

Agenda

Pwyllgor Craffu ar Berfformiad – Pobl

Dyddiad: Dydd Mawrth, 21 Medi 2021

Amser: 10.00 am

Lleoliad: Virtual Meeting

At: Cynghorwyr: W Routley (Cadeirydd), J Cleverly, Y Forsey, L Lacey, S Marshall,
J Richards, T Suller, H Thomas, C Townsend and T Watkins

Eitem	Wardiau Dan Sylw
1	<u>Ymddiheuriadau</u>
2	<u>Datganiadau o ddiddordeb</u>
3	<u>Cofnodion y Cyfarfod Blaenorol</u> (<i>Tudalennau 3 - 10</i>)
4	<u>Gofal Preswyl Plant Mewnol</u> (<i>Tudalennau 11 - 30</i>)
5	<u>Adroddiad Cyfarwyddwr Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol 20/12</u> (<i>Tudalennau 31 - 84</i>)
6	<u>Casgliad Adroddiadau Pwyllgorau</u> Ar ôl cwblhau adroddiadau'r Pwyllgor, gofynnir i'r Pwyllgor ffurfioli ei gasgliadau, ei argymhellion a'i sylwadau ar eitemau blaenorol i'w gweithredu.
7	<u>Adroddiad Cyngorydd Craffu</u> (<i>Tudalennau 85 - 90</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Diweddariad ar y Rhaglen Gwaith i'r Dyfodol (Atodiad 1)b) Camau Gweithredu'n Codi (Atodiad 2) Cliciwch ar y ddolen hon i wyllo'r digwyddiad byw.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn

Minutes



Performance Scrutiny Committee - People

Date: 22 June 2021

Time: 10.00 am

Present: Councillors W Routley (Chair), H Thomas, J Richards, S Marshall, T Watkins, C Townsend, J Cleverly, Y Forsey, L Lacey and T Suller

In Attendance: Karyn Keane (Assistant Head of Education - Engagement & Learning), Andrew Powles (Assistant Head of Education - Engagement and Learning), Deborah Weston (Service Development Manager), Neil Barnett (Scrutiny Adviser), Connor Hall (Scrutiny Adviser) and Louise A Thomas (Governance Officer)

1 Apologies

None.

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 2020/21 Service Plan End of Year Reviews

1. 20/21 Service Plan End of year review for Education Services

The Deputy Chief Education Officer provided an overview of the report stating that due to the pandemic, performance measures related to pupil outcomes, exclusions and attendance had been suspended. Welsh Government had introduced new methods of awarding grades for learners at both Key Stage 4 and 5 and so comparison to previous years was not appropriate. Tracking post 16 learners destinations was challenged by the national restrictions in place due to the pandemic and the percentage of young people who were deemed to have an 'unknown destination' on leaving school was higher than in previous years. However, Newport data for young people in Education, Employment and Training above compulsory school age remained strong and among the best in Wales.

Despite the pandemic significant work had continued by schools and central education and most actions within the service plan had progressed. The Covid pandemic had a significant impact on schools illustrated by periods of full closure or solely offering distanced learning, and the large scale operation of blended learning to enable pupils to continue learning when they were self-isolating as either individuals or as cohorts within a school.

Members asked the following:

- Was the Service Area on target with its budget and if not, what mitigation methods were in place and what was the situation with certain individual schools?

The Deputy Chief Education officer confirmed that the Service was currently on target for this year. There had been a significant underspend last year of almost two million largely due to services such as transport, out of County placements, breakfast clubs etc. not being utilised over the past year. Those charges would be reinstated this year so the projection was for a balanced budget.

In relation to the situation with individual schools there were 4 schools which projected closing deficits but this was still a significant improvement. One of these was due to close and amalgamate with another school and the other three were Secondary schools which were being closely monitored and on track to reduce their levels of overspending, helped largely by the Covid situation. These would be closely monitored on a regular basis to ensure that their financial planning arrangements were robust with no chance of them slipping back into a deficit position.

- A member asked if through operating differently, schools had found methods of saving money and could any of these methods be used going forward?

The Assistant Head of Education explained that the Service was currently exploring Post 16 collaboration to see if elements of that could be delivered virtually. This meant that schools wouldn't have to operate necessarily in the current cluster formations and could potentially offer curriculum across more than one local authority. A big part of the work done was working with lots of individual schools to look at their learning from the pandemic, seeing what had been effective, not just in terms of cost savings but in terms delivering the best curriculum in order to receive the best results.

- Members asked about monitoring measures in place, schools using reserves and information sharing between schools.

The Assistant Head of Education responded that a financial template would be issued to schools to track where any overspend was, outlining the reasons behind that and whether it was a one off spend, in which case, there would be an impact in future years. This information would be returned by the end of term to allow quality assurance to be undertaken over the summer with a report to the Governing bodies for the Autumn term with any issues outlined for them to be aware of. This would also highlight schools that had large surpluses and would indicate how it was intended to be spent. It had been challenging to have a planned spend this year and fortunately some of the Welsh Government grants received late in the financial year could be carried forward.

It was then advised that there are a few different forums for information sharing. The School Budget Forum looked at the overall mechanism for funding schools and met four times a year to discuss things such as upcoming challenges, capital maintenance and IT systems. Deficit recovery meetings included members from Finance and the schools and had robust discussions around how schools managed their budgets and how they operated within the allocated funding.

- What criteria was used to measure the success of securing Education, Employment and Training for school leavers?

The Assistant Head of Education responded that data on destinations of young people from individual schools was accessed regularly and so were able to identify those who did not have a destination in place and provide the relevant support for those learners. Newport was recognised regionally for good practice and the

previous year our figures were better than the all Wales average. There were challenges last year due to Covid restrictions impacting the ability to check if the young people were accessing training, education or employment and this had resulted in a higher number of young people with an unknown destination than was originally targeted.

This was now an area to be focussed on, working much earlier whilst young people were still in school in order to support a higher number into a destination where possible. The young people who had an unsecure destination were often those learners who had an additional learning need, and we recognised that that was occasionally a barrier to their access to employment, training or education. However, we supported those individuals in the same way as we supported others and in particular, our links with training providers were strong in that area so that we could support learners with additional learning needs into a relevant into a suitable destination.

- Has the Council continued to monitor school attendance throughout the pandemic and did the figures highlight persistent offenders.

The Deputy Chief Education Officer replied that although there was no statutory requirement this year to collect attendance data, as a Council we had asked schools to continue to collect and record this data daily. These figures were then shared monthly with all schools so that the Education Welfare service were aware of any issues. We expected the schools to monitor their own pupils and identify learners with particular attendance issues so they could be specifically targeted with additional support to help improve their attendance.

- How has the Council ensured that standards had been maintained throughout the pandemic, especially with blended learning?

The Deputy Chief Education Officer advised that this had been particularly difficult over the year as we had not been able to physically enter the schools to check and monitor. We had provided generic support for Head Teachers but not tracking performance as done previously. There had been discussions between schools to share experience of blended learning and significant union involvement to ensure the different mechanisms and quality assurance measures were in place. Whilst it had not been as comprehensive as we would have liked, given Covid restrictions, we had endeavoured to put as many quality assurance measures as possible in place.

- Query was made about the Covid recovery plan and the challenges moving forward.

The Deputy Chief Education Officer advised that the well-being of the children was of paramount importance. We would draw on the experience of blended learning and sharing best practices. Childrens' engagement with learning and encouraging them to socialise educationally would be of high importance. Some schools reported behavioural challenges following the lifting of lockdown but we utilised the lessons learnt from the systems that promoted strong learning, such as the blended learning approach that had been really strong. The amount of support provided to schools and the sharing of good practise amongst schools would be built into the new curriculum that was being developed, with well-being at its core.

Whilst we could not comment on the quality of work, we were able to confirm that there had been a significant increase in the number of pupils accessing online learning during the pandemic. Hwb was the platform that most schools used for their learning activities whilst pupils were at home. The available figures showed an increase from approx. 42,000 logins in September 2020 to 141,000 logins in

January 2021 and this was a good indication that pupils were engaging during lockdown periods.

- How has the Council monitored those children who had disengaged with education in school?

The Deputy Chief Education Officer confirmed that there were 207 young people that were known to be home educated and this was double the previous year's figure. To ensure support for those families, the Education Welfare Service would contact them and made annual visits to see what school work they were being asked to do at home. We were working with those families to engage them and attempt to re-engage them into education in school. We had received funding from Welsh Government to increase levels of support and monitoring over the coming year.

Members followed up asking how home schooled children were assessed? It was advised that there was no requirement for those children to follow the national curriculum nor to take any exams or forms of assessment. Whilst some parents chose to enter their children for GCSEs there was no formal requirement for this. Of course if they wanted to progress onto University then they would need to complete the necessary exams. Parents would have to ensure they followed the necessary curriculum, arrange entrance into exams as a private candidate and request a school to act as an exam centre for the child, but this was all up to the parent to arrange.

- How have we ensured the most vulnerable pupils and those with additional learning needs were given as much support as others during the pandemic?

The Assistant Head of Education responded that there had been a grant to set up a health and support team that all schools could access and work with to ensure the well-being of all students as a whole school priority and a toolkit was used to see which interventions were most beneficial to individual learners. Those who were determined to need face to face support were brought into school and there was also online and telephone support provided as well as an educational psychology service help line for parents and carers to access. Looked After Children co-ordinators worked with individual learners to ensure they were supported throughout. There had been constant contact throughout with Head Teachers to look for solutions for any issues that arose for ALN learners.

- Members made comment that they were reassured to hear of the measures that had been put in place and asked if we were prepared for future requests for help.

The Assistant Head of Education replied that this had been flagged up as a significant risk. There had already been an increase in requests for statutory assessments and an increase in behavioural issues had been noted. Recruitment was underway for additional staff within SEN and advisory roles.

- Members asked for an update on the implementation of the weapons in schools policy.

The Deputy Chief Education Officer replied that the managing weapons in schools policy was initially developed as a joint piece of work between the Youth Offending Service and the Inclusion Team, the aim being to ensure a consistent approach across the city to prevent any inappropriate criminalisation of young people, but also to make sure that they and their families were supported in dealing with any issues that had led to them taking a weapon into school in the first instance. The Police had had significant involvement and were a third partner in the scheme. The Policy had been piloted across Secondary schools and would be signed off in the

Autumn. Any significant instance would go down the formal route of criminal involvement but any lesser sanctions taken by school would need to be consistent City wide.

The Committee were pleased to hear that the Weapons scheme was intended to be rolled out to all schools later this year, and voiced the importance of urgent education and awareness to avoid levels of weapon crimes seen in areas like London.

- Following a question on the numbers of pupils being educated out of the City and reasons why, it was stated that the exact figure would be confirmed after the meeting but that there were specific establishments that took pupils from all over the country depending on the specific needs of individuals. Those children with significant physical or specialised needs, sometimes required residential provision and needed to be educated in settings with the necessary specialist adaptations and educational provision.
- What are the challenges and concerns surrounding pupil numbers and catchment areas, specifically with regards to new build housing developments?

The Assistant Head of Education stated the recent alteration in the catchment areas of Caerleon and Somerton had been successful in reducing the numbers of applicants from outside those catchment areas. There had been issues with pupil numbers in Rogerstone following the Jubilee Park development as the projected levelling off of numbers had not materialised but that this would be remodelled going forward, with the hope that Jubilee Park being close to completion would see the numbers of pupils levelling off. In regards to the expansion of Tredegar Park primary school, the pupil projection models indicated that the demand in that area would not manifest as early as expected. The reason for delay was as a result of Planning issues to overcome so alternative ways of utilising the funding were being investigated.

- A member asked if there were concerns regarding projected increased building costs and costing implications quoted by Newport Norse.

Members were advised that cost estimates, which came through from our partners in Newport Norse, indicated that the funding set aside was potentially not enough due to issues arising from both Covid and Brexit, both of which impacted the building trade in one way or another. There was an option to bid to Welsh Government for further funding. The costs of projects were continually monitored and a report to Cabinet at the early part of lockdown last year recommended the removal of some of the lower priority projects in order to concentrate on all of the higher value projects. Within a project both the school and the developer worked together to remove some aspects if it was felt they were not going to provide value for money.

The Committee then asked if it could be arranged for School Governors to receive additional training sessions from Newport Norse in order for them to gain further knowledge on how to utilise providers.

- Members enquired what the position was with the Youth Council and how we ensured the youth voice was being sufficiently heard.

The Assistant Head of Education reassured the Committee that there had been a significant amount of positive work in relation to ensuring the learner's voice was heard. There was good communication between the schools council and youth council and vice versa so that messages were disseminated and information shared. The strong links that existed within the secondary schools now needed to be developed within the junior schools.

The Youth Council had provided some outstanding support for schools over the last year and developed really strong links with senior leaders across schools. They had generated a guidance booklet that had been shared with all schools to support them with the delivery of the LGBTQ Plus curriculum and ideas for activities for supporting young people. They had taken a leading part in the development of the new anti-bullying guidance and the model policy that was circulated to schools and were instrumental in gaining the views of over 100 young people that was integral to that piece of work. The level of communication that they provided to schools had actually increased over the last 12 months.

- Members were concerned that there were currently only around 12 members on the Youth Council and wished to have a wider representation in order to reflect a wider range of opinions.

The Assistant Head of Education responded that the current members were extremely active and had a wider remit than just education issues and that she would ask the Policy and Partnership Team to provide more detailed information on membership and attendance numbers and provide an overview of the other aspects of the Youth Council activities.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Chief Education Officer and the Assistant Heads of Education for their comprehensive responses to Members questions.

4 Conclusion - Comments to the Cabinet

The Committee noted the End of Year Service Plan Report and agreed to forward the minutes to the Cabinet as a summary of the issues raised. The Committee wished to make the following comments to the Cabinet:

- The Committee were very pleased with the quality of the report, and wanted it to be known that all the officers and staff have every right to be proud of their work and ensuring that the services provided have been of good quality throughout one of the most difficult times in living memory.
- The Committee were pleased to hear that the Weapons scheme that is currently being piloted in a Secondary School is intended to be rolled out to all schools later this year, and voiced the importance of urgent education and awareness to avoid levels of weapon crimes seen in areas like London.
- Members were also pleased to hear that the service area are continuing to monitor school's finances as some schools are using their reserves, and welcomed the important work from the service area alongside Finance colleagues being carried out to ensure schools are aware of potential problems for next year.
- The Committee asked if it could be arranged for School Governors to receive additional training sessions from Newport Norse for them to gain further knowledge on how to utilise providers.
- Members queried if the Cabinet Member for Education could agree for an All Member Briefing on the Curriculum for Wales at some point in the future.

- The Committee also asked if they could please get additional information on the following:
 1. Additional information on Calming Rooms in special schools.
 2. The number of children currently being educated out of county, and the reasons why.
 3. Additional information about the School Funding Formula and how it is calculated.
 4. Work that has been recently undertaken by the Youth Council which fall under the People directorate, the current membership and also the maximum amount of members allowed.

4 Scrutiny Adviser Reports

. Forward Work Programme Update

Invitees;

- Neil Barnett – Scrutiny Adviser

The Scrutiny Adviser presented the Forward Work Programme, and informed the Committee of the topics due to be discussed at the next two committee meetings:

Tuesday 21st September 2021

- Children's Residential Care

Tuesday 2nd November 2021

- 2021-22 Service Plan Mid-Year Review for:
 - Children and Young People Services
 - Adult and Community Services

The meeting terminated at 12.07 pm

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Scrutiny Report

Performance Scrutiny Committee - People

Part 1

Date: 21 September 2021

Subject Children's Residential Care Provision

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Sally Ann Jenkins	Head of Children's Services
Joanne Llewellyn	Service Manager- Children Services
Scott Hereford	Team Manager – Children's Services

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to consider:

1. Current provisions for in-house Children's Residential Care.
2. The future of in-house Children's Residential Care.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 It is important as a LA that we have sufficiency of placement provision to meet the needs of the children looked after in Newport. Welsh Government has a strong drive to return children from out of authority placements to their home Local Authority and to increase the local provisions for children looked after; this includes residential provision.

Previous Consideration of this item

- 2.2 The Service Manager and Team Manager have never previously presented to Performance Scrutiny Committee - People. The item has therefore not been previously considered.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

3.1 Information report – In-House Children’s Residential Care

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- Assess and make comment on:
 - How effectively the service area is performing against objectives;
 - That the Committee is pleased with current and future planned developments in Children’s Residential care.
- In drawing its conclusions, the Committee should assess:
 - What was the overall conclusion on information contained within the report?
 - Is the Committee satisfied it has had all relevant information to base a conclusion on the report?
 - Does any area require a more in-depth review by the Committee?
 - Does the Committee wish to make any Comments/Recommendations to Cabinet?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Supporting Information

5.1 [Corporate Plan 2017-2022 \(newport.gov.uk\)](http://newport.gov.uk)

6 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- The Report has links to the *Aspirational People* and *Resilient Communities* Corporate Plan Commitments.

Well-being Objectives	Promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment	Improve skills, educational outcomes & employment opportunities	Enable people to be healthy, independent & resilient	Build cohesive & sustainable communities
Corporate Plan Commitments	Thriving City	Aspirational People		Resilient Communities
Supporting Function	Modernised Council			

7 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

7.1 General questions

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies to think about the long term impact of their decisions and to work better with people, communities and to prevent persistent health problems, increase resilience and reduce inequalities.

The children's homes work with A Resilient Wales and A More Equal Wales in focus as they work from a model that aims to promote high quality care to the young people in Newport who are Looked After, enabling young people no matter their background to fulfil their potential.

The aim of Children's Residential Care is to balance the short term safeguarding needs of young people with the long term care and promoting independence and integration into their communities.

Each young person has well-being goals that are written within the What Matters To Me Document. This is a promotion of the young person's goals to enable them to have a bright future. The decoration of the homes, changes of culture and ethos, inclusive children's meetings and decisions in their care links with the collaboration and prevention of problems reoccurring or escalating.

8. Background Papers

Include all additional documents that are referenced in the report, and those that you have used as background reading. Hyperlink to online versions of them if available.

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)

Report Completed: September 2021

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn

Information Report



Scrutiny

Part 1

Date: 07th September 2021

Subject In-house Children's Residential Care

Purpose To ensure Cabinet Members are briefed on the developments on Children's Residential Services.

Author Joanne Llewellyn

Ward City wide

Summary This report explores the current children's in house residential provision; the model of care being developed in the service, and new homes and provisions planned for the future to meet the needs of children who are looked after in Newport.

Proposal To update Members in relation to how children's residential services have developed in the past two years and future plans and developments.

Action by Joanne Llewellyn

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Home Managers
- Responsible Individual Lucy Jackson.
- Team Manager Children's Residential

1. Introduction

Children's residential care settings, or children's homes, have suffered over the years from a perception of being a 'last resort' for young people in care, potentially dangerous and extremely expensive. Welsh Government has a strong drive to return children from out of authority placements to their home Local Authority and to increase the local provisions for children looked after; this includes residential provision. It is important as a LA that we have sufficiency of placement provision to meet the needs of the children looked after in Newport. We are thus continuing to increase the number of placements available and improve the quality of our residential care provision.

The devastation and impact of Covid-19 on individuals, families and communities cannot be underestimated. Short and long term impacts of the pandemic will vary in ways and degrees for everyone. The speed of how services were expected to change and respond to the pandemic was unprecedented, providing no meaningful time to plan ahead. Preparing for sustaining service delivery and providing effective communication to families and children was immensely challenging.

From the very moment the pandemic was upon us, there was a significant impact upon the children residential care homes. The introduction of PPE and especially face masks into our children's homes was significant. The staff and children adjusted swiftly to this but the ongoing impact is still being understood. Staff have stayed in the homes for the 10 day isolation period to provide continuity and care to the children when they most needed it. Many have gone above and beyond to ensure that our young people have felt supported and cared for during these difficult times.

Newport Children's Services have continued to develop our in house residential services to provide warm, safe and loving homes for our children. During 2020 - 2021 we have overseen the closure of one home, the opening of a new home and the start of the building of another home. These developments have continued despite the Covid pandemic and its impact on the care sector.

2. Project Perthyn

Project Perthyn is a drive by Newport City Council to return children who had been placed in out of county placements to their home city. As part of this project, we have committed to opening 3 new children's homes within the Local Authority area. The homes follow innovative and new ways of working in residential care in Newport involving attachment and trauma informed practice. This model was initially a pilot within one home in January 2019 and is now extending across all of the Local Authority homes including the opening of Rosedale in 2021 and the planned opening of Windmill Farm in 2022. The drive to extend across the homes has come after the Care Inspectorate Wales inspection report evidencing that this has been successful in our pilot home. This has resulted in a positive effect on the children who access social care in Newport.

Project Perthyn means belonging; bringing children back to Newport, to their homes, schools and family and helping children to remain in Newport by providing a different type of care experience. This project has utilised CAMHS colleagues to train staff in a trauma informed manner to support development and give our children a happy, healthy childhood and to integrate them back into their community. There has been interdepartmental and across agency working and this approach has meant that our children have returned successfully to Newport. There have been links with education and social work teams to enable extensive consideration of rehabilitation to family and to improve the view of residential care not as a last resort but as a positive move for some of our children.

The new way of working means through Project Perthyn that we have no locked doors and no office as we are providing a home environment, which is as close to a familial home as possible. Language is an important part of this as residential staff are not referred to as staff but by their names, home not unit, we do not discuss shifts or annual leave, we talk about family time not contact time. Project Perthyn helps improve services and supports equality, diversity and language choice to improve outcomes for our children. The children are discouraged from using language that institutionalises them and talking about their family home promotes inclusion and a sense of belonging.

We have a 'cwthch' approach in place, understanding the need for children to receive hugs and in turn learn about appropriate physical touch. Project Perthyn is striving to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of our children in the way we work so that their voices are heard and their well-being is promoted. The children are involved in day-to-day decisions such as menu choices, activities, decoration of their home and what to grow in the garden. The children are having meetings to discuss how they want their homes to look and are given choices about who can visit their home. This gives them a voice and control over their surroundings and home.

The change of language is promoted throughout children's services to encourage everyone to consider how they discuss our children's homes and how they speak to our children. This is leading to a change of understanding within children's services that residential care in Newport is not a last resort but a positive, life enhancing experience for our children.

As an authority we applied to the Social Care Accolades for Project Perthyn and were finalists and highly commended for innovative and inspiring ways of working.

3. Current homes

Cambridge House



Cambridge House (CH) shut in May 2021.

It had been one of Newport's longest standing homes offering many years of care for children across the City. It had been pivotal in developing many of our residential staff members which nearly all have worked and started off their carers within its four walls.

As a children's home CH was a very large building which is out of kilter with best practice in children's residential care. The building layout was challenging to manage with children who

have more challenging behaviours. The building was in poor condition and in order for continued safe use required extensive capital spend. Being cited in the middle of the City posed extensive challenges because of the risks of children being exploited and targeted.

The decision to close Cambridge House was in line with the developments of smaller children's homes with focussed methodologies of care set in the more rural areas of the City. Experience has proven in that smaller homes we are more able to meet the needs of children and are better suited to developing a family environment.

Forest Lodge



Forest Lodge is located in a semi-rural area just outside of Newport City. It is surrounded by woodland and a short walk away from Fourteen Locks canal. It is a residential home for four young people between the ages of 11 to 18 years old, with a spare bedroom for an emergency placement when needed. Each young person is treated as an individual and is encouraged to reach their full potential in all aspects of their life. This includes education where the young people all have different placements, depending on their skillsets and needs.

Over the last 6 months Forest Lodge has gone through a transformation inside making it feel homely and modern. The children have been involved in picking items and colours that they would like to be in their home and have enjoyed building the furniture and planning where it all goes. All Children have been involved in new experiences and activities; Work experience on Farms, Trials with Rugby Academies, successful completion of qualifications in college and completing and passing a fork lift driver course are an example of some of the many things the children have achieved in the most recent months at Forest Lodge. The children continue to engage in meetings where they discuss their wishes and feelings. The staff team have worked extremely hard to create a warm, friendly and supportive culture where the children can express themselves and feel that they will always be supported and encouraged to make positive choices around their independence and wellbeing. Plans to continue to improve the quality of the home such as new carpeting and changes to how we manage the removal of effluent are continuing!



Rose Cottage

Rose Cottage was opened in Jan 2019, as a new model style of children's residential in Newport. Four children were chosen to move to Rose Cottage from out of county placements to return to their local authority and have their forever home. Rose Cottage has no locked doors or office and the children live in a family environment.

Rose Cottage was short-listed for an award with Social Care wales Accolades 2020.



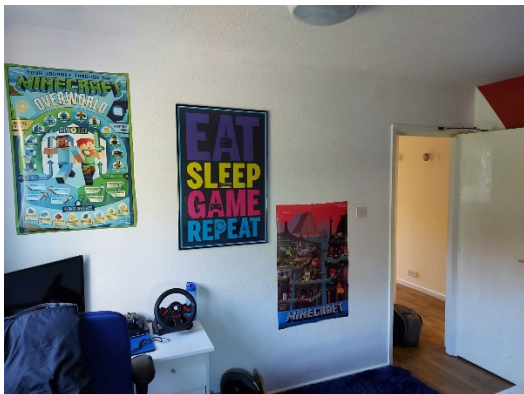
Rose Cottage has provided care to young people throughout the last 20 months. Young people have been supported to deal with the world around them and the effects the pandemic has had on all our lives.

All young people have been supported to see family where possible during the pandemic. All young people enjoyed Christmas, birthdays and all the usual celebrations. We have had three lockdown periods during this time. 4 staff lived in the home for a 14 day period in October 2020. All young people remained very settled and were happy that staff had been able to remain in the home for the isolation period.

One young person was rehabilitated home to the care of her Mother in April 2021. Another young person was returned to his mother's care in August 2021. One young person was also moved to their new placement which better met their needs in May 2021. We have continued to look at the compatibility of the young people at Rose Cottage and three new children have moved in. They have made progress, one has achieved several GCSE qualifications and is looking forward to starting college in September studying Health and Social Care. The other young person had missed so much of school he didn't achieve any qualifications, however he is now engaging in ACT and is attending 3-4 times a week. He has done this since July 2021 and is thoroughly enjoying this. The young people are being supported with their independence skills and working towards their independence plans.

Brynglas Bungalow

Brynglas Bungalow is currently supporting one young person. Since moving in during May, the young person has expressed how happy he is and how much more settled he feels. The team work in an attachment focused way, to help support the young person through trauma that has been experienced in early childhood. There has been a reduction in both his risk taking behaviours and his overall incidents per month. He has engaged in lots of activities within the home and out in the community. The team have built up really strong attachments with him and he has been able to feel comfortable and safe to trust and allow them to help him. He has been encouraged to play and do things that suits his ability and understanding, things like role play and hide and seek. He is now having half hour of being read to each evening before bed, watching cartoons, more time independently in the community and taken responsibility for life skills such as room cleaning, washing up and money management.



Rosedale



Rosedale opened in March 2021 and is a beautiful, modern, family styled, 4 bedroom home for children age 11 to 18 who need medium to long term support. The home aims to create a settled, safe and nurturing environment for children to have the opportunity to be supported and succeed in day to day life. The children are supported by 1 manager, 1 assistant manager, 9 day staff and 2 waking night staff who work on a rota basis.

We strive to promote positive outcomes for our children via a child centred approach using trauma informed and attachment focussed strategies. We believe that building positive, working relationships with our children is key to meeting their needs and promoting good health and wellbeing. Building these relationships has been proven to increase our children's confidence, self-esteem and trust in adults resulting in them investing in the journey and allowing adults to support them.

Rosedale was opened to support children coming back into the local authority in order to be closer to families, schools and their communities. Our first young person successfully moved in during April 2021 who had lived over an hour away from her family & school for over 18 months. The transition into Rosedale was flawless. She spent 6 months building good, positive relationships with adults and children which reduced her anxieties and allowed her to feel more comfortable when she moved in.

Quote from a YP person living at Rosedale,

"I recently moved into Rosedale after being away from Newport, when I found out I was moving back to Newport I was quite happy but nervous at the same time I then had a weekly teams call and spoke to the assistant manager Emma Campbell she spoke to me about what it's going to be like when moving into Rosedale. I love living in Rosedale because I am closer to my family and really close to my school so I don't have to travel an hour a day and also really close to my friends. I feel really settled and comfortable living here and I am really close with the staff and I can feel like I can speak to them about anything, also this house is probably the best placement I've lived in because its more close to my family"

Emma Campbell (Assistant Manager, Rosedale)

"Rosedale has been a huge success since we opened on 20th March 2021. We currently have 3 young people living at Rosedale, who have craved a family style house that they all, now call their home. The children have benefitted from adults using a child centred approach where children are involved in every decision that is related to their care and their home. We

have placed great emphasis on children being able to increase their independent and life skills and the children have shown us how well this has worked with them all helping out around the home and taking great pride in ensuring their home is kept clean and tidy. It has been a great pleasure to be involved in the journey of opening Rosedale and observing how well the children have settled. I strongly believe this is due to the child centred approach we use, the positive relationships the children have built with adults and a consistent routine”

ND (Residential Childcare Worker, Rosedale)

“I have worked at Rosedale since we opened in March 2021 after working in many other homes around Wales and England. I love the therapeutic way that we work with the children and the homely environment that they live in. The children are happy and settled and all the staff genuinely care about them and provide a nurturing environment on a day to day basis. The children are supported to attend full time education and sporting clubs outside of education which has really shown them the importance of improving their own health & wellbeing. We have also created a garden whereby they are supported to grow their own fruit and veg that they then cook and eat which has been great to improve their life skills. We are a very active home with the children engaging with adults in many activities within and outside the home, such as monopoly, card games, gym, swimming, walks etc.”

Rosedale currently has three young people residing there. The fourth bed is currently being used as a Remand/PACE bed (discussed below). The plans for the fourth bed after the pilot ends is to sell the placement to another Gwent Local Authority. Plans are already underway to consider which child to move into the home.

4. Pace and remand provision

Across Wales it has been recognised that given the overall shortage of sufficient accommodation available to Local Authority Childrens Social Services Departments, that when a bed is requested for vulnerable young people who have been refused bail by police, there has sometimes not been sufficient accommodation available. Unfortunately, this has on occasion led to young people having to stay overnight in custody suites, which all stakeholders agree is not in their best interests.

A multi-agency task and finish group of stakeholders was set up to look at potential solutions to this problem. A number of discussions have been held and actions identified; one key action was to test the idea of a retained ‘bed’ being kept available for use in an emergency in non-secure, but safe, accommodation. Welsh Government have provided grant funding to run a pilot of a retained residential care bed for 3 months. The pilot will then be evaluated by the group and used to inform development of longer-term solutions.

It was agreed that the fourth bedroom at Rosedale would be used by the pilot scheme and this started on Monday 5th July 2021 for a duration 3 months. The pilot area covers South Wales. Specifically, across Gwent Police, South Wales Police and Dyfed Powys Police Force areas, and the Local Authority footprints included within that geographical area.

It was agree that the emergency admissions must be risk assessed at the point of referral to ensure that the other young people can be kept safe. If the risks cannot be safely managed then the Registered Manager and Senior Management Team have the right to refuse an admission. Every effort will be made to manage risk safely by the residential care team but it is important that their decision is respected in regard admissions.

Referrals to access Rosedale will only be made by the relevant Local Authority social work team, after the normal exploration and discussion between Social Services / Police / YOT. The options of bail, alternative accommodation provided by the placing local authority such

as family, a foster placement, a pre-existing residential placement, must have been exhausted prior to referral. The basis of the pilot is that this is an emergency placement of last resort, not the preferred choice.

The pilot is reviewed by key stakeholders on a fortnightly/ monthly basis. The pilot will be evaluated to consider the referral data, needs profile data, placement data, occupancy data and reasons for use / not using will be collated and evaluated to inform further discussion on longer term planning in the Autumn of 21.

Key Messages from Partners

Chief Constable Pam Kelly, Chair of the Welsh Chief Officers Group and PCC Dafydd Llewelyn, Chair of Policing in Wales commented: *“Policing in Wales welcomes the pilot residential bed being taken forward by Newport City Council. We hope that the lessons learned from the evaluation of this work can be brought forward quickly and if appropriate, act as a framework to develop a solution that offers an alternative to police custody across all four force areas in Wales. Our most vulnerable children and young people should not be held in police cells and we look forward to working with partners to build on what we hope will be a successful pilot period.”*

Minister for Social Justice and the Deputy Minister for Social Services commented: *“Welsh Ministers have consistently been of the view that children should not be held in police cells. We acknowledge, however, that this has been a complex issue for some time. Thanks to the effective joint collaboration between policing and local authority colleagues and Welsh Government, we are pleased that the PACE and Remand Pilot exercise has been developed. We hope that the pilot exercise will generate the learning required to assist in identifying a longer-term solution to this important matter.”*





Plans are also in the early stages to consider the annexes at Rosedale and how we can utilise ICF funding to develop further emergency accommodation. These are in the early stages and planning permission will be required for any further developments of the site.

Oaklands

Oakland's is a short break service which provides planned overnight short breaks for children and young people with a disability. The age range is up to 18 years and a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment is provided.

Oaklands has remained operational through COVID thanks to our dedicated staff members who committed themselves to continue to support vulnerable children. We have completed weekly PCR tests in house and also LFT testing to manage the ongoing risks of covid. Staff have kept up to date with their training both virtually and online. Staff have been offered the covid vaccination and uptake has been high.

We have had to be creative in the way we communicate with families due to the impact of COVID, which has limited our face-to-face contact including our coffee mornings. We have set up regular family group meetings and 1-1 meetings via Teams and created a newsletter, which goes out monthly.

Through the pandemic we have had two children living with us until suitable accommodation is found and we have also supported an additional 16 young people with additional needs

Oaklands now has an operational sensory room and garden. Brynglas day services kindly donated sensory items which are going to great use within the home. We have given the summer house a revamp. It's been painted in the colours of the rainbow with support of some of our young people and it is now the disco room. We have a lovely mud garden which was made by a relative of a staff member and kindly donated to us. We have been making improvements to the outside space; we have had a trampoline fitted into the ground, which the children love.

Oaklands has had a complete refurbishment, which has given the children a lovely living space. The home also has individual pods, which allows the children to have their own quite space when they need it to relax and watch TV.



5. Future developments

Windmill Farm

Windmill Farm is situated on the outskirts of Newport of in a semi-rural location close to the village of Llanvaches. It is a five-bedroom house, set within twenty-nine acres of farmland. The house has its own orchard with a seating area and a covered terrace with outside seating attached to the house. There is plenty of space for the young people to explore and exercise.

Windmill Farm will provide a home to children aged between 10 and 18 years of age. Placements will be medium / short term, offering a stable home for children and young people through to independence or to support a planned return to family for up to 6 months. Young people accommodated at Windmill Farm will be receiving support from Social Services and Health services, and will have a profile of complex social and psychological needs that require a safe, nurturing environment that follows the biopsychosocial model of therapeutic care.

The team will support children and young people to feel safe and cared for and in turn provide for their holistic needs. Provision to include:

- Access to education.
- Access to services to support health and dietary needs.
- Physical safety and emotional containment provided by a combination of trained social care staff, and trained healthcare staff.
- Support from staff to facilitate understanding and self-management of risk.
- Understanding risk around exploitation – criminal or sexual.
- Independence, social and contact needs.
- Access to community services and leisure.
- Access to a range of psychological therapies, focused around emotional stabilisation, emotional containment and distress tolerance.
- Access to family therapy and trauma focused work, when appropriate.
- Access to a range of allied health therapy such as occupational therapy, dietetics and physiotherapy.





Rosedale Annexes

Newport and neighbouring Local Authorities have continued to have issues with obtaining emergency accommodation for young people who have experienced trauma and display challenging behaviours or because of the emergency nature of their situation. To help ameliorate this Newport have considered the current facilities and how we can develop our provision to meet the needs of children and young people in Gwent. An application for Intermediate Care Fund capital funding to develop the annexes at Rosedale was submitted and we are awaiting confirmation of ministerial approval before we can further plans to develop these buildings.



Residential care in Newport is an important resource to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children. The importance of providing high quality loving care to those children most in need of it cannot be underestimated. The plans to continue to develop the service according to future needs and finances will continue.

Joanne Llewellyn
06.09.2021

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn



Scrutiny Report

Performance Scrutiny Committee - People

Part 1

Date: 21 September 2021

Subject Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report 2020/21

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Role:
Chris Humphrey	Head of Adult Services
Sally Ann Jenkins	Head of Children and Young People Services
Cllr Paul Cockeram	Cabinet Member for Social Services

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider information contained within the report concerning the delivery, performance, risks and planned improvements of the Social Services function in the Council:
2. Determine if it wishes to make any comments to the Director of Social Services / Cabinet regarding the report.

NB. The statutory requirement is that the Annual Report is written by the Director of Social Services. Comments and observations from Members will be directed to the Director of Social Services for consideration and may be incorporated into the final report before it is considered by Cabinet and then presented to Council.

Any comments will be included for reference within the covering report to the Cabinet / Council, under the section 'Comments of Scrutiny Committees'.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 The Welsh Assembly Government issued [Statutory Guidance](#) in June 2009, regarding the Duties and Accountabilities of Directors of Social Services in Wales. Within this Guidance was the requirement for the Director of Social Services to publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of Social Care services in Newport. The Guidance states:

“The Director of Social Services must report annually to their Council on the delivery, performance and risk as well as plans for improvement of the whole range of Social Services functions. The report will have an important role in the development of the Council’s overarching Improvement Plan (WPI). The report and the underpinning evidence will inform the development of the CSSIW work programme for the authority including the overarching authority wide regulatory plan. It will be important that the report and underpinning evidence is shared at appropriate points in the cycle with CSSIW.”

- 2.3 The purpose of the Annual Report is to set out how Social Services are meeting the needs of Service users and carers, how the service has delivered on priorities during the past year as well as highlighting those areas of the service that have been prioritised for future improvement.
- 2.4 In accordance with the Council’s performance management framework, the Scrutiny Committee is being asked to consider and comment on the adequacy of the draft report in addressing the issues identified and provide feedback/ comments to the Cabinet and Council prior to its adoption.
- 2.5 The “Annual Council Reporting Framework” (ACRF) is overseen by the Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA). Copies and analysis of previous annual reports from across Wales can be found on their website (www.ssiacymru.org.uk/annualreporting).
- 2.6 As stated on the SSIA website, the intention of the ACRF approach is to:
- *Embed the accountability for performance management clearly with the local authority (council members, chief executives, directors, managers and officers)*
 - *Present a recognisable picture through analysis and self-assessment, to those responsible for the management and delivery of, as well as those served by social services*
 - *Generate the core set of information needed by CSSIW to deliver their annual performance assessment letter to Councils.*
- 2.7 These internally reached judgements are then subject to challenge by partners, carers and users of services. As stated in the [Guidance](#):

‘It is vital that the Council and its citizens, as well as inspectors and regulators, can rely on the Report as a full and true picture of Social Services in its area. That will require transparency and frankness on the part of its authors. Good quality data and intelligence will be vital and strong links with the Local Government Data Unit will be essential to ensure that opportunities for the full utilisation of performance and intelligence are exploited.

There will also need to be robust challenge built into its development and this is likely to include:

- *auditing of data accuracy;*
- *“clubs” of like Councils to examine comparative data;*
- *Peer review*

- 2.8 The approach requires each Council to deliver its own assessment of performance in social services, to analyse the services provided and consider what they are doing well, what could be done better. The report should be written in accessible language, and accompanied by evidence that supports the conclusion reached.
- 2.9 The Director of Social Services Annual Report 2020/21 will be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 15th December 2021, and subsequently by the Council for approval on 21st January 2022.
- 2.10 The statutory requirement is that the Annual Report is written by the Director of Social Services. Comments and observations from Members will be directed to the Director of Social Services for

consideration and may be incorporated into the final report before it is considered by Cabinet and then presented to Council. Any comments will be included for reference within the covering report to the Cabinet / Council, under the section 'Comments of Scrutiny Committees'.

Previous Consideration of this item

- 2.11 Previous reports have been submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. They received the draft 2017/18 report on the September 20th 2018, and the Draft 2018/19 report on the 1st of November 2019.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 **Appendix 1** - The Annual Director of Social Services Report for the year 2020/21. The report contains the following six areas;

1. **Introduction**
2. **Summary of Our Performance 2020/21**– An overview of how Social Services have performed during the year 2020/21.
3. **How Are People Shaping Our Services?** – This area provides a breakdown of the ways Social Services have involved their Service Users in service development.
4. **Promoting and Improving the Wellbeing of Those We Help** – This area outlines the six Quality Standards Social Services use to measure their ability to provide a high quality service to the citizens of Newport.
5. **How We Do What We Do**
6. **Glossary of Terms**

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- Establish if the author has provided a true and accurate picture of Social Services, and decide if Social Services are meeting the needs of the service users?
- Whether the priorities set out in the report for the next year are sufficient and will increase the quality of social services provisions?
- Question whether the priorities are measurable and achievable?
- Decide if each Quality Standard has been achieved, if not why?
- Conclusions:
 - What was the overall conclusion on the information contained within the report?
 - Is the Committee satisfied that it has had all of the relevant information to base a conclusion on the overall performance of Social Services?
 - Do any areas require a more in-depth review by the Committee?
 - Do the Committee wish to make any Comments / Recommendations to the Cabinet?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Supporting Information

5.1 The performance of both *Adult and Community Services* and *Children and Young Peoples Services* has been scrutinised by the Performance Scrutiny Committee – People. The following links are for the minutes of each meeting that considered Social Services performance for 2020/21:

- [Minutes November 3rd 2020 \(newport.gov.uk\)](https://www.newport.gov.uk/minutes-november-3rd-2020)
-

6 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- The Report aligns with the *Aspirational People* and *Resilient Communities* Corporate Plan Commitments, as well as the related Wellbeing Objectives:

Well-being Objectives	Promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment	Improve skills, educational outcomes & employment opportunities	Enable people to be healthy, independent & resilient	Build cohesive & sustainable communities
Corporate Plan Commitments	Thriving City	Aspirational People		Resilient Communities
Supporting Function	Modernised Council			

7 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

7.1 General questions

- How is this area / policy affected by the new legislation?
- How will this decision / policy / proposal impact upon future generations? What is the long term impact?
- What evidence is provided to demonstrate WFGA has been / is being considered?
- Evidence from Community Profiles / other data?
- Evidence of links to Wellbeing Assessment / Objectives / Plan?

7.2 Wellbeing Goals

- How are the Wellbeing goals reflected in the policy / proposal / action?
 - *A prosperous Wales*
 - *A resilient Wales*
 - *A healthier Wales*
 - *A more equal Wales*
 - *A Wales of cohesive communities*
 - *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*
 - *A globally responsible Wales*

7.3 Sustainable Development Principles

- Does the report / proposal demonstrate how as an authority we are working in accordance with the sustainable development principles from the act when planning services?
 - **Long Term**

The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs
 - **Prevention**

How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives
 - **Integration**

Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies
 - **Collaboration**

Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives
 - **Involvement**

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

8. Background Papers

- [Statutory Guidance on the Role and Accountabilities of the Director of Social Services](#)
- Link to the Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) website for copies and analysis of previous annual reports from across Wales - www.ssiacymru.org.uk/annualreporting
- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2017-22](#)

Report Completed: 14 September 2021

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn

**Report of the
Director of Social Services
2020/2021**



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Introduction

2020/21 was a particularly demanding year characterised by the maintenance of quality and standards of service delivery in the midst of the Coronavirus Pandemic. In April 2020 we had no idea of how long the situation would last or of the impact it would have on services, citizens and staff.

This report will document how services responded and maintained and where we find ourselves at the end of a 12 month period characterised by some unique challenges that will inevitably lead to some permanent changes in the way we support citizens in the future.

The task of embedding the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 continues to influence the provision of Early Intervention and Preventative services and in the ongoing work to manage demand. The well-being objectives tie closely to the Newport City Council (NCC) Corporate Plan, notably:

- To improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities.
- To enable people to be healthy, independent & resilient.
- To build cohesive & sustainable communities.

In Childrens Services, efforts have continued to address the shortage of placement options with a new 4 bed residential home now in operation with 2 more services planned for 2021/22. The preventative work to minimise the number of children becoming Looked After continues to develop with new and innovative practices such as Baby & Me, Family Group Conferencing and Rapid Response.

Work in Adult and Community Services continues to focus on improving and developing integrated working between health and social care with the Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) and the Transformation Fund being key enablers. The collaborative work to minimise the number of delayed hospital discharges has continued with pathways including Reablement and Home First fully integrated into the new Grange Hospital that opened during this year

The Coronavirus Pandemic brought unprecedented challenge across the range of services and older persons residential homes were impacted early on as Newport experienced high numbers of cases before preventative measures were in place. Although I have referenced the way we responded to the Pandemic throughout the report I thought it would be helpful to summarise here some of the themes of the past year to establish the context.

In April, May and December of 2020 there was a spike in deaths of citizens known to us and people have been fearful of going into hospital and into long-term care. Our domiciliary care providers have worked with us and with GP's District Nurses and Community Psychiatric Nurses to keep people safe in the community and to ensure they have access to the right care

We have adopted new ways of working, as have our partners, utilising technology where possible. We have supported our providers, ensuring PPE is available and working collaboratively with colleagues in Environmental Health, Public Health Wales, ABUHB and Welsh Government to offer practical and financial support.

People receiving some services and their carers had to deal with the fact that their care had to be delivered in a different way e.g. support at home and in the community rather than attending a building. Social Workers continued to undertake urgent assessments and maintained contact with others to ensure appropriate arrangements were in place offering telephone support and arranging welfare visits when necessary. Volunteers did shopping, collected prescriptions and delivered food parcels.

We developed a new outreach service and successfully embedded our hospital discharge processes into the new Grange Hospital that opened in September 2020. The Hospital and Reablement teams have been present at hospital sites throughout.

Considerable and impressive effort was made to house 70 street homeless people in temporary accommodation and to ensure they have ongoing access to specialist substance misuse and mental health support.

In Children's services we have continued to work in partnership with Barnardo's to prevent children coming into care, to work with children with additional needs and to support young carers.

Referral rates for safeguarding have remained high throughout the Pandemic, increasing the pressure on statutory services due to the restrictions on other community based provision. The new Rapid Response service started in October 2020 and aims to help families de-escalate and manage their crisis to prevent children coming into care.

The number of Looked After Children has remained constant (378 at 31st March) which indicates the effectiveness of prevention given the high rates of referral. Family Group Conferencing, Baby & Me, Rapid Response and MyST are all proving effective tools in supporting families. We maintained family contact sessions using technology and continued with face-to-face engagement where necessary.

Despite the restrictions, we progressed 26 adoptions, approved 23 new foster households and opened a new 4 bed residential home.

The year end financial position mirrors the operational experience, the adult underspend reflects not only the loss of life as a result of Covid 19 but also the reluctance of citizens to access services. Lockdown and furlough meant that more informal networks were available. We also had access to a significant amount of additional Welsh Government funding the future of which is not yet confirmed.

The Children's services overspend is reflective of the increased pressure on services that was already high but further exacerbated by the Pandemic. The prevention services continue to mitigate rising costs.

Across adults and children's services, we are now experiencing higher than usual levels of complexity and increasing referral numbers. Social care services have not had sufficient time to recover and there are concerning signs of a staffing crisis. We expect ongoing budget constraints but at this stage, we are still in the midst of a crisis and uncertain about how the medium to long-term impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic will affect the community and how we deliver our services.

Summary of Performance 2020/21

A new performance framework was planned for implementation during 2018/19 but it was delayed until April 2020. Unfortunately, the onset of the Coronavirus Pandemic in March 2020 led to a further delay until April 2021

NCC have developed the WCCIS system and new reporting and recording processes are now in place.

The data contained in this report represents the new performance framework but not all of the figures are for the full 12 month period. It is unavoidable that this year has been a period of transition but our systems are now complete and ready to go from April 2021 in accordance with Welsh Government timescales and the draft guidance that is yet to be finalised.

End of Year Performance Figures for Adult and Community Services

The new performance framework has changed the way we are required to measure the data so comparison with last year is problematic. This new set of metrics and recording processes coupled with the enforced working from home arrangements and the shift in demand as a result of the Pandemic means that it is sensible to treat this period as a baseline set of figures upon which to build future datasets to support evidence of future success, good practice and service pressures.

For example, last year (2019/20) **the number of people receiving assessments was 4038**, an increase of 891 from 2018/19.

During 20/21 the figure is **1538** that appears to be considerably less but this is because the metric is now restricted to **'new' assessments**

Another example of this is the change in the way the provision of **advice and assistance** is measured. In 2019/20 the figure of **4,588** was recorded but in 20/21 this has **reduced to 1,718** as we have been required to remove the numbers where only information was provided. This must be considered in the context of the **5,597 contacts recorded in 20/21** that demonstrates an overall increased level of activity

Hospital discharge figures have not been provided as they are no longer a statutory reporting requirement. However, In Reach, Reablement and Home First continue to be effective integrated service approaches to manage the flow of patients through the hospital and ensure they return home with the right level of support to maximise and maintain independence.

NB: No targets have yet been established, a full year of data is required to establish a benchmark for future performance

Adults Measures	Figure 20/21	Results & Comments
Total No. of Adults Who Have Received Advice & Assistance	1718	5,597 contact in total that includes when information only was provided
No. of New Assessments Completed During the Year	1538	Only represents new people 1 st time assessments
Active Offer of Welsh Accepted	0	
No. with a Care & Support Package at 31st March 2021	1861	
No. with Eligible Needs for Care & Support Maintained by Direct Payments at 31st March	93	over 18's only
Total no. of Adult Protection Enquiries Completed in the Year	648	doesn't represent individuals - could be multiple enquiries for same person
No. of Adult Protection Enquiries Completed Within Timescales	636 Within 7 working days	98.1%
Total No. of Packages of Reablement Completed During the Year	584	
Outcome of Reablement - Reduced Package of Care & Support	43	7.4%

Outcome of Reablement - No. of Packages of Reablement That Maintained the Need For Support	95	16.3%
Outcome of Reablement – No further Package of Care & Support	409	70%
Increased package of support	37	6.3%

End of Year Performance Figures for Children and Young People's Services

The new performance framework has changed the way we are required to measure data so a comparison with last year is problematic. This new set of metrics and recording processes coupled with the enforced working from home arrangements and the shift in demand as a result of the Pandemic means that it is sensible to treat this period as a baseline set of figures upon which to build future datasets to support evidence of future success, good practice and service pressures

Notwithstanding the above it must be noted that children's services has experienced significant additional demand during 2020/21

The continuing development of **additional residential placements** and the ongoing efforts to **recruit Foster Carers** will improve capacity and enable more children to remain within the City.

Preventions services including **Family Group Conferencing, Baby & Me** and the new **Rapid Response service** are enabling families to stay together and preventing new entrants to the care system.

NB: No targets have yet been established, a full year of data is required to establish a benchmark for future performance

Children's Measures	Figure 20/21	Comments
No. of referrals where advice and assistance was provided	5,424	10104 contacts in total that includes where information only was provided

No. Where Physical Punishment was the Only Factor	144	New law coming April 2022 about physical punishment by the parent or care – this is a new measure to start to gather data to measure the impact
Active Offer of Welsh Accepted During Assessment	0	
No. of Children With a Care & Support Plan (CASP) at 31 st March 2021	978	This figure includes children with a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and includes children receiving finance only support
No. of Children who are LAC at 31 st March 2021	378	
No. of Children Becoming Looked After During the Year	91	
No. of Children Who Ceased Being Looked After During the Year	92	
No. of LAC Who have had 3 or More Placements	26	* Note this may change once we receive final notification from WG improved figure since 19/20
No. of LAC Returned Home During the Year	36	
No. of Children in Care Proceedings During the Year	44	
No. of Foster Carers Registered with the LA	159	
No. of Childrens Residential Beds as at 31 st March 2021	21	
Total Number of Children on Child Protection Register (CPR) as at 31 st March	158	
Total No. of Registrations on the CPR During the Year	179	

No. of Children Who Were Removed from the CPR	148	
No. of Reports of Child Exploitation Received During the Year	62	*Note this only covers the 6 month period 01 Oct 2020 to 31 March 2021
No. of Contacts by Young Carers or Professionals During the Year	74	<p>Provided by Barnardo's and relates to new contacts.</p> <p>50 received advice and assistance and progressed to a formal care plan</p> <p>At 31st March there were 84 on a formal care plan</p> <p>Reviews are conducted every 6 months</p>

Youth Justice Service

By continuing to shape the service in line with the Welsh Government's **Youth Justice Blueprint for Wales**, we have seen a dramatic increase in our preventative cases, which is promoting positive outcomes for children.

We adopt a "**Child-first**" practice approach and continue to develop community partnerships to improve diversionary opportunities for children. We work with key agencies under an Anti-Social Behaviour umbrella to ensure there is a multi-agency approach to planning.

We have engaged a **Speech and Language Therapist** to aid communication and understanding and ensure each child has a plan that is individual to them.

We have just started a Restorative Justice Clinic that will provide specific restorative justice sessions for the child we are working with. These sessions will include victim empathy work

We are reviewing how we work with **victims** including providing various ways of communicating and using a "cooling-off period" to ensure they can access support at a later date if needed. We are developing a process to help us reach out to the victims of children who have been diverted away from criminal justice to ensure they are not forgotten and have the option to access a service

We have set up an **allocation pathway with the Safeguarding Hub** to ensure that those coming through the Children's Services front door can access the Youth Justice Service without delay.

We are working with the **Preventions Team**, to ensure that where possible, we work with the children and the parent/carers or siblings, so that each has their own personal support plan. This is designed to provide a family-based approach

to prevention support and to ensure any younger children can benefit from the service provided to the older children.

The Youth Justice Service Workers have been trained in **Trauma Informed Practice** which is used throughout assessment and case management.

We have monthly **psychology input** and use that for case formulation sessions where children with complex situations and adverse childhood experiences (ACE's) are considered in a multi-agency forum and a **case formulation document** completed. This document will travel with the child throughout their involvement with children's services and is available to explain their particular needs and vulnerabilities from a psychological perspective,

We continue to work closely with our **specialist services**; CAMHS, Speech and Language Therapy, Education, Probation, Police and Barod (Substance Use) These services are currently under review to ensure they are fit for purpose as the YJS goes through this period of transition. We have introduced monthly performance reporting for specialist service provision.

We have re-organised the structure and recording of **Risk Management Panels**. These have become an integral part of partnership working and are well attended by all key agencies, the outcome being that an accurate and multi-agency risk plan is completed.

Children's Measures	Target	Results & Comments (2020/21)
Number of young people sentenced to custody	25	<p>1 child was sentenced to Custody in November 2020. (0 in 2019/20)</p> <p>The YJS proposed a community order as an alternative to custody in the pre-sentence report</p> <p>5 other local authorities in Wales had more than one child sentenced to custody in 2020/21</p>
Number of first time entrants into the youth justice system	40	<p>37 (Within target but 12 more than last year)</p> <p>YJS identified that the outcomes from Bureau were often a Youth Caution or Conditional Caution resulting in the child becoming a first time entrant.</p> <p>YJS have reviewed processes to deliver more child focussed bureau outcomes and there was a reduction in first time entrants in the latter part of the year</p> <p>Additionally, 9 children were sentenced to a statutory court order because of the nature and seriousness of their offending.</p>

Young people out of court disposals re-offend within 12 months	30%	<p>30% (On target but an increase of 16%)</p> <p>NB: This figure is 12 months behind as reoffending rates are tracked over a 12 month period and covers 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020)</p> <p>Based on a cohort of 116 young people with 35 re-offending.</p> <p>The numbers of children re-offending have more than doubled.</p> <p>YJS have commissioned an audit to inform future practice.</p>
Young people statutory orders who re-offend within 12 months	50%	<p>27.5% (Strong and Improving performance)</p> <p>NB: This figure is 12 months behind as reoffending rates are tracked over a 12 month period and covers 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020)</p> <p>Based on a cohort of 29 young people with 8 re-offending.</p> <p>This improvement has been strongly influenced by the information provided to the bench on Trauma Informed Practice and engagement with the Court User Group whose support for diverting young people away from the criminal justice system is resulting in a decrease in the amount of court disposals</p>

How Are People Shaping Our Services?

Newport City Council is committed to ensuring that people are able to have a say in how they receive support and how services will be developed and delivered in the future.

Some examples of how we do this are:

- Co-production in the assessment process to enable citizens to express their preferences around how support will be delivered.
- Contract monitoring processes where the views of citizens who receive services are sought and providers are contractually required to gather feedback and comments to inform service development.
- Citizen engagement/involvement in the commissioning process
- Complaints and compliments.
- Consultation events and citizen forums
- Provider Forums and engagement processes
- Feedback from inspections.

- Engagement with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).
- Active promotion of voice of the child

Consultation events in 2020/21

These included:

- Carers Week – virtual event
- Annual public budget consultation process in December 2020.
- Regular feedback obtained from children and adults living in NCC residential homes at house meetings.
- The Cabinet Member for Social Services is very active at community level

Welsh Government agreed that Local Authorities were not required to undertake a citizens survey during 2020/21. The statutory reporting requirement is currently under review.

Adult – Residential & Reablement Services

Due to Covid the Care Inspectorate Wales inspections did not take place as planned. However, 3 monthly visits by the Responsible Individual (RI) were completed.

Common themes identified for improvement by the RI across the residential care homes at Blaen-y-Pant, Spring Gardens and Parklands were as follows:

- Ensure staff receive mandatory training within specified timescales
- Ensure vehicles have sufficient fuel, and journey logs are completed
- Ensure staff are regularly tested for Covid
- Ensure regular supervisions are completed
- Ensure photographs are placed on Mars charts of residents

Reablement were required to provide better information to citizens about what the service could achieve and to prepare them properly for the fact that it is a time limited programme

Children's Residential Services

Common themes identified by the RI across Forest Lodge, Rosedale, Oaklands, Rose Cottage and Brynglas Bungalow were as follows:

- Improve Health and Safety risk assessments
- Improve information provided at shift handover
- Ensure staff are up to date with mandatory training
- Progress outstanding environmental improvements i.e garden/decoration

Care Inspectorate Wales Inspections 2020/21

Brynglas Bungalow unannounced visit - 27th October 2020

- *There is a full staff team but there were high levels of staff absences.*
- *Staff were positive and their comments indicated that they are motivated and committed to the young people and their roles.*
- *Robust referral and admission arrangements are in place with systems in place to ensure only children whose needs can be met live at the home.*
- *Systems for engaging children in seeking their views about the day to day life at the home and their personal goals and outcomes are in place.*
- *The group of young people are well established with feedback from young people, staff and a social worker describing each of the young people making good progress.*
- *Young people are generally satisfied with living at the home*

Cambridge House unannounced inspection – 30th November 2020

- *The home is a large detached property and not well suited for such use and although changes have been made in order to meet the needs of the placement the premises are in poor condition.*

Cambridge House closed in May 2021 as the Council develops new residential services that meet the needs of children and young people. Rose Cottage and Rosedale already provide an additional 8 beds over 2 sites and Windmill Farm is scheduled to open in 21/22

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check Newport City Council - May 2021

NB Whilst this inspection took place outside of the 2020/21 reporting timeframe the focus of the check was very much on our service delivery during the Pandemic. As the findings are available at the time of writing they have been included to add further depth and context to the period of time covered by this report.

To determine:

- *How well is the local authority discharging its statutory functions to keep people who need care and support and carers who need support, safe and promote their well-being during the pandemic.*
- *What is the Local Authority doing to prevent the need for children to come into care and are children returning home to their families quickly enough where safe to do so*

"We considered the safety and well-being of people who use or may need to use services, the safety of services they access and the safety and well-being of people who work in services"

The findings identified culture of improvement and mutual support and a recognition of positive leadership. It was noted that staff morale was generally good.

"Partnerships were in the main working well at all levels and delivering an integrated sustainable approach to meeting need and promoting well-being"

Innovative responses to the Pandemic were noted in adult services and also that there was evidence that carers had been identified as requiring additional support and that efforts had been made to ensure that information and advice was available.

“Mostly evident at an individual level, we found support was underpinned by a relationship of openness and honesty about the options available for people who need care and support and carers who need support”

In Children’s Services the preventative interventions such as the Rapid Response service, Family Group Conferencing MyST and Baby & Me were identified as being effective at preventing needs escalating and it was noted that parents and carers were positive about the support they received.

“many staff were exhausted with complex case work and high volume evident. Children’s services were experiencing unprecedented demand and increase in referrals. In adult services we found services working under significant pressure”

Areas for improvement - Overview

- Supervision – need to improve recording to evidence shared thinking and rationale in decision making
- Timeliness needs to be improved in supporting the well-being of the workforce to manage demand and for those waiting for assessments and care and support
- It was acknowledged that the Pandemic had restricted the ability of preventative services to operate thereby creating additional demand.
- Inter-agency responses could be improved with better understanding

A full copy of the report can be found at:

<https://careinspectorate.wales/our-reports/local-authority-inspection-and-review-reports>

Overview of complaints 2020/21

A Stage 1 complaint is for local resolution within 10 working days.

Following Stage 1, if the complainant remains dissatisfied they can request to proceed to Stage 2. This involves a formal investigation conducted by an independent investigator and if a child or vulnerable adult and Independent Person is also appointed, at a cost to the Local Authority.

Following Stage 2, if the complainant remains dissatisfied they are advised to proceed to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)

During 2020/21, the Complaints Service received **130** Social Services complaints, **11 less than last year**

Adults’ Services –

- **52** total complaints received
- **26** were **not progressed** to a complaint
- **22** were **resolved** at stage 1
- **2** were **discontinued** (This is where a resolution has not been mutually met but the complaint does not progress to a stage 2)
- **2** proceeded to **stage 2**
- Stage 2 outcome – **part upheld** and **not upheld**
-

Children's Services –

- **78** complaints
- **50** were **not progressed** to a complaint
- **20** were **resolved** at stage 1
- **6** were discontinued (This is where a resolution has not been mutually met but the complaint does not progress to a stage 2)
- **2** proceeded to **stage 2**
- Stage 2 outcome – **part upheld** and **upheld**

The decrease in the number of stage 2 complaints has been noted again for this financial year with a total of 4 stage 2 complaints. This continues is a result of the number of complaints being resolved at stage 1.

4 complaints (2 Children Services and 2 Adults Services) were assessed by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW). The outcome of each were as follows:

1 Adults complaint - premature and referred back to the Council to complete their complaints procedure

1 Adults complaint- early settlement, progress complaint to a stage 2

1 Childrens complaints - refused as a matter for the courts

1 Childrens complaint- investigation completed by the Ombudsman – resulting in financial redress and actions to be taken forward

Recommendations for service improvement as a consequence of complaints management.

- Improvements to information provided to customers on viability assessments
- Improvements to information sharing and communication to families of children in their guardianship
- Improvements to recording and transition practices within Children's residential settings

Overview of compliments 2020/21

Adults' Services **15** - **2 more than last year**

[Occupational Therapy Team](#)

Tudalen 51

"Everything I wanted and needed you got for him without hesitation and that made his daily life a lot easier and that meant the world to me. I can't thank you enough"

Children's Services **4** - **4 more than last year**

Children's Team

"I just wanted to personally thank you for being so supportive and understanding. I'm hopeful with the help you've put in place, and support from everyone at the meeting today we'll get there."

Promoting & Improving the Well-being of Those We Help

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

In order to respond appropriately to the wide range of adult enquiries, our First Contact Service is a multi-disciplinary team with co-located specialist officers who offer on-the-spot information, advice and assistance to citizens in the following areas:

- Safeguarding;
- Occupational Therapy;
- Housing advice (funded by Housing Support Grant)
- Sensory impairment;
- Independent living – Direct Payments;
- Financial advice.
- Community Connectors

There are plans to extend the services available within First Contact to strengthen the preventative focus of IAA by ensuring citizens get the right advice and support at the earliest opportunity. Physiotherapy, Falls and Reablement is scheduled to join the First Contact team.

In 2020/21 **1538 citizens received advice and assistance** from the First Contact Team (this figure does not include those who only received information)

IAA has been successfully extended to the hospital environment and is an integral part of the following 2 components of hospital discharge that contributes to effective patient flow:

- **In Reach** - Targeted engagement with patients and families whilst still on the ward ensures safe discharge arrangements are co-produced to maximise independence.
- **Home First** - The offer of IAA is a critical feature of this regional service, hosted by Newport City Council. It offers IAA to patients within the hospital with the aim of preventing admission.

Where the First Contact Team are unable to meet the needs of adults through the provision of **Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA)** via a proportionate assessment, an integrated assessment is offered that further explores the person's eligible needs and works with the individual on how best to meet them.

"In adult services, proportionate assessments were undertaken in a timely manner. Although variable, people's voices were mostly heard, their choices respected and people achieve self-identified outcomes"

(CIW Assurance Report May 2021)

Every young person who is involved in the child protection process or who are Looked After has the opportunity to speak with an advocate.

The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) provides a regional advocacy service. Every Newport child who is involved in the child protection process or who is Looked After has access to the **statutory active offer** and has the opportunity to speak to an advocate to ensure their voice is heard.

- **139 active offers of advocacy were made in 2020/21**

Dewis is commissioned to provide an independent advocacy service to adults. In 2020/21 they supported **135 adults** with a range of issues by adopting new ways of working, blending virtual contact with face to face based on individual risk assessments.

Dewis advocates supported the consultation process in relation to the closure of Brynglas Day Centre and also ensured that the views and wishes of residents and their families were independently represented during 2 care home closure processes that occurred during the year.

This was a challenging time both in terms of the stress of upheaval for the residents and for the multi agency team who had to manage the transfer of clinically vulnerable people in the midst of a Pandemic. All were successfully moved and are now settled in their new homes.

During 20/21 Newport Childrens Services and Barnardos undertook a **Review of families and professional agencies experiences of Child Protection Case Conferences** as part of a commitment to hear the voice of the child and family in child protection processes

- We spoke to **12 family members** and **30 agencies**

- Responses were used to shape the redesign of CP processes and a greater focus on parental collaboration and ensuring the children understand what has been agreed is now at the forefront.
- This work is due to continue in 21/22

The Community Connector team offers support to citizens who may be socially isolated to help them gain independence and improve their well-being.

- Newport's team of **six Connectors** provided a service to a total number of **2,136 citizens** during 2020/21 with information, telephone advice and 1:1 support
- **4,427** outcomes were recorded at closure thereby highlighting the complexity of enquiries that resulted in multiple solutions.
- This year saw an increase in those requesting a support service and volunteer shopping due to shielding, isolating or ill-health. Food bank support continued to rise highlighting those in food poverty.
- There was a decline in those asking for social activities and skills or training but a rise in those seeking information and support regarding their health, mental wellbeing and financial assistance.
- The Connectors offer specialist support to BAME communities including work with asylum seekers, refugees and migrants to enable access to social activities, volunteering and learning and employment opportunities.
- **302 BAME citizens were supported during 2020/21** this represents a reduction as engagement is usually centered around community events that did not take place this year
- Information about Covid Support Grants were shared with community groups

The Community Connectors and our Third Sector partners continue to update the **DEWIS** database that contains local and national information. Newport has **509** live resources on the site, a decrease of 20 from last year but still high when viewed in the context of many services and groups being unable to operate throughout the year

There has been an increase in database use during 2020/21 that indicates continued trust in DEWIS as a reliable source of community information

- **Average of 7,144 views per month compared to 4,904 in 2019/20**

Occupational Therapists (OT) provide assessments to support people to remain physically independent within the home environment. An OT is based within our First Contact team to ensure appropriate advice is available for citizens at the earliest opportunity.



Over **200** urgent visits were carried out by the OT's during the Pandemic. Citizens on the non-urgent waiting list were contacted and offered advice and assistance to help with daily activities during lockdown

The OT team currently co-ordinate the telecare service that was established in 2019/20 in partnership with Monmouthshire and Caerphilly Local Authorities.

At 31st March 2020 87 Newport citizens were using telecare equipment to help them remain independent at home

Ask SARA - an easy to use online self-help guide providing information about equipment for independent living. The site provides an overview of what is available and how to obtain it and is available throughout Gwent.

CARERS

The Newport Carers Network has **540 members** and offers information, advice and support for Newport citizens in a way that suits their individual requirements.

Newsletters and updates are distributed via post and email and available on the NCC website.

The Newport Carers Offer – launched in 2020

Information around what is available to anyone in a caring role living in Newport – all this information is available on the NCC website and is regularly publicised via established communication channels.

- **132** adult carer's assessments were undertaken in 2020/21
- **689** carers received information, advice and assistance from the Connector team.
- **2,241** people accessed digital support information from the Carers Support Webpage and My Newport Online Portal (**1,330 in 2019/20**)

"We found recognition of the need to support carers during the Pandemic. Information and advice was given to carers and service provided to support their needs"

(CIW Assurance Check May 2021)

The Pandemic presented particular challenges for carers who were not only unable to access their normal support networks such as the established Carers Café, but community based services for the cared for were also unavailable thereby placing additional strain on informal arrangements. NCC recognised this and took the following steps:

- **A revised edition of the Newport City Council Carers Handbook was provided to every known adult carer with an outline of the Newport Carers Offer**
- **Information was shared on social media**
- **A new online request form was added to My Newport Council page in February 2021.**

Carers Week 8 - 12 June 2020

- **Information campaign launched with support of Public Relations colleagues**
- **Daily emails for network members and social media posts to reach a wider audience**

"Well done for all your efforts for Carers Week. I think it was really positive. Thank you for all the info, links and resources in the daily emails "

"It was helpful to see the post online and to find out that there is so much information and support out there"

Priorities for 2021/22

- To further develop the **First Contact** team into an **Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) hub** consisting of co-located Social Care, Health and partner organisations
- **Carers** - to engage and support more adult unpaid carers
- **Telecare** - to continue to expand and improve the service
- To continue to proactively **manage demand and reduce waiting times** as the community starts to recover from the Pandemic
- To **improve digital access** to the information and advice service by developing the website
- To launch an **NCC Young Carers offer** in partnership with Barnardo's
- To develop a **single entry point for adult safeguarding** issues

Quality Standard 2 – Working with people & partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being

Covid has had a significant impact upon our foster carers and residential homes. It has caused issues in placing children with new carers due to the risks of spreading the infection and the young people in our care have experienced isolation from friends, a reduction in family time and less time in education.

The staff have had to cope with homes going into isolation, PPE and children frustrated at being unable to leave. This was overcome by finding new

entertainment and staff organised activities such as baking competitions and karaoke evenings.

A key priority since 2018/19 has been to open new residential services for children in Newport to reduce the number of out of county placements and keep children close to their family and community networks. The Pandemic has caused delays but the current position is as follows:

- **Rose Cottage**, a 4-bedroom residential home opened in January 2019
- **Rosedale**, a 4 bed property opened in January 2021
- **Windmill Cottage** a 4 bed property, joint project with health to support crisis placements on a regional basis is due to open in March 2022

Newport are active partners in the Gwent-wide Children and Families Strategic Partnership and has a positive working relationship South East Wales Regional Adoption Collaborative.

- In 2020/21 permanent and stable futures were secured for **26 children through adoption**. (6 more than last year)

Newport has more children placed with in house foster carers than with foster placements purchased from independent Fostering Agencies and this is an ongoing trend. Fostering offers a family environment and is often preferable to a residential placement. In house provision also means that children can remain close to their networks and NCC are committed to recruiting more foster carers who are based within the local authority area and to offer specialist support to prevent placement breakdown.

- At year end there were **378 Looked After Children in** Newport
- **256** are in fostering arrangements
- **207** are in NCC fostering arrangements
- **159** foster carers were registered with NCC at year end
- **75%** of the independent foster agency (IFA's) carers used by NCC are out of county placements
- **23** new NCC fostering households were approved during 2020/21

NCC Corporate Plan 2017-2022:

"We will reduce out of county children's social care placements by 25%."

- **MyST** was launched in 2020/21 (My Support Team). This multi agency approach to the provision of a therapeutic service for children with complex needs will better support foster carers and prevent placement breakdown. The central purpose of MyST is to improve the psychological wellbeing of

children/young people, their relationships with birth family members, their attachments with safe adults, reduce placement disruptions and particularly the risk of out-of-county placement for young people with emotional and behavioral difficulties.

- **When I Am Ready** – a scheme to enable care leavers to stay with their foster carers post 18 and up to the age of 25 – this is now available to looked after children in Newport and will continue to be monitored.
- During 2020/21 Barnardo's **Family Support Service (FSS)** provided support to **580 children (a reduction of 17% from last year)**
- **94%** of FFS cases closed during the year did not escalate or reduced the initial risk status

NB: the number of referrals reduced at the height of the Pandemic

It has been a challenge during lockdown to provide support to families using virtual platforms and only conducting visits in the most urgent of cases. Feedback has been positive but a clear preference for face-to-face sessions has been expressed and they have increased as restrictions have eased.

The Rapid Response Team is a new early intervention service offered to families in crisis as a result of a referral to the safeguarding hub.

The service commenced in October 2020 and is funded by the **Intermediate Care Fund (ICF)** with 3 workers employed by **Barnardo's** who work closely with the Social Worker using a range of trauma informed approaches. Support is offered for **6 weeks** and the intention is to de escalate risk and **keep families together.**

During the first quarter the team worked with 12 families

- **4** children returned home
- **4** children remained with their family

The Disabled Children's Team has been working in collaboration with adult services, commissioning and the education department to:

- Develop 2 transition supported living services & 1 residential service
- Develop a new outreach and day service provision for young people with complex behaviours
- Develop alternative post 16 education options for young people with special educational needs
- Continue to deliver sessional support for children and their cares

The Young Carers' Service is delivered by **Barnardo's** to ensure young people who care for family members have an opportunity to engage with their peers, achieve their personal development goals and get appropriate respite from their role as primary carer.

- Barnardo's offer **time out activities for young carers aged 8 - 25** who often face social isolation and low self esteem.
- During the Pandemic the service diversified to offer virtual groups and activities as well as phone calls and video chats with young carers
- **422** young carers were supported in 2020/21 (73 new referrals and an increase of 123 since 2019/20)
- **Young Carers ID Card** was launched in Newport to provide young carers with the opportunity and confidence to highlight their caring role to teachers, medical professionals and retailers.
- **Newport Young Carers** ran a virtual awareness raising campaign and held a poster competition **Carers Week**

Hospital Discharge & Community Based Services

Throughout the Pandemic services have maintained a full presence on the hospital wards and in the community, often working with people who are Covid positive.

Reablement operates as a fully integrated health and social care service to support hospital discharge in St Woolos, the Royal Gwent and the Grange

It is a short term focussed support package where people are encouraged and supported to do as much as they can for themselves, which has a positive impact on their physical and mental wellbeing.

During 20/21 at the end of the Reablement programme **70% of people required no ongoing support** (409 out of a total of 584)

The Dementia Reablement Service. A regionally funded project that began in October 2020

The Service will provide planned, time limited and goal orientated approaches that support people with memory problems or with dementia to maintain their daily living skills and remain independent for as long as possible.

- **Dementia Reablement Service supported 94 people** between October 2020 and March 2021
- **11 people reduced their package of care** at the end of the programme
- **36 people remained independent** at the end of the programme
- **82 people required no change** to their support at the end of the programme

During the Pandemic people were reluctant to go into hospital due to the risk of becoming infected with the virus. In order to respond to the increased number of community based referrals the Reablement staff worked in partnership with GP's District Nurses and Social Workers to keep people safe at home.

Dementia Service Development – the specialist Reablement service is part of a suite of interventions that will offer citizens options to remain in the community for as long as possible.

- **Spring Gardens** offers daily respite for people with dementia and this also supports the carer to have a break.
- **Outreach Service** newly established as a result of the closure of Brynglas Day Centre that offers flexible support to carers both in the home and in the community

Home First - Newport City Council host this regional service. The Grange University Hospital opened in December 2020 and Home First is fully operational on that sit in addition to the Royal Gwent and Neville Hall Hospitals. It involves the offer of information, advice and assistance (IAA) through a proportionate assessment for patients within pre-admission wards, regardless of where they live in Gwent.

- **Home First** received **840 referrals** between 01/10/2020 and 31/03/21
- Home First **safely discharged 475 (60%)** people between 01/10/20 and 31/03/21

NB Home First stats were not formally recorded at the beginning of the year due to the Pandemic and the re-alignment of services to support the regional Covid 19 requirements for hospital discharge

Domiciliary Care. Newport City Council commissions services from approximately 30 independent providers. Despite a relatively stable market, recruitment of staff has been an ongoing problem across the region.

NCC Commissioners negotiate annual fees with providers that reflect the true cost of care to support the retention of a skilled and committed social care workforce but the Pandemic has exacerbated the staffing shortage and the post lockdown increase in the number and complexity of referrals means that care is having to be prioritised in a way that hasn't previously been necessary.

Staff shortages are affecting all social care services with recruitment processes often failing to identify any suitable candidates. This is a national problem that will require ongoing local, regional and national oversight to manage the risks and find sustainable solutions.

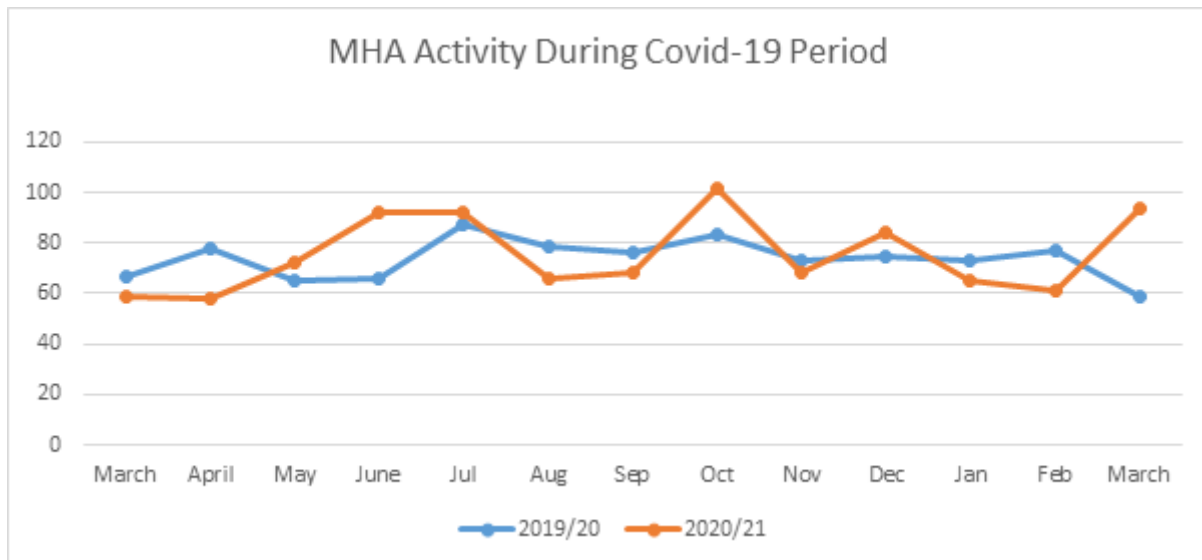
Providers worked tirelessly throughout the lockdowns with carers going into homes that are unregulated environments often knowing that individuals were Covid 19 positive. The number of cases among community based staff remained relatively low as infection control procedures were implemented.

The impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on services will continue to be monitored throughout 2021.

Mental Health. There is increasing pressure on mental health services and the Coronavirus Pandemic has created further immediate demand with an expectation that resources will continue to be challenged

The Pandemic has further highlighted increases in mental ill health and there has been an acknowledgement nationally that citizens and services are under pressure. Newport experienced 30% more referrals than usual during the period and this was replicated across Gwent.

The graph below shows a data comparison of completed assessments for the Gwent area between 20/21 and 19/20



Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) - the procedure prescribed in law when it is necessary to deprive a person of their liberty who lacks capacity to consent to the care that is required to keep them safe.

It requires Social Services to undertake a mental capacity and best interest assessment for each person where this applies

- 423 full DoLS assessments were undertaken in 2020/21

Due to Covid restrictions, the majority were completed via video conferences but the more complex cases were completed face to face using the appropriate PPE.

"We saw examples of best interest and mental capacity assessments with clear decision making; we also found capacity assessment reviewed over time to consider fluctuating capacity and changing circumstances"

(CIW Assurance Report May 2021)

A new model for authorising the Deprivation of Liberty for those receiving care was due to come into effect in 2020 but this has now been delayed until March 2022 – **Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS)** are included in the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 and will place additional responsibilities onto Local Authorities. A **key priority** for NCC is to ensure full implementation of the new **Code of Practice**

NCC commissions a service from **Mind** that offers support to prevent a deterioration in mental health. The service offers practical advice and signposting to other agencies and self management courses to help with stress and anxiety.

During the lockdown Mind have undertaken active monitoring with their service users. Groups have continued to run via Zoom and activity packs and food parcels have been delivered.

Growing Space as an NCC commissioned mental health service provider has also kept services running throughout lockdown with zoom calls and outreach visits to monitor well being and offer ongoing practical support.

NCC are working closely with partners to understand the impact of the Pandemic. Some service initiatives such as virtual groups and zoom calls will continue to be available as they have become established as a valuable alternative method of engagement

Priorities for 2021/22

- **Reablement** – to further develop the **specialist dementia service** with links to the memory clinic, older persons mental health teams, step down facilities, the dementia respite service and outreach support.
- To establish **Windmill Farm** in accordance with planned timescale
- To continue to increase capacity within the **in-house foster care service**, improve training and support for carers and reduce pressure on external foster and/or residential placements
- To continue to realise the benefits of the **MyST** service to support children with complex needs and their Foster carers and prevent placement breakdown.
- To continue to provide the **Rapid Response** service to families in crisis
- To progress the new **accommodation projects** for disabled children in transition to adulthood
- To develop the **outreach and day service for disabled children** and young people
- To continue to identify and support **young carers** in partnership with Barnardo's
- To ensure our staff are sufficiently trained and prepared for the introduction of the **Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019** by implementing the new **Code of Practice** ready for implementation in April 2022
- To work with our mental health partners in both the statutory and independent sector to establish a clear pathway into preventative services.

Quality Standard 3 – Taking Steps to Protect & Safeguard People from Abuse, Neglect or Harm

A full report on **Corporate Safeguarding** was presented to Scrutiny in June 2021. Safeguarding is intrinsically embedded within the Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015, with the requirement for public bodies to ensure citizens are safe. The Social Services and Well Being Act 2014 strengthens the statutory safeguarding requirements for the Council with regard to the protection of both adults and children. Prevention and early intervention prior to statutory intervention is a key message within the legislation.

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is a corporate priority and Newport is an active member of each of the two Regional Safeguarding Boards that have amalgamated under the umbrella of "Gwent Safeguarding".

Newport City Council host the regional **Violence against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership, (VAWDASV)** and are active members of the Board. Representatives from both adult and children social services within Newport attend all the subgroups for each Boards work plans.

The VAWDASV Team operate on a regional basis to develop and implement the Welsh Government's legislation across all relevant public services. This ensures that workplace policies are developed; that the **National Training Framework (NTF)** is operational for all staff; and the '**Ask and Act**' Welsh Government mandated training continues to be rolled out to all front line staff so that they can recognise signs of domestic abuse.

All employees complete basic VAWDASV level 1 e-Learning as part of the NCC induction process. The six NTF training levels are required to be completed depending on specific roles within the Council.

Newport City Council host the regional **IDVA (Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor)** team, ensuring resources in Newport are available for our citizens at high risk of domestic abuse. The IDVA regional Manager is employed by Newport City Council (funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner's office) and based within the Regional VAWDASV Team (Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence). The progression and development of the regional IDVA service has required an increase in sustainable funding to ensure citizens with protected characteristics have no barriers accessing the IDVA service. Regional requirements for the service development will be seeking to tender the service for Gwent in 2021.

During 2020 the roll out of the mandatory safeguarding Elearning training was successfully launched and is a part of the recruitment process.

Newport Childrens Services have continued to develop an effective multi-agency response to child exploitation over 20/21 working in partnership and collaboration with colleagues across Health, Police, Education and specialist 3rd Sector agencies.

Our work has led to the creation of an **Exploitation Toolkit and Practice Framework** for identifying and responding to risk, which is rooted in research and Welsh Government guidance on keeping children safe within our communities. Our model was trialled across the region in 20/21 and is now adopted regionally as a model of good practice and approved by the Gwent Safeguarding Board. Interest in our approach has also extended to other Local Authorities across the United Kingdom with some now using the approaches pioneered by Newport. An evaluation of the Toolkit and strategy will be a priority for 21/22 with a dedicated Exploitation Social Worker..

During 20/21 the Child Protection teams remained committed to **keeping children with families** where safe to do so. The focus on work to redesign child protection conferences, was completed across children services and the inclusion of additional services such as **Family Group Conferencing** increases the partnership with parents and wider families to ensure the needs of the child are central to all decision making and plans to safeguard the child. Raising the prevention and intervention possibilities for families with social workers, the legal department and the judiciary to align on this objective has resulted in a **reduction in the number of children entering care proceedings in Newport** as well as a reduction in the number of children waiting to be adopted.

Child protection conferences have continued throughout 2020/21, when children are deemed at risk of significant harm. During the Pandemic conferences have been held virtually.

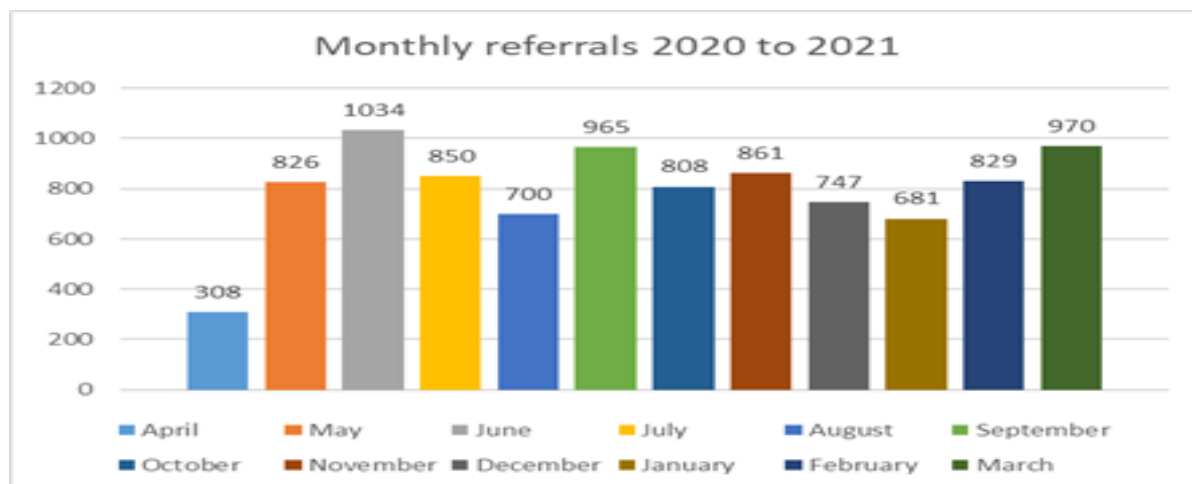
The number of children **Looked After as at 31.3.21 was 376**. The number of children who **ceased to be Looked After** during the course of the year was **92**.

The **Newport Safeguarding hub** and its success has resulted in the model being adopted across the region and the Police have restructured their resources to accommodate this way of working.

The "adult at risk" safeguarding process is still presenting through two referral pathways, the Safeguarding Hub and First Contact Team. This compromises the reliability of the data and leads to inconsistencies in the management of the process. A single pathway is the preferred option but requires further work.

There are safeguarding performance measures captured within the Safeguarding Hub

- Adults at Risk (duty to enquire) as follows:



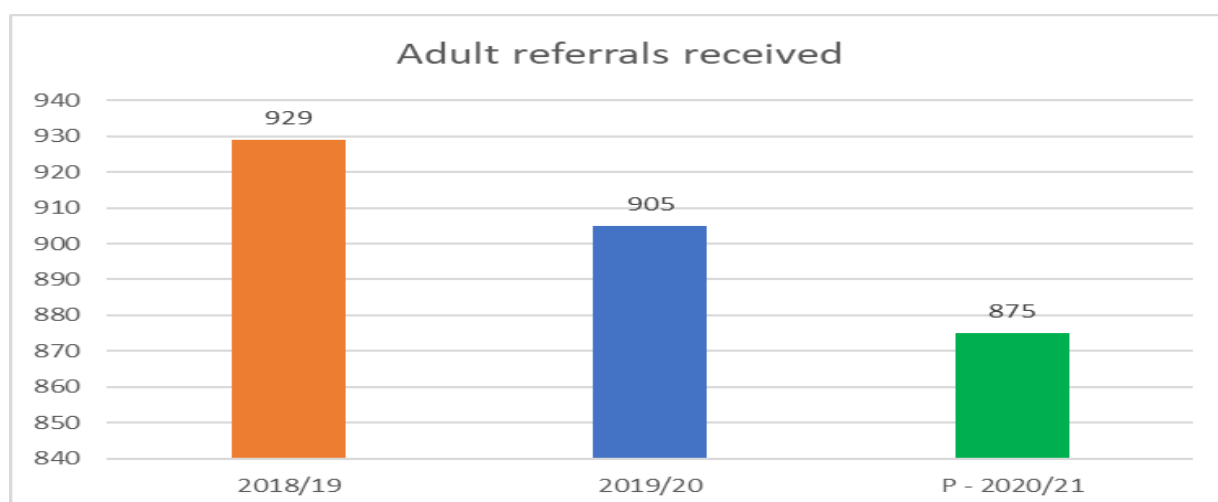
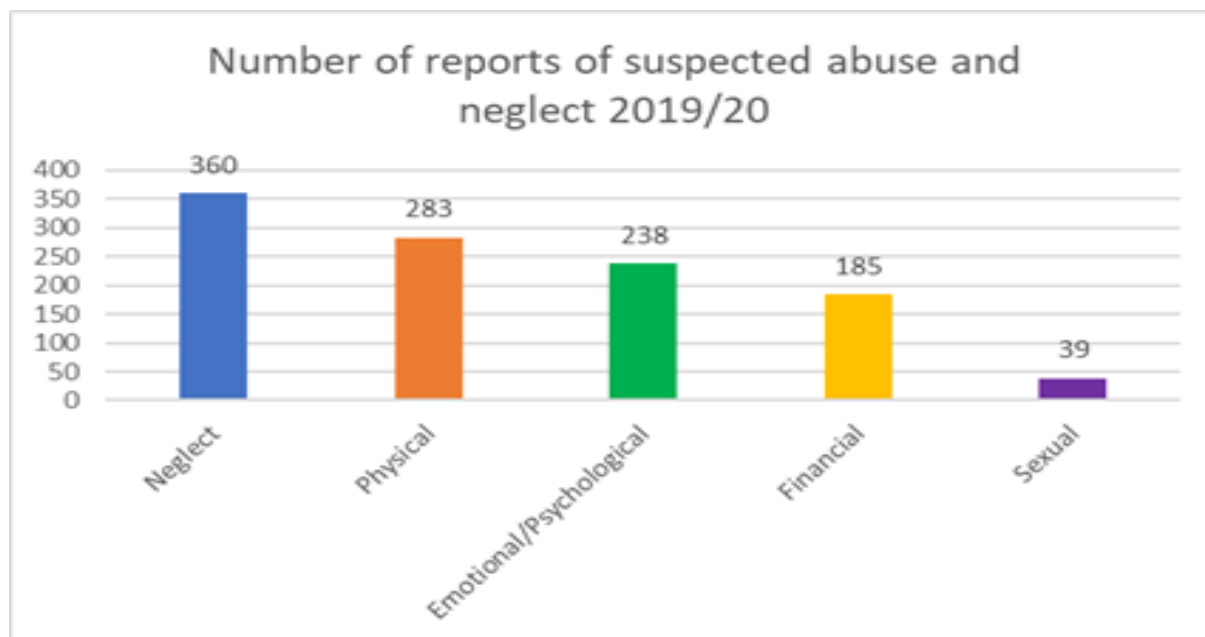
- Children’s safeguarding processes (contacts/strategy discussions/initial conferences);

There was a significant downturn in referrals (Children’s Services) in April 2020 due to the initial pandemic lockdown, however, since this time the number of referrals that have progressed through the Hub has since accelerated.

- **Referrals** to the **Safeguarding Hub (Children’s Services)** have overall **increased by 9.1%** compared to 2019/20.
- **Abuse or Neglect** continues to be the **most frequent** referral category.
- **Referrals** attributed to **Family in Acute Stress** category has **increased 55%** during the pandemic (1248 average to 2262).
- The **prevention service** and children’s duty team is the model in place to address the needs of families in acute stress, responding to need and **escalating only** those families where **thresholds are appropriate**.

The data suggests that there are effective controls within the safeguarding HUB, that there is compliancy and effective safeguarding arrangements in terms of children’s decision making and the statutory responsibilities for timely decision making.

The total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received in 2019/20 was 905. This represents a drop of 24 referrals and a percentage drop of 3%. The projected figure for this year 2020/21 for the total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk is 875 referrals, a further 3% drop.



The Council continues to prepare for the **change in practice** from Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards **to Liberty Protection Safeguards** which will now occur in 2022. More training on the new legislation/ practice to increase knowledge and skill will be on-going and is clearly identified both within the Annual Corporate plan (2021/2022) and in the social services training plans.

Achievements 20/21

- A **self- assessment safeguarding audit tool** was completed across the council.
- **E-learning** safeguarding module for all Members, Officers and volunteers is operational and formal recording is in place on completion.

- The **safeguarding champion's** cohort continued to meet virtually throughout the pandemic restrictions.
- Completion of a **volunteers/chaperones register** is centrally held within People and Organisation service. This assures **training and recruitment** for all volunteers.
- **Safeguarding Hub for children and adults** confirmed and extended across the region.
- A **child exploitation strategy** and toolkit for Newport has been accepted by the regional Safeguarding Board and parts of the UK and is now established practice.

Priorities for 2021/22

- To work with each service on the outcome of **the safeguarding self-assessment audit** for continual development.
- **Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR)** Newport leading on the Policy and Process part of the Welsh Government and Home Office project to align all case reviews for children, adults and domestic homicides under Safeguarding Boards.
- Embed the change in legislation from Deprivation of Liberty to **Liberty Protection Safeguards (Mental Capacity Act)** and ensure a robust process is introduced for Newport citizens where this is applicable.
- Tender of the **regional IDVA service** and develop the service to ensure all citizens with protected characteristics access services.

Quality Standard 4 – Encouraging & Supporting People to learn, develop and participate in society

Supporting children who are looked after and young people leaving care to reach their full potential and achieve positive outcomes is a key priority for Children's Services. Targeted support is provided to children and young people at key stages in their education. In addition, tuition and extra-curricular activities are funded to provide further support.

The Child Protection service in partnership with Barnardo's have committed to improving collaboration and participation across Children's Services in 2021/22 by establishing the following:

- **Parent Advocacy and Mentoring Support Programme** to enable parents to receive direct support to meet the needs of their children. The model will also offer peer mentors and advocate training to encourage and facilitate meaningful participation in the development and evaluation of services
- **Young Persons Participation Board** to recruit young people who have experience of children's services and are able to help us shape what we provide in the future

The Career College Consortium (previously known as the Gwent Care Academy) is a regional initiative

- The Pandemic has both highlighted and aggravated the issues of staff shortages in social care. Carers have worked tirelessly throughout and better paid jobs in hospitality and retail are an understandably attractive option that will continue to diminish the workforce.

The Consortium is working hard to improve **recruitment and retention** by establishing a

- **Gwent Care Career Pathway**

Partners include:

- Coleg Gwent – ABUHB - Local Authorities - Care Forum Wales
- Regional employability projects - Mirus (as a provider representative)

Career College Consortium Main Objectives

- To create a seamless pathway from college into health and social care by developing relationships with statutory bodies and employers
- Add value to current courses while developing new, innovative courses that meet the future recruitment needs of the sector.
- To create more opportunities for work experience placements/internships across the sector

NB: The Pandemic has led to a reduction in the numbers of placements offered by employers and the motivation and focus of students has suffered. This is being addressed and priorities for 2021/22 are:

- To develop new approaches to **apprenticeships**
- To continue to **add value to courses** by working with practitioners and providers to develop 'service insights'
- To develop **data collection processes** to understand the impact of the work of the consortium on the student cohort and the care sector.

The Council has an apprenticeship scheme – but no placements were offered during 2020/21 as a result of the Pandemic. □

Newport City Council is committed to ensure that people with **dementia** are not socially excluded.

NCC Corporate Plan 2017-2022:

“We will use best practice materials from the Alzheimer’s Society to create an online training module for staff and businesses”

The Pandemic made it difficult to deliver dementia awareness sessions but in May 2021

- **Newport Transport**, become the first bus company in Wales to be accredited as **Dementia Friendly**. The company has worked with the Regional Partnership Board, Newport City Council and Alzheimer's Society to make all staff dementia aware and highlight how drivers can support people living with dementia and their carers to use transport around the city.

In March 2020 adult services established a contract with **Volunteering Matters** to specifically address the needs of the community for low level support during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

- NCC, in partnership with Volunteering Matters established a range of essential support services such as shopping, medication/prescription collection for those shielding or with caring responsibilities who were unable to access services during the Pandemic.
- **58 volunteers** were recruited and trained and although some were on furlough and have now returned to work it has offered an opportunity build on the service and establish a meaningful volunteer programme to enhance the ongoing low level support needs of the community with funding remaining in place during 2021/22
- NCC provides funding and works in partnership with **Growing Space** who offer accredited training programmes for people recovering from **mental ill health**.

The service is based at Tredegar Park in Newport where they have established a gardening project and a shop selling plants and handcrafted items, offering participants horticultural, organisational and retail experience.

Priorities for 2021/22

- To continue to identify and source **additional educational support** for children who are looked after to improve choices for work experience, training, apprenticeships and wider employment options
- To develop the **Parent Mentoring and Advocacy Programme** and establish the **Young Persons Participation Board**
- To continue to support the health and social care sector through the **Career College Consortium**
- To further develop the **volunteer service** and establish a sustainable model.

Quality Standard 5 – Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

NCC supports children to feel they can make decisions for themselves and maintain important relationships. It is recognised that people having fulfilling relationships with those they are close to is important for their well-being. Children who are looked after maintain contact with their families through facilitated sessions.

the **Cwtch centre** who are responsible for facilitating family contact time worked tirelessly throughout the Pandemic using virtual and face to face methods to ensure parents were still able to see their children. This hybrid model successfully addressed the needs of the family and kept staff and participants safe.

- In 2020/21 **36 children returned home from care**

Barnardo's currently deliver an **Integrated Family Support Service** in partnership with NCC.

The partnership has developed innovative approaches to prevent children coming into care:

Family Group Conferencing Service. (FGC) encourages families to find their own solutions with appropriate support. The aim is to build resilience, develop problem-solving skills and reduce dependency on statutory provision. Whilst the Pandemic resulted in fewer FGC's the results still remain strong

- During 2020/21 there were **98 Family Group Conferences**
- **30% of families reduced risks** following FGC engagement
- **20% reduction in Looked After numbers** following FGC engagement

The success of this model has resulted in funding being made available by Welsh Government to deliver the **Later Life Links Model**, which uses the Family Group Conference approach for Care Leavers. This will be developed in the NCC Pathway Teams as a priority in 2021/22

Baby & Me went live in November 2019 and works with pregnant women whose children are at risk of being removed. The service includes a Social Worker, Midwife and Health Visitor.

- In 2020/21 **12 out of 18 babies** at risk of being removed **went home with their family**

Family and Friend Team This team aims to enable kinship Foster Carers to become Special Guardians. A panel has been established to consider **Special Guardianship** plans to ensure the Court is provided with sufficient reassurance of viable and safe alternative arrangements to **reduce the number of care orders** and enable children to remain within their family.

"We found a positive approach to developing creative services, such as Baby and Me and productive relationships with Families First, Barnardos and youth justice"

(CIW Assurance Report May 2021)

Respite offers an important opportunity for family members and the cared for person to have time for themselves. It supports the caring role and ensures the maintenance of healthy relationships. Newport offers **residential respite services for adults and children**.

Residential respite for **adults** with disabilities is available at the **Centrica Lodge** in the Gaer area of the city. Occupancy was reduced during the Pandemic but the service remained open. Discussions are currently underway to improve day time activities for those attending.

Oaklands residential **respite centre for disabled children** also remained open throughout the Pandemic offering much needed support for families.

The Carers Sitting Service was not available during lockdown but staff continued to offer support over the telephone and with practical issues such as shopping and prescription collection.

Brynglas Day Centre – After a long period of closure during the Pandemic it was agreed that it would not re-open and all those who previously used the services were offered alternative provision in full consultation with them, their families and carers.

During the period of closure **Social Work teams maintained regular contact** to ensure appropriate arrangements were in place.

- **Mental health** –
 - **Growing Space** based at Tredegar Park
- **Learning Disability** –
 - new **day service** at Ringland developed by an independent provider
- **Older People** –
 - new **outreach service** developed by NCC
 - new **Dementia Respite Service** developed by NCC based at Spring Gardens Residential Home

These services are in the early stages of development and some people are not yet confident enough to return. The situation is being monitored and will form part of the ongoing evaluation to determine how the Pandemic will impact in the longer term on service demand and models of delivery.

NCC Corporate Plan 2017-2022:

"We will develop our internal Care Homes and day opportunities to specialise in Dementia care"

Shared Lives offers shorter periods of respite to enable carers to have a break in addition to long-term placements. It gives older people, adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and people with mental health support needs including older persons with dementia the opportunity to experience family-based support settings, rather than in residential environments.

The service is managed regionally with Caerphilly County Borough Council as the host. The service experienced reduced numbers during the year but placements did continue to be made in accordance with guidelines and Covid safe practice.

- At the end of 2020/21, there were **41 people** from Newport in long-term placements."
- In the Newport area there are **69 registered shared lives carers** and **68 service beneficiaries**
- In August and September 2020 there were **3 virtual open days** to **promote awareness** of the scheme and **encourage carer recruitment.**

Relationships can also be harmful and as outlined under Quality Standard 3, work is carried out through the Safeguarding Boards and Regional services such as IDVA and VAWDASV to support and protect those who are at risk of harm.

Priorities for 2021/22

- To further develop the **preventions work** in Children's Services to support families, placements and develop sustainable alternatives to care
- To develop the **Later Life Links** Model for Care Leavers
- To develop the **domiciliary care service for children with disabilities;**
- To monitor and review the new arrangements for **day services provision** for mental health, learning disabilities and older people to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the community
- To continue to educate and inform people about the dangers of **unsafe relationships** and support those at risk of harm.

Quality 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.

As outlined in Quality Standard 4, Children's Services support children and young people to access education and training and provide individualised additional support where necessary.

In 2020/21 we recorded that **17** Care Leavers had completed **3 consecutive months of employment, education and training** within 12 months of leaving care and **26** within 24 months

This is a new measure and will continue to be monitored during 2021/22

In 2020/21 we recorded that **28** care leavers **experienced homelessness** within 12 months of leaving care

This is a new measure and will continue to be monitored during 2021/22

NCC works with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and the Housing Department to ensure we can provide an appropriate response to young people facing homelessness. We have access to supported accommodation and lodgings for young people who need extra help during the transition from care to independent living and are currently working with a private landlord to increase the accommodation and support options available.

- We currently have the use of **10 properties** – 8 private and 2 NCC
- Funding has been sourced from the **Housing Support Grant to employ 2 workers** to help the young people develop independent living skills.

3 ICF capital bids approved

- 2 supported accommodation provisions for 18+ and 1 for 16-18 yr olds for development during 2021/22

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC)

- The National Transfer Scheme has been developed in order to support the dispersal of unaccompanied minors. Newport and Cardiff Children Services will be acting as the region for Wales and has agreed to accept up to 30 young people per annum.
- Collaboration is ongoing with stakeholders to ensure there is an infrastructure to meet the needs of this vulnerable group of young people.

"There has been productive working with Cardiff City Council as lead local authorities in Wales for the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) and the safe transfer of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) from one authority to another"

(CIW Assurance Report May 2021)

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) are available to citizens to make their homes safe and enable them to remain independent

Covid 19 has significantly disrupted the service .Suspension of onsite work from March to July.

- **86 DFG's** were completed (135 in 2019/20)- including ramps, stairlifts, and accessible showers to enable people to remain safe and independent. The total spend was £784,307 (£1,092,123 in 2019/20)
- **780 1130 Safety at Home Grants** were allocated (1130 in 2019/20) with a total spend of £242,445 (£374,931 in 2019/20)
- A further £343,425 was unspent but committed so will continue into 2021/22

The service is adapting by introducing new safe onsite working practices and the removal of paper based systems to enable staff to work from home.

Residential Care - NCC has **3 residential homes**, offering **94 beds** for older people and those with specialist dementia care needs. Parklands offers 15 specialist beds for those who are ready to be discharged from hospital but who need support to return to independent living.

- At the end of 2019/20 Newport was badly affected by the virus and the impact on care home settings was significant and devastating for residents, families and the staff.
- The ongoing work with care homes includes the continued distribution of PPE and the allocation of additional funding from Welsh Government.
- Close partnerships have been forged between Commissioning Teams, Environmental Health, Public Health Wales and ABUHB in order to provide support and guidance to providers, to ensure service continuity for citizens and to ensure oversight of the regional position.

Care homes have suffered **significant harm** throughout the Pandemic and although the vaccination roll out has reduced the number of infections cases, the relaxing of restrictions means that cases are still being recorded. This, along with the challenges of **staff shortages** is affecting the number of placements that can be made when increasing levels of need are presenting to adult services.

Regular testing is in place and close collaboration between ABUHB, Public Health Wales and Environmental Health to monitor the situation and offer support to providers.

Changes to the financial support later in 2021 by the Welsh Government may result in some homes becoming **financially unsustainable**

- During 2020/21 **2 care homes closed** in Newport with the loss of over **60 beds**

The situation will continue to be monitored, we **work closely with providers** and with ABUHB to ensure residential care provision is sufficient for the community both in terms of capacity and quality.

NCC has developed an **Independent Living Strategy** to identify the future accommodation needs for adults with **Learning Disabilities**. Discussions are ongoing with **Housing Strategy** to identify opportunities for the development of

new self-contained accommodation units where people can access support but live more independently.

- During 2020/21 a **new development** in Newport offered **5 adults** with learning disabilities improved opportunities for independent living
- More schemes are planned in 2022/21

Housing Support Grant (formerly Supporting People)

2020/21 has been a challenging year for the supported housing sector but the housing support team together with partners have found new ways of working to continue to support some of our most vulnerable citizens.

- **Hostels, refuges and supported accommodation** settings were fully operational
- **Floating support workers** quickly adapted their working practices using technology where possible to minimise the need for face to face contact.

During 20/21, the Housing Support Team

- received over **2,500 new referrals**, approximately **48 per week**, slightly less than in 2019/20 when 3,000 referrals were recorded.
- Over **5,000 people** were supported during the 12 month reporting period but in a different way. The **new ways of working** enabled more contact with service users

Homelessness - A major challenge for the Council was implementing the directive from Welsh Government and Public Health to ensure all homeless people were able to access suitable temporary accommodation during the Pandemic.

In order to respond to the complex needs of this group of people we established a **new floating support service** in partnership with three specialist providers. Working with colleagues in the Housing Needs Unit and the Gwent Drug and Alcohol Service (GDAS)

- Over **70 verified street homeless** were accommodated and supported in a variety of settings in the City.
- **Substance misuse services** were offered on an outreach basis

Housing Support Grant - Finance

- **2020/21 £6.3m** of Housing Support Grant funding was invested in a wide range of accommodation-based and community support services for Newport citizens.
- Welsh Government announced a major uplift in funding for the Housing Support Programme in 21/22 with Newport confirmed as receiving an **additional £2.57m** per annum.

A list of project proposals is currently being developed and presents a unique opportunity to further develop services that prevent crisis, keep people safe,

prevent homelessness and reduce the need for more expensive accommodation options.

Housing Support grant also funds a

- **Financial Inclusion Team** who, in 2020/21 increased income for vulnerable citizens by over **£300,000**, despite the constraints of the Pandemic.

The Citizens Advice Bureau is funded to provide financial advice and assistance. This service continued to be available by phone throughout the Pandemic.

The Appointee Team – NCC acts as an appointee for those who lack the capacity or capability to look after their own finances. This requires the oversight and management of income, general financial management to ensure bills are paid and that money is available for everyday expenses. Many of these cases are as a result of **safeguarding issues**.

This is a **critical service** and was maintained throughout lockdown by modifying systems to reduce the number of people requiring weekly cash collection. This included new bank account set ups to facilitate electronic transfer and working with providers to agree advance payments for individual allowances.

The team assisted Children's services by providing cash for care leavers utilising their established agreements with a local Post Office.

- At 31st March 2021 the Appointee Team were managing **109 cases** providing a service to individuals to protect their finances and maintain financial solvency.
- During 2020/21 the Appointee Team **recovered £57k in care fee arrears**
- During 2020/21 the Appointee Team **recovered £33k in Housing Benefit and Council Tax debt**
- During 2020/21 the Appointee Team **recovered £9k in rent arrears** therefore protecting tenancies and preventing homelessness
- During 2020/21 the Appointee Team **generated revenue of £50k** as service charges.

Priorities for 2021/22

- Continue to work with the RSL's to develop **sustainable accommodation** options for all client groups
- To continue to develop innovative services for people with **dementia**
- To continue to support Newport citizens of all ages to **manage their own tenancies and maintain their independence** through services funded by the Housing Support Grant
- To improve the support available to **care leavers** in order to address homelessness and assist in the transition to education, training and employment;

- Increase the range of accommodation and support options available for **young people leaving care.**

How We Do What We Do

Our workforce and how we support their professional roles

The workforce is a dynamically changing asset that supports service delivery to some of the most vulnerable people in the city. NCC faces many challenges, not least as a result of complex social issues associated with city centre living.

Under Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, regional finance, governance and workforce priorities for action are agreed through the Regional Workforce Development Board and reflect alignment to Social Care Wales' National Priorities in partnership with transformation and health services.

The Social Care Wales Workforce development Programme (SCWWDP) Board regionally agreed priorities for 2020/21 are as follows:

- Support the continued implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act.
- Support the training, development and qualification of social care managers.
- Support the ongoing development of approaches to outcome-focused care and support practice.
- Support for both Social Work qualifying training and post qualifying training in Wales.
- Support frontline social care workers to develop their skills overall in relation to social care, and the revised induction framework.
- Enable the workforce to meet regulatory requirements for qualification and/or registration using guidance available in the Qualification Framework.
- Provide learning and development to equip the workforce to work effectively alongside carers.
- key priorities included support for digital solutions for workforce development and the implementation of welsh language standards, and the active offer.

Local Key achievements in 2020/21 focussed on immediate and responsive workforce initiatives required as a response to the Coronavirus Pandemic

- Resources and facilities redesigned to meet increased assessment of risk (eg continuation of personal training in buildings was risk assessed and managed)

- Continuation of face to face essential training to enable the workforce to remain competent within job roles e.g. by providing access to essential generic/ non-qualifying courses of core learning and development opportunities, delivered across the sector. Within this context we still delivered 2485 course places in a variety of formats.
- Implementation of digital formats for training (e- learning platform and licences, use of workbooks and paper-based formats to support learning, use of web -based meeting platforms to deliver training)
- Social Work Qualifying Training –5 trainee SW students from NCC workforce with 2 qualifying .
- Social Work Practice Learning Opportunities adjusted to meet COVID -19 requirements, and extended liaison with university partnerships to establish and implement *adjusted* programmes and PLO assessment requirements for SW students . This is with four universities and 30 teams /placements during the new academic year
- Similar adjustments made for our Post Qualifying Social work programmes with programmes offered via virtual formats with partner universities. 5 NQSW supported in their 1st 3 years. 3 Enabling practice learning. 9 CPEL Consolidation.
- Roll out of the new CORE vocational qualification in addition to other vocational qualification routes. The team continued to work with 85 learners across 9 vocational care and management based courses.
- Continued to work with Awarding Organisations at national level (City and Guilds and WJEC), to mitigate COVID -19 impact upon learners and qualifications, and introduce amended assessment arrangements
- Implementation of the new All Wales Induction Framework, support for SCW registration of the sector and delivery of online registration support sessions- with the Regional Transformation Team.
- Emergency training support for the sector/ Covid related resources using our networks, partners, and accessible formats such as Facebook and You Tube videos, to share knowledge and resources to the sector

The approach of workforce development to meet individual learning needs as a responsiveness to the challenges faced by teams, and practitioners managing frontline practice.

Between April 2020 and August 2020 the workforce team also responded with some front facing/care support and back office support functions that sat outside of their immediate roles (e.g. working in residential homes and supporting external sector data collection for Covid -19 data information requests). But even as supportive within these care roles, workforce staff were still completing learning activities such as assessment, observation, competency checks etc.).

Financial Resources & How We Plan for the Future

The 2020/21 revenue out-turn produced a net underspend, after core budget contributions to/from reserves, of £14m against the £300.2m budget (4.6% variance). This variance has arisen for several reasons.

At a high level, the following explains the position:

- Receipt of one-off Welsh Government (WG) funds to compensate Council services to support its enhanced service delivery to Newport's communities in response to Covid; and lost income from Covid restrictions; meant these costs were not borne by the Council;
- Funding for the direct costs of, and delivery' of the WG support programs to businesses; meant these costs were not borne by the Council;
- Underspends across all services in relation to (i) costs of general administration and service provision due to changes in working practices and (ii) not undertaking planned/normal services, as they were not required or unable to be carried out due to Covid response work being prioritised;
- Resulting directly and indirectly from all of the above, the Councils budget underspent on its general revenue contingency budget, council tax reduction scheme and council tax income, which they would ordinarily do in a 'normal year'. These are all non-service budget areas.

Across Social Services, the overall outturn was a £2.824m underspend for both areas. £221k overspend in Children services and £3.045m underspend in adult services.

- Adults social care - community care – (£1.5m) underspend
- Adult In-House residential homes – (£500k) underspend
- Adult Staffing – (£290k) underspend
- Children's in-house residential and respite – £752k overspend
- Childrens Emergency Placements - £638k overspend
- Children's out of area placements – (£330k) underspend
- Youth Offending/Child Protection and Family Support Teams – (537k) underspend

The global pandemic, which lasted throughout 2020/21, had an unprecedented financial impact.

Whilst Adult Services was expecting pressures due to increased demand from adults living longer with complex needs, COVID-19 caused a decrease in numbers. Numbers are expected to rise back up to normal levels, however the timeline is uncertain. Welsh Government compensated the additional cost, as a direct result of COVID-19.

However, within Children Services, the pandemic did not affect the numbers of looked after children. Therefore, Children services faced the normal pressures but with the added complication of not being able to carry out as much preventative work. There was also a lack of availability of certain placements/fostering options due to covid-19 restrictions.

The in-house residential services suffered from an unexpected high level of non-covid sickness across all homes. The issues have been addressed and this was hopefully an in year issue only. The alternative residential services project is progressing well which should in time reduce the reliance on external provision. Newport will continue to monitor this in 2021/22.

The council continues to work collaboratively with regional partners to maximise the use of regional resources to develop services within Newport.

The annual budget in 2020/21 for social services was £75.1m. There is a well-developed financial management process in place across service areas that supports the medium term financial plan and enables the identification and management of budget risks.

Partnership Working, Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance & Accountability

The features of partnership working have become more deeply embedded in the activities of both Children's and Adults with Heads of Service, the Strategic Director and Cabinet Member regularly engaged. NCC is a very active participant in the Regional Partnership Board.

Bids have, and will continue to be, made successfully to the WG Transformation Fund and the Integrated Care Fund, both capital and revenue. The former is a key mechanism for prompting and facilitating integrated working. The Newport Integrated Partnership (NIP), incorporating the third sector, ABUHB, Housing Associations and NCC continues to be the group that determines and drives the practical implementation of any regional approach to integration. The NCC Strategic Director is joint Chair of the NIP.

The Cabinet Member, Cllr Cockeram has been the Chair of the Regional Partnership Board since October 2020, he actively engages with numerous service user groups and with the Minister. In addition, Cllr Cockeram provides significant challenge to NCC officers.

The Cabinet Member, along with the Strategic Director and Heads of Service, regularly attend scrutiny. Cllr Cockeram presents reports on social services matters to Cabinet and responds to questions from Cabinet colleagues in addition to his appropriate provision of social services context within Cabinet discussion.

Heads of Service regularly brief the Corporate Management Team (CMT) on social services matters with safeguarding and Domestic Homicide, Child Practice and Adult Practice Reviews standard items on the CMT agenda. Safeguarding is a standard item on the agenda of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), chaired by the Chief Executive. There are monthly reviews of the service finances involving the Senior Finance Partner with the Heads of Service and again with the Strategic Director. Budget proposals and annual budget determination follow the NCC budget setting process with Heads of Service discussing these in detail with the SLT before the proposals are considered by the Cabinet Member and then by the Cabinet. Complementing the above there are clear lines of decision making and accountability to the Heads of Service and onward to the statutory Director of Social Services, the Strategic Director with the Cabinet Member providing the strategic direction.

August 2021

Chris Humphrey

Director of Social Services



Glossary of Terms

ABUHB	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
AMHP	Approved Mental Health Professional
BAME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CIW	Care Inspectorate Wales
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DFG's	Disabled Facilities Grants
DOLS	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
DTOC	Delayed Transfer of Care
IAA	Information, Advice and Assistance Service
IDVA's	Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors
LAC	Looked after Children
NCC	Newport City Council
NFF	National Fostering Framework
NSP	Newport Support Partnership
OT	Occupational Therapy/Therapist
PSOW	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
RISCA	Regulation and Inspection of Social Care legislation
RSL's	Registered Social Landlords
SCWWDP	Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme
UASCA	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children
VAWDASV	Violence against women, domestic abuse and violence Team
WCCIS	Welsh Community Care & Information System
WG	Welsh Government
YJS	Youth Justice Service

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn

Scrutiny Report

Performance Scrutiny Committee - People

Part 1

Date: 21 September 2021

Subject Scrutiny Adviser Report

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Role
Connor Hall (Scrutiny Adviser)	Present the Committee with the Scrutiny Adviser Report for discussion and update the Committee on any changes.

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to:

1. Committee's Work Programme:

Consider the Committee's Forward Work Programme Update (**Appendix 1**):

- *Are there any amendments to the topics scheduled to be considered at the next Committee meeting?*
- *Are there any additional invitees that the Committee requires to fully consider the topics?*
- *Is there any additional information that the Committee would like to request?*

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 The purpose of a forward work programme is to help ensure Councillors achieve organisation and focus in the undertaking of enquiries through the Overview and Scrutiny function. Effective work programming is essential to ensure that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
- 2.2 Further information about the work programming process, including the procedures for referring new business to the programme, can be found in our Scrutiny Handbook on the Council's Scrutiny webpages (www.newport.gov.uk/scrutiny).

- 2.3 The Centre for Public Scrutiny's Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the forward work programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be co-ordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

Forward Work Programme Update

- 2.4 The Committee's work programme was set in April 2021, including estimated timescales for when the reports will be considered by the Committee. This programme is then managed and implemented by the designated Scrutiny Adviser for this Committee under the direction of the Committee Chairperson.
- 2.5 Attached as **Appendix 1** is the Committee's Forward Work Programme Update. The Committee is asked to consider:
- *Any amendments to the topics scheduled to be considered at the next Committee meeting?*
 - *Are there any additional invitees that the Committee requires to fully consider the topics?*
 - *Is there any additional information that the Committee would like to request?*

The Committee agreed to keep a degree of flexibility within its work programme to enable the Committee to respond to urgent / emerging issues. This item is an opportunity for the Committee members to raise any suggested amendments to the Work Programme.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 The following information is attached:

Appendix 1: The Committee's Forward Work Programme Update;
Appendix 2; Outcomes from the previous meeting

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- **Forward Work Programme Update - Appendix 1**
Consider:
 - Are there any amendments to the topics scheduled to be considered at the next Committee meeting?
 - Are there any additional invitees that the Committee requires to fully consider the topics?
 - Is there any additional information that the Committee would like to request?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The Corporate Assessment, and the subsequent [follow up assessment](#) provide background information on the importance of good work programming. Specific reference is made to the need to align the Cabinet and Scrutiny work programmes to ensure the value of the Scrutiny Function is maximised.
- 5.2 The latest Cabinet work programme was approved by the Cabinet on a monthly basis for the next 12 months and includes the list of reports scheduled for consideration. Effective forward planning by both Cabinet and Scrutiny needs to be coordinated and integrated in relation to certain reports to ensure proper consultation takes place before a decision is taken. A link to the Cabinet work programme is provided [here](#) to the Committee as part of this report, to enable the Committee to ensure that the work programmes continue to reflect key decisions being made by the Cabinet.

6. Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- 6.1 Having proper work programming procedures in place ensures that the work of Overview and Scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services, contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and ensures that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.
- 6.2 This report relates to the Committee's Work Programme, Actions from Committee's and Information Reports that support the achievement of the Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the Law and Regulation Service Plan, Objectives, Actions and Measures and the Wellbeing objectives:

Well-being Objectives	Promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment	Improve skills, educational outcomes & employment opportunities	Enable people to be healthy, independent & resilient	Build cohesive & sustainable communities
Corporate Plan Commitments	Thriving City	Aspirational People		Resilient Communities
Supporting Function	Modernised Council			

7 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

- 7.1 The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 which came into force in April 2016 sets the context for the move towards long term planning of services.
- 7.2 **General questions**
- How is this area / policy affected by the new legislation?
 - How will this decision / policy / proposal impact upon future generations? What is the long term impact?
 - What evidence is provided to demonstrate WFGA has been / is being considered?
 - Evidence from Community Profiles / other data?
 - Evidence of links to Wellbeing Assessment / Objectives / Plan?
- 7.3 **Wellbeing Goals**
- How are the Wellbeing goals reflected in the policy / proposal / action?
 - *A prosperous Wales*
 - *A resilient Wales*
 - *A healthier Wales*

- *A more equal Wales*
- *A Wales of cohesive communities*
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language*
- *A globally responsible Wales*

7.4 Sustainable Development Principles

- Does the report / proposal demonstrate how as an authority we are working in accordance with the sustainable development principles from the act when planning services?
 - **Long Term**
The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs
 - **Prevention**
How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives
 - **Integration**
Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies
 - **Collaboration**
Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives
 - **Involvement**
The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

8 Background Papers

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan 2017 - 2022](#)
- The Corporate Assessment and [follow up assessment](#).

Report Completed: 12 September 2021

Appendix 1) Forward Work Programme

Thursday, 16 November 2021 at 10am

Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
<p>21 - 22 Service Plan Mid-Year Review for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Young People Services • Adult and Community Services 	<p>Performance Monitoring - holding the executive to account for the Council's performance, focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of outcomes and actions within service plans; • Scrutinising progress in improvements to areas of poor performance; • Assessing the extent to which performance objectives are contributing to the overall objectives and priorities of the Council including an update upon Corporate Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures. 	<p>Head of Children and Young People Services;</p> <p>Head of Adult and Community Services;</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Social Services.</p>

Thursday, 16 November 2021 at 4pm

Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
<p>21 - 22 Service Plan Mid-Year Review for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education 	<p>Performance Monitoring - holding the executive to account for the Council's performance, focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of outcomes and actions within service plans; • Scrutinising progress in improvements to areas of poor performance; • Assessing the extent to which performance objectives are contributing to the overall objectives and priorities of the Council including an update upon Corporate Objectives, Actions and Performance Measures. 	<p>Chief Education Officer;</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Education.</p>

Appendix 2) Action Sheet

**PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - PEOPLE
ACTION SHEET – 22/06/2021**

	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome
1	2020/21 end of Year Service Plan Reviews	Send Committee Recommendations on to the relevant departments.	Scrutiny Adviser	Completed – emailed comments and recommendations
2	Minutes	Send Committee minutes to approve within a week of the meeting.	Scrutiny Adviser	Completed – sent minutes for approval and made requested changes.