

Report

Council



Date: 26 January 2021

Subject **Annual Report of the Director of Social Services**

Purpose To present to Council the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services.2019/20

Author Chris Humphrey Director of Social Services

Ward Citywide

Summary This report is the Director's evaluation of 2019/20 performance for Social Services. It conforms in format and content with the statutory requirements for the Director's Report as set out in the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

Proposal To receive the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services, 2019/20

Action by Chris Humphrey

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Social Services staff
- Cabinet Member for Social Services
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Finance
- Head of People and Business Change

Signed

Background

The purpose of this annual report is to set out the local authority's continued delivery of its statutory duties in providing services to people in Newport in terms of information, advice and assistance, and those individuals and carers who need care and support. This report demonstrates how Newport Social Services has responded to the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and how we have promoted and accounted for the delivery of well-being and care and support to the citizens of Newport.

The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) and the ***Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB)*** sets out the requirement for the Director to produce an annual report setting out the performance of Social Services, following the format prescribed by the Local Authority Social Services Annual reports (Wales) Regulations 2016 and is intended for a range of audiences as set out in the Local Authority Annual Social Services Report guidance document.

The intention of the report is not to detail process but to focus on the activities and outcomes achieved and the impact this has had on citizens in Newport. The evidence of our citizens has been used throughout the report as has the contribution of our partner agencies and commissioned services.

Director's Summary of Performance

2019/20 was another demanding year characterised by the focus on the delivery of quality services and the beginning of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

The delivery of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales 2014) Act continues to drive the provision of early intervention and preventative services and the ongoing work to manage the increasing demands placed upon Social Services. The well-being objectives are wound through all Social Services operations and 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.

There is a continuous striving to maximise the efficient use of resources both financial and resources whilst identifying savings. 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 and Family Group Conferencing. Work in Adult and Community Services continues to focus on working across the interface of health and social care through the use of the Integrated Care Fund and the Transformation Fund to support services such as the Community Connectors, and Intermediate Care beds. The collaborative work to minimise the number of delayed hospital discharges has further developed with the combined impact of Home First and the improvement and expansion of the Reablement service to support people to remain as independent as possible in their communities.

Newport was the pilot site for a new joint inspection in Wales which carried out a review of multi-agency responses to child abuse and exploitation the outcome of which was positive with the conclusion that agencies collaborated effectively.

The Coronavirus Pandemic brought unprecedented challenge across the range of services in 2020 and some older persons residential homes were impacted early on as Newport experienced high numbers of cases before preventative measures such as whole home testing and PPE were fully in place.

At the time of writing significant changes to the way services are being delivered has been implemented in order to maintain levels of essential support. However At this stage we are still in the midst of a crisis and uncertainty remains about the longer term impact of COVID 19 on community and how we deliver our services in the future.

Financial Summary

During 2019/20, the Council has managed its overall revenue position within budget. The revenue outturn shows an underspend of £2,062k prior to the approval of new reserve transfers requested by service areas, leaving a remaining underspend of £1,807k. Excluding schools, this represents a less than 1% variance against net budget.

The Council faced some unexpected costs during the last part of the financial year linked to the Covid19 pandemic and these have been able to be accommodated within the overall budget. This is due partly to the reduced levels of spending in the service areas and also some one-off grant funding from Welsh Government received late in the financial year.

Within Children's there is ongoing significant financial pressure due to out of authority placement costs which is replicated in many other local authorities and identified as an area of increasing demand and cost nationally. The development of in-house residential services is progressing well which should in time reduce the reliance on external provision. Newport will continue to monitor this closely in 2020/21.

The Adult & Community Services budget also faces significant pressure due to increased demand. Adults are living longer with more complex conditions and these result in an increase in residential and supported living care and support arrangement as they need support on a 24 hour basis. Inflationary increases on care packages continues to place pressure on service budgets.

The annual budget in 2019/20 for social services was £71.2m. There is a well-developed financial management process in place across service areas that enables the identification and management of budget risks. This process supports medium term financial planning, ensuring that all relevant factors can be considered when budgets are set.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
That the continuing and increasing demand for Social Services will bring unsustainable financial pressures.	H	M	We are maintaining strong financial controls on day to day decision making in the service and also develop services both in-house and in partnership which provide effective options to meet the increasing demand.	Chris Humphrey Director of Social Services/ Head of Adult and Community Services and Sally Jenkins, Head of Children and Family Services
That users and carers will not continue to have the opportunity to engage and contribute further to our understanding of their experience to inform the development of services in future years	H	L	The plan will be to continue to hold regular and frequent service user and carer forum meetings, as well as making use of a wide variety of other consultative mechanisms that we have put in place for users and carers. We will continue to develop imaginative ways of	Chris Humphrey, Director of Social Services, Head of Adult and Community Services and Sally Jenkins, Head of Children and Family Services

			capturing people's views, comments and experiences	
That we will need to recruit and retain staff with the skills and experience to deliver on our statutory responsibilities and support the independent and voluntary sector to do the same.	H	M	We continue to invest in our workforce in terms of training and development and work regionally to support the care sector.	Chris Humphrey, Director of Social Services, Head of Adult and Community Services and Sally Jenkins, Head of Children and Family Services

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Newport City Council's Corporate Plan 2017 – 22.

Options Available and considered

Option 1 - Council endorses the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services for 2019 20

Option 2 – Council does not endorse the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services for 2019 -20 and sets out specific reasons and recommendations for action.

Preferred Option and Why

Option 1 as the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services is a statutory requirement whereby the Director provides their assessment of performance to the Council.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The Director of Social Services annual report gives an overview of the performance of Social Services in 2019-20. Whilst there are no financial implications arising specifically from this report it is important that the service has an awareness and consideration of the financial position when making any decisions. Robust financial management will enable the appropriate funds to be available for the greatest need.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The Director of Social Services has a statutory duty under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (as amended by the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2014) to produce an annual report to the Council, setting out his personal assessment of the performance of Social Services in delivering its social care functions during the preceding 12 months. This Annual report covers the financial year 2019/20 and has been prepared in accordance the Local Authority Social Services Annual Reports (Prescribed Form) (Wales) Regulations 2016 and statutory guidance, as set out in the Local Authority Annual Social Services Report guidance document. The Report also sets the Director's assessment of how well the Council has promoted and delivered well-being standards for service users and carers in need of care and support, in accordance with the six well-being outcomes. The Report confirms that the Director of Social Services is satisfied that the Council continues to make good progress in implementing the Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act, in a structured and programmed manner, and is meeting the requirements of the Future Generations and Well Being Act and the corporate well-being objectives. This statutory Annual Report reflects the Director's personal assessment of the performance of Social Services and is, therefore, being presented to Cabinet for information purposes and not for comment or amendment.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

This report sets out the Director of Social Services' own assessment of the performance of Social Services in 2019/20 as part of the statutory role. Whilst there are no direct staffing implications that arise specifically from the report there are potentially implications in the future, either as a result of on-going

financial uncertainty or the further implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act or Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. These will need to be considered as they arise and are not the purpose of this report.

Local issues

City-wide report

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

Not applicable to this report

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Not applicable to this report

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

This report sets out how Social Services has responded to the following requirements:

- 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 us meet our objectives
- Integration: Consider how the proposals will impact on our wellbeing objectives, our wellbeing goals, other objectives or those of other public bodies
- Collaboration: have you considered how acting in collaboration with any other person or any other part of our organisation could help meet our wellbeing objectives
- Involvement: The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the City we serve.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Not applicable to this report

Consultation

There is a continuing programme throughout the year of meeting with users and carers to help people make their contribution to the continuing intelligence supporting the Director's Annual Report..

Background Papers

None.

Dated: 26 January 2021