



## **GWASANAETHAU CYMDEITHASOL**



## **SOCIAL SERVICES**

# **Vale of Glamorgan Council Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019/20**

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## 1. Introduction

As the Director of Social Services for the Vale of Glamorgan, I am delighted to be able to outline how during 2019/20 we have further strengthened our service delivery to enhance the well-being of our citizens who access our services. Such improvements would not have been possible without the dedication of our workforce and our ability to work effectively in partnership with both the people we serve and other agencies in order to co-produce outcomes.

The format of this report is determined through regulations as part of the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014. Our progress during 2019-20 is framed around six well-being standards, which enables us to evidence how we have contributed to the well-being of our citizens who are in receipt of care and support services. In this report we detail what progress has been made in against each of the key priorities we said we would focus on over the past 12 months.

Under each well-being standard the report identifies the key priorities for next year. It is important to note that this prioritisation exercise has not been done in isolation but is part of a far more integrated and sophisticated planning process aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan. During 2019-20, a new Corporate Plan was developed. This Corporate Plan is the Council's overarching strategic planning document that reflects the vision and priorities of the Council over the next 5 years. The Corporate Plan and its associated Annual Delivery Plan have been shaped around the voice of citizens, and so it has been the key document we have used this year to identify our priorities for Social Services for the forthcoming year (2020-21).

Social Services is facing a number of unprecedented pressures, one of the most pressing being the COVID-19 outbreak (Coronavirus) that began to take hold in the UK during March. This outbreak has put our services under immense pressure and has significantly challenged how we continue to provide our services that are often a lifeline for our most vulnerable in society. The scale of this challenge, compounded by many others, is likely to place enormous strain on how we deliver services in the future.

The other pressures we face relate to our budgets and the rising demand for our services in the context of complexity of needs. We have continued to respond positively to these challenges, by taking steps to reshape and integrate our services. Despite the challenges there are many achievements (outlined in the rest of this report) that we can celebrate, that are testament to the efforts and commitment of our staff. I want to thank all those members of staff, our partners and members of the public who have been involved in this vital work.

Overall, I hope that this report will demonstrate the progress we have made over the past year in delivering a more citizen-centred approach.

## 2. Director's Summary of Performance

Across Social Services we collect a range of measures from each of the three divisions (Children and Young People Services, Adult Services, and Resource Management and Safeguarding) that make up the Directorate. This suite of measures is what provides us with a snapshot of our performance over the year.

The collection and reporting of this performance data is now undertaken through the Welsh Community Care and Information System (WCCIS). However, in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic the collection and reporting of a full year's worth of performance data has been curtailed as a result of resources being re-directed to the front-line.

Due to COVID-19 it hasn't been possible to present a full year's performance but outlined below is a snap shot summary of performance that was available for end of year.<sup>1</sup>

### Performance Highlights

- We continue to operate well within our target for re-registrations of children on the Child Protection Register, as at quarter 4 (2019/20) 1.18% were re-registrations which is significantly better than All Wales performance and remains within our 5% target for the year.
- As at quarter 4, 5.96% of Children Looked After were returned home from care during the year.
- Supporting children to either remain with family or return home has remained a consistent focus of the division. As at quarter 4, 74.73% of children were supported to remain living with their family.
- 97.03% of Children Looked After were registered with a GP. This has continued to be a key focus of the Placement Team during 2019/20 to ensure that carers are registering children in their care in a timely manner.
- Managing the stability of placements remains a key priority for Social Services. Our performance in this area has improved when compared to the same period in the previous year, as during Quarter 4 2018/19 7.77% of Children Looked After experienced three or more changes compared to 6.36% in 2019-20. Our performance in this area continues to be consistently within our target of 9%.
- We continue to work proactively with a range of partners to support and assist care leavers to engage in further education, training or employment. 52.17% of care leavers were known to be engaged in education, training or employment 24 months after leaving care during quarter 4 2019/20.
- We have had great success in relation to our reablement support packages and our ability to step down packages in a timely way that enables individuals to be able to live more independently again. We have exceeded the all Wales performance (as at quarter 4 2019/20) in relation to reablement. 17.51% of adults who received reablement support had a reduced package of care and support after just 6 months. A further 81.11% of adults who previously received reablement support, did not require any package of care and support after 6 months.
- We have continued to promote take up of Telecare services to support our service users to remain living independently. Take up of Telecare during 2019/20 (400) was greater than anticipated when compared to our target of 375.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that for the performance snapshot the figures may be subject to change due to data cleansing and validation processes.

## Areas of performance requiring improvement:

In relation to our performance exceptions (red status measures):

- As at quarter 4 2019/20, just 63.7% of assessments were completed for children within statutory timescales. This continues to be an area of concern for us requiring additional attention. As a result, an associated action plan for improvement has been put in place. The issues being experienced specifically relate to the need to ensure timely decision making in respect of referrals received and then allocation for assessment where this is required. Actions have been agreed to address efficiencies within the Duty System and capacity within this function and within the wider team. Positively, analysis of the data indicates timely completion of assessments once allocated. By taking positive actions we anticipate that we will see an improved position from quarter 4 onwards.
- Although we have consistently performed well in relation to sustaining care leavers in education, training or employment after a 24-month period, this has been more challenging after a 12 month period. For example, as at quarter 4 2019/20, just 45.45% of care leavers were reported to be in education, employment or training 12 months after leaving care. The 15+ team continue to work with partner agencies to improve the outcomes for young people and have increased the number of opportunities for apprenticeships within the council.
- 68.3% of care and support plans for adults. The downward trend in performance in relation can be linked challenges we have experienced in recording and reporting data through WCCIS. Although, the new system has created difficulties in how we record and report on some aspects of our work, cleansing our data to ensure its accuracy continues to be an ongoing priority.
- Although, 87.3% of care and support plans for children were reviewed within the statutory timescales, this still represents an underperformance compared to our target of 91%. Whilst we have not reached our anticipated target, there will be an additional focus on the reason reviews have not taken place within timescales and ongoing work will be undertaken to understand and improve reviews.
- Our performance in relation to Delayed Transfers of Care continues to be a significant ongoing challenge due to capacity within and the viability of the domiciliary sector which impacts negatively on delayed transfers of care. During quarter 4 2019/20, the rate of delayed transfers of care was 4.79 per 1,000 population compared to our target of 3.5. Although this remains within target at present and represents an improvement on performance when compared with the same period in the previous year. In order to address these pressures, we are continually working with the independent home care sector and our own reablement care service to increase this capacity.

COVID-19 is likely to have a profound impact on demand for our services and how we deliver these services both now and in the future. The overarching challenge we will face will be how we continue to sustain service delivery and performance whilst managing demand at a time when our resources have been stretched by the Pandemic. In the midst of this uncertainty there are opportunities to explore new ways of working to transform our services. Given that COVID-19 is likely to continue to impact on our policy and legislative landscape for some time our priorities for the 2020/21 period have been shaped with this in mind. Likewise, we are mindful that the volatility of the situation means that in equal measure progress against our priorities for 2020/21 during our recovery will be influenced by future developments. As we transition from our response to recovery phase it presents

us with opportunities to take stock of what we have learnt and to further develop our understanding of the challenges that lie ahead. In the context of COVID-19, there are a number of key challenges that we anticipate our Social Services will face over the coming year as follows (2020/21):

### **Children and Young People Services**

- There is an increasing number of Children Looked After whose needs/circumstances are putting greater pressure on our budgets. Although we continue to focus on reducing the cost and stability of placements and reducing our reliance on the independent sector and out of area placements there are an increasing number of children and young people who are presenting with more complex needs that require higher cost placements.
- Linked to the increasing numbers of Children Looked After, there is an increased focus on kinship arrangements. This places an increased pressure on our existing resources, due to the requirement to assess members of kin as foster carers. As a result a greater number of complex cases are going to care proceedings via the Family Court which is driving up spend on legal requirements and impacts on the capacity of our Child Care Teams.
- Our capacity to meet the growing demand for children and family support services to ensure that needs are met whilst minimising duplication in service delivery is a challenge. To help address this we have invested resources to increase our capacity at the 'front door' to improve the timeliness of assessments of need and risk and enable appropriate signposting to other services. This has been an effective way of preventing the escalation of issues and reducing pressure on Social Work teams.
- The growth in referrals to the Regional Adoption Collaborative (Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Collaborative) (VVC) is impacting on all four collaborative authorities. There is a shortage of suitable adopters to meet the demand for the number of children requiring adoption.
- In order to deliver sustainable children and family support services, we need a workforce that has the right skills to respond to the evolving legislative landscape and the need to operate on a regional basis. This requires a shift to co-produced outcomes where the children and young people, parents and carers are equal partners in the planning and meeting their care and support needs.

### **Adult Services**

- In light of the Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care, there is an increased emphasis on developing and operating arrangements to enable us to undertake regional commissioning.
- Despite our progressive approach to working with partners, collaboration in relation to developing alternative models of service delivery remains an ongoing challenge in a climate of diminishing resources.
- Our capacity to further reduce delayed transfers of care remains an ongoing challenge particularly in light of the Coronavirus crisis. Budgetary pressures and the availability of domiciliary care have impacted on our performance in this area.
- Addressing the fragility of services and ensuring the future sustainability of statutory services will require us to build greater resilience and capacity within teams. This is particularly relevant in relation to Approved Mental Health Practitioners and other 'hard to recruit' posts.

- The volatility of grant funding streams impacts on our ability to develop, commission and sustain integrated health and social care services that enhance our capacity to deliver innovative services both now and in the future.

### Resource Management and Safeguarding

- There is a lack of capacity and resilience within local markets to fulfil requirements of Residential Nursing and Domiciliary Care and the availability of placements for Children Looked After. Monitoring the quality assurance of our externally commissioned service providers is increasingly more challenging due to insufficient capacity and resources to undertake this work, which is further compounded by the volatility of external markets.
- Capacity to deliver the level of transformational change required as part of the Social Services Budget Programme and our regional work programme.
- Strengthening how we work with partners to effectively implement the strategy for Accommodation with Care that effectively responds the needs of our citizens.
- Pressure on our capacity to ensure our safeguarding procedures remain robust and are applied consistently.
- Timescales for adhering to the Deprivation of Liberty (DoLS) continues to place significant pressure on the division in terms of officer workload/capacity and budgets. There is the need to review and monitor this service to identify mechanisms and resources to enhance its capacity.



### 3. How Are People Shaping Our Services?

Public participation is a vital part in improving the quality of our service delivery, not just because we value the views of our citizens and their experience of our services but also because

their voice plays a fundamental role in transforming service delivery in a way that will enable them to achieve their own well-being outcomes.

During 2019/20 we have continued to focus our efforts on our rolling programme of consultations that help us to evaluate our services and shape future service delivery. This has focused on exploring specific service areas to ascertain levels of satisfaction and to inform improvements to policy, practice and service delivery. During 2019-20, six service-specific consultations were undertaken that included: Fostering Service, Residential Care Services, Adult Placement Service, Community Resource Team, Day Services and Flying Start. Outlined below is a summary of the key findings arising from this work.



#### **Fostering Services**

107 foster carers were sent electronic or postal questionnaires. In total there were 19 respondents to the questionnaire (16 mainstream carers and 3 kinship carers), representing an 18% response rate. In addition to this, 25 foster carers attended a foster carer forum and themes that had arisen from the outcome of the questionnaires were discussed.

The consultation highlighted that overall foster carers felt informed about assessment and pleased with the support they received from the Placements Team. Most felt they understood the role of a foster carer and what was expected of them. In terms of matching, where there had been sufficient time, foster carers felt prepared for the placement. More knowledge about the background of the young person was required in some cases

however in emergency cases this is not always possible. Most carers were satisfied with the training they received although some felt it could be more in depth.



### **Residential Services Consultation**

Residents and staff have regular monthly meetings in each of the four care homes to engage and understand the views of both residents and staff. During 2019/20, relatives were contacted with an electronic and postal questionnaire, and they also had an opportunity to attend the resident's meetings to have the opportunity to provide their views. The meetings are carried out in all four of our council-run residential homes;

Cartref Porthceri, Southway, Ty Dyfan and Ty Dewi Sant. Themes encompassed satisfaction with the care and support provided by the residential home, social interaction and daily living.

#### **Key findings from residents**

Residents felt happy with the information they had received before they moved into their care settings, especially when they came for a tea visit. Residents felt quite satisfied with the availability of staff to help them, although they acknowledged that staff do not always have time to stop and talk. Many feel they would like someone to spend more time with them, however understood that this was not always possible. Many enjoyed the opportunities to talk to children who visited from the local school. When activities are organised residents felt included and encouraged to join in, but some would like more opportunities for outings. Many were pleased with the activities available to support people with dementia, particularly the memory table and the visits to the Memory Jar. There was much praise for staff and how well they were looked after, and many felt that the fact that someone was there when they needed them was very reassuring.

#### **Key findings for relatives**

23 relatives responded representing a 30% response rate across all four residential settings.

Relatives were pleased with the information they received about the home, and the welcome their relative received when they moved into the care setting. Many relatives indicated that they were very pleased with the general attitude of staff and their willingness to help their relatives feel welcome and encouraged to join in with activities. Relatives feel they are kept informed by the staff and that they treat the residents with respect. Almost all relatives felt that the wellbeing of the resident has been improved as a result of the care and support they receive.



### **Adult Placement Service**

As part of this consultation, an engagement event was held in September 2019 involving hosts, people using the service and the families of those using the service.

#### **Key findings for individuals using the service**

People using the Adult Placement Service indicated that they felt satisfied with the support they have and have had positive experiences of their placement. People felt that they could participate in hobbies and activities they are interested in, whilst staying with the hosts. Many felt that they are well supported to maintain their health and wellbeing and are able to carry out tasks to increase their independence.



### **Key findings for Family Members**

Family members felt that the service has considered what is important to the individual and they enjoy their time at the placement.

### **Key findings for Hosts**

Hosts feel that that the information they received was clear and the support from the service is helpful. Hosts feel involved with the review process and that their views are considered.



#### **Flying Start**

Parents accessing Flying Start services attended a focus group and were also given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire when they collected their child from the childcare settings. Nine people attended a focus group and 16 responded to a questionnaire.

Overall parents indicated they were very satisfied with the Flying Start service provision, particularly with the support and time that the staff spend with them during visits. Parents felt they have enough information about the service. Some felt there could be a bit more information about services available, particularly for children that are a bit older. On the whole parents felt that the communication they received was very good and that staff are always helpful and encouraging them to join in. Most felt that their confidence in parenting had improved as a result of participating in the programme.



#### **Vale Community Resource Service**

We consulted with individuals who access care and support from the Vale's Community Resource Service based at Barry Hospital. The purpose of this consultation was to ensure that people are receiving high standards of care and support to enable them to maintain their independence following discharge from hospital. Each month, we wrote to every individual who had completed the support from the service. A total of 326 questionnaires were sent between March 2019 and February 2020. 123 were returned representing a 38% response rate.

Nearly all respondents said they had received the right information or advice when they needed it and felt that they knew who to contact about their care and support needs. The care and support from the service has helped people do the things that are important to them, and in some cases helped them to feel part of their local community again. This was not always the case however as many live alone and find it difficult to socialise. In general, respondents felt that the service had helped them feel safer, both in and outside their homes. Nearly all respondents felt that they had been involved in decisions about the care they have received, and that they have been treated with dignity and respect. Over half rated the service as "excellent", and the remainder as "good". When asked what the service did well, many highlighted how excellent the staff were, describing them as helpful, caring and positive.



## **Day Services**

### **Woodlands Day Service**

The Learning Disabilities Day service aims to promote independence and development of skills. The service also aims to give opportunities for social interaction and enrich the quality of life for people in the community. During 2019/20 a series of semi-structured interviews were carried out with individuals that use the service.

The interviews highlighted that service users feel that all the staff are very welcoming and friendly. Many commented about how helpful staff are and that it makes them happy to be there. They felt that the activities are varied such as independent living skills, exercise, music, lifelong learning and arts related opportunities. All interviewees agreed that they have choices in what they can do during their time at the Day Service, and that the staff listen to and help them. The opportunities provided by the service have helped them to learn new skills and has improved the way they feel about their lives.

### **New Horizons**

The New Horizons Day Centre provides a service for physically disabled people in the community. During 2019/20 we consulted with 16 individuals that use the service through face to face interviews. The majority of interviewees indicated they were very happy with the service they received and felt that staff were very welcoming when they started at the Day Centre.

The service users that live alone found that the service gives them an opportunity to interact with others. All interviewees felt physically and emotionally safe at the centre and explained that it is like a “hub” where the people really understand their situation and it has helped to reduce their sense of social isolation.

Overall, the service users interviewed felt that the service gives them a purpose in their lives.

### **Relatives of Individuals who use the Day Services**

Relatives of individuals who use the day service for people with learning disabilities were given postal questionnaires to complete and return. In total, ten questionnaires were returned. Relatives felt that information provision was good in most cases, and the support from the staff was considered “excellent” in nearly all cases.

Relatives were also satisfied with the facilities and equipment at the centres and felt that the day service provided excellent opportunities for all abilities. The respondents felt that the service provided their relatives with opportunities for social interaction, forming friendships and helping them to develop a consistent and stable routine. The respondents also indicated that they found the service an invaluable source of support for relatives/carers in terms of respite and the ability to take time for themselves whilst knowing that their relative is safe and well supported.

## 4. Compliments and Complaints



### 4.1 Compliments

Compliments and praise provide a vital means through which we identify what we are doing so we can effectively use and share this experience and learning more widely across our service areas.

During 2019/20, 28 compliments were received providing a good spread across both Adult, Children and Young People Services and Resource Management and Safeguarding Divisions. These compliments related to the services and support services users received/experienced and they often named specific staff where they felt the individual had done over and above what was expected of them.

To put this data in context, outlined below is a snapshot of some of the compliments we have received from service users:

“We are very grateful for X’s expert handling of a case’ ‘he acted in the person’s best interests and cooperated with us, listened to us and helped us manage a crisis’.

“Thank you for the excellent support afforded to my father by social services’ and the ‘care and attention provided’

‘Thank you for your help with navigating all the red tape and formalities in finding Mum her new home’.

‘Thank you for the help provided it will make a huge difference to my daily needs’

I was really in crisis regarding child care I had nowhere to turn and was thinking of leaving employment as my only option. I went to my sons’ school and they put us in contact with Vale Family Information Service which has worked so hard on our behalf with constant updates all the way.

‘Mum loves the speaking clock. We are shielding her from the Coronavirus but ensuring she does not become socially isolated. Thank you.’

## 4.2 Complaints

We have continued to maintain our person-centred approach to dealing with complaints. By taking this approach we are able to firstly understand the issues from the service user's perspective and it also enables us to rectify and learn from any mistakes.

The Complaints Officer takes a proactive approach to preventing and mediating issues that have the potential to escalate into a complaint. In some instances, citizens may contact Social Services unsure whether or not their concern equates to a formal complaint. In these cases, the Complaints Officer offers to meet with them to try and help clarify the issues and listen to their concerns. This approach continues to be an invaluable and effective way of reaching an early resolution to many concerns.

As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, 43% were resolved within the designated timescales<sup>2</sup>. Meeting the designated timescales for complaints is increasingly more challenging because the complexity and multi-faceted nature of the complaints we receive which can impact on our timeliness of response, particularly where legal advice is required. Although just under a half of the complaints were resolved within designated timescales, it should be noted that in all instances the complainants were made aware of the reason for the extension to the timescales and mutually agreed to an extension. Although this is not taken into account as part of the statutory guidance. We pursue robust monitoring of our complaints, as on a weekly basis the Complaints Officer circulates a report to all Senior Management to flag any potential complaints that require follow up. This has proved to be an effective escalation tool to remind managers of the importance of responding to complaints within the required timescales.

The table shown below provides a full breakdown of all compliments, enquiries and complaints received during 2019/20.

Service Division	Enquiries	Complaints Stage 1	Complaints Stage 2	Ombudsman	Responded to in Timescales	Total complaints and enquiries received
Adult Services	22	13	1	0	10	36
Children and Young People Services	32	23	7	4	9	66
Resource Management & Safeguarding	4	7	1 <sup>3</sup>	0	5	12

The vast majority (11) of complaints received during 2019/20 were in relation a member of staff and the second highest number of complaints (9) were either because the complainant was unhappy with the care they had received or the quality/ level of service that was available. The other areas of complaint related to either charges for services, communications or other.

<sup>2</sup> The designated timescale for responding to Stage 1 complaints is 10 working days and a further 5 working days to confirm the outcome of the discussion and for Stage 2 the timescales are 25 working days.

<sup>3</sup> The complaint was previously logged in the previous year, but was reopened during 2019/20.

The table below provides a breakdown of the nature of complaints by Division.

Type of complaint	Adult Services	Children and Young People Services	Resource Management and Safeguarding	Total complaints by nature of complaint
Charges for services	3	0	5	8
Lack of response	-	1	0	1
Quality/level of service	5	3	1	9
Staff complaint	2	9	-	11
Unhappy with care provided	2	7	-	9
Communication	1	3	-	4
Other	0	1	1	2

During 2019/20 a summary of key lessons learnt include:

- The importance of effective communication with families and service users.
- Ensure service users and families understand the charging process in relation to residential placements.
- Ensure any commitment to respond to calls/letters/emails is followed up.
- The importance of clearly explaining rationale for making decisions and checking it has been understood.
- The importance of responding to concerns/enquiries promptly to avoid escalation.
- The importance of staff acting professionally at all times.
- Ensure service users/families understand the limitations of our resources and services e.g. in relation to waiting times for assessments.

## 5. Promoting and Improving the Well-being of Those We Help



This section of our Annual Report sets out our performance in promoting and improving the key aspects of Well-being of people in the Vale of Glamorgan who need care and support, and carers who need support. At the end of each section, the report sets out our priorities for 2020/21.



### 5.1 WELL-BEING STANDARD 1: Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

#### Performance Overview

##### Qualitative Measures

95% of people reported that they received the right information and advice when they needed it.

98% of people reported that they were treated with dignity and respect.

100% of people with a care and support plan in place reported that they had been given information of their named worker in Social Services.

94% of people reported that they felt involved in any decisions made about their care and support.

94% of people felt satisfied with the care and support they received.

##### Quantitative Measures

63.70% of assessments for children were completed within timescales.

#### What did we plan to do last year?

For 2019/20 we identified two key priorities for delivery:

- Improving the management of our call handling with a reduction in waiting times for social work input.
- Effectively strengthening our approach to co-production to ensure we can effectively work with and involve our younger citizens to best meet their care and support needs.

## How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?



### ***Improving the management of our call handling with a reduction in waiting times for social work input.***

Provision of information, advice and assistance remains a central feature of our work in accordance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) 2014 Act. During 2019/20 our service user surveys highlighted that 95% of respondents said they received the right information or advice when they needed it. Managing and responding to demand for our services is vital to ensuring that our services can best meet the needs of our citizens in the most resourceful and effective way. As a result, the Council's Contact Centre has been fundamental to us managing the demand for our Adult Social Care Services.

The main focus of the work has been on enhancing the Intake and Assessment Team that operates from the Council's Contact Centre (C1V) to:

- improve the management of our call handling; and
- reduce waiting times for social work input.

During 2019/20 we have:

- Improved our telephony systems to enhance our call handling processes.
- Secured a dedicated call handling resource for Social Care.
- Utilised grant funding to invest in the creation and recruitment of Wellbeing Officers to complement the existing Intake and Assessment Team based in the Council's Contact Centre.
- Utilised the Wellbeing Officers and our dedicated call handling resource to establish a team that will undertake an outreach function, screen Adult Services referrals, undertake proportionate assessment and conduct home visits.

### **Key Successes:**

#### **The key successes achieved during 2019/20 in relation to this priority have been:**

- ✓ By investing in specialist capacity at the 'front door' in the form of Wellbeing Officers we have been able to successfully redirect people appropriately and where possible signpost them to other more appropriate solutions.
- ✓ These enhancements have enabled citizens to access a full range of information, advice and assistance without delay and has provided more rapid decision making with the ability to progress social work interventions where it is appropriate and offer lower level support via alternative means. By taking this approach we have reduced pressure on Adult Services social work teams. This in turn has freed up capacity for our social work teams to focus on the referrals where they are more complex in nature.
- ✓ Establishment of a dedicated call handling resource has improved our ability to respond effectively to the needs of our citizens in a more timely way, with the right resources and utilising the most appropriate skill-mix.

A key outcome from this work has been the reduction in waiting times for Adult Services responses. The Intake and Assessment Team have worked closely with the Contact Centre to reduce waiting times. For example, as at the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 the queue was 284 which was significantly reduced to 72 by the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019.

✓ The Occupational Therapy Team have continued to provide assessments for equipment and adaptations to enable people to remain in their own homes and to support the provision of care with equipment assessed to meet need. The team have been able to continue visits during the COVID-19 pandemic to prevent breakdown in care or the need for hospital admission due to lack of suitable equipment. There is an Occupational Therapist working within the Accommodation Solutions Team to support hospital discharge when there are Housing needs identified. A contract is in place for the provision of Sensory Services for specialist assessment and provision of equipment.

### Key challenges:

#### The key challenges in delivering this priority have been:

✓ Although the additional capacity in the form of Wellbeing Officers has been successful, the impact of this was not felt immediately as these new posts will take time to bed in as the new staff adapt to their new roles and strengthen their knowledge basis.

✓ Pressure on our social work teams has been further exasperated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Those who are most vulnerable and have been asked to shield often have more complex needs and are most likely to require social work intervention to live safely in their own homes at time when their usual support network of family and friends are unable to support them.



***Effectively strengthening our approach to co-production to ensure we can effectively work with and involve our younger citizens to best meet their care and support needs.***

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out that it's a child's right to be heard in matters affecting them. Therefore, ensuring that children and young people have a voice when decisions are being made regarding their care and support is central to strengthening our approach to co-production, a key principle outlined in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.

During 2019/20, we have focused on strengthening our approach to co-production in three key areas: care leavers, fostering and assessment and planning.

#### Care Leavers Forum

Our Care Leavers Forum provides a channel through which care leavers can enhance their health and well-being and access to a range of training and development opportunities. This Forum also provides a valuable way that we can engage with our care leavers to support us in reshaping service design.

#### Foster Carers Forum

This brings together carers from across the Vale of Glamorgan to access support to enable them to fulfil their roles and it also provides a means through which we can effectively



engage with our foster carers to involve them in how we better develop and deliver foster care support and services.

### Assessment and Care Planning

Ensuring children, young people and their families have a voice in assessment and care planning processes is a central feature of our work. As a result, of taking this approach our forms have been developed so that the voice and opinions of children, young people and families is consistently captured in all our documentation and now features as core business. As a standard, children and their families are routinely involved in developing their care and support plans. We created a Service Development Advisory Group within our existing workforce in order to further enhance our strengths-based approach to children and their families by enabling them to actively participate in their care planning.

### Key successes:

#### The key successes achieved during 2019/20 in relation to this priority have been:

- ✓ The Care Inspectorate Wales have highlighted that, in the main, our workforce are positively engaged with children, young people and families and particularly noted the progress made in relation to partnership and co-production work with individual families. CIW cited that the workforce 'knew their children well'.
- ✓ Successfully discharged several care orders in Court, where children have returned to parents or resided with their wider family following a period of being looked after. For example, Care Orders were discharged for 7 children who were placed with parents against a full year intention of 5, with a further 5 that continue to be progressed. In addition, Care Orders were discharged for 5 children, that were placed with kin against a full year intention of 6.
- ✓ The achievements of care leavers have been recognised via an Awards Ceremony.
- ✓ The Carers Forum continues to have a positive impact on the lives of care leavers, and a care leaver has now become a Member of the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- ✓ By focusing on co-production and partnership working with children and families we have managed to significantly reduce the numbers of Children Looked After, during 2019/20, within our population by 12. As at the end of September 2019, the Vale of Glamorgan was one of only seven Local Authorities to have successfully reduced their Children Looked After numbers, accounting for the second highest reduction in Wales.
- ✓ Admissions to care were prevented for 36 children through the provision of alternative support packages and an additional 10 children stepped down from pre-proceedings. Both exceed full year intentions and have demonstrated how co-production and using a strengths-based approach has been effective.
- ✓ By working in partnership with children, young people and their families we have been able to co-produce clearly planned journeys through care to enable them to achieve their care plan goals, this has helped in some cases to reunite families where possible and be able to exit the care system positively.

### Key challenges:

#### The key challenges in delivering this priority have been:

- ✓ Creating sufficient capacity within the workforce to enable us to further develop and enhance co-production so that becomes a meaningful way to deliver the outcomes as defined by individuals.

- ✓ Developing robust partnership working with children and families, so that we can develop effective and targeted care and support plan with clear and measurable outcomes.

## What are our priorities for next year?

During 2020/21 we will:

- Explore the use of digital solutions and technology to maximise our opportunities to support adults to achieve their own personal outcomes.
- Implement an outcomes-based approach to commissioning contracting services across both a regional and localised footprint.



## 5.2 WELL-BEING STANDARD 2: Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being

A key area of development during 2019/20 has been the development of the 'Well-being Matters' brand. This programme of work is being undertaken at both the local and regional level and has been supported by the Intermediate Care Fund.

### Performance Overview

#### Quantitative Measures

The rate of delayed transfers of care was 4.79 per 1,000 population.

17.51% of adults completed a period of reablement and had a reduced package of care and support after 6 months.

81.11% of adults who completed a period of reablement had no package of care after 6 months.

97.03% of looked after children were registered with a GP.

## What did we plan to do last year?

For 2019/20 we identified the following priority for delivery:

- Citizens are signposted to the most relevant and appropriate well-being services to ensure that GP skills and appointments are utilised appropriately.

## How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?



### Citizens are signposted to the most relevant and appropriate well-being services to ensure that GP skills and appointments are utilised appropriately.

Signposting our citizens to the most relevant and appropriate well-being services has been a core focus of our work during 2019/20.

Our main focus has been on developing and piloting a GP Triage model that will enable us to effectively utilise our resources and the skill mix of staff and GPs, so that appointments are utilised appropriately.

The GP Triage Pilot project funded through Transformation monies, has enabled us to build upon our successful call handling functions within our combined call centre for primary care and social care, alongside other council services.

During 2019/20, we have:

- Made good progress in developing this model that will enable effective triaging in order to promote General Medical Services (GMS).
- Our pilot phase of the project was successfully launched during 2019/20, which saw the new model being piloted with local GP Practice.
- Working in collaboration with our Health partners, our project team offered significant support to a large practice who were part of the initial pilot project.

## Key Successes:

### The key successes achieved during 2019/20 in relation to this priority have been:

✓ The pilot work has given us and the pilot GP practice significant understanding of patient behaviours and provides us with insight on how we approach changing patient expectations.

✓ The Pilot successfully raised the profile of services that are available to patients in their local community.

✓ The Pilot demonstrated effective signposting of patients which in turn reduced the demand for GP appointments.

✓ The learning from this pilot also provides us with a platform for developing a new 24/7 access to hospital model.

## Key Challenges:

### The key challenges in delivering this priority have been:

✓ Pilot project was unable to extend as far as it was initially planned due to recruitment difficulties for Triage Nurses.

✓ It is intended that the Council's Contact Centre will be used as the technical platform for the new GP Triage Service. The pilot that was initially based in a GP practice was due to move to the Contact Centre in order to utilise our Contact Centre technology and further test the call handling model. However, the COVID-19 pandemic delayed our plans for establishing the Call Centre presence. It also impacted on our ability to further and establish further roll out this model to other GP Practices. The project team are working on future roll out of the pilot as and when we have the staffing complement to do so, currently call handlers have been repurposed to assist with testing processes.

## What are our priorities for next year?

During 2020/21 we will:

- Develop an 'Alliance Model' within the Vale locality that will enable us to operate more effectively across organisational boundaries.
- Review our working practices to enable us to operate more sustainably.



### 5.3 WELL-BEING STANDARD 3: Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

Safeguarding children and adults remains the primary function of a local authority Social Services department.

The Corporate Safeguarding Group is responsible for overseeing the Council's corporate approach to safeguarding. The Vale of Glamorgan's Corporate Safeguarding Policy sets out our duties and the support available to elected members, employees, volunteers and/or contracted service providers when they have concerns regarding a safeguarding matter.

## Performance Overview

### Qualitative Measures

94% of people reported that they feel safe.

### Quantitative Measures

1.18% were re-registrations of children on the local authority Child Protection Register.

## What did we plan to do last year?

In relation to taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm we identified two priorities:

- Ensure that we are compliant with the requirements associated with safeguarding practice.
- Conclude the development of the Wales Safeguarding procedures.

## How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?



### *Ensure that we are compliant with the requirements associated with safeguarding practice.*

During 2019/20 we have:

- Identified the policies and procedures that are required to support staff in their roles;
- Disseminated learning from Child Protection and Adult Protection Review, supporting practitioners to understand and respond to changes needed to ensure good consistent safeguarding practice.
- Supported colleagues across the Local Authority to embed and understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

- Engaged with the Regional Safeguarding Board to support participation opportunities across all Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards across Wales in order to develop a consistent set of procedures.

## Key Successes:

**The key successes achieved during 2019/20 in relation to this priority have been:**

- ✓ High levels of engagement and representation of key partners across all Local Authority areas as part of the Regional Safeguarding Board's work programme.
- ✓ Effectively contributed to the Regional Exploitation Strategy and Work Plan.
- ✓ Prioritised the delivery of Safeguarding practice across the entire workforce. As a result, during 2019/20 88% of staff completed mandatory e-module on safeguarding. The development of a training matrix has supported us in identifying and understanding the training needs of our workforce to enable us to tailor a programme of safeguarding training based on need.
- ✓ Strong progress has been made in relation to our Safer Recruitment Policy. Compliance rates in relation to safer recruitment are significantly high across both our council services and in relation to schools.

## Key challenges:

**The key challenges in delivering this priority have been:**

- ✓ Developing a strong collective responsibility across the council in terms of understanding how safeguarding procedures apply to staff in their day to day roles.
- ✓ Ensuring consistent cross-directorate representation when developing corporate safeguarding priorities and objectives can be challenging especially when colleagues are undertaking this role in addition to their 'day jobs'.



## Conclude the development of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures

The need to develop a robust set of procedures that can be applied by practitioners across the whole of Wales for both children and adults emerged from the Social Services and Well-being Wales Act and the subsequent publication of the '[Working Together to Safeguard People](#)' guidance and the *Handling Individual Cases Guidance*. The development of a national set of procedures was progressed jointly by the Cardiff and Vale Safeguarding Boards, with the Vale of Glamorgan Council taking the lead co-ordination role in this work.

During 2019/20:

- A series of project boards supported the production of each of the chapters associated with the procedures. This piece of work was led by the Vale of Glamorgan's Director of Social Services.
- A final draft of the new [Safeguarding procedures](#) was agreed and formally launched in November 2019 as part of National Safeguarding Week.
- A digital app has been finalised and has also gone live for use by practitioners. The app is available to download via the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store.
- Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Safeguarding Board have developed an implementation programme. Although full implementation was expected by April

2020 some elements of implementation have been delayed by activity being diverted to COVID-19.

- Initial training on the procedures for staff in key roles commenced in March. Further Safeguarding training to reflect these new procedures will be more widely available from May.

## Key Successes:

**The key successes achieved during 2019/20 in relation to this priority have been:**

- ✓ First time that a consistent set of safeguarding procedures have been developed for use across the whole of Wales that applies to both adults and children at risk.
- ✓ Robust multi-agency approach to developing these procedures was adopted that resulted in input and representation from a spectrum of organisations including support from the Children's Commissioner for Wales and the Older Person's Commissioner.
- ✓ Procedures provide not only a practical 'how to approach' to support practitioners in their roles, but a valuable good practice resource in the form of guidance and pointers.
- ✓ Procedures provide a person-centred approach to safeguarding practice, where any citizen potentially being at risk is put at the centre of all discussions, planning and responsibility so that they are kept involved and informed throughout the entire process. Advocacy support is offered to all those that participate in the safeguarding processes.

## Key challenges:

**The key challenges in delivering this priority have been:**

- ✓ Ensuring we are effectively engaging with all front-line stakeholders across the board to gain their input into shaping the new procedures to support the transition to the newer ways of working that are streamlined and consistent with the requirements of the Social Services Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Welsh Government's Working Together to Safeguard People Handling of Individual Cases Guidance.
- ✓ Managing expectations and gaining consensus across the regions from a wide stakeholder group (practitioners).
- ✓ Capacity of the workforce to lead on co-ordinating and progressing this nation-wide project was a balancing act when trying to manage and prioritise the day to day responsibilities of their other roles.
- ✓ Designing and developing an appropriate communication strategy and channels that effectively targets all stakeholder groups was challenging. The strategy needed to consider the most effective means of directing communication to these groups in an informative and engaging way.

## What are our priorities for next year?

During 2020/21 we will:

- Enhance and strengthen our regional approach to recruitment and retention of foster carers.
- Scope and implement a strength-based model for working co-productively with children and their families.

## 5.4 WELL-BEING STANDARD 4: Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society



The Social Services Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 provides a legal basis for our commitment to support people to 'reach their full potential' and to effectively participate in society. It's also about enabling our service users participate in decisions affecting them.

### Performance Overview

#### Qualitative Measures

99% of people reported that they can do what matters to them.

98% of people reported that they feel satisfied with their social networks.

#### Quantitative Measures

75% (18) of a cohort of 22 learners achieved L4+ at Key Stage 2

### What did we plan to do last year?

- Deliver a consistent strategy in relation to carers in terms of policies and practice to be followed by professionals.

### How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?



**Deliver a consistent strategy in relation to carers in terms of policies and practice to be followed by professionals.**

During 2019/20 we:

- Refreshed the membership of the Regional Carer's workstream to establish new networks/relationship to ensure that the work can be progressed effectively across the region that has a focus on continual service improvement and development.
- A draft strategy was developed via the workstream and consulted on through a series of workshops. In total six workshops were held across Cardiff and the Vale for carers and the wider workforce and two engagement events were held for young carers during Spring/Summer 2019. In addition to this, online surveys were made available to all staff and carers with outreach undertaken through social media and the Third Sector.
- The extensive consultation period was concluded with a celebratory event in October for all carers who participated in workshops as well as various other consultation events.
- Developed a Regional Carers Gateway, in response to what carers told us in the Population Needs Assessment and the consultation process. The Gateway will act as the first point of contact for carers providing signposting and referrals to existing services.
- Continued to progress our work towards Carer Friendly Accreditation for health, social care and Third Sector organisations across the region. This accreditation

aims to recognise, improve and increase access to information and support for unpaid carers.

- Continued to support the Carers Experts Panel, that helps to shape and inform our services which is also used to direct other carer-related services and plans within the region.

Involving carers in the consultation workshops has had a significant impact on shaping the both the Regional Carers Strategy and the development of a Carers Gateway. A number of carers who attended the workshops felt the experience was beneficial and enable them to share their stories and experience enabling them to have a collective voice in shaping services in the future. Participants valued the opportunity to feedback on their experiences and to be part of the development and planning processes associated with the Carers Strategy.

A snapshot of the comments received by carers during the consultation process in relation to the Gateway development were as follows:

A One Stop sounds brilliant! Trying to deal with Social Workers and co-ordinate meeting can be difficult.

A One Stop Shop would be good to signpost to more relevant charities for a specific condition. It would also be a good to hold coffee mornings for carers to meet each other and find friendships and additional support.

A One Stop Shop is an excellent idea! Carers Hubs and Community Spaces are also very useful for peer support and advice or just somewhere where we can go in relieving the stress of isolation and loneliness.

## Key Successes:

### The key successes achieved during 2019/20 in relation to this priority have been:

- ✓ Seven strategic priorities of the strategy were presented to and approved by the Regional Partnership Board in February 2020.
- ✓ Unanimous support from adult carers, young carers, parent carers and our workforce for the priorities outlined in the strategy. On the whole feedback we received in relation to our vision for carers was very positive from participants who attended the various consultation events.
- ✓ Consultation feedback from carers was used to shape and inform the development key actions aligned to each of the seven strategic priorities that will be a key focus across the region.
- ✓ Commissioning and development of the Regional Carers Gateway that was launched in March 2020. This Gateway will provide consistent information, advice and assistance to carer and provide greater consistency across the region in accessing services.
- ✓ Strategy is on track for completion and launch during winter of 2020.



## Key Challenges:

### The key challenges in delivering this priority have been:

- ✓ Commissioning a Gateway to be used as a key resource for information, advice and assistance by carers across the region has been a time-consuming process.
- ✓ Challenges associated with forming new relationships as part of significantly reviewing the regional representation and membership of the Regional Carers Workstream.

## What are our priorities for next year?

During 2020/21 we will:

- Deliver a consistent and coherent strategy for carers that recognises the vital contribution they make within their communities and the people they care for.



### 5.5 WELL-BEING STANDARD 5: Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

Developing strong and healthy relationships plays a vital role in supporting people's physical and mental well-being.

## Performance Overview

Qualitative Measures
84% of people reported that they feel part of their community.
100% of parents reported they felt involved in any decisions made about their child's care and support.
90% of carers reported feeling supported to continue their caring role.
95% of carers reported that they felt involved in designing the care and support plan for the person that they care for.

Quantitative Measures
74.73% of children were supported to remain living with their family during the year.
5.96% of children looked after were returned home from care during the year.
6.36% of children looked after on 31 <sup>st</sup> March had experienced three or more placements during the year.

## What did we plan to do last year?

Our priority for delivery during 2019/20 was to:

- Progress inter-generational work involving schools and care settings.

## How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?



### *Progress inter-generational work involving schools and care settings.*

Over the past year strong progress has been made in progressing the inter-generational work we undertake across our Vale-run residential care homes. We have established an ongoing collaborative arrangement between our Residential Care Homes and local schools and play groups.

During 2019/20 we have:

- Co-ordinated fortnightly visits by Year 6 pupil from Romilly Primary School to care home residents at Cartref Porthcerri (during term time).
- Established a Pen Pal initiative between Cartref residents and Romilly Primary School pupils.
- A local playgroup, Moo Music, attends Southway residential care home on a monthly basis to run a music group with babies and toddlers and the Southway residents.
- 8 weeks of arts and craft sessions were run with children from Y Bont Faen Primary School and Southway care home residents.
- Digital champion sessions have been delivered by Stanwell school pupils with Ty Dewi Sant residents as part of their Welsh Baccalaureate.
- Tovertafel equipment (projector with infra-red sensors and speakers) has been used in Ty Dyfan and Southway to run a series of games to enhance and stimulate physical and cognitive activities of residents with Dementia. For example, 6<sup>th</sup> Form pupils from Cowbridge Comprehensive were invited into Southway to participate in a series of games/activities using Tovertafel. We have been in contact with a high school in Barry to explore implementing a similar project at Ty Dyfan, now the table has been installed and when the pandemic allows.
- Continued to have meetings with a range of private sector care homes and schools to share ideas, successes and inspire them to become involved. It is hoped through these conversations, we can encourage other settings to get involved in this inter-generational work so that benefits can be experienced and rolled out more widely. Through these meetings we have been able to find and match care homes and local schools that have shown an interest in taking these ideas forward.

### Key Successes:

**The key successes achieved during 2019/20 in relation to this priority have been:**

✓ Inter-generational work that began as a grass roots activity in one care home (Cartref Porthcerri) has inspired many other residential care homes and schools in the area to get involved and replicate this highly successful and rewarding model. The success of this project is evident through this [video](#)

The project has brought young and older people together, encouraging them to take part in purposeful activities. This in turn helps to break down harmful stereotypes and promotes a greater sense of worth, understanding and respect between generations.

✓ Our Dementia Champion (Jackie Moon) who is a Domestic Assistant at Cartref Porthcerri and was part of the initial driving force behind this work has been nominated as finalist for the Social Care Wales 'We Care' award.

✓ This initiative has not only brought great joy to our care residents but has also provided valuable learning experiences for our children and young people that have been involved with the project. E.g. Supported Stanwell Pupils working towards their Welsh BaccaLaureate qualification and has supported and supported literacy through the establishment of a Pen Pal arrangement between Romilly Primary School pupils and Cartref residents.

✓ We have witnessed that our residents, look forward to the visits from young people with great excitement and often comment of feeling uplifted. Our residents feel more engaged and it has helped increase their sense of worth, self-esteem and confidence.

Residents often express that they feel a sense of responsibility to the young people that visit, and equally this work has also helped young people to acknowledge older people's frailty and vulnerabilities as you age. As a result of this mutual respect and understanding it has motivated young people to become 'Dementia Friends' enabling us to move towards becoming a 'Dementia Friendly' community.

**Key Challenges:**

**The key challenges in delivering this priority have been:**

✓ There are risks associated with managing behaviours of some residents, but the care homes have been careful to assess the risks and put appropriate measures in place.

✓ Shortages in staffing, vacancies and capacity has at times prevented other staff from actively participating in activities.

**Southway Care Home- Cowbridge**



Y Bont Faen Primary pupils - arts and craft sessions



Cowbridge Comprehensive pupils participating in a Tovertafel activity with residents

## Cartref Porthcerri Care Home- Barry



Romilly School pupils – arts and crafts sessions.



Cartref residents attended Romilly Primary School's Panto - Aladdin.

Example of letter sent to a Cartref resident from a Romilly Primary Pupil as part of the Pen Pal initiative.



**What are our priorities for next year?**

During 2020/21 we will:

- 1. Explore opportunities to maximise our use of digital platforms to enhance our reach and engagement with and for children and young people and their families.



**5.6 WELL-BEING STANDARD 6: Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs**

Social and economic inclusion is fundamental to enhancing a person’s sense of well-being. If an individual has enough money to live on, has good social networks and can enjoy living in good quality and affordable accommodation that meets their needs, they are more likely to experience a good quality of life.

To better support our citizens to enhance their economic and social well-being our role requires us to work effectively with our key stakeholders to better co-ordinate and signpost residents to services that will give them greater economic stability, connectivity with their communities and access to good quality housing.

## Performance Overview<sup>4</sup>

### Qualitative Measures

99% of adults reported that they live in the right home for them.

100% of children and young people reported that they live in the right home for them.

99% of people reported that they received care and support through their language of choice.

### Quantitative Measures

45.45% of all care leavers were in education, training or employment 12 months after leaving care.

52.17% of all care leavers were in education, training or employment 24 months after leaving care.

## What did we plan to do last year?

We identified two priorities for delivery during 2019/20:

1. Work with housing to implement our Accommodation with Care approach to support and enhance independent living.
2. Evaluate and review the use of assistive technology to support adults to live more independently in their own homes.

## How far did we succeed and what difference did we make?



### Work with housing to implement our Accommodation with Care approach to support and enhance independent living.

The quality, suitability, adaptability and affordability of housing for older people is recognised as a key factor for enabling individuals to continue to live independently for as long as possible. Therefore, developing appropriate accommodation with care solutions to enable older people to live more independently has been a priority identified by the Regional Partnership Board.

<sup>4</sup> Data was unavailable for the 'Percentage of children and young people happy with who they live with'. This was supplemented with data on 'Percentage of children and young people that report they live in the right home for them'. In addition, no data was available on the 'Percentage of adults that chose to live in a residential care home'. Data relating to the percentage of young adults that reported they received advice, help and support to prepare them for adulthood have been excluded from publication by virtue that the data returns were too low to provide a proportionate analysis and could pose the risk of disclosing identifiable information.

During 2019/20 we have:

- Utilised Integrated Care Funding to complete a feasibility/viability study was undertaken on the Penarth Village which will include an extra care scheme that it is intended will be developed in partnership with housing, social care and health;
- Work has been progressed on the development of £3.5million project at Brecon Court in Barry to construct 15 council housing units for older people. The development is part of a much wider council housing development that will become an inter-generational site. This 'care ready' development of social housing will see some of the properties developed so that mainstream technology assistive technology can be used by individuals to live more independently by focusing on supporting those with moderate to low level needs. The development is due to be completed during the summer 2020. The scheme will meet the Development Quality Requirements and Lifetime Homes Standard so that we can future proof to meet the changing needs of older people as they age.
- A One Stop Shop service to provide advice and assistance in the centre of Barry was commissioned, which opened on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. This service will provide money advice and assistance for those claiming benefits who would otherwise be digitally excluded.

### Key Successes:

**The key successes achieved during 2019/20 in relation to this priority have been:**

- ✓ 558 older people received housing-related support funded by the Housing Support to assist them to remain living independently in the community. 69 of these individuals attended a drop-in service for older people at Golau Caredig, Extra Care Scheme in Barry.
- ✓ 40 older people received assistance to leave hospital by the Discharge Solutions team in the first nine months of 2019/20.
- ✓ 191 bed days were saved through the intervention of the Discharge Solutions during the first nine months of 2019/20, leading to a financial saving of £51,570 for the Health service.
- ✓ An additional 527 Vale Community Alarm and Telecare service users were provided with financial support to fund the monitoring costs of their emergency alarms through the Housing Support Grant.
- ✓ 202 older people were re-housed through the Home4U scheme into more appropriate accommodation that me their needs.

### Key Challenges:

**The key challenges in delivering this priority have been:**

- ✓ Initial delays were experienced in progressing the feasibility study for the Penarth Village due to delayed confirmation in funding.
- ✓ Lack of terms and conditions between partners who have been involved in progressing the feasibility study impacted on its progress.
- ✓ Adverse wether conditions delayed the completion of the new accommodation for older people in Barry, but project is back on track for completion by summer 2020.



## Evaluate and review the use of assistive technology to support adults to live more independently in their own homes.

Assistive technology plays a vital role in enabling adults to live more independently at home for as long as possible.

Our main focus has been on expanding the assistive technology options that are available to our citizens.

During 2019/20 we have:

- Worked within the Telecare Service to extend options that people can choose to best support and retain their independence in their own homes.
- Progressed plans to develop a scheme in Castle Avenue, Penarth to provide a transition place that introduces people to the use of assistive technology. It is hoped this Integrated Care Funded project will be completed during the next financial year.
- To support vulnerable clients during the COVID-19 pandemic we offered free installations for our Telecare Services and our Telecare Team handled

### Key Successes:

#### The key successes achieved during 2019/20 in relation to this priority have been:

- ✓ Extending the assistive technology options during the COVID-19 pandemic has been helpful to our service users to provide additional reassurance and support to those who have been isolated from friends and family.
- ✓ During 2019/20, 400 clients took up our Telecare Services and during the pandemic an additional 57 new clients were added.
- ✓ Our transition project in Castle Avenue has proved to be an effective way for our clients to learn how to use the assistive technology for their needs, before moving onto a permanent placement/home, where assistive technology provides additional independence and security for them.

### Key Challenges:

#### The key challenges in delivering this priority have been:

- ✓ Our progress with assistive technology project work has been hampered by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Progress has been delayed as our services needed to be reprioritised, our resources repurposed and redirected to the front line.



## What are our priorities for next year?

During 2020/21 we will:

- Develop our use of technology to optimise how we contribute to improve the planning and co-ordination of social care services to our citizens.

## 6. How We Do What We Do



### 6.1 Our Workforce and How We Support their Professional Roles

We have developed well established workforce planning and staff engagement processes to ensure that we continue to maintain a highly skilled and resilient workforce that is responsive to the constantly changing legislative and policy landscape in which we work.

Within Social Services we continue to support and promote a range of corporate workforce initiatives that are designed to promote engagement, involvement, development and recognition of our dedicated workforce. We continue to recognise and reward our staff, through supporting the 'Going the Extra Mile' (GEM) scheme that provides staff across the Council to nominate their colleagues to recognise work that goes above and beyond the job. These articles are then published on our internal intranet and via newsletters to celebrate the achievement and dedication of our staff.

During 2019/20 we have:

- Enhanced our approach to succession planning by supporting the progression of individuals from unqualified to qualified roles, and the development of practitioners to management positions.
- Continued to invest in bespoke recruitment campaigns to attract Social Workers and Social Worker Managers to our business-critical posts that are traditionally hard to recruit to.
- Delivered a programme of refresher training to staff on the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) on an ongoing basis.
- Reviewed the Resource Management and Safeguarding division, to further build resilience into the safeguarding structure. We have done this by successfully recruiting a Safeguarding Team Manager and filling all Independent Reviewing Officer positions. These appointments commenced at the beginning of 2020.
- Reviewed the remuneration of Approved Mental Health Professionals to improve recruitment and retention of these positions and have put in place new remuneration.
- Enhanced capacity within teams by looking at alternative ways of utilising and distributing our workforce. For example, within Children and Young People Services we have achieved greater capacity by adding greater resources (staff) at the 'front door' in the form of the Information and Advice Service.

In sustaining and improving our services our priority actions that we intend to take forward during 2020/21 will focus on:

- Develop and implement an Engagement Action Plan across Social Services.
- Develop a targeted approach to recruitment of specialist and critical posts and the effective retention of staff within Children and Young People Services to increase service resilience.
- Develop a generic Job Description and Person Specification for Adult Services Social Workers that includes a requirement to undertake Approved Mental Health Professional (AMPH) training.



## 6.2 Our Financial Resources and How We Plan for the Future

The Social Services Budget is carefully monitored throughout the year. To ensure effective monitoring a Budget Programme Board is in place to provide high level oversight of the budget and to take action where required on any areas of concern. The work of the Board includes regular updates of progress against savings targets as well as an understanding of the growing pressures facing the Social Services and the Council as a whole. In addition to this, individual savings schemes and cost pressures are considered by the Council's Cabinet at appropriate intervals throughout the year.

The Vale of Glamorgan continues to benefit from grant funding to support the delivery of our regional work through funding streams such as the Integrated Care Fund. There is good evidence that even in the context of significant growth in both demand and complexity of need, that we continue to manage our budgets effectively. This growth is appearing across the sector but most obviously with older people requiring care at home and children requiring placement.

The budget for Social Services for the year was £66.825m. After transfer to reserves, there was an overall favourable outturn for Social Services of £12k.

Initially there was an adverse variance of £613k in relation to Children and Young People Services, which primarily related to cost pressures associated with the External Placements budget where placement costs are higher for children and young people with significant complex needs and the costs associated with complex court cases that require counsel. This was offset against a favourable variance of £306k from additional grant funding that was received later in the year from Supporting People and ICF. As a result, the overall outturn at year end was an adverse variance of £307k.

Adult Services ended the year with an overall favourable variance with an outturn of £205k. There was initially an in year adverse variance of £920k, that mostly (£880k) related to community care packages. This has been offset by a favourable in year variance of £1.995m, which in the main related to staffing, grant funding and assets. This favourable variance has allowed £870k to be set aside in the Social Services Legislative Changes reserve and £45k transfer was made to the Telecare reserve to set aside funding to account for replacement equipment and additional staffing costs in future years.

Resource Management and Safeguarding Division ended the year with a £7k favourable variance. The majority of this budget continues to be recharged to Children and Adult Services. There was an adverse variance of £226k, which related to a reduced internal recharge to Children and Adult Services, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and the costs associated with investment in new technology to enable mobile working. This adverse variance has been balanced against favourable variances totalling £233k relating to staffing vacancies, supplies and services, additional grant funding and an increase in self-funding clients in two residential care homes.

The Youth Offending Service ended the year with a favour variance of £107k relating to staffing vacancies.



We have continued to successfully support the Council's Reshaping Services Programme and the associated Social Services Budget Programme Board has delivered a programme of significant savings over many years. This year was no exception and during 2019/20 we achieved over £500k in savings.

### **6.3 Our Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability**

We continue to explore and promote opportunities for working collaboratively locally and regionally in order to deliver improved services for customers and deliver savings. Despite the pressure points associated with the existing budgetary pressures and the rising demand for our services we continued to respond positively to these challenges by taking steps to reshape and integrate our services.



#### ***Our Leadership and Governance***

Our priorities as a Directorate are not just directed by our need to fulfil our statutory functions within Social Services, but also by the need to ensure we are consistently looking at ways we can better streamline and improve the services for our citizens.

The Social Services Well-being (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act have changed the way in which we view, plan and deliver our services so that there is a greater focus on enhancing the well-being of our citizens. In terms of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, the emphasis is on how we evidence through our service development and delivery that we are maximising our contribution to the National Well-being Goals associated with this Act. Whilst the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 the focus has shifted away from 'eligible individuals' to delivering services that are 'citizen-led' that empower individuals to define and achieve their own well-being goals.

Every year we identify actions to be taken forward that will contribute to the delivery of our Corporate Plan priorities in order to identify ways we can further enhance continuous improvement across our services. The main channel through which we do this is via our Service Plans. Within Social Services there are three Service Plans that reflect the divisions of Adult Services, Children and Young People Services and Resource

Management and Safeguarding. The Service Plans outline the wellbeing outcomes and objectives that we contribute to and provides a planning mechanism through which we annually review, assess and set what our service priorities/activities need to be for the forthcoming year. It is this evaluation of our service activities that also help to inform the setting of the future priorities of this Annual Report. This approach ensures that our priorities remain relevant to the Corporate Plan, are realistic within our budgetary means and enables us to comply with our legislative requirements and our statutory Social Services functions.

The delivery of Service Plan actions/priorities are monitored on a quarterly basis in the form of performance reports via Corporate Management Team, Scrutiny Committee and then Cabinet. It provides an opportunity to discuss resource and budget issues as well as any up and coming policy and service developments for consideration by Scrutiny and Cabinet.

The Annual Report priorities identified in this report for the forthcoming year 2020/21 have been aligned to a new Corporate Plan for 2020-25 and its associated Annual Delivery Plan for 2020/21. Although the format of the new Corporate Plan has changed, the key focus continues to be on enhancing the health and well-being of our citizens.

In addition to the DMT and SMTs, the Social Services Budget Programme Board meets monthly. The purpose of the board is to manage and monitor budgetary pressures and savings facing the Directorate and associated project work delivery. The Social Services Budget Programme reports to the Reshaping Services Programme Board due to the synergies which exist between the two programmes. An All Projects Summary Highlight report is updated following each meeting and is reported to the Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee to ensure oversight of the delivery of savings.



### ***What does our regulator say about us?***

Every year the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) summarises its review of the Council's performance in carrying out its statutory functions in the form of annual performance review. Due to the unprecedented circumstances associated with COVID-19, an annual performance review meeting couldn't be undertaken, but the CIW were able to share with us their judgement on our performance through an Annual Letter. Summarised below are the key strengths, challenges and areas of improvement identified in the CIW's annual letter for 2019/20 period.

### **Well-being**

CIW's Annual Letter identified the following key strengths in relation to well-being:

- The Local Authority benefits from an experienced senior management team.
- There is effective leadership at all levels, working towards a shared vision that emphasises the importance of choice and independence as well as sustaining family arrangements.
- The Council has progressed work with the alignment of adult and children's services structures to more effectively support local community-based approaches that focus on achieving outcomes.
- Reconfiguration of resources at the 'front door' for both adult and children's services ensure people receive timely early help services.

- Preventative services have been expanded through the inclusion of partner agencies in GP surgeries.
- Staff including partners are trained to offer high quality information, advice and assistance to support people before the need to escalate.
- There is strong corporate and political support for both adult and children's services and a good understanding of these services' strengths and current challenges.

CIW also highlighted areas of well-being requiring further improvement such as:

- Conversations around 'what matters most', as CIW identified they do not always take place soon enough; and
- The need to further embed strengths-based practice approaches in a consistent social work practice model. CIW did acknowledge that adult and children's services are proactively working towards this over the next 12 months.

## People

CIW identified the following strengths in relation to aspects of people:

- Views of citizens are sought. CIW noted the engagement work undertaken to co-produce the Regional Learning Disability Strategy, consultation work associated with the relocation of Day Services for older people and children and families.
- Most service users felt they were treated with dignity and respect and listened to and most service users were positive with their feedback about services they received and the staff that delivered them.
- The social work workforce is relatively stable, and morale is good.
- Successful recruitment to vacancies in adult services. Where vacancies remain, the Council has utilised agency staff in some posts and taken steps to enhance recruitment to remaining vacancies.

CIW noted that the Council continues to be challenged by the registration requirements for domiciliary care workers, particularly in the independent sector. CIW's letter also acknowledge the challenges associated with Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), which is in common with the national picture.

Area for improvement:

- The need to improve the timeliness of carer's assessments and to encourage carers to take up services. CIW noted that carer support across the Council has increased over the last year.

## Prevention

CIW highlighted the following strengths associated with our prevention work:

- The Council is committed to providing early help and preventative services and the impact of improving outcomes whilst alleviating pressure on regulated services. CIW cited the work of the Vale Community Resource Service (VCRS) in preventing hospital admissions and assisting hospital discharge in relation to this and imaginative investment of Integrated Care Funding. However, CIW note the challenges associated with 'significant capacity issue in the independent domiciliary care sector' leading to delays in provision of care packages as seen in the rise in delayed transfers of care due to social care reasons.

- The Council has reduced the numbers of children looked after during 2019/20. This was cited by CIW in the context of the Children Looked After Reduction Board's focus on 'safe risk taking'. The new structure has facilitated social work capacity to review and where safe to do so, revoke Care Orders. Effective use of Integrated Care Funding has supported this work with stepping down kinship placements.

In terms of challenges, CIW identified that placement sufficiency remains challenging.

Area for improvement:

- Anticipated that all 22 local authorities, take on board findings from CIW's published [report](#) on the care experienced by children and young people to appraise their own contribution to the report's findings.

## Partnerships

CIW's Annual Letter highlighted the following strengths associated with our partnerships work:

- There are a range of effective partnerships evident with well-developed strategic regional arrangements in place between Cardiff Council and the Cardiff and Vale Health Board (CVUHB).
- Regional Partnership and Safeguarding Boards provide oversight of improved outcomes for people.
- Joint planning and commissioning group partnership arrangements have resulted in service provision that meets both regional and local population needs.
- Local authority has maintained a strong approach to supporting the Third Sector evidenced by protection of funding for Third Sector investment.
- Effective strategic partnership working in Adult Services evidenced by the three integrated senior management posts. Strong strategic partnership working was also cited in relation to Children's Services where the development of a Corporate Strategy was noted.
- CIW noted the implementation of the regional adolescent service (11+) and that regional Family Group Meetings and therapeutic services that are also under development with the Council's partners.

CIW identified that the Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) has not yet been adopted by the CVUHB. This ongoing uncertainty creates challenges in terms of management and efficiency of workflows and increased risks where information is not shared with professionals involved with individuals care.



### ***Promoting Welsh Language and Access to Services***

The aim of ['More than Just Words'](#) and the [Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care](#) is to strengthen Welsh language services in health and social care, driven by the need ensure Welsh speakers can access and receive services through the medium of Welsh.

During 2019/20, we have:

- worked with Cardiff Council to implement a Joint Care Home Contract which includes a requirement to comply with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011,

the 'More than Just Words Strategic Framework' and related Welsh Language Standard;

- worked with Corporate colleagues to add information to our on-line recruitment pages to promote the support available to Welsh speakers and learners;
- created promotional materials to remind staff to 'Think Cymraeg' piloted Welsh classes in two of our Care Homes for both residents and staff to join in;
- continued to promote Welsh Language courses and taster sessions to staff across the Directorate; and
- ensured staff are able to attend Welsh Courses within work time or claim back the hours, which as a consequence has led to an increased uptake.



### ***Our Partnership Working and Collaboration***

Through pursuing a progressive collaborative agenda with our health and social care partners we have been able to deliver in partnership more integrated support services.

This coherent approach to partnership working the Cardiff and Vale's Regional Partnership Board has enabled us to make good progress in delivery the RPB's key priorities this year. Outlined below is a summary of some of the key achievements made so far:

### **Children and Young People**

In the last year the Partnership has broadened the scope of the Board to include a focus on the needs of children and young people.

To support this work, a new Children and Young People's Board has been established to enable integrated planning and service development across the region.

As a result of expanding the scope of the Partnership, the following priority areas have been identified for Children and Young People:

- Improving the offer available to support emotional health and wellbeing.
- Developing a shared framework with agreed common approaches to working with children and young people across the region.
- Increasing the availability of co-ordinated information, advice and guidance to enable children, young people and their families to access early help.
- Increasing the level of influence and involvement of children, young people and their families in service design and delivery.
- Developing and delivering changes in practice across agreed integrated care pathways.
- Driving a joint-and shared approach to workforce development and deployment.
- Utilising new ICF funding to develop key services for children on the edge of care including Family Group Conferencing, Therapeutic Interventions and Reunification.

### **Housing**

A multi-agency Health, Housing and Care Board has been formed to address the needs identified in the report commissioned by the RPB in 2017-18 from the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN) using ICF funding. This partnership has played a key strategic role in driving forward the developments that have been mentioned earlier in this Annual report regarding the development of future accommodation with care solutions.

Both Cardiff Council and Vale of Glamorgan Council have developed Local Housing Strategies in response to the housing needs identified through the Housing LIN report. The Vale of Glamorgan Council are in the process of developing an Older Persons Housing Strategy which is informed by the recommendations within the Housing LIN report

### Older people

The RPB has continued its commitment to improving the lives of older people through developing more integrated services by utilising both the Integrated Care Fund and Transformation monies made available through the Welsh Government.

As part of the RPB's older people's strand of work, key achievements have included:

- The establishment of a nurse-led multi-disciplinary triage team working as part of *Contact One Vale* that has enabled Vale residents to be supported within their community or to expedite discharge from hospital. This has also contributed to 79% of all adult service enquiries being resolved without the need for further referral.
- Testing the effectiveness of various Discharge to Assess pathways to enable people to return home from hospital without delay, with the right level of support to enable them to rehabilitate effectively. This has ensured that older people in particular, don't lose their independence as a result of their hospital stay. As a result of adopting an effective discharge pathway, during 2019/20 we have successfully increased the percentage of older people that return home and maintain their independence. For example, as at quarter 3, 79.9% of adults who completed a period of reablement required no package of care and support 6 months later.
- Developed a range of projects to support the needs of people living with Dementia. As a result of this concerted effort, the region has now empowered over 25,000 citizens to become Dementia Friends and work is now underway across our Vale of Glamorgan towns and communities to achieve 'Dementia Friendly' status.

### Joint Commissioning arrangements

A Regional Commissioning Board has been established, chaired by the Director of Social Services for the Vale of Glamorgan Council on behalf of the Partnership. Significant progress has been made to establish more aligned approaches to commissioning where this achieves benefits for the partners and local people.

In response to the requirement set out in the SSWW Act, a pooled budget arrangement between the two local authorities and the Health Board has been established in relation to the provision of care home accommodation for older people. This came into effect on 1st April 2018 and a twelve-month deed of extension was approved by the partners in March 2019.

The Partnership now seeks to align provider engagement, fee negotiations and uplift for care home accommodation services and domiciliary care services across the region.

Partners share learning from the methodology used to negotiate fee uplifts and engage with providers, then explore the necessary steps to align this process. Partners are working together to jointly communicate fee uplifts to providers across the region for 2020/21.

A common service specification for care home accommodation services for older people has been developed so that it reflects recent legislation, best practice and local need.



Mapping of existing commissioning processes for domiciliary and residential care of the three partners has taken place. This has shown that over 40% of Vale's brokerage case load for domiciliary care is on behalf of Cardiff and Vale UHB. A decision has been taken to stream line processes between the Vale of Glamorgan and UHB.

The partnership has also focused on the Escalating Concerns and Home Closure policies. These have been updated to reflect the changes in requirements brought about by Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.

### Children with Complex Needs

The Integrating Disability Services pilot project tests the concept of integrated working between agencies to reduce duplication, streamline services, reduce complexity for parents and potentially identify potential cost avoidance opportunities within existing services.

An integrated pathway aims to formalise the way in which agencies work together to support people with complex needs during childhood and also through their transition phase into adulthood and beyond. Various elements of this pathway have been developed and piloted with a specially identified cohort of 94 children.

During the pilot:

- 318 referrals were received by front door learning disability services, streamlining referrals and need from initial contact with the service.
- 30 parents have received support to deal with children with autistic spectrum disorder.
- 31 young people have been involved in a trial of pre-diagnostic school interventions within the Vale.
- 74 children have been observed at school to support neuro developmental diagnostic processes.
- Two 'unpicking neuro-developmental differences' training days have been delivered to Additional Learning Need Coordinators across the region.

### Learning Disabilities Strategy

Partners launched the first regional Commissioning Strategy for Adults with a Learning Disability 2019-2024 in June 2019. Rooted in co-production and partnership, the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Adults with a Learning Disability, outlines a commitment to working with people with a learning disability in developing services, with a focus on eight priority areas identified through consultation and engagement with individuals, carers, families and partner agencies.

The shared vision and core principles central to the Strategy are that people with a learning disability are supported to have: *'a good quality of life and to live the lives they want to lead; living locally where they feel good and well, where they are valued and included in their communities and have equal access to appropriate support that ensures independence, choice and control.'*

### Welsh Community Care Information System

The Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) has been mandated by Welsh Government for implementation across Wales to enable sharing of electronic information to support the delivery of coordinated care, enabling staff from NHS and social care

services to take an integrated approach to assessment, care planning and service delivery. The system has been implemented by social services in the Vale of Glamorgan, replacing and significantly improving on the previous SWIFT system. Additional functionality continues to be developed including specifically the development of a finance module. Other key partners across the Regional Partnership Board however are citing significant risks to implementation that would reduce the functionality available on their current systems and so the true benefits of integrated systems have not been achieved.

### ICF Capital

A three-year capital development fund was released via the Integrated Care Fund. This includes the following developments in the Vale of Glamorgan:

- Scoping for the Older People's Village in Penarth.
- Various developments to residential care home accommodation to improve access for people with dementia.
- Ongoing development of the Ty Deri special school site.

The 2018/19 Annual Report of the RPB is available on the [Partnership's website](#) and provides a useful summary of key achievements over the previous year. The RPB's Annual Report relating to 2019/20 was not published at the time of writing this report.



## 7. Accessing Further Information and Key Documents

This report summarises, with key information and analysis, the success of the local authority in improving the wellbeing of those people who need our help and support. This is not the only source of information available to members of the public, key partners and service providers. We have a significant amount of background information that sits behind this report and that provide a lot of additional detail about what we do and how we do it. Importantly if something is not mentioned in this report as a key priority it doesn't mean we're not doing it, as there is a lot of activity across social services that play a part in helping us to provide for some of the most vulnerable groups in our community.

To access further information about what we do then these are some links to key documents and further information that will provide more detail:

- [Vale of Glamorgan Council Corporate Plan 2016-20](#)
- [Vale of Glamorgan Council Corporate Plan 2020-25](#)
- [Vale of Glamorgan Council's Annual Delivery Plan 2020/21](#) which includes the 2020/21 Service Plans for Children and Young People Services, Adult Services and Resource Management, Safeguarding and Performance.
- [The Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board](#)
- [The Public Service Board's Well-being Assessment.](#)
- The [Cardiff and Vale Population Needs Assessment](#) and the associated [Area Plan](#) and [Area Action Plan](#).