



SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 8TH MARCH 2022

**SUBJECT: DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT SIX MONTH
UPDATE**

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Scrutiny with the 6-month Social Services Directorate Performance Assessment (DPA) which is part of the Council's Performance Framework.
- 1.2 The Performance Assessment (referred to hereafter as the DPA) is the Directorate's self-assessment and forms part of the Council's overall self-assessment activity. It provides information and analysis for 6-month period April – September 2021. Members are invited to discuss, challenge, and scrutinise the range of information in the DPA.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council's revised Performance Framework was endorsed by Cabinet in February 2020 and this report introduces one of the key components of the Framework, the Directorate Performance Assessment (DPA). The DPA is a 'self-assessment' of Directorate's progress across a wide range of information types and meets our 'duty as a principal council to keep our performance under review'
- 2.2 DPA's are an opportunity to bring together a range of information and intelligence into one picture to answer the self-assessment questions of 'how well are we performing, how do we know? And what and how can we do better? Appendix 1 is the Social Services Performance Assessment 6-month update 2021/22.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members review the attached document (appendix 1) and discuss, challenge, and scrutinise the information contained within.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Scrutiny members are involved in the 'self-assessment' process by scrutinising the information within the Directorate Performance Assessment. This also supports the principles within the new section (Part 6, Chapter 1) of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act which provides for a new performance and governance regime for principal councils

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Performance Framework has been developed to meet several strategic and operational needs as well as to meet the legislation and further the Council's desire to be a high performing learning organisation focused on meeting the needs of its residents. The framework was piloted in 2019 and endorsed by Cabinet February 2020 and now is reported as a regular part of scrutiny committees. This report introduces and shares the Social Services dashboard (the DPA) 6-month update 2021/22.
- 5.2 The spirit of the DPA (appendix 1) is about providing learning. The DPA is less about performance and targets (though they have their place) and is more so to provide a wider picture of performance that will support reflective and challenging conversations and scrutiny that will ultimately lead to learning and further improvement.
- 5.3 **Conclusion**

This DPA covers the period April 2021 to September 2021, our key messages are:-

Clearly performance during the past six months of 2021 have been impacted by the authority's response to the Coronavirus pandemic, whilst the majority of social care services have remained in place (with the exception of day services and some respite services) the attention of staff has clearly had to be on responding to the virus.

In Adult Services, the number of people receiving services remains fairly consistent, however it should be noted because of the national difficulties in recruiting domiciliary care workers there are currently 74 people awaiting provision of a care package. The first quarter saw an unprecedented demand in terms of increased referrals especially for the Community Occupational Therapy Team, this has started to level off in quarter 2. Assessments and reviews completed have reduced this has been impacted upon by staffing vacancies and staff absences and complexity of the work means assessments take longer to complete. The impact of the upgrade to WCCIS cannot be underestimated, this has caused a significant amount of downtime, thus staff are still catching up with recording work on the system which could impact on figures for quarter 2.

In Children's Services, continued Covid restrictions and changes to guidance have inevitably impacted on working practice. However, it is reassuring to note that the numbers of referrals received and the number of those referrals progressing to assessment have remained relatively stable. Similarly, the overall number of Children Looked After has remained static and the small variance in the numbers of children on the Child Protection Register is unremarkable given our longer-term trend data. As stated above the impact of the upgrade to WCCIS has been significant. However, overall, there continues to be positive performance and there are no exceptions to report for this half year period.

Sickness absence levels across the Directorate, overall, for the Directorate as at the end of September, sickness absence is on a slight upward trend from 6.33% in qtr1 to 6.96% in qtr2. Adult Services has seen a slight increase in their sickness absence figures from 8.18% in qtr1 to 8.19% in qtr2. Children's Services has also seen an increase in their sickness absence figures when comparing the last two quarters, qtr1 was 3.63% compared to 5.65% in qtr2. Absences linked to Covid remained low throughout the 2 Quarters.

The budgetary perspective of the Directorate, an underspend of £671k is forecast for Social Services at the end of Quarter 2. However, the Covid 19 pandemic continues to curtail service activity in many areas during the current financial year and has also led to increased staffing vacancies, reduced travel costs and reduced office running costs. These underspends are unlikely to recur in future years once Covid 19 restrictions have been lifted. However, there is an underlying increase in demand for childcare placements, supported living placements and domiciliary care for adults. The pandemic has highlighted the fragilities in the social care market, which could lead to pressure on fee levels once the Welsh Government Hardship Fund support is withdrawn. Therefore, it is critical that the Directorate continues to focus on initiatives to manage demand and provide cost effective services.

The Coronavirus pandemic has and continues to pose unprecedented challenges for the Social Services Directorate within Caerphilly County Borough Council. It is to the great credit of all our staff, together with our partners in the independent and third sectors that we have been able to respond as effectively as we have. The coming months are going to be unquestionably challenging as we face potential winter pressures.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions were thought to be required in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is for information only and on this basis an integrated impact assessment is not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications within this report, however the DPA (appendix 1) has a section on resources including relevant budget outturns as part of the overall self-assessment of the directorate.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications within this report, although the DPA (appendix 1) has a section called 'resources' which provides data on a range of workforce aspects.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 Any consultation responses have been included with in this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Local Government Measure (2009) and) Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

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Consultees: Councillor Donna Cushing, Chair - Social Services Scrutiny
Councillor Carmen Bezzina, Vice Chair - Social Services Scrutiny
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Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director for Economy & Environment
Jo Williams, Assistant Director of Adult Services
Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director of Children's Services
Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer, Equalities, Welsh Language & Consultation)
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitor
Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Directorate Performance Assessment (April – September 2021)