



HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 25TH OCTOBER 2016

SUBJECT: INFORMATION ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE SERVICE

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information regarding the development and performance of the Information, Advice and Assistance Service (IAA Service) as requested by Scrutiny Committee.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report provides an overview of the development of the IAA Service. The report notes successes, issues encountered and how these were resolved together with performance information.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SS&WB Act) places a duty on local authorities to provide an IAA Service.
- 3.2 Caerphilly County Borough Council Social Services Commissioning Strategy (2015 - 2020) identifies the IAA Service as the critical entry point to Children's and Adults Services enabling early intervention and access to preventative support to reduce the need for managed care and support.
- 3.3 In developing the IAA Service the impact of the Medium Term Financial Plan was considered and savings were made.

4. THE REPORT

The SS&WB Act and the development of the IAA Service

- 4.1 The SS&WB Act, implemented in April 2016, requires local authorities and their partners to make significant changes to current assessment and eligibility practice, with a move away from identifying what services an individual needs to an emphasis on what care and support a person requires to achieve the personal outcomes that matter to them. The aim is to streamline assessments while recognising the different requirements of children and adults.
- 4.2 The SS&WB Act, has at its core 4 main principles:
- People - individuals have a voice in and control over achieving their outcomes;

- Wellbeing - supporting people to achieve their own well-being;
- Prevention - increase in early intervention and preventative services that minimises the risk of escalating and critical need;
- Collaboration - stronger partnership working between all organisations and agencies.

- 4.3 The SS&WB Act specifically places a duty on local authorities to establish, deliver and maintain a service for providing people within its local authority area with information, advice and assistance relating to the care and support for adults, children and carers.
- 4.4 The IAA Service must promote early intervention and prevention to ensure that people of all ages can be better supported to achieve their personal outcomes, and explore options for meeting their care and support needs. The IAA Service should be considered to be a preventative service in its own right through the provision of high quality and timely information, advice and assistance.
- 4.5 In 2014, when the need for the Local Authority to provide an IAA Service was identified the opportunity was taken to reconfigure the access points for Social Services to respond to the demands of the SS&WB Act. Prior to this Caerphilly Social Services had operated two well established "front door" teams i.e. the Children's Services Contact and Referral Team (C&RT) and the Adults Services Duty and Information Team (ASDIT). Each team had a Team Manager and Senior Practitioner and a team of experienced Duty Officers located in the Foxes Lane offices. To be SS&WB Act compliant a decision was taken to combine the two teams to form the IAA Service under one Team Manager which placed Caerphilly in a good position to develop an IAA Service. This reconfiguration resulted in the reduction in staffing establishment of one Team Manager and three Duty Officer posts as efficiencies were identified.
- 4.6 The IAA Service staffing establishment comprises of one Team Manager and two Senior Social Workers and 14 Duty Officers who are divided into separate adults and children's duty teams. During the development of the service consideration was given to whether Duty Officers should deliver a response across the IAA Service for Adults and Children's Services enquiries. The advantages of such an approach were to increase resilience and knowledge base and a number of duty officers were given the opportunity to do so. However, given the diverse nature of working across Children's and Adults Services and the range of specialist knowledge required in each service area, a decision was reached to retain the model of specialist IAA Adult Duty Officers and IAA Children's Duty Officers. Each Team is supported by a specialist Children's and Adults Senior Social Worker who can provide relevant specialist advice and guidance. However, the joint team retains the advantage of ensuring that there is a common approach to the interface with citizens.

Community Connector Service

- 4.7 In addition to the team as described above, the Community Connector Service is co-located and line managed within the IAA Service. The Community Connector Service comprises of a Senior Community Connector, four Community Connectors plus a Carers Support Worker. The Service was funded from the Welsh Government Intermediate Care Fund on a fixed term basis from April 2014 – March 2015 and since April 2015 the Team has gained permanent funding.
- 4.8 Community Connectors provide support and advice to vulnerable adults and their families to enhance their wellbeing and prevent social isolation. These posts are essential in ensuring the effective delivery of preventative agenda within the IAA Service and contribute to the delivery of the SS&WB Act by:
- Supporting Social Services Directorate to develop innovative strategies that will enable citizens to enjoy more independent lives within their communities
 - To develop effective community links and networks and promote partnerships to create community based solutions that will increase their ability to have choice and control over the way they receive support

- To support empowerment through information, advice and local opportunities
- Improve social and emotional wellbeing
- Reduce social isolation
- Promote independence
- Reduce social and emotional isolation and loneliness
- Empower people to use existing community based resources and facilities through proactive public awareness sessions, social media opportunities and face to face activities
- Develop and disseminate knowledge of local groups, activities and networks

4.9 The Community Connector Service is evolving in line with the developments of the SS&WB Act and evaluation methods of this relatively new service are under development to ensure its effectiveness of service delivery to the citizens of Caerphilly. The Community Connectors will continue to offer support, information and advice to people and carers to try and help them to help themselves which in turn will prevent people unnecessary accessing statutory services.

What Matters Conversations

4.10 In December 2016 the Social Services Improvement Agency identified Caerphilly's IAA Service as a pilot site to develop the skills for front line duty staff. The long term ambition of this work was to develop a consistent experience and engagement with citizens to assist in the "what matters conversation" with the focus reflecting a far more co-productive approach to addressing presenting issues. This work is ongoing and the final product will become part of the Care Council for Wales Framework on training under the SS&WB. This work was undertaken with officers from the Children's and Adult Duty Teams and the SSIA were very complimentary about the teams experience, dynamism and positive engagement.

IAA Service Citizen Feedback

4.11 A significant number of positive comments, letters and thank you cards have been received from citizen's who have been supported by the IAA Service.

- **Community Connector Service.**

Mrs D. who was socially isolated with a number of health problems who had previously refused help wrote the following. "I owe you a big thank you for what you have done for me. When I opened the door and you introduced yourself I thought, please go away, but you are the best thing that happened to me.....when I go to sleep now I no longer pray I never wake up again. I would never have asked for help, but thank God I met you. If there were more people like you in this world it would be a better place."

- Report received from a social worker for Mrs J who was very complimentary about her community connector and the service provided to her husband.

- **IAA Service Adults**

Thank you card which read "Thank you so much for discussing my needs and my mam's it was so nice to have someone who understands my problems and what I have been going through"

- Call from an Adult who was subject to significant domestic abuse. Anonymised. "You should be very proud of what you did for me and so should your manager. I will never forget what you have done for me, it was outstanding."

4.12 The Table below shows the small number of Complaints received by Social Services, Customer Services Team. All complaints were dealt with at Stage One of the complaints procedure. All complaints were Not Upheld.

	ASDIT	C&RT
2012/13	1	2
2013/14	1	5
2014/15	0	1
2015/16	0	2

Performance Information

- 4.13 There is one nationally reported Key Performance Indicator (SCC006) for the function completed by IAA (previously C&RT) in relation to Children's Services. This indicator relates to the time taken to make a decision when a referral is made to Children's Services, for the last four years decisions have been made on 100% of referrals within one day. This is an important indicator that demonstrates that referrals to Children's Services are consistently reviewed and relevant decisions made in a timely way.

Percentage of IAA Children's Services referral decisions made in 24 hours	
2012/13	100%
2013/14	100%
2014/15	100%
2015/16	100%

- 4.14 The table below represents total number of contacts received by the Adults Duty Team and the Children's Team over the past four years. Clearly contacts for the Children's Duty Team have remained relatively constant over this period which has been due to the consistent process of how contacts are managed with the team. However, it can be clearly noted that the number of contacts for Adult Services has significantly reduced. This is an expected decrease in contacts which is due to changes made to the way in which information was previously managed with in Adults Services.

Year	Total Contacts received by IAA Adults Team	Total Contacts received by IAA Children's Team
2012/13	27893	8067
2013/14	27979	8045
2014/15	19049	8133
2015/16	12853	7993

- 4.15 Since the development of the IAA service there have been significant changes to the way in which Contacts have been recorded and the way in which the IAA Service interacts with other directorates with Caerphilly CBC, and external partner agencies. The Start Team have been involved in reviewing the work of the IAA service by undertaking a systems thinking approach and will continue to do so to increase efficiency and to provide a more prompt service to citizens and other users of the IAA Service. Previously the ASDIT team undertook a significant proportion of "administrative tasks" which now have alternative solutions. These changes have had a significant impact on capacity. The effect of the reduced number of contacts is that Duty Officers have time to talk to citizens to engage with callers to the service and have a conversation about "what matters" and to work in a collaborative and co-productive approach to the presenting issues, enabling people where appropriate to meet their own needs.
- 4.16 Changes have been made in relation to the ability to respond to callers via telephone to the IAA Service. Working patterns of staff have changed so they are available to answer calls from public and professionals when phone lines are live. In addition the answerphone had been utilised by the Adult Services team but this was switched off. It became clear that a disproportionate amount of time was taken up in responding to answer phone messages, frequently the caller didn't leave their contact number, or was unavailable when the duty

officer returned the call resulting in several time consuming calls to try to contact the original referrer. On occasion important information was left without correct contact details. Whilst duty officers were responding to answer phone messages they were unavailable to answer calls. The answer phone system also gave the impression that when a caller left an urgent message then it would be dealt with.

- 4.17 It was decided therefore that Adults Duty Officers would operate in the same way as the Children's Duty Officers and move to an open phone line. This ensures staff are available to deal with "live calls". When all phone lines are busy the caller receives a message that all duty officers are busy dealing with enquiries and to call back later. This ensures that the caller can make the decision to make alternative calls where there may be an urgent situation. For the reasons outlined above Caerphilly Customer Services do not use answer phone services.
- 4.18 In response to a concern that call were not being answered in a timely way, IT undertook a monitoring exercise and confirmed there were no long waiting periods and no lost calls. In addition, as part of the Start Team programme of work, the IAA Adult Duty Officers were asked to conduct a survey of telephone callers to establish whether changes made had any impact on the teams ability to answer incoming calls promptly. Duty officers were required to ask callers whether they had any difficulty in contacting the service. This work was undertaken in the week commencing 30th May 2016 and no callers identified any problems in contacting the service.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

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

8. CONSULTATIONS

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

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the progress and development of the Information, Advice and Information Service.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

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