



COUNCIL – 5TH OCTOBER 2021

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The attached reports were presented to the Social Services Scrutiny Committee on the 13th September 2021. The reports provided the Scrutiny Committee with the key messages that have been identified in the preparation of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services and Housing for both 2019/20 and 2020/21.

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 Unusually, this year Council has received two annual reports, one for 2019/20 and a further report for 2020/21. Due to the need for Social Services Departments in Wales to prioritise their responses to the Coronavirus pandemic, Care Inspectorate Wales allowed Directors to defer the production of their annual report for 2019/20 by 12 months.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Council are asked to endorse and adopt the reports for 2019/20 and 2020/21 prior their submission to Welsh Government, Care Inspectorate Wales and publication on the Authority's website.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Statutory guidance requires the Corporate Director for 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 years in question.
- 5.3 As I am sure Members would expect the annual report for 2020/21 centres very much around the Directorates response to the pandemic. The detail of the report is very much based on reports submitted during the year to Social Services Scrutiny Committee and as part of the corporate response reports submitted to full Council.
- 5.4 Whereas, it is not my intention to repeat the detail of the annual report in this cover report I make no apology for wishing to put on record by 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. Likewise, some our decisions have had consequences for unpaid carers and I would like to thank them for their patience and understanding.
- 5.5 Scrutiny Committee now receive regular reports on the work of the Regional partnership Board and its associated sub groups and whilst still await Welsh Governments response to the white paper on rebalancing care and support, there is little doubt that the Regional Partnership Boards will continue to be increasingly influential.
- 5.6 I would also draw Members attention to the fact that despite, quite rightly, prioritising the response to the pandemic, the report for 2020/21 also reference the progress against other key objectives for the year and sets out our priorities for 2021/22.

5.7 Conclusion

Once adopted by Council the Annual Director's Reports 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 the Annual Director's Report are aligned with the Social Services Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the

Directorates revenue budget. Much of the Directorates 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 the Annual Director's Report a wide range of information sources are taken into account including feedback from our customers and regulators/ inspectors. This feedback has been incorporated into the Annual Directors Report where relevant.
- 10.2 This report was presented to Social Services Scrutiny at its meeting on the 13th September 2021. The Scrutiny Committee made the following comments:-

"Members made reference to the MTFP, and enhanced grant funding from Welsh Government, and asked what the implication should funding cease. The scrutiny committee also asked if the pressures upon the revenue budget in the medium term continue, will the Directorate be able to cope or will there be a need to seek additional funds. Committee were advised that if grant funding ceased immediately the impact would be significant, with real problems for some independent service providers who have received additional funding to help them through the Pandemic. However, Members were reassured that WG have indicated that funding will continue into end of March 2022 plus there may potentially be additional recovery funding to help social care in Wales which we are awaiting additional information on and it is hoped that this will allow the additional funding to independent providers to continue. Reference was also made to challenges in Children's services and also capacity in Adult services.

The scrutiny committee referred to the priorities for 2020/21 and asked if the delayed training for staff will have an impact on resources and work pressures and the impact of DTOC being likely released back to the service. It was explained that the priority will be delivering the care service.

Members asked for clarification on the numbers of looked after children changing schools which was 12% in 2019/20. The committee was assured that the priority is to maintain current school placements when children move into another area but it will be reviewed at appropriate times such as end of school terms and in consultation with the child. Members were advised that often children will ask to move schools in order to attend the local school and be the same as other children in their community. Clarification was sought on the number of complaints upheld and partially upheld. It was explained that the complaints can contain several issues and the complaints figures show the number of issues and not complainants. Reassurance was given

that when issues are upheld that the department will look at the learning and contact the complainants to advise them what action has been taken”.

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
Cllr Carmen Bezzina, Vice-Chair – Social Services Scrutiny
Councillor Shayne Cooke, 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 2019/20
Appendix 2 Annual Report of the Director of Social Services & Housing 2020/21