

**Caerphilly County Borough Council**

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL  
SERVICES & HOUSING  
2022-2023



CREU CYMUNEDAU GOFALGAR  
CREATING CARING COMMUNITIES



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### 1. Introduction

I am pleased to introduce my Annual Report for 2022/23 as Statutory Director of Social Services & Housing for Caerphilly County Borough Council. This is my opportunity to reflect on the achievements and challenges for the year concerned. It is important at the start of this report I am able to confirm that all the identified service priorities for the year have been met. The report also outlines our priorities for the year 2023/24.

Given the aftermath of the Covid pandemic, the increasing demands for services and the ongoing financial challenges faced by Local Government, delivering against these priorities and maintaining consistently high quality services has been a significant achievement in itself.

The resilience and commitment of our workforce is commendable. Although we have ongoing challenges in relation to recruitment and retention. Caerphilly is fortunate to be able to rely on staff who are passionate about what they do, feel supported to deliver good services and are genuinely committed to improving outcomes for our citizens. This is the case for both the staff who we directly employ and those we rely on from our commissioned service.

Overall performance across the Directorate has been strong despite significant pressures emerging from the NHS in terms of hospital discharge as well as pressures in children's services relating to complexity of needs and non-availability of services.

Our ability to respond to people both in the community and in hospitals has been hampered by a very fragile independent sector care market. We will continue to work with these key partners to ensure that these essential services remain in place to meet identified need.

The workload relating the Regional Partnership Board continues to increase as does the strategic influence of the Board on day to day operational delivery.

Going into 2023/24, there will be exceptional challenges because of the continued cost of living crisis, ongoing health issues and the wider pressures on families. However, my staff are enthusiastic and determined to continue to deliver the best possible services across every element of Social Services.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Street', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Dave Street  
Corporate Director - Social Services & Housing

## 2. Director's Summary of Performance

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, performance reporting was suspended by Welsh Government. Local authorities were instead required to submit 'check point data', initially on a weekly and then fortnightly basis to monitor the impact of the pandemic particularly in relation to work load demands and staff resourcing including absences. For 2022-2023 this checkpoint data has been reviewed and is now submitted monthly. For the first year it was agreed that comparative data will not be published. 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 the 2023/24 financial year.

As a result, I am unable to provide the traditional 3 year comparative performance data for Adult and Children's Services. However, the Directorate Performance Assessment (DPA) was presented to Scrutiny Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and the key messages were as follows:

### Adult Services:

The numbers of people receiving services remains constant however, due to the national shortage of domiciliary care workers in an average month there were 577 hours of care that could not be provided. The number of people waiting for the provision of a care package was, on average, 70 at any one time.

There was an increase in the number of assessments and reviews completed across adult services.

### Children's Services:

For Children's Services, the numbers of referrals progressing for assessment remained relatively stable however, complexity of the issues presented was 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 Directorate Performance Assessment report can be found here: [Social Services DPA](#)

### 3. How are people shaping our services?

Caerphilly Social Services is committed to making sure that people can 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 to care homes, complaints and compliments, consultation events and feedback from Regulatory 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 the 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.

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 and annual returns are all available on the CIW website: [Home | Care Inspectorate Wales](#)

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.

The Annual Social Services Complaints and Compliments Report for 2022/23 was reported to Scrutiny Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and can be accessed via the following link: [Annual Complaints and Compliments Report 2022-23.pdf \(caerphilly.gov.uk\)](#)

During the year, the Directorate received 189 complaints, this is an increase on the 135 complaints received in the previous year. 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 continue to be 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 189 complaints received at Stage 1, the following outcomes were noted:

- 20 were closed with 3 being withdrawn by the complainant, 2 being referred to other agencies and 15 being subject of other processes where the issues raised could be more appropriately resolved i.e. ongoing legal proceedings
- 13 complaints were upheld
- 8 complaints were partially upheld
- 147 complaints were not upheld
- 1 complaint was ongoing at the year end

Of the 13 complaints upheld:

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

The Directorate received 11 requests to progress complaints to a Stage 2 formal investigation with 7 being dealt with under the Corporate Complaints Procedures and 4 progressing to Independent Investigation. In addition, there were 9 contacts by our customers to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) – a slight decrease on the previous year. Of these:

- In 5 cases, the PSOW confirmed that Caerphilly had followed due process
- In 2 cases, Caerphilly had been unable to follow procedures and so the matters were referred back to the Council to conclude
- 1 complainant withdrew their complaint and
- In 1 case, Caerphilly were asked to complete a Stage 2 investigation (included in the figure reported above).

The Directorate appreciates the importance of learning from complaints and representations and 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 2022/23, 233 compliments were received, of which 166 (71%) related to Adult Services and 67 (29%) related to Children's Services. This is an increase on the previous year which is due to improved recording processes. The percentage split is similar to previous years and reflects 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.



### 4. Promoting and improving the well-being 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 maintain or regain 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 wherever 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 Aneurin Bevan Health Board to have access to their domiciliary care services 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 to their own home which improves their well-being.

We have opened a coffee shop staffed by 12 individuals with a learning disability who previously attended day services. We have employed 7 individuals on the Council's terms and conditions and are looking to increase this number.

### **How we addressed our priorities for 2022/23:**

- We embedded the intake model of assessment for care to promote people's independence, choice and control with very positive results. The first 3 months data showed only 34% of people who went through the assessment services required a long term package of care.
- We have established a regional post 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 standardise practice and to promote the service.
- Learning from Caerphilly was shared across Wales to support the successful roll out of Parental Advocacy in Children's Services

### **What are our priorities for 2023/24?**

- To refresh the collaborative conversations training for assessment care management staff across adult services and develop the mentor's role to focus on having 'what matters' conversations
- To embed the reablement outcomes focused care planning across adult services

### **5. Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being**

Caerphilly recognises the importance of working with people and our partners to improve outcomes for all service users and this will continue to be a priority for us going forward.

Caerphilly are active partners in the Gwent wide Children and Families Partnership which continues to prioritise the development of integrated approaches to supporting children and young people including the development of Windmill Farm, a regional residential assessment resource managed by Newport City Council in partnership with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board serving the five Gwent Local Authorities.

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 the Welsh Government's policy to 'Eliminate Profit in Children's Residential Care' Children's Services gained Corporate and Political approval to expand in-house residential care provision including additional children's homes, supported accommodation for young people Leaving Care and for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). These plans will see the opening of two small children's homes and an additional UASC property during 2023/24.

Across Adult Services, we continue to develop 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.

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 2022/23:**

- We worked with the Health Board to enable people to remain in the community by implementing Welsh Government's 6 goal approach.
- We worked with regional colleagues to introduce Bridging the Gap, a framework to support unpaid carers, this is funded from the Regional Integration Fund.
- Demolition has commenced on site for the development of the new respite houses for adults and for children.
- Two properties have been purchased to develop 2 bedded children's homes.
- We continue to support the National Transfer Scheme by offering accommodation for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children identified for transfer by the Home Office and an additional 4 bedded house is being planned to accommodate the young people.

### **What are our priorities for 2023/24?**

- To work with the Health Board to implement the system resilience plan to enable people to remain at home or be discharged from hospital in a timely manner.
- To increase capacity for respite for children with disabilities by re-registering an existing provision to provide additional support to parent/carers.
- To progress the design of the respite houses for adults and children.
- To continue 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 one of the highest priorities for the Council and the 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 DSO's.

The Corporate Safeguarding Board produces an Annual Report for Elected Members and the 2022/23 Report was shared with Scrutiny Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The report can be accessed via the following link: [Corporate Safeguarding Annual Reporting 22-23.pdf \(caerphilly.gov.uk\)](https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/~/media/2023/07/23/Corporate-Safeguarding-Annual-Reporting-22-23.pdf)

The arrangements for improving safeguarding policies, procedures and practice across the region are led by the South East Wales Safeguarding Boards for Adults and Children (SEWSB) 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 clear governance structures and their work is supported by a range 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 managed by one Service Manager and capacity and resilience has been improved as a result.

Decisions are made on all children's referrals within 24 hours ensuring full compliance with statutory procedures. The Wales Safeguarding Procedures are fully embedded across the Directorate and the National Safeguarding Training Framework is scheduled to be fully implemented by the end of 2023.

#### How we addressed our priorities for 2022/23:

- We continued to embed learning from Adult and Child Practice Reviews.
- We reviewed the priorities of the Regional Safeguarding Board's 3-year Plan.

- We implemented the National Safeguarding Training Framework from November 2022 with further updates expected during 2023.
- We continued to support the development of a Council wide Learning Management System (LMS) to record safeguarding training attendance and compliance.
- We await the findings from Internal Audit following their review of the Corporate Safeguarding Self-Assessment processes.

### **What are our priorities for 2023/24?**

- To continue to embed learning from Adult and Child Practice Reviews
- To implement a Council wide Learning Management System (LMS) to record safeguarding training attendance and compliance.
- To respond to the findings of the Internal Audit of the Corporate Safeguarding Self-Assessment processes.
- To respond to the changing requirements of the National Safeguarding Training Framework.

### **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 key to commissioning a modern, fit for purpose, day service provision going forward. I acknowledge that the changes around day services have been challenging for some of our service users and their family members, but I am confident in time that these changes will be seen in a positive light.

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 2022/23:**

- We commissioned an independent organisation to produce a model of day services, this was agreed by Cabinet and is based on good practice across the country.

**What are our priorities for 2023/24?**

- To look at opening another coffee shop in Newbridge leisure centre to enable more people to have the opportunity to learn and develop skills.
- To look at employing individuals in catering under the Council's terms and conditions.



### **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 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 supports 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 2022/23?**

- We expanded South East Wales Shared Lives Scheme with the Health Board to provide a service for older adults with mental health problems.
- We worked with partners in the third sector to develop mechanisms to allow individuals to establish and maintain friendships.
- We continued the secondment scheme for staff to undertake the Social Work Degree.

### **What are our priorities for 2023/24?**

- To further expand the South East Wales Shared Lives Scheme to include Rhondda Cynon Taff County Council to provide a larger service for long term and sessional support.
- To implement a hub with partners to look at how outcomes for people are met.
- Continuation of the secondment scheme for staff to undertake the Social Work Degree.
- To work with Corporate Human Resources to identify ways of addressing the wider recruitment and retention challenges across the Service.

### **9. Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs**

Children's Services actively support children Looked After to engage in education and training and provide individual support wherever necessary. Children are encouraged to make the best use of their leisure time and are supported to engage in community activities wherever possible.

Children's Services has 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 2022/2023:**

- We have employed people with a learning disability on the Council's terms and conditions to work in our café.

- Building work commenced on the Mill Road flats project which is now part of the regional strategic capital plan
- We continue to develop children's residential care and supported accommodation for young people across the Borough (*also in Section 5*)

### **What are our priorities for 2023/24?**

- To further increase the number of people we employ in our day opportunities projects.
- To open an additional respite facility for children with disabilities.

## 10. How we do what we do?

### 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, we are seeing increasing challenges in recruiting to specific posts across both Adult and Children's Services and increasing pressures around retention due to the Council's current salary scales no longer being competitive with neighbouring Local Authorities.

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

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 DMT's and SMT on a regular basis.

For the financial year 2022/23 the Directorate underspent by £432,000.

The most significant growth in demand during 2022/2023 has continued to be in the following areas:

- Independent sector residential care for children
- Nursing care for older people
- Supported living for people with learning disabilities

The financial pressures being faced by the UK Government, Welsh Government and subsequently Local Government are growing and whilst the financial situation for 2022/23 was relatively stable, there are significant concerns for 2023 and beyond.

Ongoing reliance on time limited grant funding streams from Welsh Government 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 stability 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 & Well-being (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 Health. 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](http://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. I am 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.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services 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.







