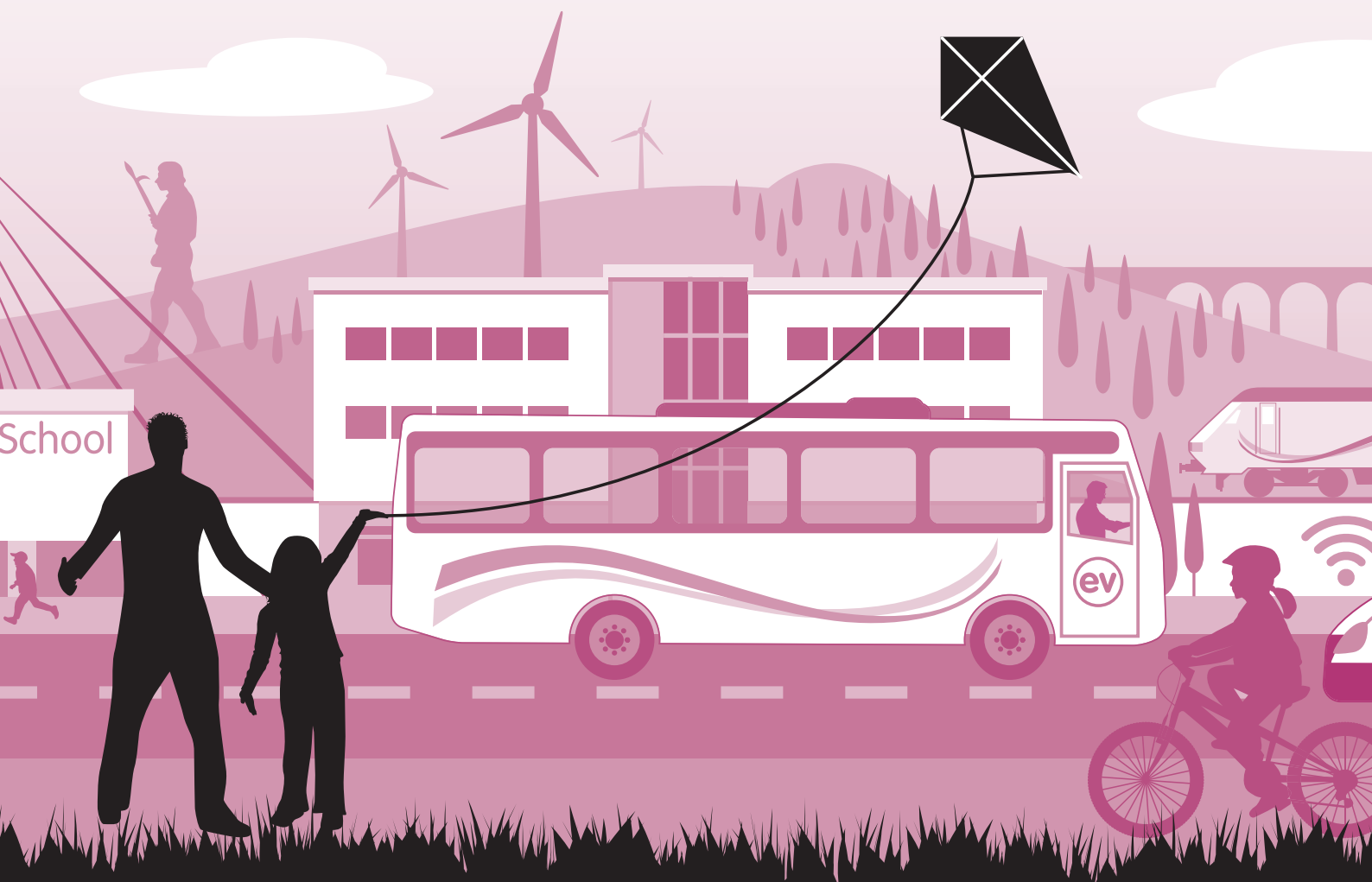


Caerphilly County Borough Council

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL
SERVICES & HOUSING
2019-2020



CREU CYMUNEDAU GOFALGAR
CREATING CARING COMMUNITIES



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.
This document is available in Welsh, and in other languages and formats on request.

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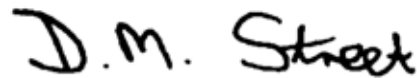
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Introduction

The availability of my annual report for 2019/20 is obviously much later than would normally be the case. Due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic in early 2020, local authorities were permitted to defer the report, hence why this report is being written at the same time as the report for 2021.

This report lays out the challenges faced during 2019/20 and how we responded to these challenges. It also lays out what were our priorities moving into 2020/21. Our progress against these priorities is contained in my report for 2020/21.

As we moved into the early months of 2020 it became clear our response to the pandemic had to be the priority for our services and this clearly impacted on how we could respond to some of these priorities.



Dave Street

Corporate Director for Social Services & Housing

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Director's summary of performance

Welsh Government has undertaken a major review of the performance measurement framework for Social Care. Caerphilly has been fully engaged in supporting this review with key officers attending workshops and steering group meetings. In the absence of a national performance framework, we continued to capture local performance information and some key measures for the period covered by this report are detailed below together with comparable information on performance in previous years.



ADULT SERVICES

MEASURE	RESULTS 2017/18	RESULTS 2018/19	RESULTS 2019/20
% of adult protection enquiries completed within 7 days.	93	100	100
The average length of time adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes (weeks).	158	174	215
Average age of adults entering residential care homes.	83	83	86
% of adults who have received advice and assistance from the information, advice and assistance service and have not contacted the service for 6 months.	90	95	98



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

MEASURE	RESULTS 2017/18	RESULTS 2018/19	RESULTS 2019/20
% of assessments completed for children within statutory timescales.	93	90	94
% of re-registrations of children on local authority Child Protection Registers (CPR).	2	6	4
The average length of time for all children who were on the CPR during the year.	268	268	230
% of looked after children who have experienced 1 or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the year to 31st March.	10	7	12
% of looked after children on 31st March who have had three or more placements during the year.	11	9	11



CARE LEAVERS

MEASURE	RESULTS 2017/18	RESULTS 2018/19	RESULTS 2019/20
% of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at 12 months after leaving care.	51	51	50
% of all care leavers who are in education, training or employment at 24 months after leaving care.	61	45	53

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How are people shaping our services?

Caerphilly Social Services is committed to making sure that people are able to 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, complaints and compliments, consultation events and feedback from Inspections.

All of our Regulated services are now registered under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act (RISCA) 2016. This has been a major piece of work completed in accordance with the statutory timescales.

Key activity undertaken by Care Inspectorate Wales and the Wales Audit Office during the period has included:

Children's Services

- Thematic inspection into services for Care Leavers.

Cross Directorate

2019/20

- WAO Review of Local Authority arrangements for Corporate Safeguarding.
- Thematic inspection of Adult Safeguarding arrangements.

The reports for the above inspections were generally positive and although, understandably, they identified areas for



further development as opposed to areas of non compliance, they all recognised the good progress being made across service areas. All reports are available to view on the Inspectorate website at:

careinspectorate.wales/our-reports

Periodic engagement meetings have continued to be held with the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) involving the Senior Management Team and the Cabinet Member for Social Services & Wellbeing.

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.

During 2019/20, the Directorate received 144 Stage 1 complaints. The majority of the complaints were resolved to the customer's satisfaction at Stage 1 and this is due to the efforts that are placed on resolution at Stage 1 of the process.

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.

During 2019/20 we received 144 Stage 1 Complaints and managed 5 Stage 2 Complaints

Of the 144 complaints received at Stage 1 in 2019/20, the following outcomes were noted:

- 16 were closed, as the matters were resolved early or signposted to other processes, e.g. legal process.
- 9 complaints were upheld.
- 14 complaints were partially upheld.
- 105 complaints were not upheld.

During 2019/20, the Directorate received 5 requests to progress complaints to a Stage 2 formal investigation, a minimal decrease from the previous year when there 6 Stage 2 investigation. All 5 (100%) of the Stage 2 investigations related to Children's Services.

In addition, there were 11 contacts by our customers during 2019/20 to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) a slight drop from 14 in the previous year.

The Directorate appreciates the importance of learning from complaints and representations and it is recognised 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 2019/20, 281 compliments were received, of which 228 (81%) related to Adult Services and 53 (19%) related to Children's Services. 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.



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Promoting and improving the wellbeing of those we help

Quality Standard 1: Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve.

In accordance with the requirements of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act, 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 peoples strengths, on working with people to regain or maintain 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.

'You helped me when I didn't know what to do or where to go... thank you so much!'

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.

'I am feeling so much more confident now thanks to the support I have had!'

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.

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 have also developed Parent Advocacy through partnership working funded by Families First.

98% of our assessments were completed within the statutory timescale and over 700 children were supported to remain living within their families.

During 2019/20, 98% of adults who received advice and assistance from the IAA did not contact the service again within the next 6 months. This is a positive message as it suggests that the advice and assistance received helped people to retain their independence, choice and control.

We continue to make use of our assessment beds which are located in Ty Clyd and Ty Iscoed residential homes. These beds help to prevent people going to hospital unnecessarily and enable them to be discharged in a timely manner.

Supporting people to remain or regain their independence is a key objective for all who work within Social Services.

How we addressed our priorities for 2019/20:

- The Compassionate Communities programme has been embedded in the north of the borough, with staff located in GP surgeries attending Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings, providing advice information and assistance to individuals. Post feedback has been received from people about the impact it has had in terms of reducing isolation.
- A single point of contact for GPs and other professional referrals to Primary Care Mental Health Services has been established through IAA and the Space-Wellbeing Panels.
- In partnership with Health, integrated wellbeing networks have been established across the borough that map all the resources available for people. Numerous engagement events have been held with communities, the third sector and community connectors linking services together for the benefit of individuals and communities.



What are our priorities for 2019/20?

- To expand the compassionate communities project across the whole of the borough.
- Work with the Health Board to enable staff to have different conversations with people to better understand their desired outcomes.

Quality Standard 2: Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing.

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

Caerphilly are active partners in the Gwent wide Children and Families Strategic Partnership which is prioritising the development of integrated approaches to supporting children and young people including therapeutic support for children Looked After through the regional development of the My Support Team (MyST) service across the five Local Authorities. This service was originally developed in Caerphilly in 2017.

Caerphilly MyST, is a multi disciplinary therapeutic intervention service supporting the most challenging children and young people to prevent placement breakdown and prevent the need for children to be placed in high cost residential provision outside the County Borough.

'With MyST I have been able to return to live with my dad - I never thought that would happen.'

The Gwent wide Attachment Trauma Service has been offering 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 a small number of particularly challenging children, we purchased a property to develop a second Children's Home within the County Borough and recruited a residential staff team. Due to having to use the property for an emergency placement, refurbishment works were delayed and it is anticipated that the home will become fully operational during the coming year.

Across Adult Services, we continue to develop our Community Resource Team (CRT) which offers a rapid response to people's medical and social needs. In addition we have developed a discharge to assess pathway in Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr which has been recognised national as an area of good practice, the Data Unit are currently producing a YouTube video to promote the service and tell peoples stories of using the pathway.

'My carers treat me with total respect and dignity - that is really important to me.'

During the year we have focused on identifying and developing services for carers to support them in their caring role. We held a series of events during carers week, we listened to what carers told us, developed social media sites and focused on events.

We recognise that people don't want to be in hospital for any longer than necessary. We have therefore increased the number of domiciliary care providers on our framework to enable us to arrange more packages of care so people can be discharged home as soon as they are well enough.

'We would never have been able to stay living in our own home and together if it hadn't been for your help. You really listened to us.'

The Council has six residential care homes for older people, which it owns and runs, all of which have adopted the Dementia Care Matters approach. Two of our homes, Brodawel and Ty Iscoed, have achieved 'butterfly status' which is the nationally recognised mark of good practice. All our homes are now registered under Regulation Inspection Social Care Act as required.

The average age of adults entering residential care homes was 86 years.

The average length of time adults (aged 65 or over) are supported in residential care homes is 215 days, illustrating our commitment to enable people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible.

We continue to work with our health colleagues in integrated mental health teams to develop the services we provide to promote people's mental health and emotional wellbeing.

How we addressed our priorities for 2019/20:

- The Discharge to assess model has been developed to look at different pathways for people with particularly focus on people in the Elderly Frail Unit in YYF to prevent unnecessary admission to a ward. Excellent working relationships have been established with the medical lead, staff attend board rounds daily and have successfully taken people home and followed them up without the provision of services. This has been acknowledged by the Delivery Unit as good practice.
- Funding from ICF has been secured to ensure the scheme continues across ABuHB hospitals and an independent review is being undertaken by IPC to evaluate the effectiveness of the projects in the programme.
- Refurbishment works on a property to develop a second residential children's home in the Borough commenced.
- Caerphilly agreed to host the regional leadership posts for the MyST Service on behalf of the Gwent Children and Families Partnership.

What are our priorities for 2020/21:

- Expand the Home First ethos to include Prince Charles Hospital in Merthyr Tydfil.
- Secure funding to expand Home First to cover the Grange University Hospital.

- Implement the nationally agreed 4 pathways in respect of Discharge to Assess to improve outcomes for individuals.
- Expand the MyST service into Newport to complete the regional development.

Quality Standard 3: Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is the most important thing that the Authority does. Consequently the Authority has ensured that it is a Corporate priority and responsibility. A cross Directorate Corporate Safeguarding Board is led by the Assistant Director for Children's Service and 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 underway. Each service area has identified a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and periodic practice development groups are held to support the DSOs. The Corporate Safeguarding Board produces an Annual Report for Elected Members. The Welsh Audit Office undertook a review of Corporate Safeguarding arrangements in the Council during 2019 and the findings were used to develop a work programme for the Board to implement.

The arrangements for improving safeguarding policies, procedures and practice across the region are led by the South East Wales Safeguarding Boards (SEWSCB and GWASB) 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 a clear governance structure and their work is supported by a set of sub groups. Caerphilly are active partners on these Boards.



- **100%** of adult protection enquiries were completed within 7 days.
- **98%** of initial Child Protection Conferences were carried out within statutory timescales.
- **98%** of all Child Protection Reviews were carried out in timescale.
- **100%** of children on the Child Protection Register have an allocated Social Worker.
- **100%** of children Looked After have an allocated Social Worker.

The Boards agreed to establish a single Adults and Children’s Safeguarding Board during 2019/20. This has enhanced shared learning across the two sectors and enabled the development of better joint working across the region.

‘I didn’t realise it at the time but all you did for me actually kept me safe and protected!’

Within the Council, responsibility for children’s and adults safeguarding sit within Children’s Services. Although discrete service areas, they are all managed by one Service Manager and capacity and resilience has been improved as a result. Decisions are made on all referrals within 24 hours ensuring full compliance with statutory procedures. The existing national procedures have been reviewed and are expected to be re-launched during 2020.

We continue to provide training on ‘Ask and Act’ to all front line staff so they can recognise the signs of domestic abuse.

‘I used to think I was broken - now, thanks to you, that has all changed’

We closely monitor services we commission in terms of the quality of care they provide and this covers domiciliary care, supported living and long term care homes.

How we addressed our priorities for 2019/20:

- **Building on the success of merging the Safeguarding Case Practice Review Group across Adults and Children, the Safeguarding Board Business Unit support the merger of the separate Adults and Children’s Boards. The new single joint Board became fully operational during the year.**
- **The recommendations of the WAO review of Corporate Safeguarding arrangements resulted in the development of a robust action plan that continued to be monitored by the Board.**

- Education Safeguarding transferred from Children's Services to the Local Education Authority.

What are our priorities for 2020/21:

- Embed the new All Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- Develop a Council wide Learning Management System (LMS) to record safeguarding training attendance and completion.
- Introduce a Safeguarding Self Assessment Tool for Service areas.

Quality Standard 4: 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.

'School was the only thing that stayed the same for me and I loved being able to stay there.'

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.

The local authority employs a number Community Connectors who have developed a database of activities taking place in local areas so they are able to signpost or take people to clubs and activities that interest them, such as 'knit and natter', art classes, craft groups, men's sheds and luncheon clubs.





'I didn't have a clue where to start to try and get help from my mum - and then you helped me.'

We have embedded the DEWIS information system so people can access information for themselves 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

'You have no idea what it means to me to know that she is cared for when I have to go out myself.'

Supporting carers is key. We have developed a carers skill swap system which is going from strength to strength. Carers are contacting each other and swapping skills for example, one carer did another's ironing in exchange for a sitting service to enable them to attend a birthday party.

How we addressed our priorities for 2019/20:

- Using ICF grant funding, we created a Community Connector post for children and families in the Intensive Support Team which offers preventative services to children assessed to be on the 'edge of care'.
- DEWIS has been used to record and promote resources available for people to meet their own outcomes.

What are our priorities for 2020/21?

- Embed a Family Meeting Service within the Intensive Support Team to help families identify solutions to issues that they may be facing and reduce the numbers of children coming into care.
- To promote and develop volunteering opportunities for people within tier communities.

Quality Standard 5: 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.

'Family Time (contact) is supervised but I totally understand why and I am so lucky to have the chance.'

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 are working with health to develop a bespoke service for people in crisis in respect of their mental health which will be a separate arm of the service.

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.

With our partners we have updated the Strategy for Learning Disabilities and during consultation meetings with our citizen groups, people told us that relationships are really important to them. This is now a fundamental part of the 'what matters' conversations and reviews are ensuring we are outcome focused.

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 us increase the enquiries we receive and the assessments that we are undertaking. We are fully engaged in the National Fostering Framework developments looking at an all Wales approach to recruitment, retention and support services for foster carers.

Recruitment of qualified social workers in the Children's Services Locality Teams continued to be challenging and the Market Supplement that was introduced to attract applicants was reviewed during the year.

How we addressed our priorities for 2019/20:

- **Recruitment of Social Workers continued to be monitored throughout the year and the Market Supplement was reviewed and agreed it needed to continue.**
- **ICF grant funding was utilised to expand the Shared Lives Service with recruitment of more carers and very positive feedback being received.**
- **The Learning Disability Strategy was reviewed and ambassadors identified to champion the work and engage with wider stakeholders across the sector.**

What are our priorities for 2020/21?

- Develop the mental health project arm of South East Wales Shared Lives Scheme and expand the pilot area from Newport to Caerphilly.
- Promote membership of My Mates for people with a learning disability to develop personal relationships and friendships.
- Continuation of the secondment scheme for staff to undertake the Social Work Degree.

Quality Standard 6: Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic wellbeing, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

Children's Services actively support Looked After Children to engage in education and training and provide individual support wherever necessary. Children and young

people are encouraged to make the best use of their leisure time and are supported to engage in community activities wherever possible.

'You trusted me with my own place and with your continued support I have succeeded to keep it all going.'

Children's Services have a well established working 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. We continue to review this provision and look to identify further opportunities for new developments.



Key performance includes:

- **100%** of Looked After Children have a plan for permanence in place by the time of their second CLA Review (within 4 months of becoming Looked After).
- **100%** of young people leaving care have an allocated worker to support them and we keep in touch with 100% of our care leavers up to the age of 21 years.
- **50%** of care leavers were engaged in education, training or employment 12 months after leaving care.

Within Adult Services, during the refresh of the Learning Disabilities Strategy, people clearly told us where they lived was very important to them. They wanted independence with some support. Taking on board this message we opened a series of flats in Ashfield Road which enabled people to have their own front door but with targeted support when needed.

We are working with our colleagues in Housing to review the current accommodation we have available to see if it can be used differently to increase the range of choices for people.

'They make me feel I am equal and like one of the family - it is the best!'

As a Council we are 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.

You may also see many different displays and themes reflecting people's former 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.

'Staff encourage me to continue to do as much as I can for myself but it is so reassuring to know they are there if I need them.'

With our partners we piloted an expansion of 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 2019/20:

- ICF was used by the Gwent Local Authorities to develop reablement services for people with memory loss and/or dementia. Caerphilly decided to appoint a part time Community Psychiatric Nurse and a Carers' Support Officer and both are in post.
- We submitted a bid for ICF Capital funding to purchase a property to develop a third residential children's home in the Borough which was successful.

- We have identified a potential property developer who specialises in bespoke accommodation for young Care Leavers as an alternative to the use of B&B accommodation and they are looking for properties within the Borough.

What are our priorities for 2019/20?

- Develop the Mill road flats for independent living for adults with a disability.
- Make an application to the Cardiff Challenge Fund for employment opportunities for people with a learning disability.
- Contribute to the development of regional plans for shared residential provision for young people in crisis.



5

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 is relatively stable with good staff retention. However, we have continued to experience challenges in recruiting to specific teams within Children's Services and the Market Supplement incentive has been extended.

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.

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 DMTs and SMT on a regular basis and these management teams are the key players in the development of the financial strategy of the Directorate.

An analysis of the spend per head of population indicates that Caerphilly's spend on Children's Services, Adults with Learning Disabilities and Adults aged 65+ is less than the average for Wales. Spend on Adults with Physical Disabilities is just above the Welsh average but spend on Adults with Mental Health Needs in Caerphilly is around 56% higher than the Welsh average.



The most significant growth in demand during 2019/2020 has continued to be in the following areas:

- **Independent sector residential care for children.**
- **Nursing care for older people.**
- **Domiciliary care to support people in their own homes.**
- **Residential and nursing care for people with learning disabilities.**

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 authority is now a part 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 the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

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

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.**

Political support for Social Services in Caerphilly CBC remains strong. Despite the very difficult financial settlement for the authority, additional funding was allocated to help us meet some of the financial pressures from an increasingly ageing population.

The Corporate Director for Social Services & Housing is 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.

There is an Executive Member for Social Services who sits on the Council's Cabinet and also 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.



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