

Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 24 January 2023

Subject Annual Report of the Director of Social Services

Purpose Presentation of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services and accompanying documents as required in The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

Author Strategic Director Social Services

Ward All Wards

Summary The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 lays out the statutory framework for the presentation of an annual report on the work of Social Services. The format and nature of the report is determined by Welsh Government with a requirement for the report to be submitted to both Welsh Government and Care Inspectorate Wales. The documents in this section make up the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services for 2021/22.

Proposal To receive the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services, 2021/22

Action by Strategic Director Social Services

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Adult Services
- Head of Children's Services
- Finance Business Partner

Signed

Background

Under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 all Local Authorities must produce a report considering the work of Social Services. The outline for this report is laid out by Welsh Government.

The report must consider the work of the Local Authority to deliver Social Services within the framework of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. When complete and following submission through the governance of the Local Authority the report must be submitted to both Welsh Government and Care Inspectorate Wales.

The current format of the report is under review. It is likely for 2022/23 there will be a revised reporting framework.

The report for 2021/22 follows extensive changes in the Senior Management arrangements within Social Services and the wider Council including a period with an Interim Director of Social Services and then a change in postholder. This report also reflects the second year of the covid pandemic and the very particular challenges posed to Social Services by the pandemic. In light of both of these factors the report is truncated and calls on the reader to look to some of the other reporting mechanisms most notably the year end reports of Adult and Children's Services as well as the Annual Safeguarding report.

Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

This report has no financial implications

Risks

This report is a retrospective consideration of the work of Social Services. There are risks identified in the Corporate Risk Register for Social Services with Pressure on Services, Risks to providers and Safeguarding being the key risks. While this report references the challenges this report does not require decisions which would impact on these risks.

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

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			

This report covers the period of the previous Corporate Plan. While the work of Social Services touches on all the Well-being objectives and all the Corporate Plan Commitments laid out at that time it primarily focuses on

“Enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient.” The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 underpins the work of Social Services and core to the legislation is the well-being of citizens. Care and support which meets the needs of citizens as they themselves see those needs and work to ensure all are able to live safely and independently are fundamental to the work of both Adult and Children's Services.

Ensuring citizens are able to live in their own communities with hope for the present and the future drive social care in all the delivery of services.

Options Available and considered

Cabinet is asked to consider and accept the report from the Director of Social Services.

Cabinet may wish to propose amendments to the report.

Preferred Option and Why

For Cabinet to accept the report.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The Director of Social Services annual report gives an overview of the performance of Social Services in 2021-22. 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. Both Adult and Children Services underspent significantly in 2021-22 (£6.4m) however, that was largely due to a temporary reduction in client numbers due to COVID-19 and one-off funding such as the Winter Pressures grant of £2.5m. Covid-19 resulted in a backlog of assessments, significant cost pressures on the external care providers market and increasing demand on children's services and corresponding placements. This has resulted in on-going significant financial pressures for future years for the Council to manage.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The Strategic Director, as the designated Director for 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 2016) to produce an annual report to the Council, setting out a 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 2021/22 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. The Report confirms that the Director of Social Services is satisfied that, despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and the economy, the Council continues to comply with its statutory duties under the Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act, 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 amendment.

Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation

This report sets out the Director of Social Services' own assessment of the performance of Social Services in 2020-21 as part of their statutory role. The report notes progress against the six quality standards and the sustainable development duties including the prevention agenda, development of partnerships and collaborative working and involvement of service users. The report also reviews service performance identifying strong performance and areas where targets have not been achieved and notes that staff have been working to address a range of challenges which are identified in the report.

As the report mainly looks back at the position in 2021-2, there are no direct staffing implications or decisions.

Scrutiny Committees

Scrutiny will consider this Report on 06.12.2022. Comments will be added prior to the Cabinet meeting on the 14.12.2022.

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

- **Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Socio-economic Duty**
- **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

As there is no decision required for this report a FEIA has not been completed. This is a retrospective report for the work of 2021/22 and while it holds considerations for the future it is primarily a look back at the work of last year. It will not fundamentally lead to changes in the way services are delivered. Reflecting on the past will inform the future but this is not the core aim of this report.

Summary of impact – Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

Well-being of Future Generation (Wales) Act

- 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.

Throughout this report the core principles of the WFG are referenced and interwoven. Prevention and Inclusion underpins the work of Social Services. Sadly while much of the direct work of Social Services teams is crisis and risk driven the aim is always to reach a place where citizens can support their own families and manage their own care with as little statutory intervention as possible. Integration with other elements of the Council and public bodies is key to the success of the work of Social Services. Working in collaboration with families and vulnerable adults as well as partner agencies is vital and drives this work. Throughout Social Services we are constantly looking for new ways to fully involve and engage children, young people, parents, vulnerable adults and carers.

Summary of impact – Equality Act 2010

Social Services are largely reactive services with provision available to all across the City. The services must be open to all fairly. Given the nature of vulnerability the two key elements of particular note are age and sex. Young and old are more likely to access services while women are more likely to feature as caregivers.

Summary of impact – Socio-economic Duty

Just as with the Equality Act and the protected characteristics Social Services work with all regardless of their socio economic position. In Children’s Services the correlation between accessing care and support and poverty has been well documented in research while in adult social care the role of unpaid care givers creates particular socio economic challenges for those with high levels of vulnerability.

Summary of impact – Welsh language

Within Social Services staff work to “More than Words” to promote the Welsh language. All who are referred to Social Services receive the “Active Offer” of service in Welsh or English. The choice is the recorded on WCCIS to ensure appropriate service.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

The Youth Justice Services sit within Social Services. The work of Youth Justice is considered separately in order to meet the requirements of the Youth Justice Board.

Consultation

No comments at this stage

Background Papers

The report and all the appendices are available to the public.

Dated: 6 December 2022