = 2 offences
- ABH = 20 offences
- GBH = 1 offence
- Assault Police and Emergency Workers = 9 offences
- Assault with resist arrest = 1 offence
- Attempt Assault Police and Emergency Worker = 1 offence

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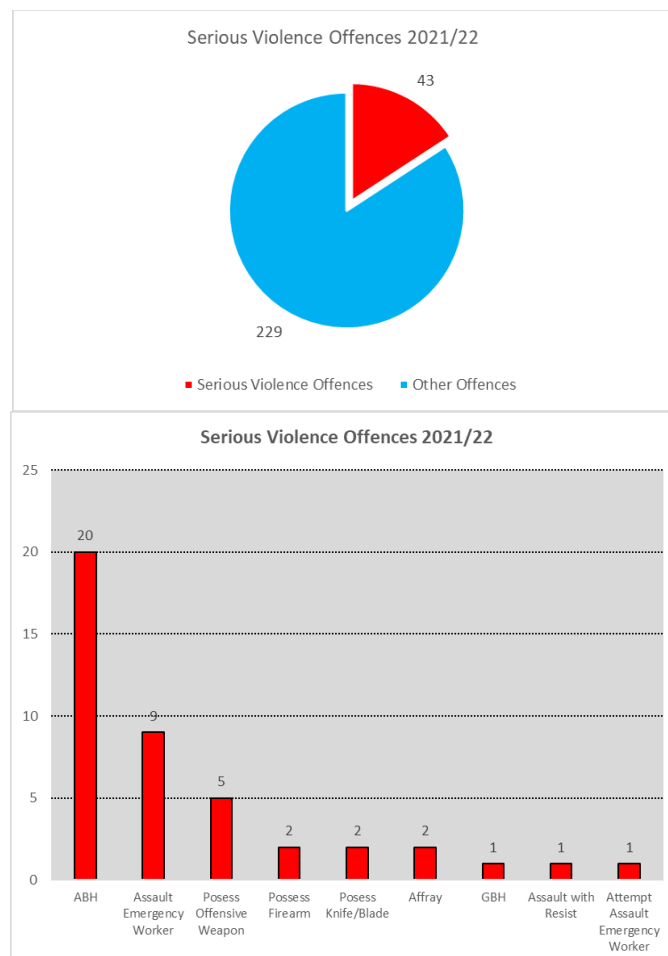
These 43 offences are in relation to 39 children; 10 children were from Blaenau Gwent and 29 were from Caerphilly.

Out of the 39 children there were 9 females who were responsible for 9 interventions who committed 9 serious violent offences. The 9 offences consisting of 1 Possess an offensive weapon offence, 5 ABH offences and 3 offences of Assault Police and Emergency Workers.

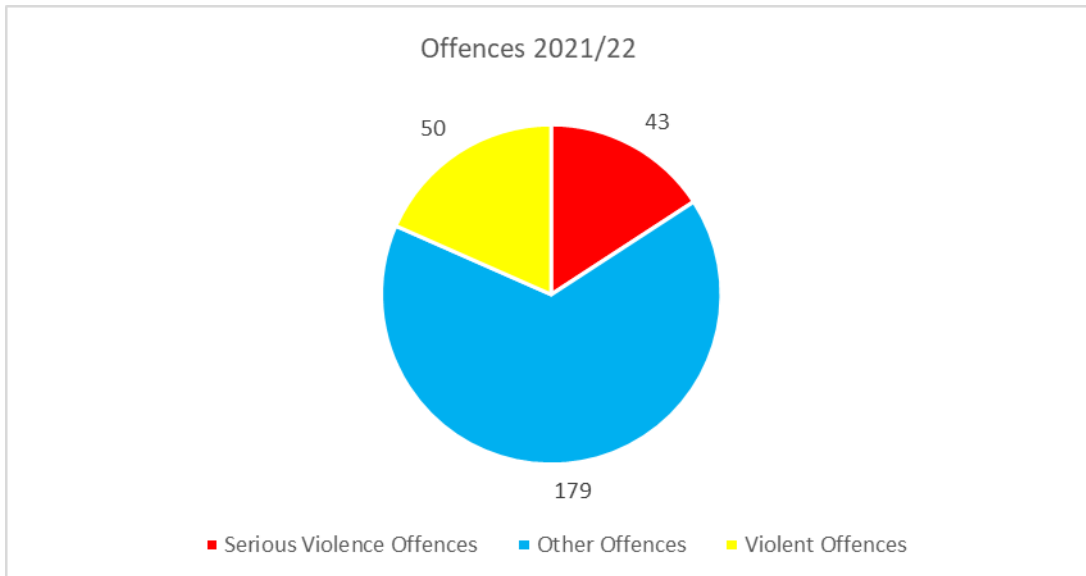
None of the 39 children received a custodial sentence. All 39 children received a community intervention and were responsible for 39 interventions.

- Community Resolution = 24 interventions
- Referral Orders = 6 interventions
- Youth Caution = 3 interventions
- Youth Conditional Caution = 5 interventions
- Youth Rehabilitation Order = 1 intervention

Serious violent offences for 2021/22 equates to 14.33% of the total amount of offences.

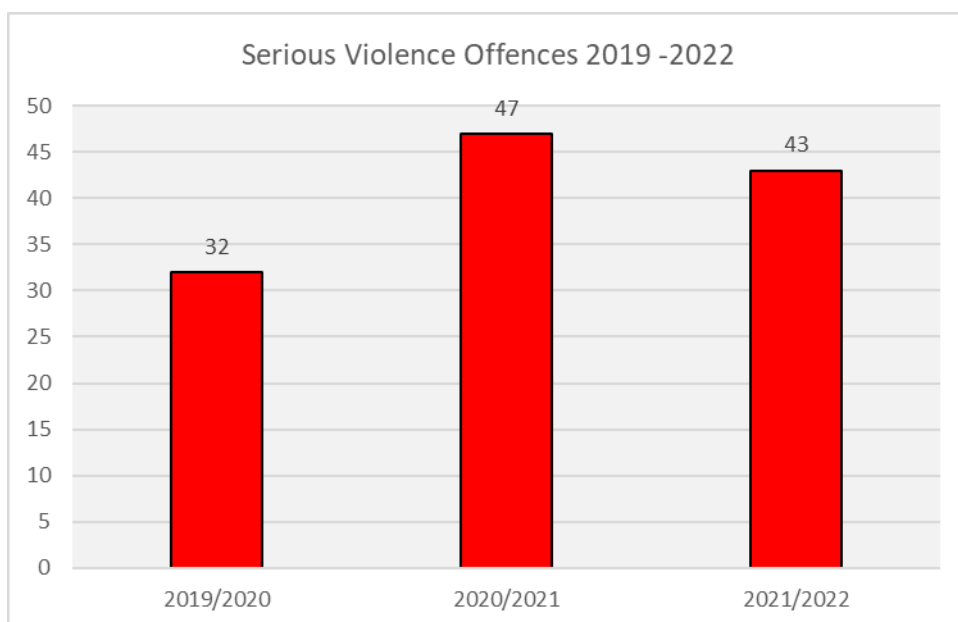


Additionally, there were 50 other violent offences committed during 2021/22. Combined with the serious violent offences this equates to a total of 93 offences (34.19% of the total amount of offences).



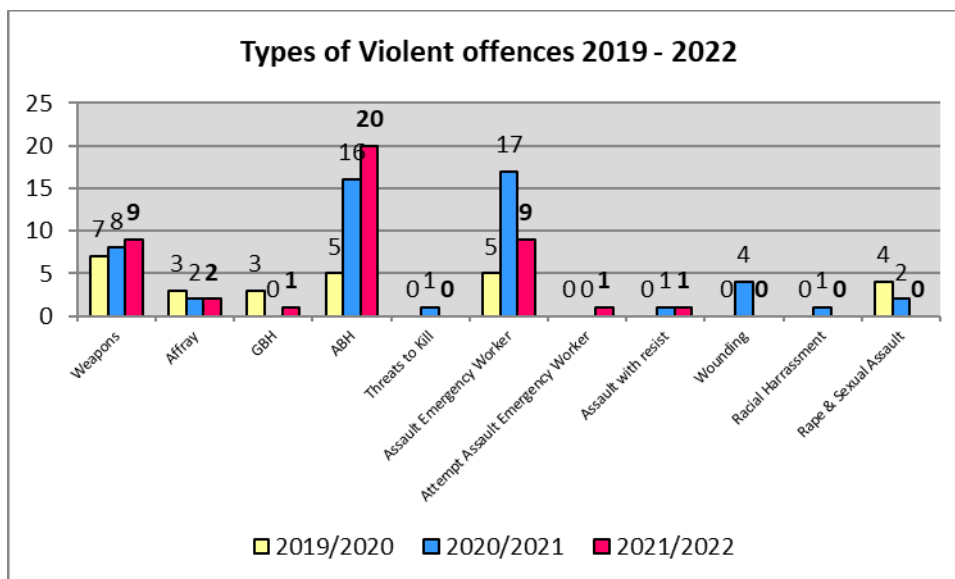
Comparison of 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22

When looking at the current year 2021/22, there is a decrease of serious violence offences compared with 2020/21 where there were 47 offences: a decrease of 4 offences on last year. Looking over a three-year period there has been a consistent level of offending in 2020/21 and 2021/22 following 2019/20.



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When looking at the types of violent offences ABH has increased over the three-year period.



When looking at a three-year period the violent offences have remained consistent with a slight decrease from 2019/20 where there were 52 to 49 in 2020/21 and then increasing slightly to 50 in the year 2021/22.

During the period April 2021 to March 2022 there were 19 children identified as being at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation. Of these 19 children 4 progressed to NRM Panel. All 4 children were male and identified as White.

Constructive resettlement and the use of custody (including remands)

During the period April 2021 to March 2022, there was 1 child who was remanded to YDA. The child was from the Blaenau Gwent area and was remanded to HMIP Parc Young Offenders Institute (YOI).

The use of remand has a cost implication for both Local Authorities. Both Local Authorities receive funding from the YJB, which is allocated per year. In 2021/22 the price per night for a YOI was £315. During 2021/22 the price per night for a YOI was £315. For secure children's home per night is £574. For Secure Training Centres the price per night is £453.

The child received a substantive outcome after their remand episode. The child received a 2 year Youth Rehabilitation Order with an ISS Requirement. The child was discussed at the YOS Resettlement and Reintegration Panel (RRP) and YOS Risk Panel. The child is a Child Looked After.

Every time a child is facing remand in any Court the YOS always offers a community based alternative, highlighting how risks will be managed. The Court Officer had offered community alternatives. However, due to the seriousness of the offence the child was remanded.

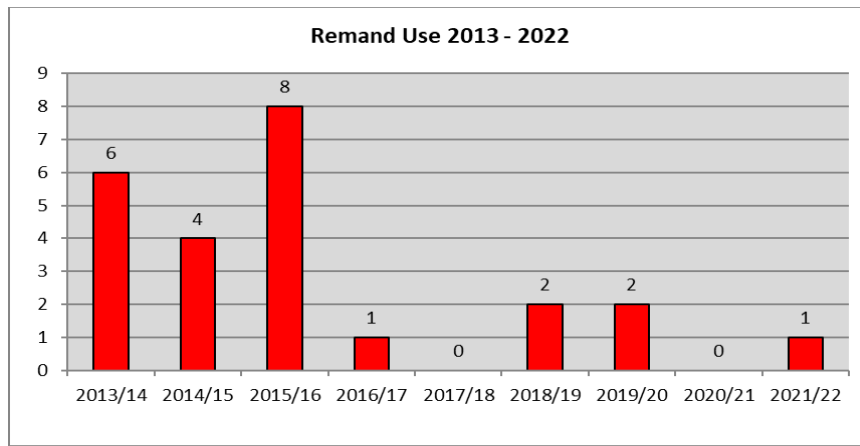
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The child first appeared at Newport Magistrates Court on 02.11.2021. The remand sentence lasted for 25 nights at Parc YOI. The child was 16 years old at the time of the remand. The child committed an offence of Robbery and Possess an offensive weapon in a public place.

The cost of the remand placement for the child was £7,875. The YJB grant covered the costs of the remand placement.

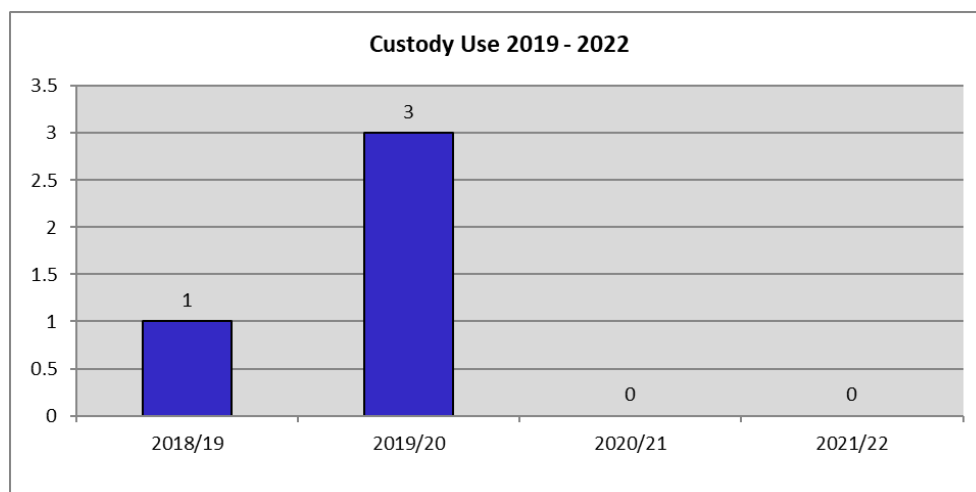
Remand Trends

The number of remand interventions over the last several years are presented below



Custody Trends

During the period April 2021 to March 2022, there were no children in custody. The number of custody interventions over the last four years are presented below.



Accommodation

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During the period April 2021 to March 2022, there were 15 children who closed to the YOS on statutory interventions. All children were in suitable accommodation at the start and the end of their intervention.

Restorative Justice and Victims

During the period April 1st 2021 to March 31st 2022, there were 118 recorded victims of youth crime; all other crimes were deemed to be victimless, for example, drug offences, public order offences or driving offences, where the victim is classed as Regina. In the same period last year, there were 151 recorded victims. The number of victims has decreased by 33 since the last reporting period.

Of those 118 victims, every victim of an incident referred via Police was contacted by the YOS Police Officer and the Restorative Justice process explained and offered. This is done by an initial letter and then a follow up phone call and more recently with a home visit.

Of those 118 victims, 84 chose to take part in the victim process, requesting some aspect of Restorative Justice. This being direct or indirect reparation. This equates to a 71% participation rate by those victims.

Victims are offered a range of services by the YOS, although during Covid 19 YOS victim services focused on letters of explanation.

The following numbers illustrate the restorative options requested by the victims:

Letter of Explanation – 76 victims requested a letter from the 83 children involved.

57 letters were completed (69%), 19 children refused to take part (23%), 2 cases are still on-going and 5 have been returned to the OIC (8%).

Face to face meeting/ RJ Conference – 8 were requested

6 children refused to take part in a face-to-face conference (74%), 1 child completed a letter of apology as an alternative to the face to face meeting (13%) and 1 was sent back to the OIC (13%).

Other – 34

29 victims did not wish to take part in any reparation (85%). YOS Police were unsuccessful in contacting the remaining 5 victims (15%).

All victims are provided with a final update by the YOS Police Officer.

Out of all the Restorative Justice that was requested, 26 children did not wish to take part. The victim is updated with this outcome, although disappointed in most cases, it is not unexpected as all victims are aware the restorative process cannot be a compulsory element of the child's plan.

In terms of victim satisfaction rates, the YOS gather this information when providing the victim with the final update.

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The following information was collated:

24 were very satisfied

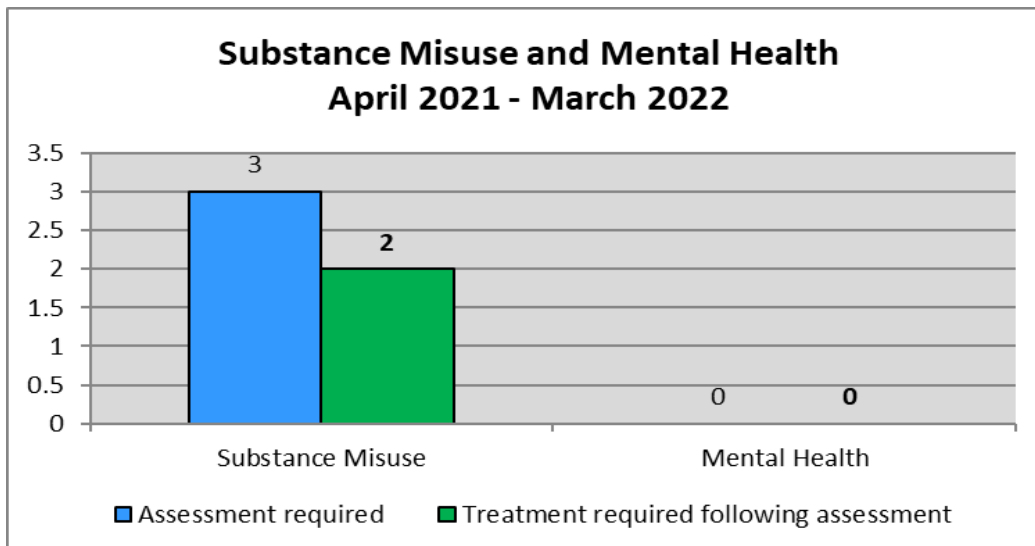
84 were satisfied

4 were unsatisfied

- 1 was unsatisfied with the child receiving an OOC. They did not believe the outcome was proportionate to the offence.
- 2 were unsatisfied as the child refused to complete a letter of apology/explanation.
- 1 was unsatisfied as they have been victims for a long period of time from ASB. The Community Resolution the child received has not stopped the ongoing issue.

Six could not make any comment on the process as the YOS Police were unable to establish contact with the victim.

Health provision to the YOS is of a high standard. The YOS can access a psychologist's time for case discussions, refer to the Enhanced Case Management service and has a full time seconded CAMHS clinical nurse specialist. It has a speech, language and communication therapist for two days per week and a full-time substance misuse worker. Please see below chart for services provided to statutory interventions.



9. National standards

In April 2019 the YJB published new National Standards (NS) for children in the youth justice system. They define the minimum expectation for all agencies that provide statutory services to ensure good outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

At the start of 2020 the YOS completed and submitted its YJB National Standards Self Assessment. It was very pleased with the findings and outcomes across all areas.

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However, there are always improvements identified within any auditing process, therefore the YOS created an action plan to develop any areas identified.

During Covid-19 NS timescales/frequencies remained in place across all YOS interventions although they may have been met via different methods of communication and engagement in line with government messages and safe practices for all involved.

The YOS Service Manager receives NS performance data monthly and NS compliance is monitored via individual staff supervision sessions, quality assurance processes and as part of case management reviewing processes. NS compliance is also included for each of the three internal YOS teams on a rota basis as part of the LMB Quarterly Performance Report.

10. Challenges, risks and issues

The Police, Crime, Sentencing & Courts Act 2022 will implement a number of significant changes to children engaged with the youth justice system. It looks to ensure custodial remand is always used as a last resort which is welcomed, but there is a need to consider the impact of the Act on community sentences such as the increase to maximum daily curfew from 16 hrs to 20 hrs (weekly max remains 112 hours) for Youth Rehabilitation Orders (YROs). There may also be an increase from the Courts for Intensive, Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) programmes.

The YJB are currently consulting on a number of new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Once implemented these will need to be understood, communicated, embedded and reported against as additional monitoring requirements.

Other risks and issues are captured in the attached below YOS Risk Register:



Blaenau Gwent &
Caerphilly YOS Risk R

11. Service improvement plan

Please see attached the YOS Youth Justice Plan Improvement Plan for 2022 – 24. Please also see the YOS Workforce development Strategy that underpins this plan and the attached Improvement Plan.



Blaenau Gwent &
Caerphilly YOS Imprc



YOS Staff
Volunteers Workfor

12. Evidence-based practice and innovation

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Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) and Enhanced Case Management (ECM) - The YOS was a pilot and test site for the YJB Enhanced Case Management programme. The ECM draws on a range of psychological and criminological approaches, combining cognitive theories of child development, attachment theory, desistance theory and emerging understanding on neurobiological development. The YOS is still able to access the resource and does so via a psychology informed case discussion alongside the full time Clinical Nurse Specialist in the YOS who is present for each case discussion. The YOS also have trained Trauma Informed Champions.

Interventions - The YOS has a directory of interventions which includes many programmes of work designed by staff, volunteers and children and is creative in how it works with children to address their needs. This includes the 'Road to Learning' programme which is a course for motoring offences, 'Street Doctors' and "RISK" (Reality Is Stabbing Kills) which are knife crime programme, 'Stay Safe' a fire setting and/or arson programme, a five week hate crime course, "Reckless" which is a criminal damage programme of work and 'Respect and Protect' which is a domestic abuse programme. The YOS also promotes a 'learning through play' philosophy which means using interactive games with children whilst delivering interventions.

Resettlement - The YOS has a high-quality, evidence-based resettlement service for children leaving custody which has been in place since 2014. The YOS Resettlement and Reintegration Panel takes account of "The Seven Resettlement Pathways" (Welsh Government initiative) and "Constructive Resettlement", (Youth Justice Board initiative). The resettlement and reintegration pathways include accommodation, education, employment and training, health, substance misuse, family services, finance, benefits, debt and transitions.

Award Winning - In 2020 the YOS 'Be Me' project won an award for 'Best Innovative Practice'. It was created to improve the wellbeing of children with a focus on girls. The project looks at confidence building and self-esteem through the use of beauty treatments in partnership with a local salon. Tutorials, support and advice is provided on a one to one basis and offers the opportunity for careers advice sessions as well. This project was led by children following consultation and engagement with girls known to the YOS

Volunteers are regularly nominated for awards. This includes volunteers winning a Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) award for a number of consecutive years.

Participation - The YOS uses various methods of engagement to capture children's feedback ensuring that they are inclusive to all children. The feedback includes the different activities that children have been involved in, for example their experience of the Bureau, Referral Order Panel, reparation, interventions and other areas of service delivery. To complement the existing methods the YOS will be developing a ViewPoint App to offer children to enhance participation opportunities. Please see attached for an example of a YOS Quarterly Participation Report (Q4 2021/22):



4. YOS Local
Management Board

Specialist Assessments - Most staff are trained in Assessment, Intervention and Moving On (AIM3) for working with children who display harmful sexual behaviour.

13. Looking forward

The YOS will continue to deliver a Child First service whilst working collaboratively with children and families.

Work has already started regarding the actions and areas for improvement identified within this plan.


From April 2022 the YOS has welcomed more staff back to the office, resumed face to face contact and engagement with children and families and restarted face to face Risk Management, Referral Order and Bureau Panel processes.

Following a "Good" inspection rating the YOS is awaiting the publication of their inspection report to ensure all areas for development are identified, understood and actioned, whilst also sharing the positives in the report (including 6 outstanding and four good ratings out of 12) with staff, volunteers, partners, children and families and other stakeholders.

14. Sign off, submission and approval

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Joint Chair of YOS Board | Gareth Jenkins |
| Signature |  |
| Date | 29.07.22 |
| Joint Chair of YOS Board | Alison Ramshaw |
| Signature | |

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| | |
|------|--|
| |  |
| Date | 29.07.22 |

15. Appendix 1 –

- A. Full board membership; linked to Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements
- B. Attendance and dates of board meetings 2021-22

A**Board Membership (as of July 2022)**

| Name & Title | Authority/ Organisation | Contact Details |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Gareth Jenkins – Joint Chair - Assistant Director, Children’s Services | Caerphilly CBC | jenkig2@caerphilly.gov.uk 01443 864520 |
| Alison Ramshaw – Joint Chair – Interim Assistant Director, Children’s Services | Blaenau Gwent CBC | Alison.Ramshaw@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 07896584764 |
| Michaela Rogers – Service Manager | YOS | rogerm@caerphilly.gov.uk 01495 235623 |
| Adam Edwards Mental Health Advisor | Aneurin Bevan Health Board | adam.edwards@wales.nhs.uk 01633 436835 |
| Mike Jones – Finance Service Manager | Caerphilly CBC | jonesmj@caerphilly.gov.uk 01443 864618 |
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| Sarah Ellis Lead for Inclusion and ALN, Education | Caerphilly CBC | ELLISS@CAERPHILLY.GOV.UK |
| Lisa Adams Senior Education Welfare Officer | Blaenau Gwent CBC | Lisa.adams@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 01495 353340 |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Ceri Edwards Environmental Health Manager | Safer Caerphilly Partnership | EDWARC@CAERPHILLY.GOV.UK 01443 811332 |
| Andrew Parker Service Manager: Policy and Partnerships | Safer Blaenau Gwent Partnership | community.safety@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 01495 356145 |
| Amanda Thomas – Chief Inspector | Gwent Police | Amanda.thomas@gwent.pnn.police.uk 01633 838111 |
| Kerry Denman Housing Solutions Manager, | Housing Caerphilly CBC | DENMAK@CAERPHILLY.GOV.UK 01443 873548 |
| Mark Congreve Team Manager - Housing Solutions and Compliance | Housing Blaenau Gwent CBC | mark.congreve@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 07854 367028 |
| Helena Baker Performance and Information Manager | YOS | BAKERH@CAERPHILLY.GOV.UK 01495 235623 |
| Paty Wysom – Area Manager | Careers Wales | paty.wysom@careerswales.com 02920 84 6573 |
| Lesley Kemp - Acting Legal Team Manager | Gwent Magistrates' Court | Llesley.kemp1@Justice.gov.uk 01633 261300 |
| Eleri Thomas | Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner | Eleri.thomas@gwent.pnn.police.uk 01633 876 466 |
| Liam Thomas Engagement and Progression Co- ordinator (NEETS) | Blaenau Gwent CBC | Liam.Thomas@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 01495 355690 |
| John Poyner Engagement and Progression Co- ordinator (NEETS) | Caerphilly CBC | POYNEJ@CAERPHILLY.GOV.UK 01443 864970 |
| Elaine Forehead Councillor | Caerphilly CBC | elaineforehead@caerphilly.gov.uk 07792 566314 |
| Haydn Trollope Councillor | Blaenau Gwent CBC | Hayden.Trollope@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 01495 718276 |

B



2. Attendance at LMB
Meetings - 2021 - 2022

16. Appendix 2 -

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- C. Service Structure Chart
- D. Reporting arrangements for the Head of Service.
- E. Staffing diversity characteristics (ethnicity, sex and known disability of staff)

C



YOS Organisational
Chart July 2022 - YJ P

D



Children-s-Org-Cha
rt-September-2021.p

E



YOS Staffing -
Ethnicity, Gender and

F



YOS Staff Volunteers
Workforce Developm

Common youth justice terms

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| ACE | Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices |
| AIM 2 and 3 | Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour |
| ASB | Anti social behaviour |
| AssetPlus | Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour |
| CAMHS | Child and adolescent mental health services |
| CCE | Child Criminal Exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity |
| Children | We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention |

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| | on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection. |
| Child First | A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion |
| Child looked-after | Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority |
| CME | Child Missing Education |
| Constructive resettlement | The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social |
| Contextual safeguarding | An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety |
| Community resolution | Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt |
| EHCP | Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs |
| ETE | Education, training or employment |
| EHE | Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school |
| EOTAS | Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting |
| FTE | First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal) |
| HMCTS | Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service |
| HMIP | Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who |

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|----------------------------------|---|
| | inspect Youth Justice services and probation services |
| HSB | Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves |
| ISS | Intensive, Supervision and Surveillance Programme |
| JAC | Junior Attendance Centre |
| MAPPA | Multi agency public protection arrangements |
| MFH | Missing from Home |
| NRM | National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them |
| OOCD | Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court |
| Outcome 22/21 | An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending |
| Over-represented children | Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average |
| RHI | Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing |
| SLCN | Speech, Language and communication needs |
| STC | Secure training centre |
| SCH | Secure children's home |
| Young adult | We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service. |
| YJB | Youth Justice Board |
| YOS | Youth Offending Service |
| YOI | Young offender institution |



An inspection of youth offending services in

Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly

HM Inspectorate of Probation, September 2022

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The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We report on the effectiveness of probation and youth offending service work with adults and children.

We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice and use our data and information to encourage high-quality services. We are independent of government and speak independently.

Please note that throughout the report the names in the practice examples have been changed to protect the individual's identity.

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Foreword

This inspection is part of our programme of youth offending service (YOS) inspections. We have inspected and rated Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. Overall, Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS was rated as 'Good'.

The inspection found an effective service, with strengths apparent across assessment and reviewing for court orders. Assessing, planning and delivering services in out-of-court disposals were excellent areas of practice. However, improvements were required in court orders when planning and delivering services for children's desistance and managing their risk of harm to others. The YOS's arrangements for information and facilities are rated as 'Outstanding', and its governance and leadership, staffing and partnerships as 'Good'.

The YOS management board receives comprehensive performance and participation reports. The service promotes a learning culture and has a robust quality assurance framework in place. However, we found little evidence to show that the partners set the direction and vision for the YOS. The inspection also found that the panel for out-of-court disposals (the Bureau) is not multi-agency and is not consistently presented with all the assessment information relevant to children and their families.

The YOS is a well-resourced service that focuses on prevention, diversion and early intervention to support children and families. Staff and volunteers felt valued by managers and their peers, and we saw that the service promotes a culture of caring both for its staff and for the children and families that it works with.

Health service provision to the YOS is of a high standard. The service also has specialist staff to work with families, care-experienced children and children at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse. It was disappointing to see, however, that the YOS seconded probation officer post was vacant. In addition, the YOS victim liaison workers are police officers, and the service must be assured that this approach does not restrict some victims' engagement because of their possible pre-held assumptions about the police service.

The YOS office base is excellent accommodation that offers a safe and calming environment both for staff and children. We found that children from the two local authorities were treated equitably and staff ensured that they had access to resources based on their needs and were not restricted by resources in their locality.

In this report, we make a number of recommendations that we hope will support Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS to build on its strong foundations and ensure that it continues to deliver a high-quality service for children.



Justin Russell
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service

Fieldwork started: May 2022

Score 28/36

Overall rating

Good



1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Governance and leadership

Good



1.2 Staff

Good



1.3 Partnerships and services

Good



1.4 Information and facilities

Outstanding



2. Court disposals

2.1 Assessment

Outstanding



2.2 Planning

Good



2.3 Implementation and delivery

Requires improvement



2.4 Reviewing

Outstanding



3. Out-of-court disposals

3.1 Assessment

Outstanding



3.2 Planning

Outstanding



3.3 Implementation and delivery

Outstanding



3.4 Out-of-court disposal policy and provision

Requires improvement



Executive summary

Overall, Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) is rated as 'Good'. This rating has been determined by inspecting the YOS in three areas of its work, referred to as 'domains'. We inspect against 12 core 'standards', shared between the domains. The standards are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. They are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with children who have offended.¹ Published scoring rules generate the overall YOS rating.² The findings and subsequent ratings in those domains are described below.

Organisational delivery

The YOS's arrangements for information and facilities are rated as 'Outstanding'. The arrangements for governance and leadership, staffing, and partnerships are rated as 'Good'.

The YOS management board is co-chaired by the Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly heads of children's services and both have previous experience of working in youth justice settings. New board members receive an induction into their role from the YOS service manager and are given an induction pack. However, the board has not held any development sessions since before the pandemic and it felt that the vision and strategy for the service was set by the YOS leadership and managers, with little input from the partners on the management board.

Each quarter, the board receives a comprehensive performance report, the reoffending toolkit actions and findings report, and the participation report. In addition, it has received reports and generated action plans relating to disproportionality, serious youth violence and the YOS's response to HM Inspectorate of Probation's thematic reports.

Partners acknowledge that the YOS is a well-resourced service that focuses on prevention, diversion and early intervention to support children and families. The inspection found evidence that the management board has challenged the probation service regarding its resourcing of the YOS and lack of a probation officer in post.

The YOS produces a participation report that enables the board to hear the views of children and families. However, it was disappointing that, from a management board perspective, it did not highlight examples of how this feedback had influenced service delivery.

The YOS has a stable and experienced workforce. The service manager is supported by four team managers and there is a wealth of youth justice experience within the management team. There are three case management teams and there was no evidence of disharmony between them, with all staff working together in the best interests of the whole service. Staff are comfortable with their workload, receive regular supervision and feel supported by their managers. Allocation of cases

¹ HM Inspectorate of Probation's standards can be found here:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

² Each of the 12 standards is scored on a 0–3 scale in which 'Inadequate' = 0; 'Requires improvement' = 1; 'Good' = 2; 'Outstanding' = 3. Adding these scores produces a total score ranging from 0 to 36, which is banded to produce the overall rating, as follows: 0–6 = 'Inadequate', 7–18 = 'Requires improvement', 19–30 = 'Good', 31–36 = 'Outstanding'.

considers which staff have previously been involved with the family, so that consistency of case manager is prioritised. Staff do all they can to encourage good engagement and compliance from the child.

Staff feel encouraged to take up training opportunities. Volunteers are offered the same training as paid members of staff and are not restricted to training that is only linked to their role. The YOS actively encourages staff development through offering management opportunities within the service and supporting staff to complete external qualifications. Staff and volunteers reported that they felt valued by managers and by their peers, and there is a sense that the YOS is a caring organisation where people take pride in their work.

A YOS risk management panel is convened if a child is assessed as high risk for safety and wellbeing and/or risk of harm to others. The YOS also has a resettlement and reintegration panel which is a subgroup of the YOS management board. It is a multi-agency meeting, chaired by the YOS service manager, which commits additional support and resources to unblock any issues that the child may have as they leave custody or end their time with the service.

The YOS has a youth respect officer, who delivers individual interventions to children at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse. It also has a family support worker and a dedicated restorative approaches key worker, who works directly with care-experienced children to prevent their prosecution when it is appropriate to do so.

Health service provision to the YOS is of a high standard. The service can access a psychologist for case discussions and has a seconded Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services clinical nurse specialist. The YOS has a speech, language and communication therapist for two days per week and a full-time substance misuse worker.

The YOS monitors its performance regarding children's education, training and employment (ETE). It has a full-time ETE worker and there is an education themed YOS management board held annually.

It was disappointing to see that the YOS half-time seconded probation officer post was vacant. The skills and experience of managing risk of harm that probation officers bring to the service is a gap in provision.

The YOS has two victim liaison workers who are Gwent police officers, and when victims are identified they will make the initial contact. The service must be assured that this approach offers all victims the opportunity to take part in a restorative justice intervention and does not restrict engagement because of potential assumptions they have about the police service.

The inspection team observed that the YOS promotes a culture of caring both for its staff and for the children and families that they work with. The YOS office base is on the boundary between Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly, and is excellent accommodation that offers a safe and calming environment both for staff and children. It is very child friendly, with motivational quotes on the walls around the building.

The YOS has access to both local authorities' databases, and relevant partners have their own access to the YOS case management system. YOS staff use desktop computers, as well as smartphones and laptop computers, to facilitate agile working. They can also use tablet computers when working with children and families.

The YOS promotes a learning culture and has a robust quality assurance framework in place, which includes a peer-led assessment review group. Both senior practitioners and managers use a 'QA buddy', which can be any member of staff, to help them audit cases. The YOS performance report includes an update on the quality assurance work being undertaken in the service, and this has led to themed audits taking place. At the request of the YOS, other agencies complete an independent 'deep-dive' audit of one of the cases presented to the reintegration and resettlement panel.

A participation report is produced and reported to the management board. It outlines the feedback that has been collated from children through self-assessments and an online system called the 'Viewpoint Hub'. There is evidence to suggest that, as part of its learning culture, the YOS reviews cases when serious incidents occur. It also reviews outcomes of other areas' inspections and thematic inspections, and develops action plans to improve its own practice.

The YOS has had resettlement panels for children leaving custody since 2014. As a result of the low number of children receiving custodial sentences, the remit of these panels has been extended to include all children open to the YOS and those who are finishing YOS interventions where there are unmet needs. The resettlement and reintegration panel is a subgroup of the management board, and it was evident that partners are committed to these panels to support effective joint working.

Children from the two local authorities are treated equitably and staff ensure that they have access to resources based on their needs, rather than being restricted by availability in their locality. The service completes an annual disproportionality report on black, Asian and minority ethnic children. The YOS is currently consulting on its draft equality and diversity policy, which includes a helpful guide to people's diversity characteristics, which informs staff on appropriate questions to ask.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the YOS continues to follow official advice from the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales. Risk assessments on practice and service delivery were created and shared with staff and volunteers. The YOS maintained contact with children and families using various platforms, including FaceTime, WhatsApp, Skype, telephone, text, messenger, email and mail. Interventions were delivered using creative methods, including YouTube clips, worksheets sent through the post and resources emailed to parents or carers. If a child had no means of contact, the YOS bought a basic mobile phone so that they could make contact by telephone. However, if an engagement, public protection or safeguarding situation arose that required face-to-face contact, the YOS ensured that this contact was made. In January 2021, the YOS was able to start using its workshop for individual meetings with children.

Our key findings about organisational delivery are as follows:

- The management board is co-chaired by the heads of children's services from both areas.
- A comprehensive suite of data and regular monitoring reports are presented to the management board.
- The YOS is well-resourced and focuses on prevention, diversion and early intervention to support children and families.
- The service produces a participation report that enables the board to hear the views of children and families.

- There is a stable and experienced workforce, whereby staff from different teams work together in the best interests of the whole service.
- Staff are encouraged to take up training opportunities and volunteers are offered the same training as paid members of staff.
- Staff and volunteers feel valued by managers and by their peers, and there is a sense that the YOS is a caring organisation where people take pride in their work.
- Health service provision to the YOS is of a high standard.
- The YOS office base sits on the boundary between Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly, and is excellent accommodation that offers a safe and calming environment both for staff and children.
- The YOS promotes a learning culture and has a robust quality assurance framework in place.
- Members of the resettlement and reintegration multi-agency panel work effectively together to meet the needs of children.
- Children from the two authorities are treated equitably and staff ensure that they have access to resources based on their needs and are not restricted by what is available in the local area.

But:

- There was little evidence to show that the management board partners set the YOS's direction and vision.
- The board has not held any development sessions since before the pandemic.
- The management board did not highlight any examples of how children's feedback influences service delivery.
- There has been no probation provision to the YOS, and so the skills and experience in managing risk of harm that probation officers bring to the service are missing.
- Having police officers as victim liaison workers could restrict victims' engagement because of their possible pre-held assumptions about the police service.

Court disposals

We took a detailed look at five community sentences managed by the YOS. There were no custodial sentences within the timeframe covered by the inspection. We also conducted four interviews with the relevant case managers. We examined the quality of assessment; planning; implementation and delivery of services; and reviewing. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance, to keep the child safe, and to keep other people safe.

Our key findings about court disposals are as follows:

- Assessing and reviewing were strong in the areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
- Case managers built on the child's strengths.
- Planning was robust in relation to a child's safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.

- Staff used available sources of information, including other assessments, to inform their own judgement.
- Staff understood the importance of developing a working relationship with the child and motivating them to engage.
- There was good evidence of multi-agency work to deliver services.
- Staff took the views of children and their parents or carers into account.

But:

- Case managers did not always consider the victim's needs and wishes as part of the assessment and planning process.
- There was limited evidence that concerns relating to actual and potential victims were addressed when planning and delivering services.
- Staff did not consistently take account of the child's desistance when putting plans in place.
- When delivering services, staff did not focus sufficiently on the child's desistance or their risk of harm to others.
- There was poor contingency planning to manage children's safety and wellbeing, and their risk of harm to others.
- Staff did not always consider the child's wider diversity factors when reviewing their progress.

Out-of-court disposals

We inspected 10 cases managed by the YOS that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of one youth conditional caution, one youth caution and eight community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in nine cases.

We examined the quality of assessment; planning; and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance, to keep the child safe and to keep other people safe.

We also inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for out-of-court disposals, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews.

Our key findings about out-of-court disposals are as follows:

- An AssetPlus assessment is completed on all children who become known to the YOS.
- Assessment, planning and delivering services for out-of-court disposals are strong areas of practice in all three areas.
- Case managers appropriately analysed the child's diversity needs and considered their levels of maturity and motivation to change.
- Staff focused on understanding the child's learning style and their individual needs when planning interventions.
- The victim's needs and wishes were considered in relevant cases inspected.
- Case managers developed an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers.

- Case managers focused on ensuring that the child would be able to access mainstream services when their intervention ended.
- Staff used multi-agency meetings to ensure that all professionals were up to date with the child's progress.

But:

- The Bureau³ is not multi-agency, and it is not consistently given all the assessment information relevant to children and their families.
- Staff had not identified all the potential risk factors in some cases.
- The classification of risk to a child's safety and wellbeing, and their risk of harm to others was not always reasonable when all the available information was taken into account.
- Contingency arrangements were needed in planning to support the child's safety and well-being, and manage their risk of harm to others.
- Case managers had not considered the protection of actual and potential victims in every relevant case.

³ The Bureau is the decision-making panel for out-of-court disposals.

Recommendations

As a result of our inspection findings, we have made five recommendations that we believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of youth offending services in Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly. This will improve the lives of the children in contact with youth offending services, and better protect the public.

The Chair of the Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS Management Board should:

1. make sure that board members are actively engaged in setting the direction and vision for the YOS
2. review the format and purpose of the Bureau and ensure that it has the relevant information and input from the necessary agencies, so that out-of-court disposals meet the needs of the child.

The Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS Management Board should:

3. challenge the Probation Service to ensure that it provides the appropriate provision to the YOS.

The Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS Service Manager should:

4. review the service offered to victims and make certain that all who want to engage are enabled to do so
5. improve the quality of services to promote children's desistance and manage their risk of harm to others.

Background

Youth offending teams (YOTs) work with children aged 10 to 18 who have been sentenced by a court, or who have come to the attention of the police because of their offending behaviour, but have not been charged – instead, they were dealt with out of court. HM Inspectorate of Probation inspects both these aspects of youth offending services.

YOTs are statutory partnerships, and they are multidisciplinary, to deal with the needs of the whole child. They are required to have staff from local authority social care and education services, the police, the Probation Service and local health services.⁴ Most YOTs are based within local authorities, although this can vary.

YOT work is governed and shaped by a range of legislation and guidance specific to the youth justice sector (such as the National Standards for Youth Justice) or else applicable across the criminal justice sector (for example, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements guidance). The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) provides some funding to YOTs. It also monitors their performance and issues guidance to them about how things are to be done.

We carried out inspection fieldwork in Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly over the week beginning 09 May 2022, looking at cases which started between October 2021 and March 2022.

The Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) is a dual local authority YOS, covering both the Blaenau Gwent and the Caerphilly areas in Gwent, Wales. Gwent is made up of five local authorities in total. The YOS is part of children's services in Caerphilly County Borough Council, which sits within the wider social services directorate. Caerphilly County Borough Council has 'hosted' the YOS since its creation on behalf of both local authorities. The number of children it engages with across the two areas is usually at or around 70 per cent for Caerphilly and 30 per cent for Blaenau Gwent.

The under-17 population of Caerphilly County Borough is 37,670, equivalent to 20.7 per cent of the overall population. Based on the Census (2011), 1.68 per cent of children aged 10 to 17 in the area identified as black, Asian or minority ethnic. For Caerphilly's Year 11 school leavers, 91 per cent continued their full-time education in either school or college, compared with a Wales average of 90.4 per cent.⁵ For Year 13 school leavers, 74.8 per cent continued their full-time education in school, college or higher education, compared with a Wales average of 80 per cent.

The under-17 population of Blaenau Gwent is 13,619, equivalent to 19.5 per cent of the overall population. Based on the Census (2011), 1.7 per cent of children aged 10 to 17 in the area identified as ethnic minority. For Blaenau Gwent Year 11 school leavers, 89.1 per cent continued their full-time education in either school or college, compared with a Wales average of 90.4 per cent.⁶ For Year 13 school leavers, 85.7 per cent continued their full-time education in school, college or higher education, compared with a Wales average of 80 per cent.

⁴ The *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* set out the arrangements for local YOTs and partnership working.

⁵ Pupil Destinations 2020, Careers Wales.

⁶ Pupil Destinations 2020, Careers Wales.

Performance reports indicate that the number of first-time entrants to the YOS for January to December 2020 was 148 per 100,000 population, which was higher than the average for Wales but lower than the England and Wales national average. The service has seen an eight-year trend of decreasing the first-time entrants' rate, which is now at its lowest recorded level. The rate of reoffending is slightly higher than the England and Wales national average, but with no children receiving a custodial sentence for over two years, the custody rate is lower than both the Wales and England and Wales national averages.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the YOS continues to follow official advice from the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales. Risk assessments on practice and service delivery were created and shared with staff and volunteers. The YOS maintained contact with children and families using various platforms, including FaceTime, WhatsApp, Skype, telephone, text, messenger, email and mail. Interventions were delivered using creative methods, including YouTube clips, worksheets sent through the post and emailing resources to parents or carers. If a child had no means of contact, the YOS bought a basic mobile phone, so that they could make contact by telephone. However, if an engagement, public protection or safeguarding situation arose that required face-to-face contact, the YOS ensured that this contact was made. In January 2021, the YOS was able to start using its workshop for individual meetings with children.

Contextual facts

Population information⁷

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 148 | First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly ⁸ |
| 167 | First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in England and Wales |
| 35.4% | Reoffending rate in Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly ⁹ |
| 34.2% | Reoffending rate in England and Wales |
| 251,751 | Total population Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly |
| 23,543 | Total youth population (10–17 years) in Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly |

Caseload information¹⁰

| Age | 10–14 years | 15–17 years |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS | 21% | 79% |
| National average | 18% | 82% |

| Race/ethnicity ¹¹ | White | Black and minority ethnic | Unknown |
|---|------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS | 98% | 2% | 0% |
| Youth population (10–17 years) in Blaenau Gwent | 98% | 2% | 0% |
| Youth population (10–17 years) in Caerphilly | 98% | 2% | 0% |

| Gender | Male | Female |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS | 87% | 13% |
| National average | 86% | 14% |

⁷ Office for National Statistics. (June 2021). *UK population estimates, mid-2020*.

⁸ Youth Justice Board. (2022). *First-time entrants, January to December 2020*

⁹ Ministry of Justice. (January 2022). *Proven reoffending statistics, April 2019 to March 2020*.

¹⁰ Youth Justice Board. (January 2022). *Youth justice annual statistics: 2020 to 2021*.

¹¹ Data supplied by the YOS.

Additional caseload data¹²

| | |
|------------|-----------------------------------|
| 219 | Total current caseload, of which: |
| 21 | Court disposals |
| 198 | Out-of-court disposals |

Of the 21 court disposals:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 21 | Total current caseload: community sentences |
| 0 | Total current caseload in custody |
| 0 | Total current caseload on licence |

Of the 198 out-of-court disposals:

| | |
|------------|---|
| 15 | Total current caseload: youth caution |
| 20 | Total current caseload: youth conditional caution |
| 163 | Total current caseload: community resolution or other out-of-court disposal |

Education and child protection status of caseload:

| | |
|------------|--|
| 2% | Percentage of current caseload 'Looked After Children' resident in the YOS area |
| 0% | Percentage of current caseload 'Looked After Children' placed outside the YOS area |
| 5% | Percentage of current caseload with child protection plan |
| 11% | Percentage of current caseload with child in need plan |
| 77% | Percentage of current caseload aged 16 and under, in full-time school |
| 11% | Percentage of children aged 16 and under, in a pupil referral unit, alternative education, or attending school part-time |
| 30% | Percentage of current caseload aged 17+ not in education, training or employment |

For children subject to court disposals (including resettlement cases):

| Offence types ¹³ | % |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Violence against the person | 40% |
| Criminal damage | 20% |
| Indictable motoring offences | 20% |
| Other summary offences | 20% |

¹² Data supplied by the YOS, reflecting the caseload at the time of the inspection announcement.

¹³ Data from the cases assessed during this inspection.

1. Organisational delivery

The Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) is a dual local authority YOS, covering both the Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly areas in Gwent, Wales. The YOS is part of children's services in Caerphilly County Borough Council, which has 'hosted' the YOS since its creation on behalf of both local authorities. The management board is co-chaired by the Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly heads of children's services and both have previous experience of working in youth justice settings. New board members receive an induction into their role from the YOS service manager and are given an induction pack. However, the board has not held any development sessions since before the pandemic and there was little evidence that the management board partners have set the direction and vision for the service.

Each quarter, the board receives a comprehensive performance report, the reoffending toolkit actions and findings report, and the participation report. It was disappointing that the management board did not highlight examples of how this feedback has influenced service delivery.

In addition, the board has received reports relating to disproportionality, serious youth violence and the YOS response to HM Inspectorate of Probation's thematic reports.

Partners acknowledge that the YOS is a well-resourced service that focuses on prevention, diversion and early intervention to support children and families. The inspection found evidence that the management board has challenged the Probation Service on its resourcing of the YOS and the lack of a probation officer in post.

The YOS has a stable and experienced workforce. The service manager is supported by four team managers and there is a wealth of youth justice experience within the management team. There are three case management teams, who work together in the best interests of the whole service. Staff are comfortable with their workload, receive regular supervision and feel supported by their managers. Allocation of cases considers which staff have previously been involved with the family, so that consistency of case manager is prioritised. Staff do all they can to encourage good engagement and compliance from the child.

Staff feel encouraged to take up training opportunities and volunteers are offered the same training as paid members of staff and are not restricted to training that is only linked to their role. The YOS actively encourages staff development by offering management opportunities within the service and supporting staff to complete external qualifications. Staff and volunteers reported that they feel valued by managers and by their peers, and there is a sense that the YOS is a caring organisation where people take pride in their work.

The YOS has access to a comprehensive suite of data and regular monitoring reports are presented to the management board. These include a quarterly participation report and reoffending report, and further in-depth analysis reports are also provided.

A YOS risk management panel is convened if a child is assessed as high or very high risk for safety and wellbeing and/or risk of harm to others. The YOS also has a resettlement and reintegration panel, which is a subgroup of the management board. It is a multi-agency meeting chaired by the YOS service manager, which commits

additional support and resources to unblock any issues that the child may have as they leave custody, receive interventions or end their time with the YOS.

The YOS has a youth respect officer, who delivers individual interventions to children at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse. It also has a family support worker and a dedicated restorative approaches key worker, who works directly with care-experienced children to prevent their prosecution when it is appropriate to do so.

Health service provision to the YOS is of a high standard. The YOS can access a psychologist for case discussions and has a seconded Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) clinical nurse specialist (CNS). It has a speech, language and communication therapist for two days per week and a full-time substance misuse worker.

The YOS monitors closely its performance regarding children's education, training and employment (ETE). It has a full-time ETE worker and there is an education themed YOS management board annually.

It was disappointing to see that the YOS half-time seconded probation officer post was vacant at the time of the inspection. The skills and experience in managing risk of harm that probation officers bring to the service were therefore missing for the YOS.

The YOS has two victim liaison workers who are Gwent police officers, and when victims are identified they will make the initial contact. The service must be assured that this approach offers all victims the opportunity to take part in a restorative justice intervention and does not restrict some victims' engagement because of their possible pre-held assumptions about the police service.

The inspection team saw that the YOS promotes a culture of caring both for its staff and for the children and families that it works with. The YOS office base sits on the boundary between Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly, and is excellent accommodation that offers a safe and calming environment both for staff and children. It is very child friendly, with motivational quotes on the walls around the building.

The YOS has access to both local authorities' databases, and relevant partners have their own access to the YOS case management system. YOS staff have access to desktop computers, as well as smartphones and laptop computers, to facilitate agile working. They can also use tablet computers when working with children and families.

The YOS promotes a learning culture and has a robust quality assurance framework in place that includes a peer-led assessment review group. Both senior practitioners and managers use a 'QA buddy', which can be any member of staff, to help them audit cases. The YOS performance report includes an update on the quality assurance work being undertaken within the service, and this has led to themed audits taking place. At the request of the YOS, other agencies complete an independent 'deep-dive' audit of one of the cases presented to the reintegration and resettlement panel.

The YOS produces a participation report and reports this to the management board. It outlines the feedback that has been collated from children through self-assessments and an online system called the 'Viewpoint Hub'. As part of its learning culture, the YOS reviews cases when serious incidents occur. It also reviews outcomes of other areas' inspections and thematic inspections, and develops action plans to improve its own practice.

The YOS has had resettlement panels for children leaving custody since 2014. As a result of the low number of children receiving custodial sentences, the remit of these panels has been extended to include all children open to the YOS and those who are finishing YOS interventions where there are unmet needs. The resettlement and reintegration panel is a subgroup of the management board, and it was evident that partners are committed to these panels in order to support effective joint working.

Children from the two authorities are treated equitably and staff ensure that they have access to resources based on their needs, and are not restricted by what is available in their area. The service completes an annual disproportionality report on ethnic minority children. The YOS is currently consulting on its draft equality and diversity policy. This includes a helpful guide to people's diversity characteristics, which helps staff to ask children and families appropriate questions.

Strengths

- The management board is co-chaired by the heads of children's services from both areas.
- A comprehensive suite of data and regular monitoring reports are presented to the management board.
- The YOS is a well-resourced service that focuses on prevention, diversion and early intervention to support children and families.
- The service produces a participation report that enables the board to hear the views of children and families.
- There is a stable and experienced workforce, whereby staff from different teams work together in the best interests of the whole service.
- Staff are encouraged to take up training opportunities and volunteers are offered the same training as paid members of staff.
- Staff and volunteers feel valued by managers and by their peers, and there is a sense that the YOS is a caring organisation where people take pride in their work.
- Health service provision to the YOS is of a high standard.
- The YOS office base sits on the boundary between Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly, and is excellent accommodation that offers a safe and calming environment both for staff and children.
- The YOS promotes a learning culture and has a robust quality assurance framework in place.
- Members of the resettlement and reintegration multi-agency panel work effectively together to meet the needs of children.
- Children from the two authorities are treated equitably and staff ensure that they have access to resources based on their needs and are not restricted by resources in the local area.

Areas for improvement

- There was little evidence that the management board partners set the direction and vision for the YOS.
- The board has not held any development sessions since before the pandemic.
- The management board did not highlight examples of how children’s feedback has influenced service delivery.
- There has been no probation service provision to the YOS and therefore the skills and experience in managing risk of harm that probation officers bring to the service are missing.
- Having police officers as victim liaison workers could restrict some victims’ engagement because of their possible pre-held assumptions about the police service.

Organisations that are well led and well managed are more likely to achieve their aims. We inspect against four standards.

1.1. Governance and leadership



The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Good

¹⁴Key data

| | |
|---|------------|
| Total spend in previous financial year | £1,749,355 |
| Total projected budget current for financial year | £1,758,722 |

In making a judgement about governance and leadership, we take into account the answers to the following three questions:

Is there an effective local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children?

The Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS is a dual local authority YOS, covering both the Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly areas in Gwent, Wales. The YOS is hosted by Caerphilly County Borough Council and is part of children’s services, which sits within the wider social services directorate. The local management board is co-chaired by the head of Caerphilly children’s services and the head of Blaenau Gwent children’s services. Both have previous experience of working in youth justice settings and are registered social workers. They are also the joint line managers for the YOS service manager.

¹⁴ Data supplied by the YOS.

The board meets quarterly, and its membership includes all statutory partners, as well as some non-statutory partners, including representatives from housing and community safety.

Both areas of Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly are represented on the board. New members receive an induction manual and meet the YOS service manager. Attendance by members is consistent and the level of seniority of representatives on the board is appropriate and enables it to make decisions.

The YOS has a youth justice plan in place for 2021 to 2023 and an organisational vision statement, which is included in its policy and procedure documents. However, the management board has not had any specific development sessions since 2020. Therefore, it is difficult to see how it has influenced the direction of the YOS over the past two years.

Board members hear the views of children and families through the quarterly participation report, which collates all the feedback that has been gathered. It was disappointing that the management board did not highlight examples of how this feedback has influenced service delivery. The inspection team concluded that board members are not ambitious enough in their vision to drive the YOS forward in order to make it an outstanding service.

Do the partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery?

Partners acknowledge that the YOS is a well-resourced service that focuses on prevention, diversion and early intervention to support children and families. The YOS has a prevention and early intervention strategy in place and provides a prevention initiative called 'Reach Engage and Change Happens' (REACH), which is part-funded by both local authorities' Welsh Government Children and Communities grant. The service's out-of-court disposals diversionary provision is part-funded by the Gwent Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

At the time of the inspection, the YOS was consulting on its equality and diversity policy for 2022-2025. This included a guide on helpful questions to encourage discussions about diversity with children and families.

The YOS presents a performance report at each management board meeting. It includes information on the profile of children known to the YOS, workload allocation, outcomes from quality assurance audits, finance and updates on service action plans. The board has also been presented with other reports, including the disproportionality audit report for 2020/2021, the serious youth violence report for 2020/2021 and the reoffending toolkit actions and findings report, which is presented each quarter.

There is evidence that the management board challenges partners about the resources they provide. For example, it challenged the Probation Service for being unable to meet its statutory requirement to provide the YOS with a probation officer.

Issues impacting on youth offending are prominent on the agendas of other key strategic groups in Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly. These include the corporate parenting groups, case review groups and Families First boards in both areas, and the Gwent Criminal Justice Strategy Board.

Does the leadership of the YOT support effective service delivery?

Team managers regularly attend the management board and other staff members attend to present on specific pieces of work. There is a two-way relationship between the board and YOS staff, and communication from the board is shared at management and team meetings. Before the pandemic, board members attended sessions with the team and often visited the YOS office. Team managers have lead areas of responsibility and work directly with board members in these areas of practice, as well as seeing them in other meetings across the partnership.

The inspection staff survey was completed wholly by 20 people; 14 out of 20 people understood the vision and mission of the YOS 'very well'; six out of 20 were 'very aware' of the activities of the management board and understood its role; and 13 out of 20 were 'quite aware' of these activities. Most staff who completed the survey felt that they are updated on strategic issues.

1.2. Staff



Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Good

Key staffing data¹⁵

| | |
|--|------|
| Total staff headcount (full-time equivalent (FTE)) | 41 |
| Total headcount qualified case managers (FTE) ¹⁶ | 7.5 |
| Vacancy rate (total unfilled posts as percentage of total staff headcount) | 9.3% |
| Average caseload case managers (FTE equivalent) ¹⁷ | 8 |
| Average annual working days sickness (all staff) | 7.6 |
| Staff attrition (percentage of all staff leaving in 12-month period) | 9.3% |

In making a judgement about staffing, we take into account the answers to the following five questions:

Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children?

The YOS has a stable and experienced workforce consisting of 41 staff. The YOS service manager initially joined the YOS as a student and then took on the role of a social worker, and subsequently a senior practitioner and then team manager, before eventually becoming the service manager in 2012. Alongside the YOS, this individual

¹⁵ Data supplied by YOS and reflecting staffing at the time of the inspection announcement.

¹⁶ Qualified case managers are those with a relevant social work, youth justice or probation qualification.

¹⁷ Data supplied by YOS, based on staffing and workload at the time of the inspection announcement.

also has responsibility for the Families First team and Complaints and Information team, both in Caerphilly.

The service manager is supported by four team managers, who cover information and performance, prevention and two court and community teams, as well as three senior practitioners. There is a wealth of youth justice experience within the management team, and managers work well together to support the teams. There was evidence in the cases inspected that staff do all they can to encourage good engagement and compliance from the child, and staff and managers alike are child centred and know the children in their care well.

The YOS team managers are responsible for allocating cases and use a caseload spreadsheet to manage this. They consider the number of cases held by case managers, and their specific skills and knowledge. When allocating cases, they also consider which staff have previously been involved with the family, so that consistency of case manager is prioritised. At the time of the inspection, case managers had approximately eight cases each. Of the 23 members of staff who completed the staff survey, all of them said that they find their workload or caseload manageable.

Do the skills of YOT staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children?

The YOS has three case management teams. The prevention team key workers manage cases that are part of REACH, out-of-court disposals, the Together Project, Supporting Family Change (in Caerphilly) and antisocial behaviour interventions. The two court and community teams include social workers, who manage statutory orders and out-of-court disposals. There was no evidence of disharmony between the teams, and all staff work together in the best interests of the whole service.

The YOS has a volunteer coordinator, and volunteers can apply for a number of roles within the service, including a referral order panel member or an appropriate adult for children in police custody, mentoring or reparation. There are currently 17 volunteers actively working, and a further 18 at different stages of the recruitment process. All volunteers receive an induction, which includes specific training programmes, meeting staff and shadowing panels. Volunteers are offered the same training as paid members of staff. They are not restricted to training that is only linked to their role but are encouraged to apply for training based on their own professional and personal development. They are included in all local authority training emails and recently completed a course on adverse childhood experiences. Volunteers receive individual supervision every six months, and an annual appraisal and development plan. They are invited to team meetings and staff development days. They gave examples of when they had been listened to by the YOS management team and reported feeling fully supported and integrated into the service.

During Covid-19 lockdowns, the YOS had to change the way the referral order panels were run. They used conference calls on the telephone so that they could continue to operate, but as soon as restrictions were lifted, they returned to face-to-face panels. The YOS aims to have the same panel members on the initial referral order panel and the review panels, in order for them to develop a relationship with the child and their family. YOS staff spend time with volunteers both before and after the panel, to discuss any issues that have arisen.

Does the oversight of work support high-quality delivery and professional development?

Staff receive regular monthly supervision, which covers caseload, workload, any challenges to a person's emotional and mental health, the quality of work and areas of improvement and professional development. Annual appraisals are also completed and include a personal development plan.

Seconded staff receive supervision from their home agency, which completes an appraisal, and from their YOS line manager. Clinical supervision is provided when it is relevant to a person's role.

There is a comprehensive induction process in place for new staff, and there are procedures for addressing staff competency. Staff and volunteers reported feeling supported both by their managers and their peers. For the cases that were inspected, management oversight met the needs of the case in four out of five post-court cases and all out-of-court disposals.

Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?

There is a YOS staff and volunteers workforce development strategy in place for 2020-2023. The service also completed the YJB's youth justice skills audit for practitioners and keeps comprehensive training records. Staff and volunteers reported that they feel encouraged to take up training opportunities.

All YOS staff and volunteers have access to the courses available through the internal workforce development website. Caerphilly County Borough Council also offers a range of courses, such as performance management, equalities and Welsh language. Staff and volunteers can also access training courses through the Gwent Safeguarding Board and the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Board. Most staff are trained in Assessment, Intervention and Moving On 3 (AIM3) for working with children who display harmful sexual behaviour, and all staff recently completed training on child exploitation.

The YOS actively encourages staff development through offering management opportunities within the service and supporting staff to complete external qualifications, including social work degrees and the Professional Certificate in Effective Practice.

Do managers pay sufficient attention to staff engagement?

Staff surveys are regularly distributed across both local authorities, as well as within the YOS, and staff members are encouraged to complete them. Staff are also consulted at team meetings about any new policy or procedure that is to be introduced.

Staff are encouraged to share positive news at team meetings, and good practice is recognised. Staff and volunteers receive praise and appreciation emails from senior leaders and through supervision with their line managers. Staff and volunteers reported that they feel valued by managers and by their peers, and there is a sense that the YOS is a caring organisation where people take pride in their work. In the staff survey, of the 20 staff members who responded to every question, 15 said that the YOS always recognises exceptional work.

YOS staff and volunteers are regularly nominated for awards. This included the service winning the YJB's Hwb Doeth Award for innovative practice for one of its

projects and the service volunteers winning a Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) award for a number of consecutive years.

1.3. Partnerships and services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children.

Good

Caseload characteristics

| | |
|---|-----|
| Percentage of current caseload with emotional wellbeing or mental health issues | 17% |
| Percentage of current caseload with substance misuse issues | 39% |
| Percentage of current caseload with a statement of additional learning need or an individual development plan | 5% |

In making a judgement about partnerships and services, we take into account the answers to the following three questions:

Is there a sufficiently comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the profile of children, used by the YOT to deliver well-targeted services?

The YOS has access to a comprehensive suite of data. A performance management report is provided for the YOS management board, which includes commentary on national and local indicators and very detailed profiling and analysis. The YOS reports on the safety and wellbeing risk ratings for all assessments completed, as well as the types of intervention, the gender of the child and the relevant local authority. For cases rated as high risk, a brief outline of the child's circumstances is included. There is also a summary of safeguarding trends, including the number of multi-agency referral forms submitted and the number of children receiving care and support. The YOS also monitors the number of care-experienced children and those on a child protection plan.

Regular monitoring reports presented to the management board include a quarterly participation report and a reoffending report. Further in-depth analysis reports are also provided, and these have recently included reports on serious youth violence, disproportionality and a remand data report.

Does the YOT partnership provide the volume, range and quality of services and interventions required to meet the needs of all children?

A risk management panel is convened if a child is assessed as presenting a high or very high risk for safety and wellbeing and/or risk of harm to others. The meeting is chaired by a team manager and all YOS staff and external partner agencies involved with the child attend.

The YOS has a resettlement and reintegration panel, which is a subgroup of the management board. It was set up in 2014 to address the gaps and barriers to effective resettlement for children leaving custody. It has since widened its remit and now includes children subject to community orders who are in need of reintegration services. It is a multi-agency meeting, chaired by the service manager, which commits additional support and resources to unblock any issues that the child may

have regarding accommodation; ETE; health services; substance misuse; family services; finance and debt; and transitions to adult services.

The YOS participated in the pilot of the YJB's Enhanced Case Management (ECM) programme, which ended in July 2021. The ECM draws on a range of psychological and criminological approaches, combining cognitive theories of child development, attachment theory, desistance theory and emerging understanding on neurobiological development. The ECM model is now embedded for all YOSs across Wales through the mental health FACT (flexible assertive community treatment) teams. The YOS is also able to access the resources for a psychology-informed case discussion alongside the full-time CAMHS CNS in the YOS, who is present for each case discussion.

There is an antisocial behaviour panel, chaired by the community safety team, in both areas, and the YOS is represented on these panels. If any form of child exploitation is identified, professionals will complete an exploitation toolkit. They will then put in place a multi-agency response through safeguarding processes and procedures, including holding emergency strategy meetings. St Giles Trust works with children at risk of, or subject to, child exploitation, as well as those involved with serious youth violence. When assessing children who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour, or where there are serious concerns that they have done so, the YOS works collaboratively with children's services in both local authorities, using the AIM3 model.

The YOS incorporates the REACH project, which was developed to provide a multi-agency response to children aged eight to 17 who are at risk of offending or have displayed antisocial behaviour. The project ensures that children and families can access preventative interventions, such as substance misuse provision, family support, access to emotional mental health and wellbeing services, speech and language support, and access to community activities. Children and their families work with REACH on a voluntary basis for three to six months and any agency can refer children to the project.

The YOS has a youth respect officer, who delivers individual interventions to children who are at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse. The Youth Respect Programme focuses on 14–18-year-olds who have been identified as at risk of offending or reoffending related to domestic abuse. Complementary support is also provided to the parents or carers to ensure that change is monitored and sustainable. The youth respect officer works in Caerphilly; however, the same service is available through Blaenau Gwent's commissioning arrangements with Phoenix Domestic Abuse Service, which prioritises referrals from the YOS.

The service also has a family support worker for Caerphilly children and families. When a child becomes involved with a YOS intervention, with the parents' or carers' consent, a referral is made to the family support worker. A screening assessment is completed, and the family can receive a 12-session programme tailored to their individual needs. The same service is available in Blaenau Gwent through its Families First parenting workers and, again, any referrals from the YOS are treated as a priority.

The YOS also has a dedicated restorative approaches key worker, who works directly with care-experienced children to prevent them from being prosecuted when it is appropriate to do so. They also deliver restorative approaches training to residential unit staff, foster carers and other accommodation providers.

The service has a directory of interventions and is creative in how it works with children to address their needs. This includes the 'Road to Learning' programme, which is a course for those who have been involved in motoring offences; 'Street Doctors', which is a programme for those who have been involved in knife crime; 'Stay Safe', programme for those who have been involved in fire-setting and/or arson; a five-week course for those who have perpetrated hate crimes; and 'Respect and Protect', which is a programme for perpetrators of domestic abuse. The YOS also promotes a 'learning through play' philosophy, which means using interactive games to engage children while delivering interventions.

The YOS has two victim liaison workers who are Gwent police officers, and when victims are identified they will make the initial contact. The victim also receives a leaflet produced by the three YOSs in Gwent, which highlights the restorative justice opportunities available. These include a letter of explanation or apology, mediation, a face-to-face meeting or reparation. A victim safety assessment is done, which explores the victim's individual needs, and signposts them to other agencies for support, if necessary. A victim contact report is also completed, which outlines any injuries and the impact of the offence on the victims. With the victim's permission, this is then shared with the various panels and with the case manager, so that it can influence the detail of the victim awareness sessions with the child who has offended.

All staff and volunteers are trained in restorative approaches, and the training is repeated annually for new starters. The YOS uses a victim case audit tool and completed a number of audits during 2020/2021. Feedback from victims is included in the quarterly participation report. As outlined above, the YOS uses its two police officers as victim liaison workers. It must make sure, therefore, that this approach offers all victims the opportunity to take part in a restorative justice intervention and does not restrict some victims' engagement because of their possible pre-held assumptions about the police service.

There was a wider choice of reparation projects before Covid-19, and the YOS hopes that, eventually, all of the programmes will be reinstated. The YOS has access to 'Unit 6', where they can carry out woodwork projects, arts and crafts, and a bicycle project, where it teaches children how to fix bicycles. It also recently acquired an allotment, where children will be taught about growing produce and healthy eating. Reparation also includes making bird boxes and benches, which are distributed in the local community parks. All children receive an induction, so that projects can be matched to their interests and skills.

Feedback from the court stated that the YOS liaises well with all court users, and that staff are professional, assertive, knowledgeable and helpful. There is a system in place whereby the YOS has direct contact with a youth legal adviser, and a YOS representative attends the youth panel meeting, ensuring good communication and working relationships. The panel meeting is also used as a training opportunity when required.

Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?

Health service provision to the YOS is of a high standard. The service can access a psychologist for case discussions and have a full-time seconded CAMHS CNS. The CNS holds Friday morning consultation clinics, where referrals and cases are discussed, and they advise staff on strategies and approaches to working with

individual children. The CNS provides direct work with children and ensures that the first meeting is alongside the case manager, so that any barriers can be broken down. Children can also be referred to the 'SPACE (Single Point of Access for Children's Emotional Wellbeing) – wellbeing' panel, which enables each child to be assessed for both early intervention and specialist provision relating to their mental health and emotional wellbeing needs. The YOS also has a speech, language and communication therapist for two days per week, who has delivered training to YOS staff to enable them to screen cases effectively.

The YOS has a full-time substance misuse worker, who is also responsible for referring YOS children to appropriate community-based drug and alcohol services. Referrals are made when children need to receive a more intensive intervention or as an exit strategy to general community provision at the end of their YOS intervention. The YOS substance misuse worker provides assessment and treatment, and keeps YOS staff up to date with trends in drug use and new substances.

The YOS monitors its performance regarding children's ETE. It has a full-time ETE worker and there is an education themed YOS management board annually. Children at risk of being excluded from school are discussed at the resettlement and reintegration panel. In both areas, the YOS sends the education department a fortnightly list of all children known to the service, and this is then shared with schools, so that partnership working can begin. For 2021/2022, the average number of hours for which a school-aged child was accessing education and training provision had increased by the end of their YOS intervention for post-court cases.

For children older than school age, the local authority progression and engagement coordinators in both areas share the identification tool that allows partners to see who is at risk of not being, or is not, in ETE. This also highlights which children are known to the YOS, so that professionals can work together. In 2021/2022, the average number of hours for which a child aged over 16 was accessing ETE provision had also slightly increased by the end of their YOS intervention for out-of-court cases.

In addition to their role as victim liaison workers, the YOS police officers complete a daily check of the police database, to see if any children have been in police custody, either through arrest or voluntary attendance. They also track and monitor children for intelligence purposes, by identifying information from the police system and matching it with children known to the YOS.

The YOS has a service level agreement in place with both Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent children's services departments. There is a clear understanding, shared between all staff, about the referral process for social services intervention.

It was disappointing to see that the YOS's half-time seconded probation officer post was vacant. The skills and experience in managing risk of harm that probation officers bring to the service are therefore a gap for the YOS. However, the service was working closely with the Probation Service on its youth to adult transfers. When a child is approaching 18 years of age, their case is referred through the integrated offender management process for discussion about suitability for a transfer to adult services. If the child has ongoing identified needs, then the YOS will remain involved for the first three months of any transition period. Children being considered for a transfer are also discussed at the YOS resettlement and reintegration panel.

Involvement of children and their parents or carers

The YOS uses various methods to obtain children’s feedback, ensuring that it includes all children. The feedback includes the different activities that children have been involved in – for example, their experience of the Bureau, referral order panel, reparation, interventions and the workshop. The inspectors saw evidence of how children’s feedback had changed processes and practice. A participation report is produced and reported to the management board. It outlines the feedback that has been collated from children through self-assessments and the Viewpoint Hub.

As part of the inspection process, children are invited to participate in a text survey, and those whose cases are inspected are offered the opportunity to speak to an inspector, to give their feedback.

Inspectors spoke to two children and received a text response from four. They all felt that their YOS workers had the right skills to do the work and they said that they had been able to access the right services and support to help them stay out of trouble.

One child, who rated the YOS 10 out of 10, said:

“My case manager made me feel comfortable in doing the work and also taught me a lot”.

When asked if the YOS worker had the right skills, one child said:

“My case manager is easy to talk to and she understands me”.

1.4. Information and facilities



Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children.

Outstanding

In making a judgement about information and facilities, we take into account the answers to the following four questions:

Do the policies and guidance in place enable staff to deliver a high-quality service, meeting the needs of all children?

There is a full range of policies and guidance in place, which are reviewed annually and are accessible to staff. People are kept up to date with any changes through emails and team meetings. Information-sharing protocols are in place and understood across the partnership. There is an escalation process for all partners if they need to challenge another agency, and staff feel supported by managers in raising concerns.

Does the YOT’s delivery environment(s) meet the needs of all children and enable staff to deliver a high-quality service?

The YOS promotes a culture of caring both for its staff and for the children and families that it works with. This was evident in the way people spoke about the children they work with and in their interactions with each other.

The YOS has been based at its current office, which sits on the boundary between Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly, since 2013. It is excellent accommodation that offers a safe and calming environment both for staff and children. It is very child friendly,

with motivational quotes on the walls around the building. One room was designed for girls, reflecting their specific needs, as set out in a thematic inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation. Staff can also access a range of community-based facilities in other areas, including community centres and schools, and will visit children at home.

The YOS was able to keep its office open for staff throughout the pandemic and had a skeleton rota in place for office-based staff each day. In June 2021, it opened up its office again for face-to-face contact with children, using risk-assessed rooms and activities, Covid-19 screening questions, social distancing and the wearing of personal protective equipment.

Do the information and communications technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a high-quality service, meeting the needs of all children?

The service has access to both local authorities' databases, and relevant partners have their own access to the YOS case management system. The South East Wales emergency duty team has access to the YOS database to inform out-of-hours interventions. The YOS case management system enables the service to produce data on performance.

YOS staff had access to desktop computers and were allocated smartphones and laptop computers during the Covid-19 restrictions, when the Welsh Government wanted staff to work from home where possible. Staff also have access to tablet computers to use when working with children and families.

Are analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?

The YOS promotes a learning culture and has a robust quality assurance framework in place, which includes a peer-led assessment review group. Managers review all AssetPlus assessments, and there is a gatekeeping process for reports that are presented to the Bureau, referral order panels and court. Senior practitioners and managers use a 'QA buddy', which can be any member of staff, to help them audit cases. This approach enables all members of staff to take part in, and be responsible for, quality assuring the work of the service.

The YOS performance report, which is presented quarterly to the management board, includes an update on the quality assurance work being undertaken within the service, and this has led to themed audits taking place. For example, the YOS updated the management board with findings in relation to serious youth violence offences that had been committed by children open to the YOS during 2020/2021. The YOS also completed a victims' code self-assessment in June 2021. At the YOS's request, partner agencies will complete independent 'deep-dive' audits of cases presented to the reintegration and resettlement panel. This review looks at: whether the referral to the panel was relevant and timely; whether the identified needs and risk merited multi-agency interventions; and the contribution of partner agencies to supporting the child.

As part of its learning culture, the YOS reviews cases when serious incidents occur. It also reviews outcomes of other areas' inspections and thematic inspections, and develops action plans to improve its own practice.

Resettlement

Resettlement policy and provision

The YOS has a resettlement policy, dated 2021, and has had resettlement panels in place since 2014. As a result of the low number of children receiving custodial sentences, the remit of these panels has been extended to include children leaving YOS interventions where there are unmet needs, as well as children leaving custody.

The resettlement and reintegration panel is a subgroup of the management board and is held every six weeks. The panel is multi-agency and chaired by the YOS service manager, and pathways include support with accommodation; ETE; health services; substance misuse; family services; finance, benefits and debt; and transitions. It was evident that partners are committed to these panels in order to support effective joint working. An annual report is presented to the management board on the workings of the panel, which includes the attendance rates of partner agencies.

The YOS also has custody and resettlement practice guidance for staff to use when they have a custody case. It does not, however, set out the processes that case managers should follow when recalling children to the secure estate when they are subject to licence conditions.

There were no resettlement cases considered as part of the inspection, but staff who had managed a custodial case described communication with the secure estate as very good. Each child is allocated a resettlement worker and there are weekly conversations between the YOS and the establishment. Information exchange with the secure establishment is timely, and any adjudication outcomes are usually received within 24 hours.

Staff maintain good relationships with families and will take parents or carers to visits and facilitate video and telephone calls, so that families can stay in touch. When appropriate, staff from partnership agencies will see children in secure establishments and will liaise with their counterparts in the institution. In order to ensure continuity of care from custody to the community, they will share information and progress on interventions being completed.

YOS staff are encouraged to attend all initial planning meetings, remand review meetings and sentence review meetings, as well as to complete welfare visits. The full YOS resources are available for children in the secure estate, alongside all other service interventions. These are provided by case managers, partner agencies or specialist workers in both the YOS and the secure estate.

The YOS has good partnership links with local housing authorities and both children's services departments. Staff can also access Caerphilly County Borough Council's intensive support team, which offers provision to help maintain children in their home environment. The resettlement and reintegration panel also has a young person's homelessness officer as part of its membership.

When a child is sentenced to custody, the YOS service manager and relevant team manager will review the case and the sentence given. At the time of the inspection, some staff had completed training in resettlement work, with others due to attend in the coming months.

Diversity

Throughout our standards, we expect a personalised and responsive approach for all children, which includes taking account of their diversity and protected characteristics. Those factors may influence our judgements in specific standards. Here, we present an overall summary of the approach to diversity that we found in this YOT.

Children from the two authorities are treated equitably and staff ensure that they have access to resources based on their needs and are not restricted by the resources available in their area. The YOS is currently consulting on its draft equality and diversity policy. This includes a helpful guide to people's diversity characteristics, which helps staff to ask children and families appropriate questions.

The service completes an annual disproportionality report on ethnic minority children. It also includes other disproportionality data in its quarterly performance reports, which are presented to the management board.

The most recent disproportionality report looked at children open to the YOS during April 2020 to March 2021. There were 236 children on prevention cases, out-of-court disposals and court interventions. Out of these, 230 identified as 'white' – either White Welsh, British or European. Six children identified as ethnic minority, (compared with two in the previous year), of which four were male and two were female. The YOS will monitor this and report it to the management board.

When considering disproportionality, the YJB asks the YOS to report on children who are subject to statutory interventions. For 2020/2021, there were 51 children. Of these, one child identified as ethnic minority, which shows that children identifying as such in the statutory cohort are not over-represented.

At the time of the inspection, the YOS had 219 interventions open, of which 25 per cent were for females, 39 per cent were for those with substance misuse issues and 17 per cent were for those with emotional, mental health and wellbeing concerns. Six children had either a statement of additional learning needs or were subject to individual development plans.

In 2020, the YOS 'Be Me' project won an award for 'Best Innovative Practice'. It was created to improve the wellbeing of children, with a focus on girls. The project looks at confidence building and self-esteem through the use of beauty treatments, in partnership with a local salon. Tutorials, support and advice are provided on a one-to-one basis and children are also offered careers advice sessions. This project was led by children, following consultation and engagement with girls known to the service.

2. Court disposals

We took a detailed look at five community sentences managed by the YOS. There were no custodial sentences within the period covered by the inspection. We also conducted four interviews with the relevant case managers. We examined the quality of assessment; planning; implementation and delivery of services; and reviewing. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance, keep the child safe and keep other people safe.

HM Inspectorate of Probation's ratings panel applied professional discretion to the ratings given for the quality of planning and for implementing and delivering services. Although these were both rated as insufficient in some of the cases inspected, there was evidence that practice was strong when case managers planned work to support the child's safety and wellbeing, and manage their risk of harm to others. When delivering services, practice was strong for supporting the child's safety and wellbeing but could have been improved for managing the child's risk of harm to others. After considering all of the evidence, the panel agreed to increase the rating for planning from 'Requires improvement' to 'Good', and for implementing and delivering services from 'Inadequate' to 'Requires improvement'.

All assessments were strong in the areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others. Case managers took account of the child's attitude towards their offending and considered their personal circumstances. They focused on the child's strengths and recognised their level of maturity and motivation to change. Staff had taken the views of children and their parents or carers into account and had used available sources of information, including other assessments, to inform their own judgement. Inspectors did not always agree with the level of risk of harm to others in the cases inspected. This related to case managers not taking account of all the risk factors and therefore considering the risk to be lower than it should have been. Work with victims needed developing, as their needs and wishes were not consistently considered, and therefore an opportunity for a restorative process was missed.

All of the cases we inspected were strong when planning for a child's safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others, although work to plan appropriately for the child's desistance needed improving. There was evidence in the inspected cases that staff focused on and understood the importance of developing a working relationship with the child and motivating them to engage with planning their interventions. When planning for the child's safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others, case managers addressed their risks and involved other agencies appropriately. The victim's needs and wishes were not always considered as part of the planning process, and there was limited evidence that concerns relating to actual and potential victims were addressed. Work to set out contingency arrangements to manage the child's safety and wellbeing, and their risk of harm to others needed to improve.

There was some good evidence of multi-agency work to deliver services, especially in regard to children's social care, health service and substance misuse provision. When delivering services, however, YOS staff did not consider the child's desistance or their risk of harm to others as carefully as they considered their safety and wellbeing. There were examples where work was not focused on the intervention plan and was not being delivered in a timely manner.

Reviewing was a strong area of practice across all three areas. Case managers built on the child's strengths and considered their motivation and engagement levels. They included the views of the child and their parents or carers when considering the progress that the child had made. When reviewing how to keep the child safe and their risk of harm to others, case managers had considered information from other agencies and made the necessary changes to the ongoing plan. However, reviewing and responding to the child's diversity factors needed to improve.

Strengths

- Assessing and reviewing were strong in the areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
- Case managers built on the child's strengths.
- Planning was robust in relation to the child's safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
- Staff used available sources of information, including other assessments, to inform their own judgement.
- Staff understood the importance of developing a working relationship with the child and motivating them to engage.
- There was good evidence of multi-agency work to deliver services.
- Staff took the views of children and their parents or carers into account.

Areas for improvement

- Case managers did not always consider the victim's needs and wishes as part of the assessment and planning process, and there was limited evidence that concerns relating to actual and potential victims were addressed when planning and delivering services.
- When assessing risk of harm to others, case managers did not consistently take account all the risk factors present.
- Staff did not always consider what would support the child's desistance when putting plans in place.
- When delivering services, staff did not focus sufficiently on the child's desistance or their risk of harm to others.
- There was poor contingency planning to manage children's safety and wellbeing, and their risk of harm to others.
- Staff did not always consider the child's wider diversity factors when reviewing their progress.

Work with children sentenced by the courts will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections, we look at a sample of cases. In each of those cases, we inspect against four standards.

2.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Outstanding

Our rating¹⁸ for assessment is based on the following key questions:

| | % 'Yes' |
|---|-------------|
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance? | 100% |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe? | 100% |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe? | 100% |

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?

Assessments analysing how to support a child's desistance was a strong area of practice. In all five inspected cases, there was sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, and the assessments considered the child's attitude towards, and motivation for, their offending. Staff took account of the child's diversity issues in four out of five cases and considered their personal circumstances in all cases. Information from other agencies had been used to inform the assessment, and every assessment focused on the child's strengths and protective factors, and recognised their level of maturity, ability and motivation to change. They had involved the child and/or their parents or carers in the assessment and taken their views into account.

In one case, the needs and wishes of victims were not taken into account and therefore an opportunity for a restorative process was missed.

The factors in court orders that relate most to a child's offending are lifestyle, learning and ETE, substance misuse and their living arrangements; in all cases we inspected, the assessment analysed sufficiently how to address these factors and support desistance.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?

Assessments analysing how to keep children safe was a strong area of practice. In all cases, the risk to the child's safety and wellbeing had been identified and analysed appropriately by the case manager. The assessment used sources of information, including other assessments, and involved other agencies where appropriate in every case inspected. The appropriate controls and interventions to keep the child safe had been identified in all five cases.

Inspectors judged the case manager's assessment of the level of safety and wellbeing as reasonable in every case. Overall, the assessment analysed sufficiently how to keep the child safe in all of the inspected cases.

¹⁸ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?

Assessment to keep other people safe was a strong area of practice. The case manager had used available sources of information, including other assessments, to inform their own judgement. They had identified the appropriate controls and interventions to minimise harm presented by the child in all of the cases.

Inspectors judged the case manager's assessment of the level of risk of serious harm to others as reasonable in only three of the five cases inspected. This related to case managers not taking account of all the risk factors present and therefore considering the risk to be lower than it should have been. Overall, however, the assessment analysed sufficiently how to keep other people safe in all of the cases.

2.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Good

Our rating¹⁹ for planning is based on the following key questions:

| | % 'Yes' |
|--|------------|
| Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance? | 60% |
| Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe? | 80% |
| Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? | 80% |

Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?

Professional discretion was applied to this area of practice. In four out of the five cases inspected, staff planned the services most likely to support desistance, paying attention to appropriate timescales and sequencing. In all cases, they took account of the child's personal circumstances and social context. In four out of five cases, staff had considered the child's strengths and protective factors, level of maturity and motivation to change. Disappointingly, the victim's needs and wishes had been considered in only three out of the five cases.

Planning was proportionate to the court outcome, which meant that interventions could be completed within the timescales in all cases. Overall, planning supported the child's desistance sufficiently in only three of the five cases.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Planning that focused on keeping children safe was a strong area of practice. In all cases, the risks to a child's safety and wellbeing were addressed. Case managers used information from other agencies to inform their planning and had identified the appropriate controls and interventions to promote the safety of the child in four out of the five cases inspected. In only three cases, contingency arrangements for any changes to the level of risk were evident but, overall, planning focused on keeping the child safe in four out of the five cases.

¹⁹ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Planning to promote other people's safety by addressing the factors related to the risk of harm to others was evident in all cases. In all but one case, staff involved other agencies where appropriate. However, planning for contingency arrangements to manage the risks identified was evident in only three of the five cases inspected.

Disappointingly, planning to address concerns related to actual and potential victims was only evident in three of the five cases. Overall, planning that focused on keeping people safe was evident in four of the five cases.

2.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Requires improvement

Our rating²⁰ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

| | % 'Yes' |
|--|------------|
| Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance? | 40% |
| Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child? | 80% |
| Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people? | 60% |

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?

Professional discretion was applied to this area of practice. Delivery of services to support a child's desistance was the poorest areas of practice. An area of work that needs more consideration is the sequencing of services, where only two out the five cases inspected were judged to be sufficient. In four cases, staff had considered the child's diversity needs, and in three cases they had taken account of the child's social context, their strengths and positive factors. In all but one case, service delivery offered opportunities for access to provision when the intervention was finished.

In all cases, staff had developed and maintained an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers and had encouraged and enabled the child to comply with the interventions. Disappointingly, however, overall, support for the child's desistance was evident in only two of the five cases.

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?

Delivering services that focused on keeping children safe was a stronger area of practice. It was evident that the child's safety and wellbeing had been promoted through service delivery in all but one of the five cases inspected. In three of the

²⁰ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

cases, staff had involved other agencies in keeping children safe. Overall, service delivery supported the safety of the child in four of the five cases.

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?

Delivering services that considered how to keep other people safe was a weaker area of practice. The services delivered managed and minimised the risk of harm and staff sufficiently involved other agencies in only three of the five cases inspected. The protection of actual and potential victims had been considered in four of the five cases. Overall, inspectors judged that the safety of other people was supported sufficiently in only three of the cases.

2.4. Reviewing



| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers. | Outstanding |
|--|--------------------|

Our rating²¹ for reviewing is based on the following key questions:

| | % 'Yes' |
|---|----------------|
| Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance? | 80% |
| Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe? | 100% |
| Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? | 80% |

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?

Reviewing how to support a child's desistance was a strong area of practice. Case managers were aware that children's circumstances can change rapidly, and that this can result in an increase, or sometimes decrease, in their likelihood of reoffending, risk of harm to others or in risks to their safety and wellbeing.

Reviewing cases resulted in the identification of, and a subsequent response to, changes in the factors linked to desistance in three of the four relevant cases we inspected. Case managers built on the child's strengths and considered their personal circumstances, including their wider familial and social context, in every relevant case. Disappointingly, the review included an analysis of, and a response to, the child's diversity factors in only one case out of four where it was relevant. Case managers considered the child's motivation and engagement levels in all of the relevant cases, and in every case, the child and their parents or carers had been involved meaningfully in the process, and their views were taken into account.

In two of the three relevant cases, the review led to changes in the plan of work and, overall, four out of the five cases inspected focused sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance as part of the reviewing process.

²¹ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Reviewing how to keep children safe was a strong area of practice. Case managers identified and responded to changes in the child's safety and wellbeing. When reviewing, case managers had considered information from other agencies and made the necessary changes in the ongoing plan in all of the relevant cases. Overall, reviewing focused on keeping the child safe in all of the cases inspected.

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Reviewing a child's risk of harm to others was a strong area of practice. The case manager had identified, and responded to, changes in risk in three of the four relevant cases. Reviewing was informed by information gathered from other agencies in all but one of the relevant cases. The reviewing process had led to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to manage and minimise risks in two of the three relevant cases. Overall, reviewing focused on keeping other people safe in four of the five cases inspected.

3. Out-of-court disposals

We inspected 10 cases managed by the YOS that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of one youth conditional caution, one youth caution and eight community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in nine cases.

We examined the quality of assessment; planning; and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance, work to keep the child safe and work to keep other people safe.

We also inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for out-of-court disposals, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews.

The YOS provided diversion and prevention activities and completed AssetPlus assessments on all children referred to these services. Therefore, children and families could receive a lot of early intervention work before a child was referred for an out-of-court disposal. At the time of the inspection, the YOS's caseload showed that most of its work was with children on community resolutions, with only a small number going to the Bureau and receiving a youth caution or youth conditional caution.

The Bureau was the decision-making panel for out-of-court disposals, and because of its set-up, should have been viewed as part of the criminal justice system. It consisted of a police sergeant, a YOS senior practitioner or team manager, a community panel member and the YOS police officer, who could also represent the views of the victim. It worked in a similar way to referral order panels and courtrooms, and was not a multi-agency panel. At this stage, however, children were not part of the criminal justice system and could be diverted away. The panel was not set up to recognise this, and panel members should have included those agencies that were focused on the safeguarding and welfare of children, as well as those that were part of the criminal justice system.

Although an AssetPlus assessment was completed on all children, the Bureau only received a summary report and did not have access to all the information relevant to the child and their family. Therefore, detailed information from the assessment was not consistently presented to the Bureau. This made it more difficult to ensure that children were receiving an outcome that supported their individual needs, and that any diversity concerns were recognised. The YOS captured and collated the views of children who had attended the Bureau, and had examples of how this feedback had helped the service make changes to the process.

Although there were issues with the Bureau process, overall, assessment by YOS staff was a strong area of practice for out-of-court disposals in all three areas. Case managers appropriately analysed the child's diversity needs and considered their levels of maturity and motivation to change. They took account of the victim's needs and wishes, and used available sources of information, including other assessments, to inform their judgements. Risks to the child's safety and wellbeing, and their risk of harm to others were identified; however, inspectors found that the classification was not always reasonable and that case managers did not consider all of the risk factors, and therefore judged the risk to be lower than it should have been.

Planning was a strong area of practice. There was evidence in the inspected cases that staff focused on understanding the child's learning style and individual needs when planning interventions. The risks had been identified and analysed

appropriately when planning for a child's safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others, and staff had considered the victim's needs and wishes. However, contingency arrangements for any changes to the level of risk were not consistently evident in all cases.

Implementation and delivery of services was also strong across the three areas. Case managers considered the child's wider social context, developed and maintained an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers, and encouraged and enabled the child to comply with the interventions. They also focused on the child being able to access mainstream services when their intervention ended. This included, for example, involving the REACH project and other agencies in delivering services – for example, substance misuse and CAMHS services – and they had used multi-agency meetings to ensure that all professionals were up to date with the child's progress. When delivering services in relation to the child's risk of harm to others, case managers had not considered the protection of actual and potential victims in every relevant case.

Strengths

- An AssetPlus assessment was completed on all children who became known to the YOS.
- Assessment, planning and delivering services for out-of-court disposals were strong areas of practice in all three areas.
- Case managers had appropriately analysed the child's diversity needs and considered their levels of maturity and motivation to change.
- Staff focused on understanding the child's learning style and their individual needs when planning interventions.
- The victim's needs and wishes had been considered in relevant cases.
- Case managers developed an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers.
- Case managers focused on ensuring that the child would be able to access mainstream services when their intervention ended.
- Staff used multi-agency meetings to ensure that all professionals were up to date with the child's progress.

Areas for improvement

- The Bureau was not multi-agency, and it was not consistently given all the assessment information relevant to children and their families.
- Staff had not identified all the potential risk factors in some cases.
- The classification of risk to a child's safety and wellbeing, and their risk of harm to others was not always reasonable when all the available information was taken into account.
- Contingency arrangements were needed in planning to support the child's safety and wellbeing, and manage their risk of harm to others.

- Case managers had not considered the protection of actual and potential victims in every relevant case.

Work with children receiving out-of-court disposals will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections, we look at a sample of cases. In each of those cases, we inspect against four standards.

3.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Outstanding

Our rating²² for assessment is based on the following key questions:

| | % 'Yes' |
|---|----------------|
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance? | 100% |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe? | 100% |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe? | 90% |

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?

Assessments analysing how to support a child's desistance was a strong area of practice. In all cases, there was sufficient analysis of offending behaviour and the assessments considered the child's personal circumstances and their strengths and protective factors. In all but one case, staff took account of the child's levels of maturity and motivation to change, and had involved the child and their parents or carers in the assessment and taken their views into account.

In every case, there was an appropriate analysis of the child's diversity needs, and case managers had used information from other agencies to inform their assessment. The victim's needs and wishes had been taken into account in all the relevant cases.

The factors in out-of-court disposals that relate most to a child's offending are learning and ETE, lifestyle and substance misuse, and in all of the 10 cases we inspected, the assessment analysed sufficiently how to address these factors and support desistance.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?

Assessments analysing how to keep children safe was a strong area of practice. In all but one case, the risk to the child's safety and wellbeing had been identified and analysed appropriately by the case manager. The assessment used sources of


²² The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

information, including other assessments, and involved other agencies where appropriate in every case we inspected.

Inspectors judged the case manager’s assessment of the level of safety and wellbeing as reasonable in eight out of the 10 cases. Where they disagreed, this was because of case managers not taking account of all the risk factors, and therefore considering the risk to be lower than it should have been. Overall, however, the assessment analysed sufficiently how to keep the child safe in all of the inspected cases.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?

Assessment to keep other people safe was a strong area of practice. All but one of the cases clearly identified and analysed the risk of harm to others. Similarly, in nearly all of the cases staff had used available sources of information, including other assessments, to inform their own judgement. Inspectors judged the case manager’s assessment of the level of risk of serious harm to others as reasonable in only seven out of the 10 cases inspected, with three cases having a lower risk factor than our inspector determined. Overall, the assessment analysed sufficiently how to keep other people safe in all but one of the cases.

| | |
|---|---|
| 3.2. Planning |  |
| Planning is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers. | Outstanding |

Our rating²³ for planning is based on the following key questions:

| | % 'Yes' |
|--|----------------|
| Does planning focus on supporting the child’s desistance? | 100% |
| Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe? | 100% |
| Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? | 90% |

Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child’s desistance?

Planning to support a child’s desistance was a strong area of practice. In all cases, staff planned the services most likely to support desistance, paying attention to appropriate timescales and sequencing, and took account of the child’s personal circumstances and social context. In nearly all cases, when planning for a child’s desistance, case managers considered the child’s strengths and protective factors. Staff took account of the child’s diversity issues and their level of maturity and motivation to change in eight out of 10 cases.

In all but one case, consideration had been given to the opportunities for the child to integrate into the community and access mainstream services after completing their out-of-court disposal. Every relevant case showed evidence that the victim’s needs and wishes had been considered, and in all but one case, staff had involved the child and their parents or carers in the planning process.

²³ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

Planning was proportionate to the disposal type, which meant that interventions could be completed within the timescales, in all cases.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Planning that focused on keeping children safe was a strong area of practice. In every case, planning promoted the child’s safety and wellbeing, and in all relevant cases, information from other agencies was included to inform planning. In two out of the 10 cases inspected, contingency arrangements for any changes to the level of risk were not evident but, overall, planning focused on keeping the child safe in all of the cases.

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Planning to keep other people safe was a strong area of practice. Planning to promote other people’s safety by addressing the factors related to the risk of harm to others was evident in all but one case, and case managers had involved other agencies in every case. However, planning for contingency arrangements to manage the risks identified was not evident in two of the 10 cases inspected.

Planning to address concerns related to actual and potential victims was evident in nearly all of the relevant cases. Overall, planning that focused on keeping people safe was evident in nine of the 10 cases.

3.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Outstanding

Our rating²⁴ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

| | % 'Yes' |
|---|------------|
| Does service delivery effectively support the child’s desistance? | 100% |
| Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child? | 100% |
| Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people? | 90% |

Does service delivery focus sufficiently on supporting the child’s desistance?

Delivery of services to support a child’s desistance was a strong area of practice. In all cases, interventions to support desistance had been sequenced appropriately and delivered in good time. In eight out of the 10 cases inspected, the case manager had considered the child’s diversity needs, and in all but one case the child’s opportunities for community integration and access to mainstream services had been taken into account.

²⁴ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

In every case, staff considered the child's wider social context, developed and maintained an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers, and had encouraged and enabled the child to comply with the interventions.

Interventions proportionate to the disposal were evident in all cases and, overall, support for the child's desistance was sufficient in all 10 cases.

Does service delivery focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Delivering services that considered how to keep children safe was a strong area of practice. It was evident that the child's safety and wellbeing had been promoted through service delivery in all of the cases inspected. In eight of the nine relevant cases, staff had involved other agencies in keeping children safe. Overall, service delivery supported the safety of the child in every case.

Does service delivery focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

Delivering services that considered how to keep other people safe was a strong area of practice. The services delivered managed and minimised the risk of harm in all but one case, although staff had not considered the protection of actual and potential victims in one of the relevant cases. Overall, inspectors judged that the safety of other people was supported sufficiently in nine of the 10 cases inspected.

3.4. Out-of-court disposal policy and provision



There is a high-quality, evidence-based out-of-court disposal service in place that promotes diversion and supports sustainable desistance.

Requires improvement

In making a judgement about out-of-court disposal policy and provision, we take into account the answers to the following three questions:

Is there a policy in place for out-of-court provision that promotes appropriate diversion and supports sustainable desistance?

The YOS provided diversion and prevention activities through various programmes and projects across both local authorities, ensuring that children and families could receive appropriate early intervention work. The inspection found that the YOS was very proactive in engaging children and families before they received an out-of-court disposal. The REACH programme ensured that children had an AssetPlus completed at an early stage, so that preventative interventions could be put in place if needed.

There was a Gwent out-of-court disposal framework and Bureau process 2019-2022. The policy set out an escalation process in the event of disagreements about outcomes arising, although these situations had rarely happened.

The out-of-court disposal framework incorporated a two-tiered approach. The first tier was for a child who had been arrested for their first offence, been identified as committing the offence and accepted responsibility. In these cases, if the child agreed, the police would consider them for a community resolution. The child was then referred to the YOS police officer for a period of 28 days. A member of the YOS management team had to approve any agreement for a child receiving a second or third community resolution. The second tier was for a child who had been arrested or taken part in a voluntary interview, been identified as committing the offence, with

sufficient evidence to charge them, and they had accepted responsibility. In these cases, if the child agreed, the police would consider them for a referral to the Bureau. The outcome from the Bureau could be a youth caution or a youth conditional caution.

The Bureau was the decision-making panel for out-of-court disposals. It should have been viewed as part of the criminal justice system because of the way it was set up, as it worked in a similar way to referral order panels and courtrooms, and was not a multi-agency panel. At this stage, however, children were not part of the criminal justice system and could be diverted away. The panel was not set up to recognise this, and panel members should have included those agencies that were focused on the safeguarding and welfare of children, as well as those that were part of the criminal justice system.

The Bureau members only received a summarised AssetPlus report and so did not have access to all the information relevant to the child and their family. Therefore, detailed information from the assessment was not consistently presented to the Bureau. This made it more difficult to ensure that children were receiving an outcome that supported their individual needs, and that any diversity concerns were recognised.

At the time of the inspection, the YOS's caseload showed that most of its work was with children on community resolutions, with only a small number going to the Bureau and receiving a youth caution or youth conditional caution. However, the Bureau and its procedures needed to be reviewed to make sure that the child's needs were being met at each stage of the process.

Does out-of-court disposal provision promote diversion and support sustainable desistance?

In Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly, the YOS police officers received a notification about a potential out-of-court disposal through the police database and reviewed the incident to ensure that it fitted the criteria. They produced a regular report on the quality of the information they received, in order to identify any reoccurring problems that could be addressed with the referring police officers. If the criteria were met, they liaised with a YOS team manager, who allocated the case. Checks were made with other agencies, such as children's services and education providers, to see if the child was known and had had any previous contact with the YOS. If the case was going to the Bureau, a date was set.

At this stage, the YOS police officer contacted the victim, to make sure that their views were represented in all assessments and reports. The case manager then completed an AssetPlus assessment and liaised with the YOS police officers regarding the child's views on any involvement in a restorative process. All interventions available to children on statutory orders were available to those receiving an out-of-court disposal.

It was expected that an out-of-court disposal would be completed within three months, although a disposal could stay open on a voluntary basis for longer if needed. When a child did not comply with their disposal, efforts were made to support engagement.

Are the out-of-court disposal policy and provision regularly assessed and updated to ensure effectiveness and maintain alignment with the evidence base?

The Gwent out-of-court disposal framework and Bureau process was reviewed by the partners on a biannual basis. Partners included Gwent Police, Monmouthshire and Torfaen YOS, Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly YOS, Newport YOS, the Crown Prosecution Service and Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service. In addition, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner had in place a scrutiny panel that included the courts, magistrates, police and the three YOSs in Gwent. Its purpose was to conduct reviews of the decision-making process and the rationale for out-of-court disposals being made.

As part of the YOS performance report and the monitoring of various grants that the YOS received, reports were generated to analyse out-of-court disposal work. The YOS also produced an annual report looking at children who had been issued with a second or third community resolution. The YOS captured and collated the views of children who had attended the Bureau, and had examples of how this feedback had helped the service make changes to the process.

Annexe 1: Methodology

HM Inspectorate of Probation standards

The standards against which we inspect youth offending services are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. These standards are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with children who have offended.²⁵

The inspection methodology is summarised below, linked to the three domains in our standards framework. We focused on obtaining evidence against the standards, key questions and prompts in our inspection framework.

Domain one: organisational delivery

The youth offending service submitted evidence in advance, and the head of Caerphilly children's services and head of Blaenau Gwent children's services delivered a presentation covering the following areas:

- How do organisational delivery arrangements in this area make sure that the work of your YOS is as effective as it can be, and that the life chances of children who have offended are improved?
- What are your priorities for further improving these arrangements?

During the main fieldwork phase, we conducted 13 interviews with case managers, asking them about their experiences of training, development, management supervision and leadership. We held various meetings, which allowed us to triangulate evidence and information. In total, we conducted 12 meetings, which included meetings with managers, partner organisations and staff. The evidence collected under this domain was judged against our published ratings characteristics.²⁶

Domain two: court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. Forty per cent of the cases selected were those of children who had received court disposals six to nine months earlier, enabling us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

We examined five court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of five), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm, and risk to safety and wellbeing classifications matched those in the eligible population.

²⁵ HM Inspectorate's standards are available here:
<https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

Domain three: out-of-court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. Sixty per cent of cases selected were those of children who had received out-of-court disposals three to five months earlier. This enabled us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, and implementation and delivery. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

We examined 10 out-of-court disposals. The sample size was set based on the proportion of out-of-court disposal cases in the YOT.

Annexe 2: Inspection data

In this inspection, we conducted a detailed examination of a sample of five court disposals and 10 out-of-court disposals. In each of those cases, we inspect against standards regarding assessment, planning and implementation/delivery. For court disposals, we also look at reviewing. For each standard, inspectors answer a number of key questions about different aspects of quality, including whether there was sufficient analysis of the factors related to offending; the extent to which children were involved in assessment and planning; and whether enough was done to assess the level of risk of harm posed, and to manage that risk.

To score an 'Outstanding' rating for the sections on court disposals or out-of-court disposals, 80 per cent or more of the cases we analyse have to be assessed as sufficient. If between 65 per cent and 79 per cent are judged to be sufficient, then the rating is 'Good' and if between 50 per cent and 64 per cent are judged to be sufficient, then a rating of 'Requires improvement' is applied. Finally, if less than 50 per cent are sufficient, then we rate this as 'Inadequate'. Resettlement cases are not separately rated; the data is for illustrative purposes only.

The rating for each standard is aligned to the banding at the key question level where the lowest proportion of cases were judged to be sufficient, as we believe that each key question is an integral part of the standard. Therefore, if we rate three key questions as 'Good' and one as 'Inadequate', the overall rating for that standard is 'Inadequate'.

| Lowest banding (proportion of cases judged to be sufficient key question level) | Rating (standard) |
|--|----------------------|
| Minority: <50% | Inadequate |
| Too few: 50-64% | Requires improvement |
| Reasonable majority: 65-79% | Good |
| Large majority: 80%+ | Outstanding ☆ |

Additional scoring rules are used to generate the overall YOT rating. Each of the 12 standards are scored on a 0–3 scale in which 'Inadequate' = 0; 'Requires improvement' = 1; 'Good' = 2; and 'Outstanding' = 3. Adding these scores produces a total score ranging from 0 to 36, which is banded to produce the overall rating, as follows:

- 0–6 = Inadequate
- 7–18 = Requires improvement
- 19–30 = Good
- 31–36 = Outstanding.

Domain one standards, the qualitative standard in domain three (standard 3.4) and the resettlement standard (standard 4.1) are judged using predominantly qualitative evidence.

The resettlement standard is rated separately and does not influence the overall YOT rating. We apply a limiting judgement, whereby any YOT that receives an

'Inadequate' rating for the resettlement standard is unable to receive an overall 'Outstanding' rating, regardless of how they are rated against the core standards. Where there are no relevant resettlement cases, we do not apply a rating to resettlement work.

Data from inspected cases:²⁷

| 2.1. Assessment (court disposals) | |
|---|-------------|
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance? | |
| a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's attitudes towards and motivations for their offending? | 100% |
| b) Does assessment sufficiently analyse diversity issues? | 80% |
| c) Does assessment consider personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child? | 100% |
| d) Does assessment utilise information held by other agencies? | 100% |
| e) Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors? | 100% |
| f) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child? | 60% |
| g) Is enough attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and their likelihood of engaging with the court disposal? | 100% |
| h) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims, and opportunities for restorative justice? | 80% |
| i) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account? | 80% |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe? | |
| a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child? | 100% |
| b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate? | 100% |
| c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child? | 100% |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe? | |

²⁷ Some questions do not apply in all cases.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk? | 80% |
| b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve other agencies where appropriate? | 100% |
| c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child? | 100% |

2.2. Planning (court disposals)

Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?

| | |
|---|-------------|
| a) Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing? | 80% |
| b) Does planning sufficiently address diversity issues? | 60% |
| c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child? | 100% |
| d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary? | 80% |
| e) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary? | 80% |
| f) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims? | 60% |
| g) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account? | 100% |

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

| | |
|---|-------------|
| a) Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks? | 100% |
| b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child? | 80% |
| c) Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child? | 80% |
| d) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified? | 60% |

| Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? | |
|--|-------------|
| a) Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors? | 100% |
| b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate? | 80% |
| c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims? | 60% |
| d) Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety of other people? | 60% |
| e) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified? | 60% |

2.3. Implementation and delivery (court disposals)

| Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance? | |
|--|-------------|
| a) Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales? | 40% |
| b) Does service delivery account for the diversity issues of the child? | 80% |
| c) Does service delivery reflect the wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents or carers, or significant others? | 60% |
| d) Does service delivery build upon the child's strengths and enhance protective factors? | 60% |
| e) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers? | 100% |
| f) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to services post-supervision? | 80% |
| g) Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT? | 100% |
| h) Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate? | 20% |
| Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child? | |
| a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child? | 80% |
| b) Is the involvement of other organisations in keeping the child safe sufficiently well-coordinated? | 60% |

| Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people? | |
|---|------------|
| a) Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm? | 60% |
| b) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims? | 80% |
| c) Is the involvement of other agencies in managing the risk of harm sufficiently well-coordinated? | 60% |

2. 4. Reviewing (court disposals)

| Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance? | |
|--|-------------|
| a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors linked to desistance? | 60% |
| b) Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building upon the child's strengths and enhancing protective factors? | 100% |
| c) Does reviewing include analysis of, and respond to, diversity factors? | 20% |
| d) Does reviewing consider the personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child? | 100% |
| d) Does reviewing consider motivation and engagement levels and any relevant barriers? | 80% |
| e) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in reviewing their progress and engagement, and are their views taken into account? | 100% |
| f) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to support desistance? | 40% |
| Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe? | |
| a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to safety and wellbeing? | 80% |
| b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child? | 80% |
| c) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child? | 60% |
| Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? | |
| a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to risk of harm? | 60% |

| | |
|--|------------|
| b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the risk of harm? | 60% |
| c) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan all of work to manage and minimise the risk of harm? | 40% |

3.1. Assessment (out-of-court disposals)

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?

| | |
|---|-------------|
| a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's acknowledgement of responsibility for, attitudes towards and motivations for their offending? | 100% |
| b) Does assessment sufficiently analyse diversity issues? | 100% |
| c) Does assessment consider personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child? | 100% |
| d) Does assessment utilise information held by other agencies? | 100% |
| e) Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors? | 100% |
| f) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child? | 80% |
| g) Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change? | 90% |
| h) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims, and opportunities for restorative justice? | 80% |
| i) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account? | 90% |

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?

| | |
|--|-------------|
| a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child? | 90% |
| b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate? | 100% |

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?

| | |
|---|------------|
| a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk? | 90% |
| b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including any other assessments that have been completed, and other evidence of behaviour by the child? | 90% |

3.2. Planning (out-of-court disposals)

Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?

| | |
|--|-------------|
| a) Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing? | 100% |
| b) Does planning sufficiently address diversity issues? | 80% |
| c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child? | 100% |
| d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary? | 90% |
| e) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary? | 80% |
| f) Does planning take sufficient account of opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services following completion of out-of-court disposal work? | 90% |
| g) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victims? | 90% |
| h) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account? | 90% |

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

| | |
|---|-------------|
| a) Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks? | 100% |
| b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (for example, child protection or care plans) concerning the child? | 80% |
| c) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified? | 80% |

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

| | |
|--|-------------|
| a) Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors? | 90% |
| b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate? | 100% |
| c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims? | 89% |

| | |
|--|------------|
| d) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified? | 80% |
|--|------------|

3.3. Implementation and delivery (out-of-court disposals)

Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?

| | |
|--|-------------|
| a) Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales? | 100% |
| b) Does service delivery account for the diversity issues of the child? | 80% |
| c) Does service delivery reflect the wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents or carers, or significant others? | 100% |
| d) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers? | 100% |
| e) Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT? | 100% |
| f) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services? | 90% |

Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?

| | |
|---|-------------|
| a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child? | 100% |
| b) Is the involvement of other agencies in keeping the child safe sufficiently well utilised and coordinated? | 80% |

Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?

| | |
|---|------------|
| a) Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm? | 90% |
| b) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims? | 80% |



SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND NOVEMBER 2022

**SUBJECT: CO-OPTED MEMBERS SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE VACANCIES**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Following the Local Government Elections in May 2022 the three co-opted member positions became vacant. Council agreed in May 2017 that the positions would be on a fixed term to run concurrently with the term of office for each respective administration. In line with the agreed process GAVO were contacted and asked to circulate to User and Carer Groups in the County Borough to nominate persons interested in the positions. Therefore, Social Services Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the responses received and approve the members to sit on the Social Services Co-opted Member Appointments Sub-Committee.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Social Services Scrutiny Committee are asked to agree the members to sit on the Social Services Co-opted Member Appointments Sub-Committee. Previously the Sub-committee consisted of the Chair, Vice Chair and one additional Scrutiny Committee Member.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To agree and appoint three members to sit on the Social Services Co-opted Member Appointments Sub-Committee as outlined in point 4.1.
- 3.2 To recommend to Council AGM that the ABUHB co-opted position is removed.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Following the Local Government Elections in May 2022 the three co-opted member positions became vacant. Council agreed in May 2017 the process for appointment of non-voting co-opted members. It was also agreed that a Co-opted Member

Appointments Sub-Committee would be established to consist of the Chair, Vice Chair and one nominated committee member. The Sub-Committee will consider all nominated persons and select a shortlist for interview where they will determine the nominees experience and skills. Following the interview the Sub-Committee will make a recommendation to the Scrutiny Committee. The interview panel is also permitted to suggest unsuccessful interviewees as reserves, should future vacancies arise.

- 4.2 The process to fill the vacant positions on the scrutiny committee are to circulate an invitation via GAVO to User and Carer Groups in the County Borough and seek nominations. Therefore, a letter was circulated in July 2022 inviting nominations. Organisations were asked to submit a nomination in writing setting out the nominees' personal details along with their skills, experience and qualifications for the role. The groups were prompted a second time to send in nominations for the roles before the deadline.
- 4.3 The outcome of the invitation to User and Carer groups was only one nomination, from Alzheimer's Society Cymru was received. After consulting with the Chair and Vice Chair it was suggested that we try again and seek additional nominations.
- 4.4 The co-opted positions are offered for a fixed term to run concurrently with the term of office for each respective administration. They may then seek re-nomination, subject to the agreed selection process outlined above, this is also to be applied to for any future vacancies as and when they occur.
- 4.5 Therefore the purpose of this report is to update the Social Services Scrutiny Committee also seek the nominations for the membership of the Social Services Co-opted Member Appointments Sub-Committee.
- 4.6 A further matter for consideration by Social Services Scrutiny Committee is the co-opted member position held by a representative of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB). This position has been held since the previous scrutiny committee (Health Social Care and Wellbeing) was established.
- 4.7 The ABUHB co-opted position was established because the Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee was aligned to the former Community Strategy which is no longer relevant. The report to Council AGM in May 2017 confirmed the position would continue and allow for flexibility to take in account for changes on personnel. However, in effect although there is a nominated representative they have not attended for several years. Members are therefore asked if they wish to recommend to Council that this position is terminated. The ABUHB representative has been contacted to seek her views and she has no objection to the position being removed.

4.8 **Conclusion**

The report sets out the process to appoint to the Social Services Co-opted Member positions. In line with point 4.1 of this report Social Services Scrutiny Committee agree the membership of the Social Services Co-opted Member Appointments Sub-Committee shall be the Chair, Vice Chair and one nominated committee Member. Social Services Scrutiny committee is also asked to consider recommending to Council that the ABUHB co-opted position is removed.

5. ASSUMPTIONS

- 5.1 It is a matter for the scrutiny committee to decide who will be appointed to the Social Services Co-opted Member Appointments Sub-Committee. Social Services Scrutiny Committee can make a recommendations to Council on terminating co-opted positions.

6. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 This report does not require an Integrated Impact Assessment as it relates to a procedural matter agreed by Council on 18th May 2017.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications not contained in the report

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications not contained in the report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 There are no consultation responses not contained in the report.

10. STATUTORY POWER

- 10.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.
10.2 Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

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Councillor Donna Cushing, Chair Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Marina Chacon-Dawson, Vice Chair Social Services Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers: Report to Annual Council 18th May 2017 Co-opted Scrutiny Committee Members Agenda Item 16

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol