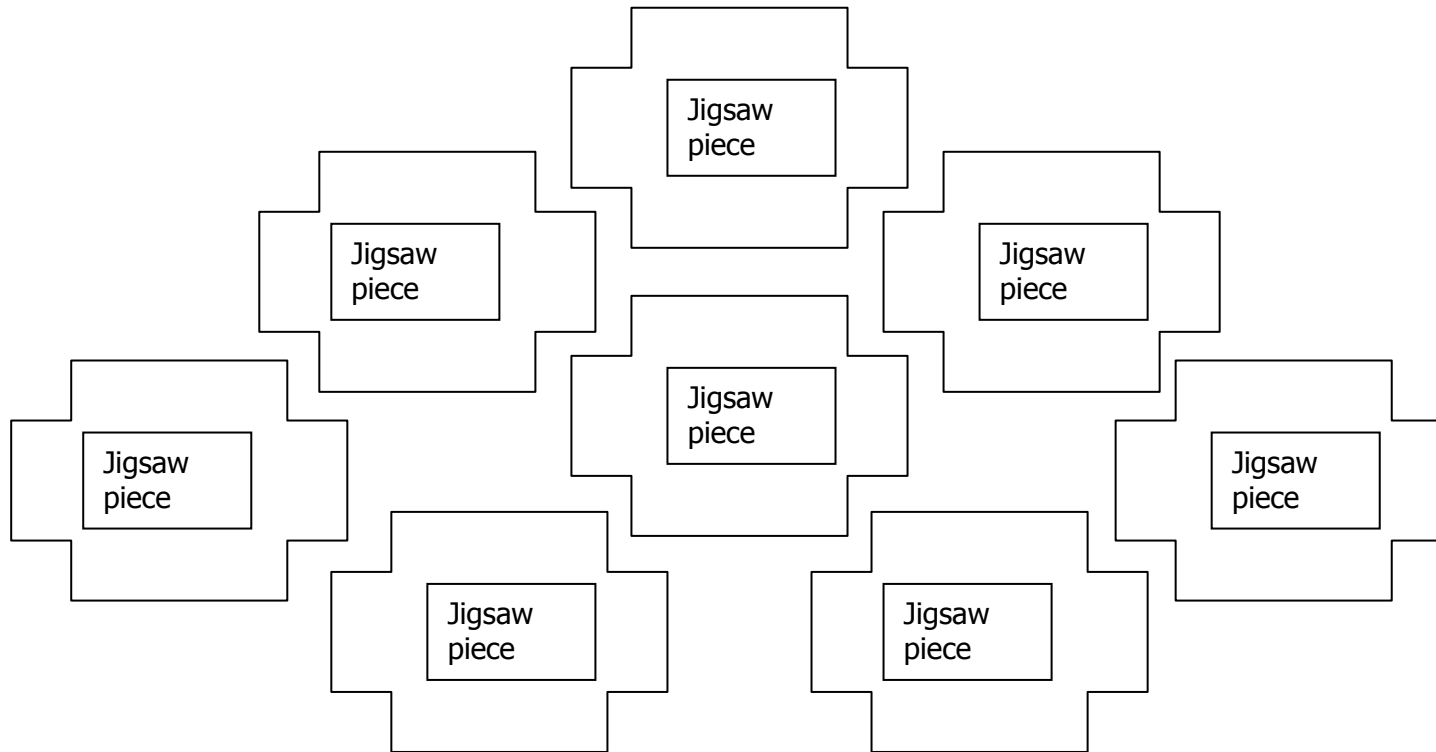




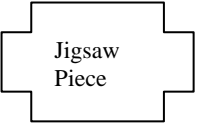

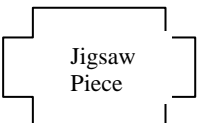
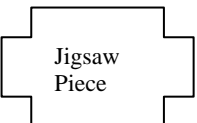
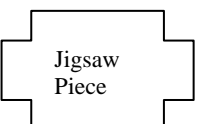
Annual Directors Report on the Effectiveness of Social Care Services 2014-2015

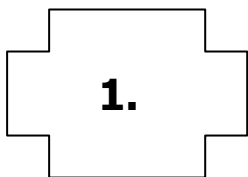


A greener place Man gwyrdach



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Directors Introduction

Photo of
Dave

As the Corporate Director Social Services I am pleased to present the sixth Annual Director's Report for Caerphilly County Borough Council's Directorate of Social Services.

The purpose of my report is to outline the challenges we have faced in 2014-15, how well we have delivered our services in the last year and what our priorities for improvement are for 2015-2016.

Like many public bodies the financial climate for Caerphilly County Borough Council has been extremely challenging. However the directorate has managed its budget well, with an underspend projected for the 2014-15 financial year, which places the directorate in a relatively positive financial position. The achievement of a sound financial position is testimony to the hard work of all those working within Social services. Unfortunately the financial picture for 2015-16 is not an improving one and will continue to test our capability and capacity to deliver quality services within the County borough.

On 25th February 2015 a special council meeting was held to agree the 2015-16 budget which included a range of agreed savings for the Directorate of Social Services totaling £3.128m. The majority of these savings will be achieved by reviewing the way we deliver our services and having in place good vacancy management practices.

A strategic priority for the Directorate over the coming years will be the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The Act will come into place in April 2016 and will transform the way social care services are delivered across Wales. Work has already started within the Directorate to assess our 'preparedness' for implementation, and while there are areas for development, in general the Directorate finds itself well placed to manage the changes the new Act will bring.

In 2014-15 our Children's Services Division underwent a National Inspection in relation to 'Safeguarding and Care Planning of Looked After Children and Care Leavers Who Exhibit Vulnerable or Risky Behaviours'. The aim of the national inspection was to assess the quality of care planning across Wales and whether it effectively, supports and protects Looked After Children (LAC) and care leavers, identifies and manages their vulnerabilities and risky behaviour, promotes rights based practice and the voice of the child, promotes improved outcomes and promotes

compliance with policy and guidance. The findings of the Inspection report for Caerphilly identified many positive areas of practice, however a number of areas for improvement were also noted around, for example, partnership working, quality assurance and commissioning systems and how we gather feedback from our children and young people. A comprehensive Action plan has been developed to address these issues and will be a key priority for the Directorate in 2015-16.

In November 2014 a national report was launched by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales 'A Place to Call Home? - A Review into the Quality of Life and Care of Older People living in Care Homes in Wales'. This Review was the biggest inquiry ever undertaken in Wales into the quality of life and care of older people in care homes and the lives they live. The overall conclusion of the Review was that too many older people living in care homes have an unacceptable quality of life and the view of what constitutes 'acceptable' needs to shift significantly. While the report made for hard reading, we are committed to ensuring that changes are made where necessary and providing the best quality of life for those living in our care homes, in whatever way that is defined by an individual older person. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the forthcoming Regulation and Inspection Bill will provide a background against which the actions will need to be undertaken.

Finally I would like to take the opportunity to thank all staff, carers and elected members for their commitment and support over the past year in helping to continue to improve and deliver our services.

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Cabinet Member for Social Services

Photo of
Cllr Woodyatt

In Caerphilly county borough the demand for social care is rising, placing pressure on social care services and budgets. In order to respond to these challenges the Social Services Directorate and Council Members are working hard to reconfigure services that allow people to live independently for longer in their own homes and participate as fully as possible in the life of their communities. Local authorities have also been challenged as part of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 to develop preventative measures that can defer or delay people becoming reliant on longer term services.

In addition to our changing demographics and increasing demand, the requirement to make efficiency savings place a further pressure on the Directorates resources. For Social Services in 2015-16 the Council agreed efficiency savings totalling £3.128m and while some difficult decisions required to be made, ensuring value for money and maintaining the best possible service for service users was our primary consideration. I am confident that the decisions taken puts in place a sound and prudent financial framework that will support service delivery for the future.

In February 2015, Caerphilly hosted the 10th Looked After Children Awards to celebrate the achievements of looked after children and care leavers. Representatives from Caerphilly County Borough Council's Children's Services, Education and Health worked together to arrange two award ceremonies for children of all ages to attend with their foster carers. These events were packed with fun and games to recognise and celebrate the hard earned achievements of the prize winners.

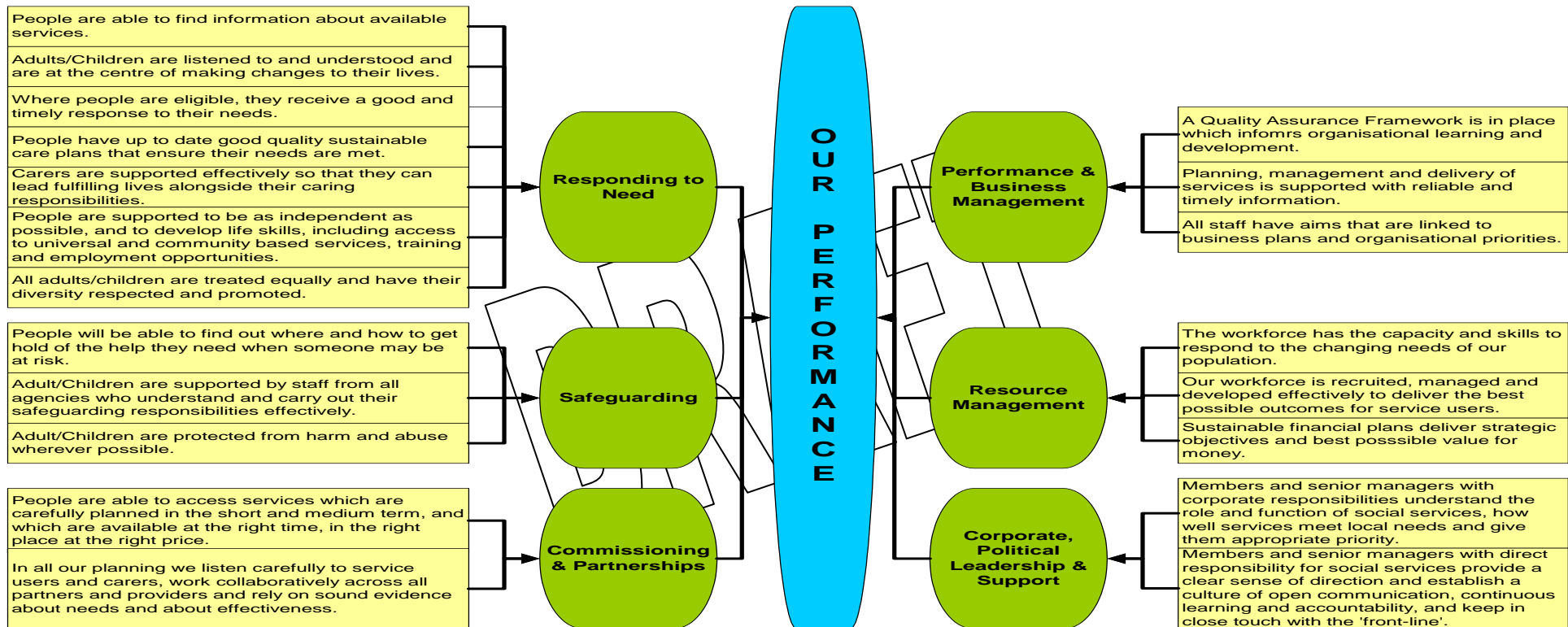
Looking forward, 2015-16 will continue to present challenges for the Directorate such as pressures around implementation of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, alterations to the way in which the Independent Living Fund is administered and the ongoing implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act. However, as the Cabinet Member for Social Services I am confident that the people within the county borough will continue to have access to high quality care and support when they need it.

On behalf of residents of the county borough I wish to thank all members of staff for the services they provide to our most vulnerable people.

3.

Social Services Outcomes

Over the past few years we have been working hard towards the achievement of a set of specific outcomes. These outcomes are 'conditions of well-being' that we want to achieve for our service users, carers and staff. There are 20 outcomes grouped as follow:



My report this year has been developed around these outcomes and I hope to show you how we in Social Services have performed against them.

4.

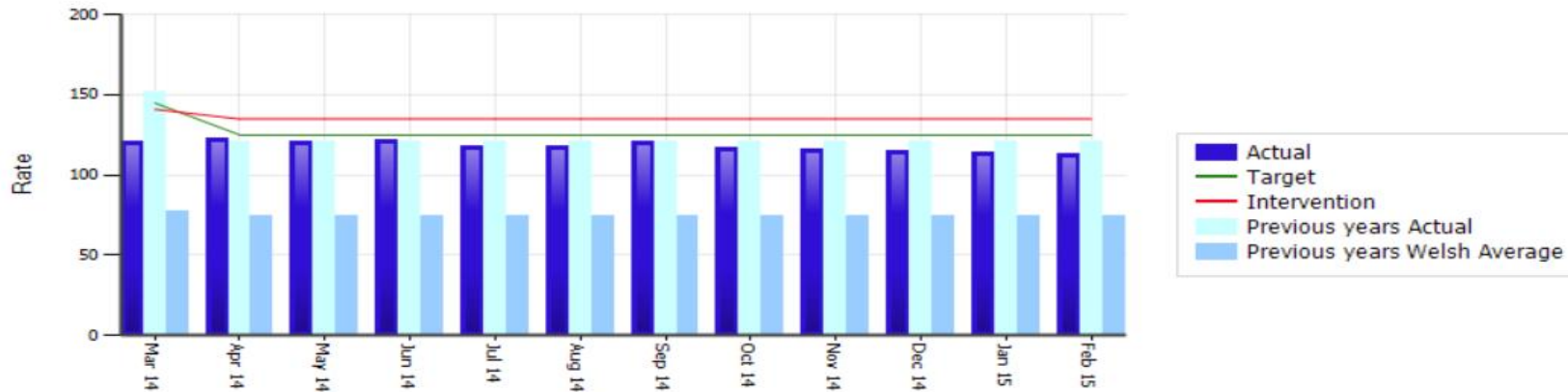
Our Performance & Priorities

4.1 Responding to Need

The Directorate of Social Services has 20 National Indicators that are comparable across the 22 Local Authorities in Wales.

We have listed below some examples of where we are performing well from the National suite of performance measures and where we are working to improve our performance.

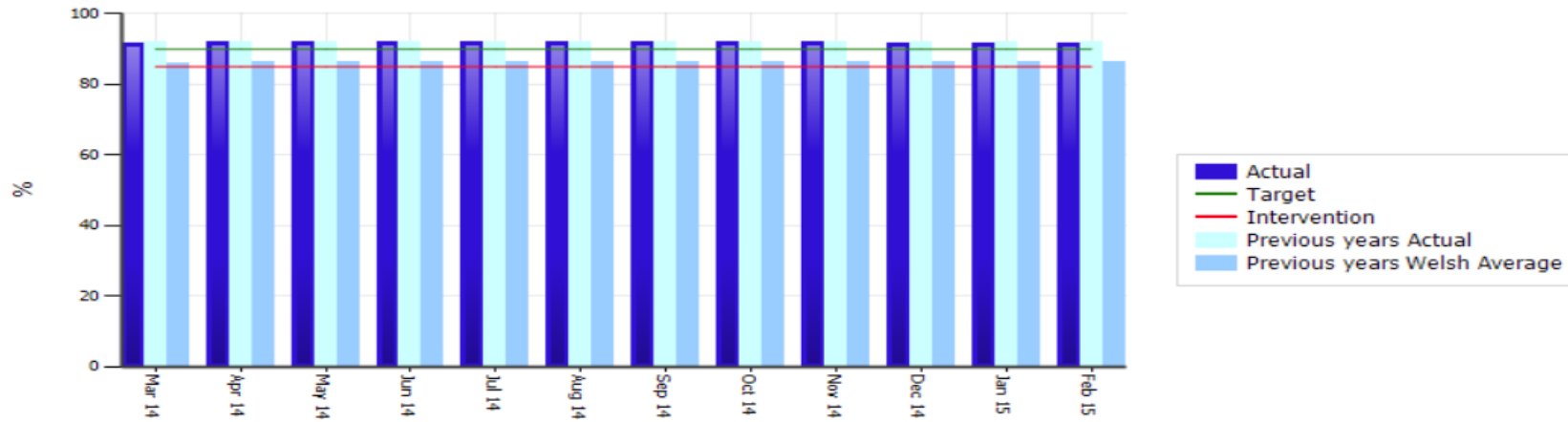
SCA/002a - The rate of older people supported in the community aged 65 or over



FACT: Did you know in 2014-15 there were 19,049 contacts recorded by the Adult Services Duty and Information Team and 11,972 contacts received by Children's Services.

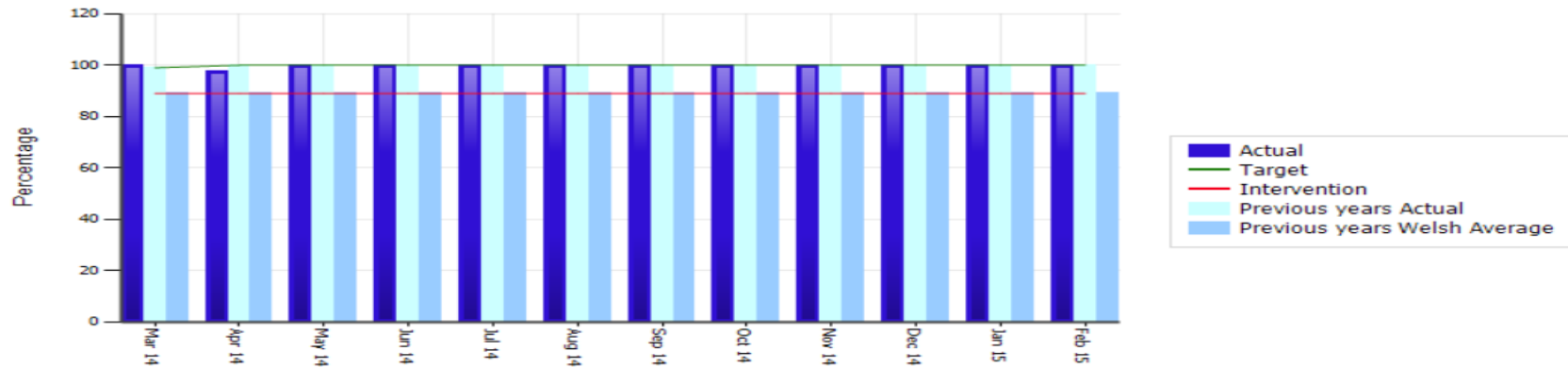
SCA/002a - Although the rate of older people has reduced slightly, this is in fact a good news story as it illustrates the impact that the Frailty programme, community connectors and volunteer coordinators are having in terms of enabling people to be independent in the community rather than being dependent on services. The Directorates' focus on signposting people means that the future targets for this area will be lower than in previous years.

SCA/020 - The percentage of adult clients who are supported in the community during the year



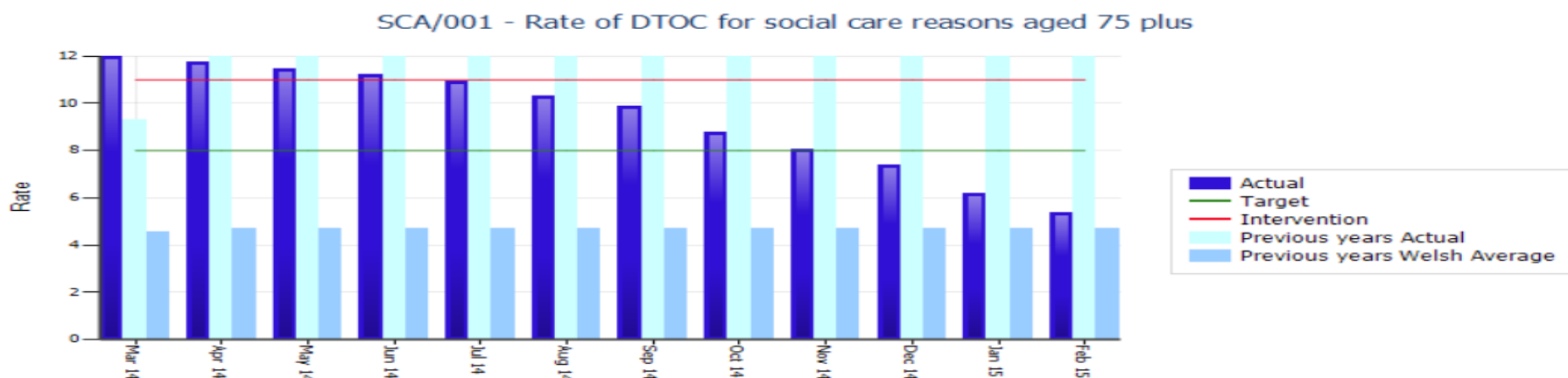
SCA/020 - Out of the 7,320 adult clients, 6717 (91.8%) were supported in the community during 2014-15. Our position remains well above the all Wales average.

SCC/041a % of eligible children that have pathway plans



SCC/041a – Out of the 116 eligible children all (100%) had pathway plans in place.

While we are performing well on the majority of our performance measures, the Delayed Transfers of Care (DToc) for Social Care reasons indicator continues to be challenging, however significant improvements have been made this year. Maintaining high performance levels will remain a priority for the Directorate.



The rate of DToc for social care reasons for February 2015 was 5.35 (per 1,000) of the population. This figure equates to 3 people compared to 12 people at the end of March 2014. This measure has steadily improved over the year as shown in the graph above. A number of improvements have been made to the DToc process including more thorough validation and closer working with our Health colleagues, for example, the Joint Hospital discharge team are now responsible for contracts for long term care which speeds up the discharge process and the Intermediate Care Fund has been used to develop schemes to look at winter pressures to reduce lengths of stay in hospital and DToc. The challenge going forward will be to maintain these high standards, greater validation and continue our good working relationships with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

What we've done in 2014 - 2015

Children's Services have completed a number of activities to strengthen and improve the quality and effectiveness of assessment and care planning, these include restructuring teams to minimise transfer points for families, offer flexibility so that fluctuating demands across the county borough can be managed and creation of a dedicated senior practitioner role to over see LAC/Child protection/Public Law Outline (PLO) planning and to undertake a quality assurance role in respect of this.

The service is also part of the national pilot for exploring how personal outcomes for people who need care and support in Wales are aggregated. This will be piloted within teams working in the North of the county borough.

In June 2014 the Adult Services Duty Information Team and the Children's Services Contact and Referral team merged to form the Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service reporting to one Team Manager. In September 2014 two Senior Social Work Practitioners from Adult and Children's Services commenced duties with the new team.

A reconfigured 'Team Around the Family' model has been developed by a multi-agency task and finish group and agreed by the Families First Board. As a result the 'Team Around the Family' and 'Supporting Family Change' Projects have been merged and managed by a single manager. Support workers within the team are now able to be allocated as lead professionals and provide one to one support to families. The new team is called 'Supporting Family Change'.

In September 2014 a proposal was put forward that would see the creation of an Integrated Service for Disabled Children and Young People. Since this time plans have been put in place to co-locate the Children with Disability Team in the Children's Centre by end of calendar year in order to enhance access to services and the exchange of information and skills across professional boundaries. There is a need to invest in the IT infrastructure in order to support the Team's move but the long term benefits will more than outweigh the immediate costs. Building on the success of the Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs (ISCAN), it is proposed to develop a single point of contact/one stop shop for families, parents and carers which will have strong links to the Family Information Service, Contact and Referral Service and Families First Services. All referrals for disability services will be considered by ISCAN in order to reduce duplication and ensure effective use of resources.

Within **Adult Services** the review of the Gwent Frailty Programme has confirmed the direction of travel and focus on prevention of admission to hospital via rapid intervention from both Health and Social Care services. As a result a pilot commenced early in 2014 regarding the development of an Elderly Frail Unit (EFU) at Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr Hospital for rapid intervention by the Community Resource Team (CRT) staff. Following a review of the pilot an EFU was established and is running successfully.

The Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) has been used to appoint Community Connectors (One Senior Community Connector, three Community Connectors, three Community Connectors for Carers) to operate as part of the IAA service to identify and develop community based services to enable people to remain independent and meet their own needs. The Community Connectors work with people who are deemed to be socially isolated, the ethos being to respond appropriately to members of the public in the right place, at the right time, with the right service. Interventions are increasing thus reducing the need for statutory intervention. The ICF has also been used to provide step up/step down beds to enable people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible by providing accurate assessments and interventions via a small dedicated multi-professional team.

The Council website has been redesigned which includes a Community Directory. This Directory provides a wealth of information to residents of the county borough on a number of services, organisations and groups within the area. This Community Directory will be continually updated in order to ensure that people are able to access good quality information and advice to assist them to resolve their

own problems. The Community Directory will also be a vital information point for professionals in order to reduce dependency on statutory services.

The pilot Mental Health Initiative 'Listen, Engage, Act and Participate' (LEAP) in the north of the county borough was developed to test new ways of working with people with mental health needs. A multi-agency team including a wide range of competencies has been established with a principle of working with individuals in a different way, focussing on what is important to them and setting outcomes related to this. It is now in the second phase of the pilot, the first phase was successful and an interim report produced to inform phase two. On completion of phase two, which is due to complete in June 2015, a final evaluation report will inform the future shape and delivery of Adult Mental Health. Whilst too early to tell, we believe that the LEAP initiative will help us to better understand the kind and type of service provision and competencies that will be needed to deliver future mental health services.

The Carers Assessment documentation has been amended to make it more user friendly and understandable for the Carer and more focused on what the client feels meets their needs and what actions were agreed during the discussion.

The System Testing and Redesign Team (START) completed the initial testing phase in April 2014. It was then decided that it was necessary to extend this way of working to a bigger area in order to further test this new approach. The team worked with 220 individuals to fully evidence the benefits to service users of this way of working. In addition, learning in respect of unnecessary duplication and ways to reduce bureaucracy has been shared with teams across adult services, freeing up staff capacity and allowing more time to explore with individuals what matters most to them. In October 2014 the team commenced a learning and development programme to a wider group of staff within adult services as the start of expanding this way of working to all staff within adult services.

What our Regulators Told Us

In the 2013-14 Annual Performance Report prepared by our Regulators the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) they highlighted that we should:

- **Interrogate the reasons for delayed discharge and put in place strategies to monitor and improve the progress of this:**

In response to their comments, in 2014-15 we have:

- ✓ Agreed a joint action plan with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board regarding winter pressures.
- ✓ Held meetings with Prince Charles Hospital regarding out of county hospital placements.
- ✓ Provided monthly information to the Welsh Government on our performance.

- ✓ Redeployed staff as and when required to meet need.
- ✓ Co-located the Age Concern Hospital Discharge team and the Joint Hospital Discharge Team
- ✓ Improved the pull on and use of the Emergency Care at Home service.

The changes have resulted in a reduction of 60% in number of DToC's for social care reasons over the year.

➤ **Continue to develop methods for supporting and developing skills of foster carers:**

In response to their comments, in 2014-15 we have:

- ✓ Recruited an additional 24 foster carers over a two year period instead of three years as originally planned.
- ✓ Developed a dedicated role to provide continuity of worker through the early stages of the foster carer process.
- ✓ Reviewed the 'Foster Carer Recruitment Strategy' with a plan to re-launch by April 2015.
- ✓ Reviewed the role of the Career Carer to ensure carers are taking on the more challenging placements and delivering against their core competency requirements.

Feedback regarding support provided to Foster Carers continues to be positive.

➤ **Continue to develop outcome measures for new services:**

In response to their comments, in 2014-15 we have:

- ✓ Implemented 'Outcome Webs' within the START and LEAP projects. An 'Outcome Web' is used to capture specific personal outcomes, and for those who have outcome webs, to be integral in identifying and agreeing their personal outcomes, to recognise where they are, where they would like to be, and what steps they need to take to get there.
- ✓ Participated in the Welsh Government technical group regarding the National Outcomes Framework.
- ✓ Become a pilot authority for the Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) National Outcomes Framework development, which will require a whole system approach to new cases referred to the Directorate. The pilot operates in our Children's Services North Cluster area and started in January 2015.

From March to June 2014 a Review of the Gwent Frailty Programme (GFP) was undertaken by Cordis Bright. The results published in September 2014 concluded that:

- ✓ People are receiving a very good service, which is timely, responsive and helps them to achieve their aspirations for remaining independent.
- ✓ Overall, stakeholders think that the service has reduced pressure on acute services and is effective at both avoiding hospital admissions in the first place and reducing length of stay.
- ✓ Stakeholders are overwhelmingly of the view that the direction of travel is right.

However the Review also identified that:

- ✗ The programme has not achieved cashable savings as envisaged
- ✗ Management of the service is not as effective as it could be
- ✗ The impact on hospital admissions, length of stay and DTOC, residential and nursing care admissions and intensive home care packages is not yet proven.
- ✗ There is considerable room for improvement regarding to the information currently collected for evidence-led decision-making and service planning.

The Gwent Frailty Partnership will lead on the development and implementation of an action plan that will take this work forward and address the recommendations arising from the Review.

In November 2014 a national report was launched by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales 'A Place to Call Home? - A Review into the Quality of Life and Care of Older People living in Care Homes in Wales'. This Review was the biggest inquiry ever undertaken in Wales into the quality of life and care of older people in care homes and the lives they live. The Review concluded that too many older people living in care homes have an unacceptable quality of life and the view of what constitutes 'acceptable' needs to shift significantly. A comprehensive action plan has been developed from which the Directorate will be actively working towards.

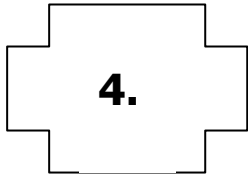
What we're going to do in 2015 – 2016

Our priorities for the year ahead in connection with this area will be:

Priority	Why is this a priority?	What effect will it have?
Implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.	This is a legislative requirement.	Ensures compliance with legislation.
Respond to the changes in the Supporting People Programme.	There has been a reduction in the grant awarded to the Local Authority and changes in legislation regarding	Ensure the service has a managed reduction in resource levels and supports the legislative changes.

	homelessness.	
Embed practice regarding Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and Mental Capacity Act.	This is a legislative requirement.	Ensures compliance with legislation and improved service delivery.
Improve Quality in Care.	This is a National priority linked to the Commissioner for Older People's Report 'A Place to Call Home'.	Improved service delivery.
Responding to PLO.	The demands of the PLO include pre-proceedings work, achieving 26 week timescales and criticisms from Court.	Maintain performance and professional reputation of the Council.
Revision of the Foster Carer Recruitment Strategy.	We need to improve recruitment and approval rates to provide more placement choices.	An increase in the numbers of Foster Carers.

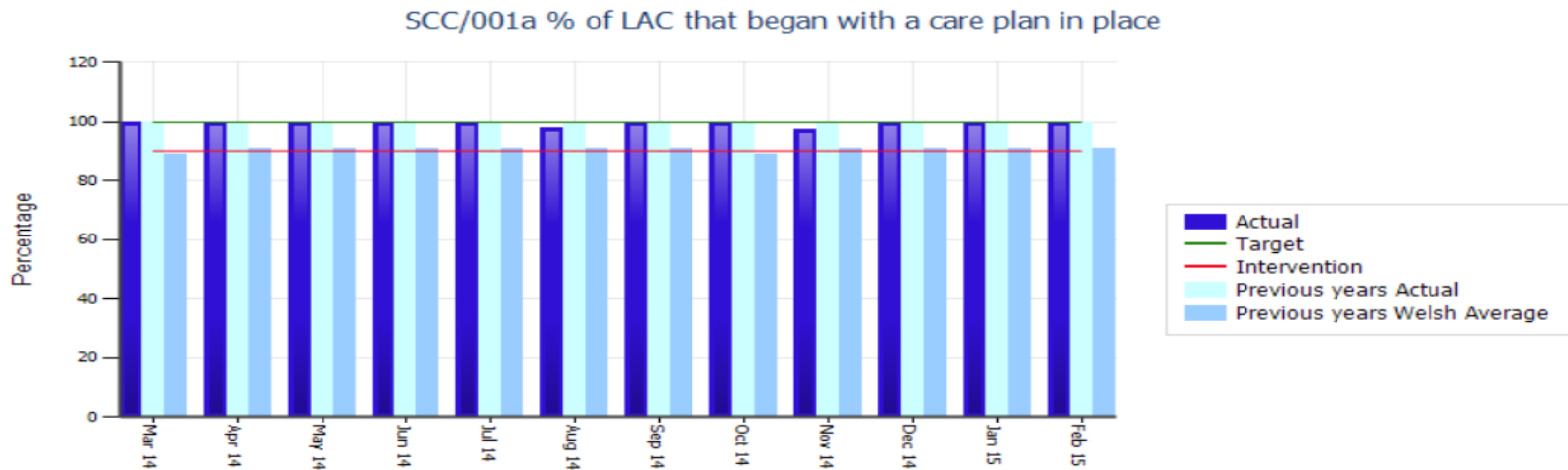
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4.2 Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains at the very heart of everything we do. Social care plays an important role in helping children, young people and adults with care and support needs to live full lives, free from abuse and neglect. This includes preventing abuse, minimising risk and responding proportionately where abuse or neglect has occurred.

We have listed below some examples of where we are performing well from the National suite of performance measures:

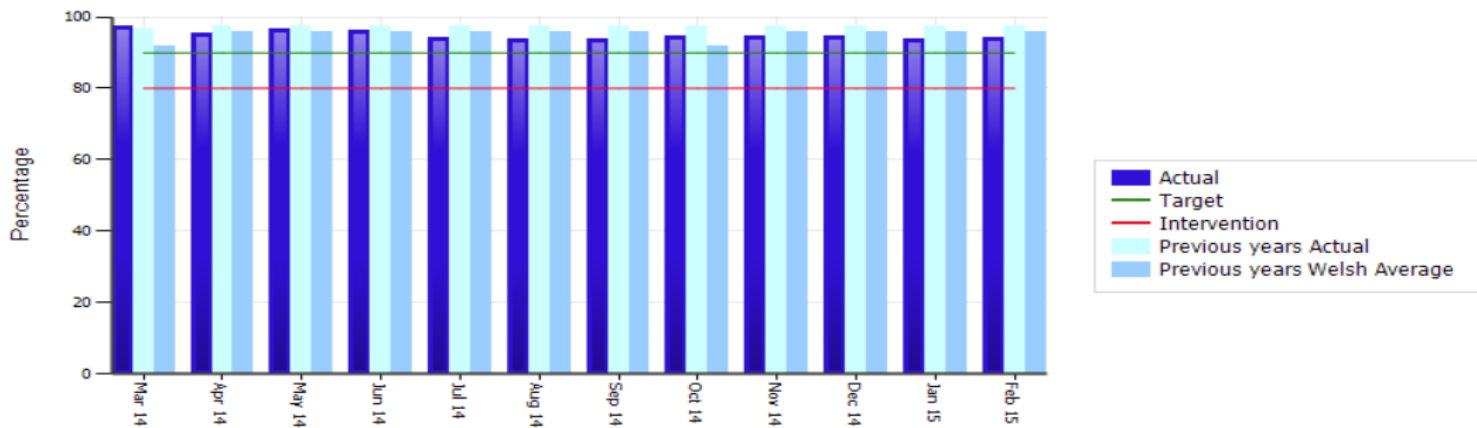


SCC/001a - For the past five years 100% of first placements for LAC have begun with care plans in place. Maintaining this performance level is noteworthy given there has been an increase in the LAC from 125 first placements in 2014-15 compared to 92 in 2013-14.

FACT:

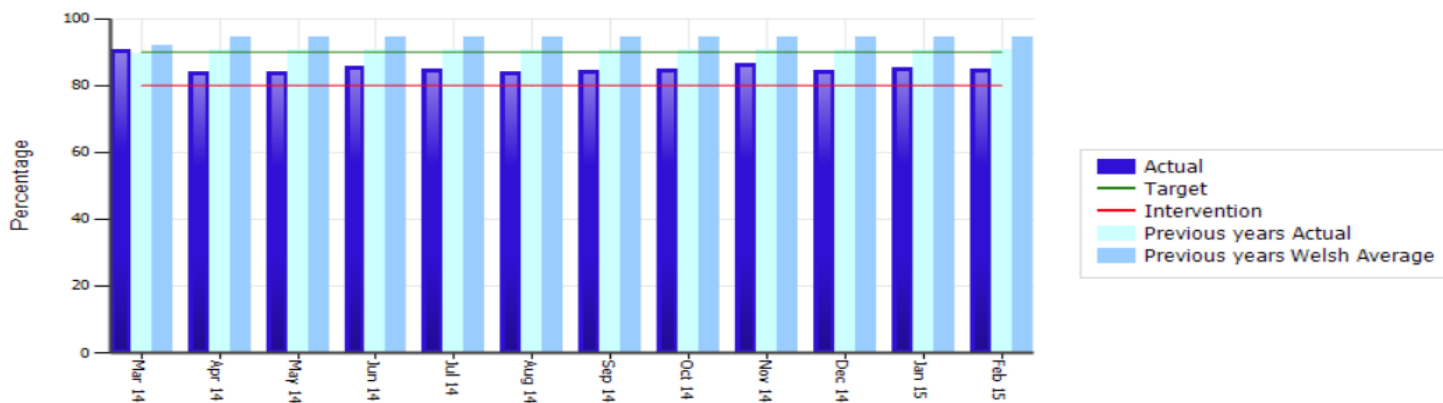
Did you know that over the last 3 years the percentage of Looked After Children achieving the core subject indicator in key stage 2 and 3 has increased year on year.

SCC/021 % of LAC reviews carried out within statutory timescales



SCC/021 – Out of 495 LAC reviews, 467 have been carried out within statutory timescales, which equates to 94.30%.

SCA/019 - % Of adult protection referrals completed where the risk has been managed



SCA/019 – Out of 347 adult protection referrals, 295 referrals were managed for risk, which equates to 85%. The remaining 15% of cases not managed are those where no consent was given, primarily victims of domestic abuse, or where it was found that no abuse occurred and therefore no risks to be managed.

What we've done in 2014 - 2015

The **Adult Services** Protection of Vulnerable Adult (PoVA) Team are currently working on streamlining processes within the service. A process mapping day was held with the team where areas for improvement were identified and suggestions made on how best to proceed. Some of the suggestions for improvement included making changes to the existing referral form. The new form is currently being piloted. A training programme for use across the organisation has also been developed.

The PoVA team working with our Development Officer for Older People undertook an exercise to see whether POVA safeguarding training could be more effectively delivered to vulnerable adult groups through 'Peer to Peer' presentations and discussion. The 'Peer to Peer' nature of this project was designed to acknowledge that people often learn better from someone they can relate to or share common ground with. The Caerphilly County Borough 50+ Forum were invited to be a key partner and three members volunteered to be our 'Peer to Peer' trainers. In addition to the training, and as a way of targeting those who could be socially isolated and vulnerable, a DVD was created called 'Keeping Safe – What is Abuse and Who Can Help'. The DVD has been well received and we are now developing a fully bilingual version.

Within **Children's Services** a recent service reconfiguration included the creation of a dedicated Senior Practitioner role in each Locality Team to oversee LAC/Child Protection/PLO planning. These post holders will undertake a critical quality assurance role on behalf of the service and will act as important links between the Courts and the Local Authority. In addition, PLO Business Process flowcharts and associated paperwork has been reviewed and re-issued to all staff.

What our Regulators Told Us

In the 2013-14 Annual Performance Report prepared by our Regulators (CSSIW) they highlighted that we should:

- **Examine factors contributing to the rise in children placed on the Child Protection Register**

In response to their comments, in 2014-15 we have:

- ✓ Investigated the rise in number of children on the Child Protection Register, and while there is no obvious reason, there have been a few large sibling groups registered which can affect figures. However, it is important to put the recent reported rise into an historical context. The average number over the last two years is 191 within a range of 164 to 216. The highest monthly rise has been 18 new registrations and largest drop has been 15 de-registrations. The rate currently is downwards from 216 in August 2014 to 194 as at February 2015.

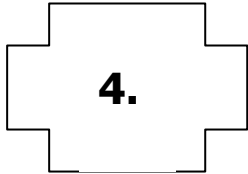
In 2014-15 our Children’s Services Division underwent a National Inspection in relation to ‘Safeguarding and Care Planning of Looked After Children and Care Leavers Who Exhibit Vulnerable or Risky Behaviours’. The aim of the national inspection was to assess the quality of care planning across Wales and whether it effectively, supports and protects LAC and care leavers, identifies and manages their vulnerabilities and risky behaviour, promotes rights based practice and the voice of the child, promotes improved outcomes and promotes compliance with policy and guidance. The findings of the Inspection report for Caerphilly identified many positive areas of practice, however a number of areas for improvement were also noted around, for example, partnership working, quality assurance and commissioning systems, and how we gather feedback from our children and young people. A comprehensive Action plan has been developed to address these issues and will be a key priority for the Directorate in 2015-16.

What we’re going to do in 2015 – 2016

Our priorities for the year ahead in connection with this area will be:

Priority	Why is this a priority?	What effect will it have?
Consider the development of a cross Directorate Safeguarding Unit.	This links closely to the Medium Term Financial Plan and discussions around the development of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub with partners.	Improved service delivery and potential Directorate savings.
Implementation of CSSIW LAC Inspection Action Plan.	Regulatory Inspection identified areas for development which need to be implemented.	Improved service delivery and successful completion of all identified actions.

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4.3 Performance & Business Management

A key development across the whole of Caerphilly county borough council this year has been the introduction of 'Self Evaluation'. Self Evaluation means, using a range of data and intelligence to evaluate your area of work and to draw a conclusion as to how effective your service is. In brief, self-evaluation is designed to answer two key questions - How well are we doing? And how do we know?

Whilst Self Evaluation is not a new technique there is now more than ever the need to formally show how intelligence is being used to form an opinion about where the Directorate is and where it needs to be. Findings from the Directorates Self Evaluation has been used to inform the Directorates Service Plan for 2015-16 and the priorities set out in this report.

In addition to our Corporate Self Assessment, the Welsh Government asked that we complete a Self Assessment Tool to find out our readiness to comply with the duties of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, and to assess where we are currently placed in being able to implement the cross-cutting themes and strategic intent of the Act. The outcome of the assessment was that while there are areas for development, in general the Directorate finds itself well placed to manage the changes the new Act will bring.

What we've done in 2014 - 2015

In order to ensure that people in Caerphilly county borough continue to receive high quality services, the Directorate has developed a **Quality Assurance Framework**. Quality assurance is a continual and dynamic process. It is an improvement cycle by which we set standards, develop appropriate ways to make sure we're working to those standards, review the way we work and finally use the information we have to improve services. It also helps us to improve our understanding of whether we are supporting our service users, in the right way, at the right time, and whether we are making a difference.

Our Quality Assurance Framework sets out:

- The quality assurance cycle and the role that all officers, senior officers and elected members will play in relation to the quality assurance of Social services;
- The range of quality assurance activities that will be undertaken; and

- The arrangements for quality assurance reporting and learning.

The Quality Assurance Cycle is shown below:



The Framework is designed to help us in a journey of continuous self-assessment and improvement.

The Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) is working on behalf of a multi stakeholder group for Welsh Government, to test the recording and reporting of personal outcomes within a new **National Outcomes Framework** for performance measurement in preparation for the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Caerphilly Children's Services are part of the pilot along with six other authorities (Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Monmouthshire and Neath Port Talbot). Caerphilly, Denbighshire and Neath Port Talbot have been identified as sites for Children's Services.

A working group was established in September 2014 that focused on developing two key areas:

1. The tool for recording personal outcomes, baseline measurement and tracking progress towards achieving it; and
2. The agreement of a training programme to support an outcome based approach within operational services.

Using the recording tool to log individual outcomes will enable Caerphilly and the Data Unit Wales to report to Welsh Government on how people are progressing towards their goal (or agreed outcomes). Importantly the framework will connect broad outcomes to operational changes and will measure the difference made, not what has been delivered/achieved.

A training programme (Collaborative Communications Skills) has been designed for practitioners to build and develop confidence and skills sets in having complex conversations with people who are often at a point of crisis or challenge in their lives. It is also about developing skills in empowering people to help themselves as much as possible.

The Children's Services pilot will focus on Looked After Children, specifically those children and young people assessed as being at risk of becoming looked after or, who have become looked after as a result of a crisis, through to their second statutory review (i.e. 4 months and the plan for permanence). However locally, Caerphilly will apply the new way of working to all new cases in order to encourage a whole team approach.

One of the ambitions of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act is to see a much more co-productive approach (between agencies and individuals) to addressing and finding solutions to support needs. An underlying assumption of the Act is that too much time, skills and resources are spent on bureaucratic assessments. This Pilot is based on the belief that through a professional targeted conversation, people need to be and can be supported to help themselves as much as possible. Agreeing the outcome or 'what matters' issue is key to this, as it helps provide clear direction to all parties concerned. This method of practice requires practitioners to be able to facilitate complex discussions and assist families in identifying what needs to change and identifying their own outcomes.

What our Regulators Told Us

In the 2013-14 Annual Performance Report prepared by our Regulators (CSSIW) they highlighted that we should:

- **Continue to develop method/frameworks for quality review**

In response to their comments, in 2014-15 we have:

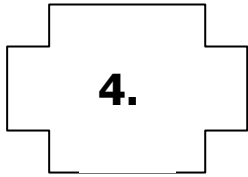
- ✓ Developed a Quality Assurance Framework for use across the whole Directorate. 2015-16 will see its implementation.

What we're going to do in 2015 – 2016

Our priorities for the year ahead in connection with this area will be:

Priority	Why is this a priority?	What effect will it have?
Implement a Quality Assurance Framework to include consultation, engagement and learning from Complaints and Compliments.	This area for improvement was identified during our Corporate Self Evaluation process and the need to consult regarding Medium Term Financial Planning. In addition we also have a revised Complaints Procedure that requires to be implemented.	Improved service planning and delivery.
Engagement in National Outcomes Framework Pilot.	Children's Services is a pilot area for implementation of new performance measures that will be rolled out nationally.	All Wales learning from Caerphilly county borough experience.

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4.4 Resource Management

Continued focus on budget management has helped to ensure that the directorate has delivered the majority of the savings targets that were agreed in the 2014-15 budget strategy and has helped to identify potential savings for inclusion in the 2015-16 budget strategy.

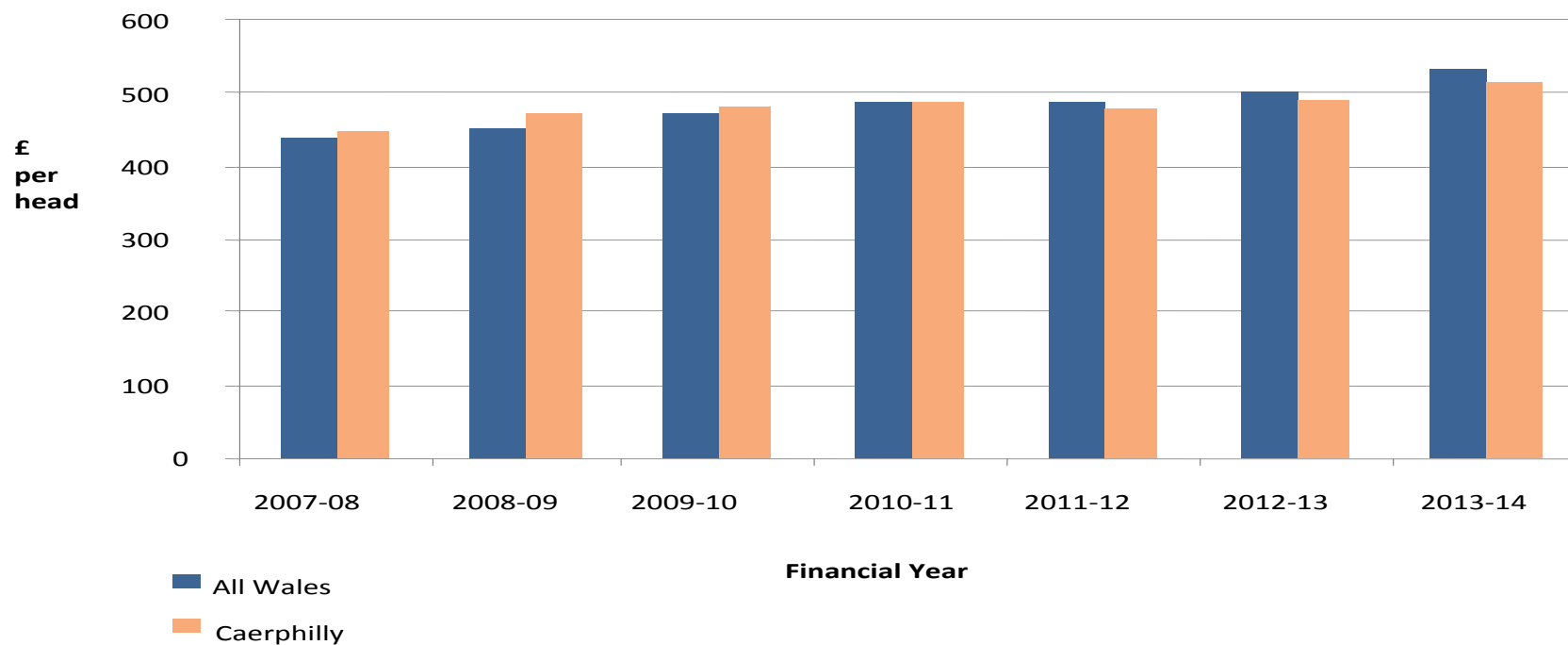
Despite the progress made in recent years, we do not underestimate the financial challenges that lie ahead. Management teams have identified over £3m of potential savings for the 2015-16 financial year. The savings put forward and approved by Council in February 2015 are:

General savings that have no direct impact on service users.	£1,568,000
Reduction of 3 social workers per division with the intention to achieve by vacancy management.	£219,000
Removal of £1m of demographic growth for 2015-16.	£1,000,000
Independent Sector Domiciliary Care - Elderly - Review of shopping service.	£40,000
Meals on Wheels – An increase of 50p per meal.	£44,000
Own Day Care – Review of day centre provision.	£128,000
Home Assistance and Reablement Team – Review of domiciliary care provision.	£85,000
	<hr/>
	£3,084,000

It should be noted however, that these savings proposals would leave very little flexibility within the directorate budget to react to any future additional cost pressures, such as, demand for child care placements, an aging population, inflationary pressure on care fees, reductions in Welsh Government specific grant funding and the implications of legislative changes.

This sound budget management is further evidenced through a comparison of the actual spend per head of population on social services across Wales as shown below. The most recent information for 2013-14 shows that the spend per head of population within Caerphilly amounted to 104.5% of the Welsh average in 2007-08 but has steadily reduced to 96.6% of the Welsh average by 2013-14. Information for 2014-15 will be available in October 2015.

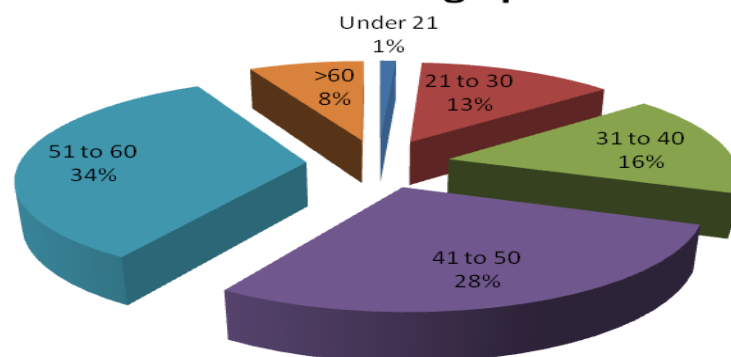
Social Services Spend per Head of Population



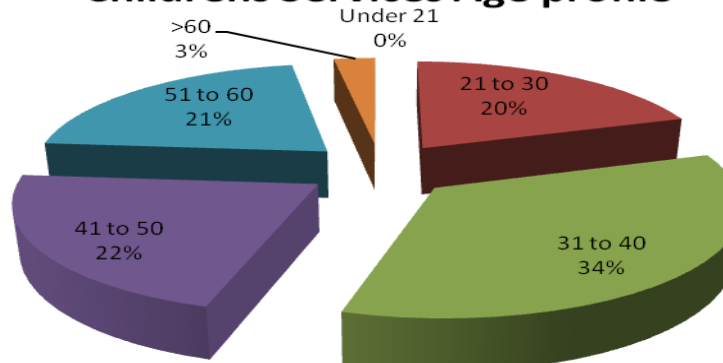
The key workforce planning issues for the service area over the next 12 months will be directly linked to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). Within the Directorate's MTFP are various proposals for restructuring and downsizing. Some of these aims have already been achieved but as the management of the MTFP continues into 2015-16 and 2016-17, there will be a continuing trend of restructuring and downsizing.

Workforce data for Social Services illustrates a staff group that is predominantly female (86.8%) and part time. The age profile of the workforce as shown below illustrates that within Adult Services the largest group of our employees are aged between 51-60, while within Children's Services are aged between 31-40 years. When considering any downsizing the Directorate will seek to ensure that no particular cohort of staff are disproportionately affected.

Adult Services Age profile



Childrens Services Age profile



The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 will have a significant impact in terms of how the Directorate utilises its workforce. The 'front door' of the service has already been reconfigured to ensure that the focus of services is in line with the main principals of the Act. Further reconfigurations are also planned for teams delivering safeguarding outcomes. New approaches to work (i.e. START and LEAP Teams) will also have significant workforce development implications. In this regard, we will need to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to deliver the service.

What we've done in 2014 - 2015

Within our **Children's Services** division the savings identified for 2014-15 mainly related to the deletion of some vacant posts and the reconfiguration of both fieldwork teams and administration services. In addition, the transfer of the Assessment Team functions to the new larger Locality Teams immediately reduced the need for cases to transfer between teams. Establishment of larger Locality Teams ensures sustainability going forward.

Through the use of 'Invest to Save' funding a pilot project called the 'The Immediate Response Team' was established within Children's Services to provide crisis intervention support to children, young people and families on the verge of breakdown, which previously often resulted in children entering the Looked After system. The team has been in operation since October 2011 and after a thorough evaluation it became evident that the project was saving more than it was costing to run, therefore the Immediate Response Team were awarded permanent contracts from 1st September 2014.

Achieving savings within our **Adult Services** division has concentrated largely on reviewing back office structures in provider services, deleting vacant posts and restructuring the Home Assistance and Reablement Team and Day Services. The Adult services front door

(ASDIT) was combined with the Children’s services front door to improve service delivery, prepare for the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and produce efficiencies in terms of the number of staff required to deliver the service. The Adult services and Children’s services Commissioning teams were also joined, taking advantages of vacant posts whilst ensuring service levels were maintained. Administrative posts were also reduced as a result of the START initiative and budgets realigned to reflect actual spend in provider services.

What our Regulators and Service Users Told Us

In recent years, financial management within the Directorate has proved effective. Internal audits have reported that the majority of key controls in place are operating effectively. The Annual Improvement Report by the Wales Audit Office in May 2014 recognised that the Council remained within its budget for Social Services, but it was not complacent about the challenges going forward.

Throughout 2014-15 the Council and the Social Services Directorate conducted a wide range of consultation events with residents of the county borough on the budget savings proposed. Whilst no one service area was highlighted more than others in the comments received from members of the public, many noted the importance of ensuring that vulnerable people in the community are protected and a reduction of services that impact on these groups should be carefully considered. Some of the comments people made were:

"I think that, in the main, it is good as vulnerable people will still be safeguarded"

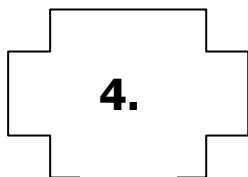
"Overall, the vulnerable appear to have been protected, which is excellent."

The Directorate is working hard to ensure that such services continue to be protected.

What we’re going to do in 2015 – 2016

Our priorities for the year ahead in connection with this area will be:

Priority	Why is this a priority?	What effect will it have?
Deliver the savings and service redesign required for the Medium Term Financial Plan.	This is a priority for all Council Directorates in order to manage the financial pressures going forward.	Achievement of the required savings will ensure the financial stability of the Council.



4.5 Commissioning & Partnership

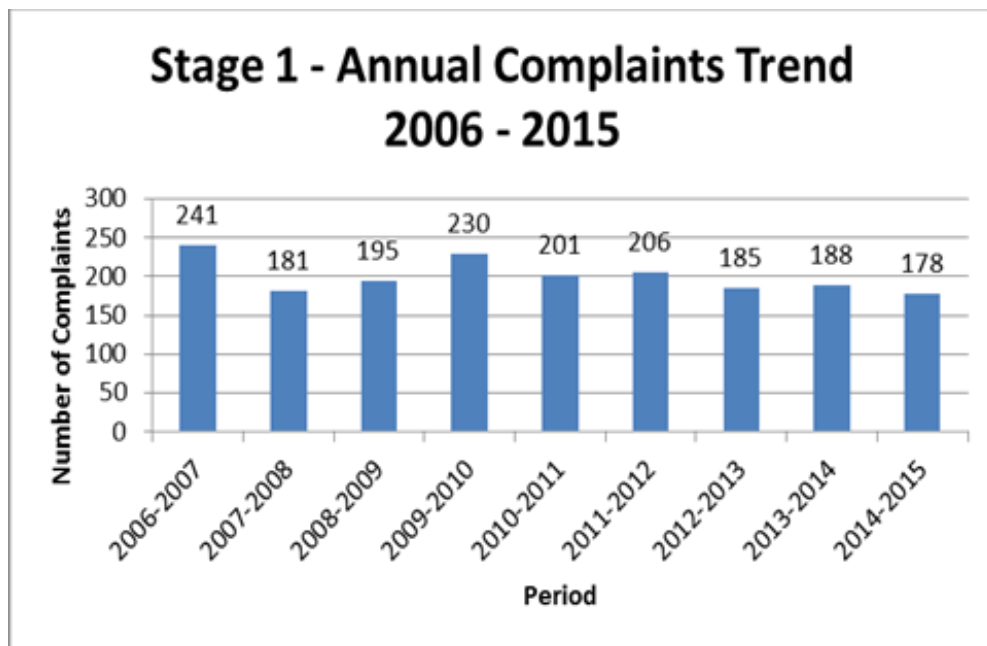
Making sure that people are able to access our services, at the right time and in the right place is an essential part of what we do, and therefore listening to what our service users tell us is of crucial importance to help us get this right. One way that this is done is by listening to the complaints and compliments that we receive and making changes where necessary.

During 2014-15, 103 representations were received. The majority of these were from Elected Members, MP's and AM's, on behalf of their constituents, of which 76 (74%) related to Adult Services, 25 (24%) to Children's Services and 2 (2%) to the Directorate's Service Strategy and Business Support Service area.

During 2014-15 the Directorate received 178 Stage 1 complaints and 1 complaint that a customer wished to progress directly to Stage 2. The majority of the complaints were resolved to the customer's satisfaction at Stage 1. Of the 178 complaints received at Stage 1, 95 (54%) related to Children's Services, 73 (41%) to Adult Services and 8 (5%) to Service Strategy and Business Support.

The graph below illustrates the trend of Stage 1 complaints received and responded to by the Directorate since the implementation of the Listening and Learning Guidance in April 2006.

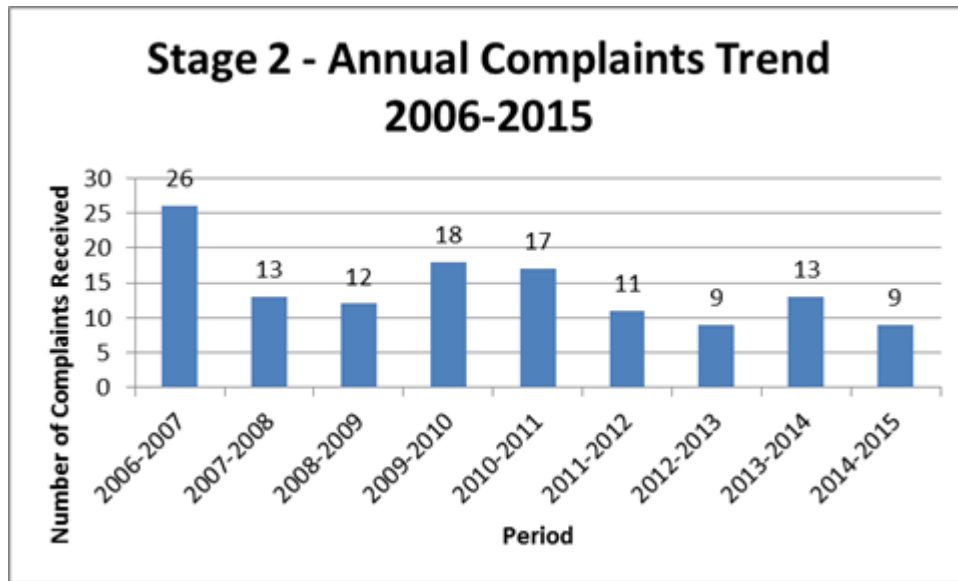
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During 2014-15 the Directorate received 9 requests to progress complaints to Stage 2. Of these, 6 (67%) related to Children’s Services and 3 (33%) related to Adult Services. Of the 9 requests for a Stage 2 investigation, 1 was progressed directly to stage 2 formal investigations, without the Directorate having the opportunity to attempt local resolution.

The following graph shows the trend for complaints progressing to the formal Stage 2 process for independent investigation since the implementation of the Listening and Learning Guidance in April 2006.

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There was 1 stage 2 complaint that progressed to a Stage 3 Welsh Government Panel in 2014-15.

As a result of what our service users told us, the following changes were made in 2014-15:

- ✓ Children's Services have worked with the Council's Legal department and Directorate and Corporate Information Officers to review the Fostering agreement between the Authority and foster carers. This will ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will enhance the protection of personal information relating to Looked After Children.

As well as listening and acting on the complaints that the Directorate receives, the Customer Services team also logs the praise that we receive from customers about teams or individuals.

During 2014-15 the Directorate received expressions of praise/compliments from 290 customers expressing their gratitude for the quality of service/ commitment and care from individual staff. The majority of the praise received relates to Adult Services, however it is recognised that the nature of the services provided by that Division is more likely to attract praise.

In the coming year 2015-16 the Customer Services team will reinstate the practice of including statistics on compliments received in the Annual Complaints report. It will also record any changes that are made in response to positive feedback and how we have used the learning from compliments to improve practice, including:

- ✓ Ensuring individual staff members and teams are recognised when positive feedback is received. At present, the Corporate Director writes to individual staff members in cases where customer feedback identifies a high level of professional commitment.
- ✓ Reporting information on statistics and case studies in management briefings, team meetings and in staff bulletins.
- ✓ Using positive feedback in staff training to cascade learning across the organisation.
- ✓ Reviewing and amending protocols/policies where relevant in response to compliments received.

What we've done in 2014 - 2015

In 2014 the Social Services Directorate developed a Service User and Carer Engagement Strategy. This strategy was developed in recognition that while there are a number of areas of good practice within the Directorate there is a need to develop a more consistent approach to participation, involvement and consultation across the department which demonstrates that external views are considered and used in decision making, and makes sure that we all use the same standards so that people know what they can expect from us and what we expect from them. There is also a need to appraise the extent of service user and carer participation in all levels of service planning and delivery. This will be an expectation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Children's Services have reviewed the Family Support Service specification and re-tender the service in early 2014. This contract worth £504,058 per annum and was awarded to Barnardo's.

On 1st April 2014 the South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS) covering the five Gwent Local Authorities of Blaenau-Gwent, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and Caerphilly was established and became fully operational. The new service has established itself well and continues to be a forerunner across Wales in terms of implementation and operational delivery. It is important to note that the Welsh Government have acknowledged the success of this regional collaborative.

In our **Adult Services** division the Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy was signed off at the end of March 2015 and a task and finish group has been established for the Adult Mental Health Commissioning Strategy which is currently out for consultation.

There has been a significant amount of negative press recently around care homes and nursing homes. However, there are examples of high quality care that is delivered each day to residents living in care homes throughout Caerphilly county borough. This prompted the Directorate to develop a DVD called 'There's No Place Like Home'. The film focused on the 6 local authority care homes and showed how high quality residential care can be a positive experience for many older people. Production of the film allowed us to capture the range of accommodation options available, the activities delivered in care homes and allowed residents of the county borough to hear from service users, their families/carers and staff working within residential care homes about their experiences. The film is available to view on the Caerphilly county borough council YouTube channel.

The authority has taken a regional approach to the development of an Integrated Assessment for Older People with Complex Needs. It was agreed that Monmouthshire county council would be the lead authority on its development and subsequent pilot of an assessment tool with health colleagues. Results from the pilot showed success in terms of use by community staff and accordingly it was agreed regionally to use the Intermediate Care Fund to establish a post to ensure the document and training was rolled out across Gwent. By agreement this post has been extended for a further year and smaller partnerships have now been formed based around current I.T. systems in use. Caerphilly are working with Newport city council to implement the integrated assessment.

What our Regulators Told Us

In the 2013-14 Annual Performance Report prepared by our Regulators (CSSIW) they highlighted that we should:

➤ **Develop a Commissioning Strategy for Older People**

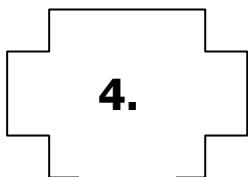
In response to their comments, in 2014-15 we have:

- ✓ Held initial discussions with partners with a view to looking at the feasibility of developing a pan Gwent commissioning strategy for older people. Due to different positions within each organisation this hasn't been possible hence this will be a priority for the Directorate in 2015-16.

What we're going to do in 2015 – 2016

Our priorities for the year ahead in connection with this area will be:

Priority	Why is this a priority?	What effect will it have?
Development of a Commissioning Strategy for Older People.	Demographics indicate an increasing ageing population and the number of people with dementia. Putting in place a strategy that takes account of the needs of the future will ensure appropriate services are provided to those who need them.	Improved service delivery.
Implementation of the Children's Services Commissioning Strategy.	This will be a key strategic document to drive service development and practice improvement.	Improved service delivery.



4.6 Corporate, Political Leadership and Support

Identifying the cultural and language needs of our services users is an integral part of ensuring that their care and/or support needs are accurately assessed and met. Directors of Social Services have a key role to play with regards to developing a culture within their organisations where staff are sensitive to people's linguistic needs and users receive services through the medium of Welsh as a natural part of their care. To support this the Welsh Government launched 'More than just words...'. The aim of this framework is to spread good practice and mainstream the Welsh language into all aspects of service planning and delivery.

The implementation of 'More than just words...' is a significant challenge for the Authority as well as for our commissioned services, given the scope of the Framework, the size of the Directorate and the increasing financial pressures that we are all facing. However, towards the end of 2014 Welsh Language Champions were identified in both Children's and Adult Services and the Council now maintains a Directory of Welsh Speakers. The Authority continues to support staff to attend Welsh Speaking Training courses. We will continue to work closely with our colleagues in the Corporate Policy Unit, Training and Development and Human Resources to progress this work in 2015.

In addition to our Welsh language requirements, the Directorate works hard to ensure that all staff are aware of, and implement, the duties set out within the Equality Act 2010. The Directorate offers specialist training to staff, partner agencies and carers to promote good practice in relation to meeting the specific needs of service users with protected characteristics covered under the Act. The Local Authority also maintains close ties with Community groups to promote partnership working and inform service planning. These groups include the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Council, local Deaf Clubs, Visual Impairment Community Groups, Caerphilly Access Group, 50+ forum, Inter-faith Groups and Mental Health.

What our Regulators Told Us:

In the 2013-14 Annual Performance Report prepared by our Regulators (CSSIW) they highlighted that we should:

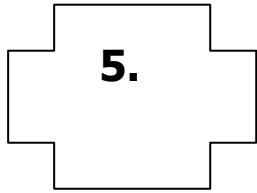
- **Continue to develop mechanisms to improve corporate oversight.**

In response to their comments, in 2014-15 we have:

- ✓ Been part of the CSSIW National Inspection of Safeguarding and Care Planning of Looked After Children and Care Leavers who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours. Caerphilly was inspected in March 2014 and CSSIW reported their findings in August. The inspection focussed on 4 key areas; corporate roles and responsibilities, care and planning pathways, safeguarding and reviews. The Inspection confirmed that Corporate Parenting arrangements were well embedded and that Elected Members understood their responsibilities and demonstrated ambition for Looked After Children. Partnership working was found to be effective and although there were areas for improvement identified, there were no issues of concern raised. The Inspection confirmed that all LAC and Care Leavers had Plans in place and although the quality of the plans was inconsistent, there was clear evidence that young people felt they were involved in their planning. The development of the dedicated 16 Plus Team was recognised as significantly improving services for young people. The Inspection confirmed that safeguarding was well embedded in practice and children and young people were protected appropriately. Whilst areas for improvement were identified relating to strengthening risk assessment and risk management, there were no areas for improvement noted for safeguarding. Finally, the Inspection reported that performance in relation to Reviews was consistently high but more work needed to be done to improve quality assurance processes and the recording of engagement with young people. An Action Plan has been produced and both the Local and National Reports have been presented to Scrutiny Committee.
- ✓ Sought members views on the possibility of setting up task and finish groups for scrutiny members. Task and finish groups would allow a more in-depth examination of one or two specific areas than would normally be possible at a scrutiny committee meeting. Reports from all Task and Finish groups would be presented to the Health, Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny committee for endorsement of the appropriate recommendations.

What we're going to do in 2015 – 2016

Priority	Why is this a priority?	What effect will it have?
There are no specific priorities for the Directorate in this area for 2015-16		



5. Links to Corporate Priorities and Improvement Objectives

In 2010, legislation required Council's to identify areas for improvement and called these 'Improvement Objectives'.

Improvement Objectives are a little different from our overall Council priorities in that they are based specifically on areas of unmet need from the public's point of view and where we want to place our focus in a shorter time frame. We also use a range of intelligence, from survey data, statistics and local knowledge.

Specifically for the Social Services Directorate our Improvement Objectives for 2014-15 focused on Safeguarding Children. We chose this because Corporate Parenting is the legal and moral duty that Councillors and the Authority have for LAC, to provide them with the level of support, care and protection that any good parent would be expected to provide for their own child.

Good quality foster care placements provide LAC with the support and stability they need in order to achieve positive outcomes. It is important for Caerphilly to have sufficient foster carers to offer appropriate placements for children and young people who are increasingly displaying complex and challenging behaviours. For those LAC who are unable to be rehabilitated to parents or extended family, we need to plan for permanence through Adoption.

LAC have the right to expect the same outcomes as every other child including educational outcomes. Although some do well, LAC across Wales generally have lower than average educational achievement in comparison to their peers. We need to ensure that all LAC have access to good quality education and the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Similarly, young people leaving care are particularly vulnerable and we will continue to promote their engagement in education and training to ensure they have opportunity to secure employment in young adulthood.

The reforms to welfare benefits will put more pressure on vulnerable families and this is likely to lead to additional demand for our services. We will need to continue to look at innovative and cost effective ways of providing good quality services to those who need them.

Our Improvement Objective goals in 2014-15 were to:

- Maintain placement stability levels ensuring children experiencing three or more placement moves remains below the Welsh Average of 10%.
- Continue to recruit sufficient foster carers in order to meet the placement demands of LAC and reduce reliance on Independent Fostering Agency placements.
- Ensure that children requiring adoptive placements are suitably matched and placed with adoptive families in a timely manner.
- Improve the educational attainment levels of LAC.
- Improve the engagement of young people leaving care in education, training and employment.
- Continue to improve the range of accommodation options for young people leaving care and those facing homelessness.

What we've done in 2014 - 2015

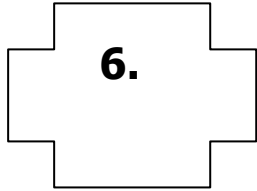
In 2014-15, 7 new carers have been successfully approved by the Fostering Panel. The target to recruit 25 new carers over the Improvement Objective timeframe has been exceeded with the total now standing at 30. The Foster Carer Recruitment Strategy was revised during autumn 2014 in readiness for implementation in 2015-16. Placement stability is currently reported at 3.9% and is projected to remain below the Welsh Average of 10%.

The South East Wales Adoption Service has been fully operational since April 2014 and working practices are continuing to be developed and strengthened. In the year we have successfully placed 8 children for adoption exceeding the annual target of 3.

Whilst the academic achievements of LAC are only reported annually, a key indicator of success is the timely completion of Personal Education Plans (PEP's) and to date 100% of LAC have a PEP in place within timescales. This is an improvement on last years rate of 95%.

Most of our young people who have left, or are leaving care have had significant issues to overcome in their lives making it difficult for many of them to engage positively in education, training or employment. In the year we have maintained last years performance at 50% in line with the target. However, 100% of our care leavers have Pathway Plans in place, are in contact with the Council and living in suitable accommodation.

The Sixteen Plus Team, working closely with colleagues in Housing and the Supporting People team continue to identify and develop a wide range of accommodation options for young people leaving care and homeless 16/17 year olds. Performance to date confirms that 100% of young people known to Children's Services are placed in appropriate accommodation that meets their identified needs.



Conclusion

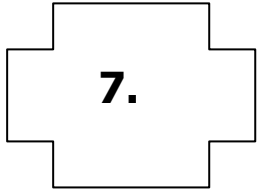
In my report I have shown the progress that we have made with our services, highlighted our strengths and identified areas that we need to focus on in 2015-16.

Staff have worked extremely hard this year to ensure that the performance of the Directorate continues to meet the standards that are expected of us. This has not been an easy task, especially given the particular challenges that we have faced us in 2014-15, such as the increasing demands on our services and the growing budget pressures faced by the Local Authority as a whole.

As the Directorate finds itself with continued pressure on its resources, the challenges for 2015-16 will not be dissimilar to that of last year, and difficult choices will need to be made to re-shape services to meet those pressures. However, as we work through the process of change, we will ensure that we continue to work closely with our service users, carers, citizens, staff members, Elected Members and partner agencies to secure the best possible outcome for all.

While I have referred to the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 already in this report, its significance cannot be underestimated given the impact that its introduction will have on the services we provide. Through changing the way we work, it is envisaged that we will shift the point at which people require formal social services intervention and subsequently this will create a more sustainable position for the future. Accordingly, implementation of the Act will drive the work programme of the Directorate for the foreseeable future.

While the future brings an array of challenges, I am confident that by meeting the priorities I have set out within this Annual Report, the Directorate will be well placed to continue to deliver efficient, effective and safe services to the residents of Caerphilly county borough.



Where to Find Out More

If you would like further information on any aspect of this report please contact:

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This report is also available in large print, Braille or other language formats upon request.

If you would like more general information about Social Services or are interested to find out more about a particular development, there are various ways you can do this. You can:

Visit the Caerphilly County Borough Council Website at: www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Contact our Social Services Customer Services Department by: Telephone: 0800 328 4061 or Email: socialservices@caerphilly.gov.uk

Read our Social Services Committee reports at: <http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/My-Council/Meetings,-agendas,-minutes-and-reports>

Watch the Digital stories that we have produced on: <https://www.youtube.com/user/CaerphillyCBCTV>