



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 15TH OCTOBER 2024

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR 2023/24

REPORT BY: INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee of the key messages that have been identified in the preparation of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services for 2023/24.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Part 8 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA) requires Directors of Social Services in Wales to publish an annual report about the exercise of the Local Authority's social services functions. The attached report has been written in a format that is compliant with the requirements of the SSWBA.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members of the Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the content of the Annual for 2023/24 prior to its submission to Council on the 12th November 2024.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Statutory guidance requires the Director of Social Services to produce an Annual Report for publication.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1. This report is an opportunity for the Social Services Senior Management Team (SMT) to provide a summary of the effectiveness of Caerphilly County Borough Council in delivering Social Services to its citizens.
- 5.2. The format and content of the report is prescribed by CIW and outlines how we addressed our key priorities for 2023/24 and identifies what our priorities are for 2024/25.
- 5.3. The report is also an opportunity for the Senior Management Team to record their gratitude to all the staff in the Directorate for their continued hard work, dedication, resilience and commitment to providing the best standards of care and support to those residents in greatest need.
- 5.4. Following presentation to Council on 12th November 2024, the Annual Report will be made available to Welsh Government, CIW and members of the public and other stakeholders on the Council's website.
- 5.5. Changes to the annual reporting process are coming into force which will affect the production of the Annual Report for 2024/25 report. Going forward, the Annual Report will form part of the National Performance Improvement Framework which will be used by Welsh Government and CIW as a basis for their ongoing assessment of Social Services performance. These changes are outlined in detail in Section 11 of the attached report.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1. There are no assumptions made or presumed in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. This report is for information purposes only and an integrated impact assessment is therefore not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Despite increasing demands across the Directorate, Social Services reported a budget underspend as a result of significant staffing vacancies and additional in-year Welsh Government grant funding.
- 8.2. The most significant growth in demand during 2023/2024 continued to be in the following areas:
 - Independent sector residential care for children
 - Nursing care for older people

- Supported living for people with learning disabilities

- 8.3 The financial pressures being faced by the UK Government, Welsh Government and subsequently Local Government are significant and likely to grow. The budget position for 2023/24 was challenging but the pressures for 2024/25 and beyond are significant within a context of the Council needing to make savings in order to address projected deficits.
- 8.4 Ongoing reliance on time limited Welsh Government grant funding streams undermines longer term service sustainability. The Regional Integration Fund (RIF) has afforded a short period of stability to the current funding arrangements however, plans for this funding to cease in 2 years will have a devastating impact on services. Work is currently underway to review the schemes and projects funded locally and regionally to identify the risks and develop potential exit plans.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 In order to produce the Annual Report a wide range of information sources are taken into account including feedback from our customers and regulators. This feedback has been incorporated into the report where relevant.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Part 8 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

Author: Gareth Jenkins, Interim Corporate Director of Social Services

Consultees: Cllr Elaine Forehead, Cabinet Member for Social Care
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Jo Williams, Head of Adult Services
Mike Jones, Financial Services Manager
Nikki Chapman, HR Service Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2023/2024