

THURSDAY, 24 JUNE 2021

**TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A VIRTUAL MEETING
OF THE SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WHICH WILL BE HELD AT 10.00 AM ON WEDNESDAY, 7TH
JULY, 2021 FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS
OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA.**

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Democratic Officer:	Emma Bryer
Telephone (Direct Line):	01267 224029
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Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 MEMBERS

PLAID CYMRU GROUP – 7 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|------------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Kim Broom |
| 2. | Councillor | Karen Davies |
| 3. | Councillor | Tyssul Evans |
| 4. | Councillor | Jean Lewis |
| 5. | Councillor | Emlyn Schiavone |
| 6. | Councillor | Gwyneth Thomas [Chair] |
| 7. | Councillor | Dorian Williams |

LABOUR GROUP – 4 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|-------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Rob Evans |
| 2. | Councillor | Amanda Fox |
| 3. | Councillor | Ken Lloyd |
| 4. | Councillor | Kevin Madge |

INDEPENDENT GROUP – 2 MEMBERS

- | | | |
|----|------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Sue Allen |
| 2. | Councillor | Ieuan Wyn Davies [Vice-Chair] |

NEW INDEPENDENT GROUP – 1 MEMBER

- | | | |
|----|------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Councillor | Louvain Roberts |
|----|------------|-----------------|

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.
3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)
4. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020/2021 5 - 94
5. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES IN CARMARTHENSHIRE 2020/21 95 - 158
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Agenda Item 4

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7th July 2021

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020/2021

To consider and comment on the following issues:

The Council's draft Annual Report

Reasons:

- Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 we must publish an Annual Report on past performance by the end of October each year.
- Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 we are required to publish an Annual Report on our Well-being Objectives.
- This report meets both these requirements in one document.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: YES

Executive Board: YES (27th Sept) / County Council: YES (13th Oct)

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Corporate Overview: Y Cyng. Mair Stephens (Dirprwy Arweinydd)

Well-Being Objective Portfolio Holders:

Cllr Jane Tremlett (Social Care & Health) Cllr Linda Davies Evans (Housing)

Directorate:	Designations:	Tel Nos./ E-Mail Addresses:
Communities		
Names of Heads of Service:		
Avril Bracey	Head of Mental Health & Learning Disabilities	01267 242492 abracey@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Alex Williams	Head of Integrated Services	AlexWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Jonathan Morgan	Head of Homes & Safer Communities	01267_228960 JMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Report Author:		
Rob James	Performance Planning & Business Officer	01267 224486 RNJames@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Silvana Sauro	Performance, Analysis & Systems Manager	01267 228897 ssauro@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7th July 2021

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020/21

1. The following sections within the document are **relevant to Social Care & Health Scrutiny**:

- Introduction
- WBO 9. Support good connections with friends, family and safer communities
- WBO 10. Support the growing number of older people to maintain dignity and independence in their later years.
- WBO 11. A Council wide approach to supporting Ageing Well in Carmarthenshire
- Appendices

2020/21 was a year like no other due to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The vast majority of the Council's services had to adapt and change, with many being shut down completely for long periods of the year. For this reason, it is not possible for the 2020-21 Annual Report to act as a progress report on previous performance or as a comparator with other local authorities. The report reflects the actions the Council had to take to support its residents, communities and businesses through the pandemic. With many staff being redeployed to assist in the pandemic response and many set to work to aid recovery the Council's priorities had to shift significantly to face the challenges presented by the pandemic.

For these reasons, the Annual Report for 2020-21 has a different focus and approach to previous reports.

- Many of the actions and targets we set for 2020/21 were blindsided by the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and we had to deal with the emergency in hand. An initial COVID-19 Community Impact Assessment was published in September 2020 and individual services reported their responses to Scrutiny Committees in the November / December 2020 cycle of meetings. We will when appropriate update the Community Impact Assessment on COVID-19 within Carmarthenshire.
- The Annual Report starts with an overview of our COVID-19 Year and outlines some key responses and impacts.
- The Annual Report then looks in turn at each of our 15 Well-being Objectives and assesses the progress and adaptations that have been made during this difficult year.

COVID-19

We have a statutory duty to publish an Annual Report for 2020-21 by the 31st October 2021. There has been no relaxation on this statutory duty despite the pandemic. It is not possible to provide as much in-depth analysis and evaluation as we have done in previous years due to some performance information not being gathered nationally as services focused on pandemic response. There are also some gaps in information that we would usually provide. For instance, Welsh Government has confirmed that comparative out-turn data will not be published for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 period

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed:

Avril Bracey, Head of Mental Health & Learning Disabilities

Alex Williams, Head of Integrated Services

Jonathan Morgan, Head of Homes & Safer Communities

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

To comply with the Well-being of Future Generations (WbFG) Act 2015, we must (in carrying out sustainable development):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set and publish well-being objectives Take all reasonable steps to meet those objectives Publish a statement about well-being objectives 	Corporate Strategy update published – June 2019, and further updated in May 2021.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish an annual report of progress 	This will be accomplished by the enclosed Annual Report

Only when a public body can demonstrate it has taken into account the sustainable development principle in the setting, taking steps and meeting of its well-being objectives will it be compliant with the Act. Public bodies may take other matters into account when making their decisions, but in order to comply with the Act they must take into account the 5 ways of working.

1. Long term
2. Integrated
3. Involving
4. Collaborative
5. Preventative

2. Legal

We have to publish our Annual Report by the 31st October to comply with the Local Government Measure 2009.

This is the last year that we will be reporting under the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 as this is being replaced by the duties of Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 in future years.

3. Finance

Well-being Objective 15 - Building a Better Council and Making Better use of Resources covers financial matters.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed:

Avril Bracey, Head of Mental Health & Learning Disabilities

Alex Williams, Head of Integrated Services

Jonathan Morgan, Head of Homes & Safer Communities

1. Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny Committee	Date	Outcomes
Community and Regeneration	1 st July	
Environment and Public Protection	2nd July	
Social Care and Health	7 th July	
Education and Children's Services	8 th July	
P+R	21 st July	

2. Local Member(s)

NA

3. Community / Town Council

NA

4. Relevant Partners

NA

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

NA

**EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**
YES

Include any observations here

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Shared purpose: shared future Statutory guidance on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015		SPSF 2 Individual Role (public bodies)
Local Government Measure (2009)		Local Government Measure (2009)
June 2019 - Corporate Strategy		https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1219049/corporate-strategy-revised-2019-20.pdf

Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire

ANNUAL REPORT for 2020/2021

on the Council's Corporate Strategy 2018-2023

October 2021

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



Page 9

Welcome from the Leader of the Council

This time last year I wrote here about the stark contrast between where we started the year and how it ended, and we find ourselves in the same position this year. At the start of this year, we were in the middle of a lockdown, and almost at the first peak of cases. Headlines were filled with mortality figures, the creation of emergency Field Hospitals and communities across the county had already pulled together to start supporting each other in ways we could not previously have imagined. I think we can agree that over the last year, we have witnessed some heroic efforts, sometimes overwhelming challenges, and some of our darkest times.



Writing this introduction has given me an opportunity to reflect on the last year, to view the year from start to finish. The report serves as a reminder of all we achieved. In a matter of weeks schools closed and childcare hubs were set up to support key workers. Leisure Centres and sporting venues were converted into Field Hospitals with hundreds of hospital beds. Thousands of food parcels were delivered to those who were shielding, and help and advice given to over 4,000 small businesses. As you read this report you will see in numbers and statistics what we have achieved, and it is a testament to the hard work and commitment of officers, members, frontline workers, and communities across Carmarthenshire. What we achieved was done by your efforts, and I would like to thank each and every one of you for working hard to bring us through this year.

The pandemic has brought localism to the front and centre of our focus on Economic Recovery. Our Economic Recovery Plan is in tune with the needs of businesses and communities across Carmarthenshire, taking advantage of opportunities to accelerate change to enable success in the economy of the future. The plan identifies actions to support the recovery of the Carmarthenshire economy from the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit. It sets out our priorities for supporting business, people, and place. With this support Carmarthenshire's economy can recover as quickly as possible to become one which is more productive than before, more equal, greener, healthier, and with more sustainable communities.

This report also highlights our vision to significantly increase local procurement spend. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided greater impetus and focus on this area of work, and our plans to review local food procurement have been extended from just food to cover all the Council's procured spend. This work is very closely aligned with the Council's economic recovery plan with progressive procurement being a key theme of that plan.

In 2019 we were one of the first local authorities in Wales to declare a climate emergency and early last year became the first to publish a climate change action plan detailing how we plan to become net zero carbon by 2030. There is a lot to be done, but already a lot underway with our initial focus on our measurable carbon footprint. We've reduced carbon emissions from our buildings and our fleet significantly already, and this work will continue; we are investing in electric car charging points to support sustainable travel and in cycle facilities to encourage active travel; we are looking at ways to develop renewable energy sources, enhancing our biodiversity and looking at nature-based solutions – and this is only a small part of what we are doing. We will continue to protect and enhance Carmarthenshire so that it continues to grow and flourish for the benefit of our communities and our future. And in preparing for our future generations there are other foundations that must be laid, and it is these foundations that may be the most important of all - ensuring that the people of Carmarthenshire can live well and thrive.

I hope as you read this report that it gives you a clear view of the last year, and as we have seen, we can be innovative and forward thinking even under the most difficult of circumstances. We know that we have a challenging time ahead, but we're ready to grasp each opportunity, we're prepared, and we are ambitious.

Thank you.

Councillor Emlyn Dole

Leader of Carmarthenshire County Council

We welcome constructive comments on our strategies and services. Feedback from customers and service users is essential in identifying opportunities for improvement and we hope that if you have any comments or suggestions that you believe would help that you will share them with us. Please contact us at **Corporate Performance Management**, Carmarthenshire County Council, County Hall, Carmarthen SA31 1JP or email at performance@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

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OUR COVID-19 YEAR



Childcare Hubs were set up to support key workers and vulnerable children



Help and advice given to over **4,000** small businesses



100's of businesses helped to ensure robust processes in place to protect customers

Providing up to date information, with a **45% increase** in user sessions on the Council website



Supported over **2,000** staff working from home



...rising to support for over **3,000** remote connections on our network

TTP - Test, Trace, Protect



A dedicated team was set up to support the National **TTP** Programme

Assisted NHS with the setup of **4 field hospitals** with hundreds of temporary hospital beds



Over 8,000 Food Parcels distributed to help support those Shielding

HOW COVID-19 HAS CHANGED CARMARTHENSHIRE

Many of the actions and targets we set for 2020/21 were blindsided by the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and we had to deal with the emergency in hand. We accounted for this period in a [COVID-19 Community Impact Assessment](#). Furthermore, Services reported their responses to Scrutiny Committees in the November / December 2020 meetings. We will when appropriate update the Community Impact Assessment on COVID-19 within Carmarthenshire.

Below are some key impacts during 2020 and our thanks must go to the Council staff from across a range of services, in many cases working with other partners, for their significant efforts and commitment in responding to previously unknown situations.

Life is for living, let's start, live and age well
in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment

START WELL



CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS

Following the outbreak of the pandemic schools, nurseries and childcare provision all closed. As part of the response Carmarthenshire established 24 *childcare hubs* to provide much needed childcare for the children of key workers whilst 4 *specialist settings* remained open. Flying Start re-purposed childcare hubs to provide care for vulnerable and pre-school critical worker children and supported private settings to re-open. Summer holiday clubs remained open to fee paying parents throughout the summer.

In order to minimise the impact on pupils learning, a *Continuation of Learning Plan* was rapidly put in place. In support of this plan, devices including laptops, Chromebooks and 4G MiFi dongles were supplied to support families with remote learning across Carmarthenshire.

For schools to re-open the Department for Education and Children's Services coordinated a significant corporate response to make arrangements for schools to be COVID safe environments. This included producing Risk Assessments, checked and signed off, for every school site, signage, handwash basins and additional cleaning. This was to ensure that all staff and pupils felt safe in returning to school.

Children's Services continued throughout the pandemic by adapting working practices, using PPE, social distancing, etc. to maintain a full provision. The Inclusion team (Additional Learning Needs) and Behaviour teams also provided a full service throughout the pandemic with some Specialist settings remaining open while all offered remote support. Specialist staff from across the Department also worked in the Hubs with identified vulnerable learners. Support both academically and for emotional wellbeing was provided where necessary. Home Tutored pupils were offered remote support and wellbeing calls throughout the pandemic.

Free School Meals (FSM) – pupils entitled to FSM were supported promptly from the start of the pandemic. They were initially provided with food packs collected from schools before BACS payments were implemented, with some families continuing to receive food packs delivered throughout the county. The number of applications for FSM (and payments) has increased over the past 15 months due to families facing financial challenges and hardship.

The *Pupil Development Grant (PDG – Access)* offers financial assistance to families eligible for FSM to purchase school uniform and other resources. Take up of this funding has also increased as a result of the pandemic.

LIVE WELL



ECONOMY

At the start of the pandemic, the scale of the outbreak had already led businesses to change their working practice, such as sending staff to work from home. With the imposed lockdown, and banning all 'non-essential' travel, the resulting impact on businesses, jobs and the economy was severe. Businesses in Carmarthenshire are typically smaller (up to 9 employees) than businesses throughout Wales and the UK, and the sad reality of the pandemic is that many businesses will fail, and others will take a significant length of time to get back to where they were.

We helped over 4,000 businesses to receive Welsh Government's business rates grant payments of between £10,000 and £25,000 with a total amount of over £46 million.

There have been economic challenges for Carmarthenshire, the effects of which will be evident long after the pandemic ends. It may take many months for household income to recover to pre-pandemic levels resulting in lower levels of disposable income which feeds the local economy. So, we promoted a 'buy local' message, helping to stimulate growth at a local level, resulting in a steadier economic future for local businesses and their staff. Through acting together with our partners, we can take action to restore consumer and business confidence to stimulate investment in our economies, which will create employment and help the unemployed find new jobs. Planning for economic recovery started early on in the pandemic and will be a priority for the Council going forward.

There are currently 16 Food Banks in the County and we have been directly providing funding in supporting many of these during COVID-19.

HOMELESS

The COVID-19 crisis has had a significant impact on homelessness provision. In order to safeguard homeless people Welsh Government changed the law around priority need. This meant Local Authorities were required to prioritise all homeless people (previously local authorities prioritised families and vulnerable single people). This has increased demand significantly resulting in large numbers (up to 150) of homeless households being temporarily accommodated. Our priorities have been to tackle this new demand over the last 12 months.

AGE WELL



SOCIAL CARE

We tried as far as possible during the pandemic to maintain business as usual. This included continued support to people who need our help in the community and need support to be discharged from hospital. We have continued to offer Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) and carried out social care assessments where required.

The most significant area of risk and greatest impact of COVID-19 has been in relation to the Care Home Sector and Carmarthenshire has experienced a number of outbreaks and the sector, which includes our in-house and commissioned provision, has faced huge challenges to care for those who were very frail, and for some, sadly at the end of their life. Staff went above and beyond to protect residents following stringent infection control procedures using PPE in line with national guidance. They demonstrated remarkable resilience and commitment and continued to deliver care to our most vulnerable residents throughout the pandemic.

HEALTHY, SAFE AND PROSPEROUS ENVIRONMENT



During lockdown people rediscovered the *environment*. More than ever before we have realised that our natural environment is vital for our well-being. More people used *footpaths and cycleways*.

Cleaners were retrained, and additional cleaners employed to develop an enhanced standard of cleaning across all settings. This helped to keep our school hubs, schools, food distribution centres, depots, critical offices and sheltered housing open. These enhanced cleaning standards were essential to reduce transmission of the virus and to build confidence and reassurance that the work environment is as safe as we can make it.

As a consequence of lockdown there was an improvement in *Air Quality* during the year because of reduction of road vehicle movements. The main pollutant of concern for Carmarthenshire is Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂).

Waste and recycling collections were crucial to public and environmental health during the COVID-19 crisis, and waste workers were deemed 'key workers' by the Government and continued to carry out essential services during the epidemic. The full range of waste collection services at the kerbside continued throughout the pandemic, despite some of the logistical and resource challenges brought about by COVID-19 at times; this was testimony to the commitment and determination of all the teams involved in ensuring these important services continued. This was clearly appreciated by our residents.

GOVERNANCE



After a brief pause, democratic government and scrutiny were sustained by the introduction of virtual democratic meetings. Scrutiny was a possibility via Executive Board Meetings and group leader meetings. We were the first Council in Wales to hold a virtual Annual General Meeting. This required securing an on-line meetings software system and a method of providing Welsh translation facilities both for members and for the public.

Information Technology

The Authority's decision, before the pandemic, to spend £1.9m of investment in agile working initiatives, including providing staff with the right equipment to allow them to work in a more agile and flexible way, together with improvements to the resilience of the IT network, has helped support an almost seamless move to homeworking. Having the right equipment in place meant that staff could be operational from home immediately with no disruption to customers.

The use of technology, and especially the use of Microsoft Teams, has been a vital component of the Council's response to the pandemic, and is helping to support the adoption of a far more dynamic and productive way of working. It has facilitated improved communication and team working at a local, regional, and national level.

We currently have over 40 transactional council services available to the public online, many of these have been developed extremely quickly.

Workforce

Staff stepped up and showed caring, conscientious commitment in ‘*doing their bit*’ and showed bravery when called for. Many went the extra mile and kept going.

We diverted resources from the outset to ensure UK and Welsh Government legislation and guidance was quickly interpreted and disseminated to managers and head teachers. We quickly adapted our existing policies and developed new guidance such as Temporary Homeworking, Annual Leave and Furloughing of Staff. We also undertook a range of risk assessments and put in place safe systems of work to make sure critical services continued to be delivered, which, for example, allowed critical workers to access the Learning Hubs in our schools so that they could go to work.

The health and wellbeing of all our people has been a key priority for us and in response, we have dedicated significant resources to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all our employees. We have been keen to normalise discussions about mental health and as part of Mental Health Awareness Week we launched the Time to Talk initiative, which we will continue to build on as we move forward.

We will not be going back and doing everything the same as before the pandemic – some new ways of working, developed due the pandemic, proved so successful that we will continue with them.

Some of the alternative ways of working that were rolled out during the pandemic has seen service areas have their “*light bulb*” moment and realise that it is a better way of delivering the service to the customer and will be adopted as the “*new norm*”.

Partnership

During the pandemic working in partnership with other Public Service Board partners and wider community has been essential. Trust and relationships developed through partnership working over a number of years came to the fore as partners supported each other at our time of greatest need. From establishing field hospitals in a matter of weeks to ensuring food parcels were delivered to those shielding and vulnerable, the collaboration and co-operation between partners and stakeholders has been immense and will be something to build on for future developments.

We quickly developed a *Test, Trace and Protect (TTP)* service working collaboratively with Public Health Wales, Hywel Dda University Health Board and the Police to advise contact cases, identify hotspots, enforce if needed to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.

Incident Management Teams (IMTs) across services were set up and they have strategically driven the COVID response in the County. This work is certainly something we will look as a blueprint in the future as really good examples of partnership working.

Police and Public Protection services have also worked in collaboration undertaking site visits at licensed premises ensuring that COVID rules were being followed. This close working has resulted in only a limited number of enforcement notices being needed to be issued to date.

Lyndsay McNicholl, a Carmarthenshire County Council residential care manger, was awarded the British Empire Medal for her services to care during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Major Challenges

CLIMATE CHANGE

- We have the first **Net Zero Carbon Action Plan** in Wales
(See Well-being Objective 12)

RECOVERY

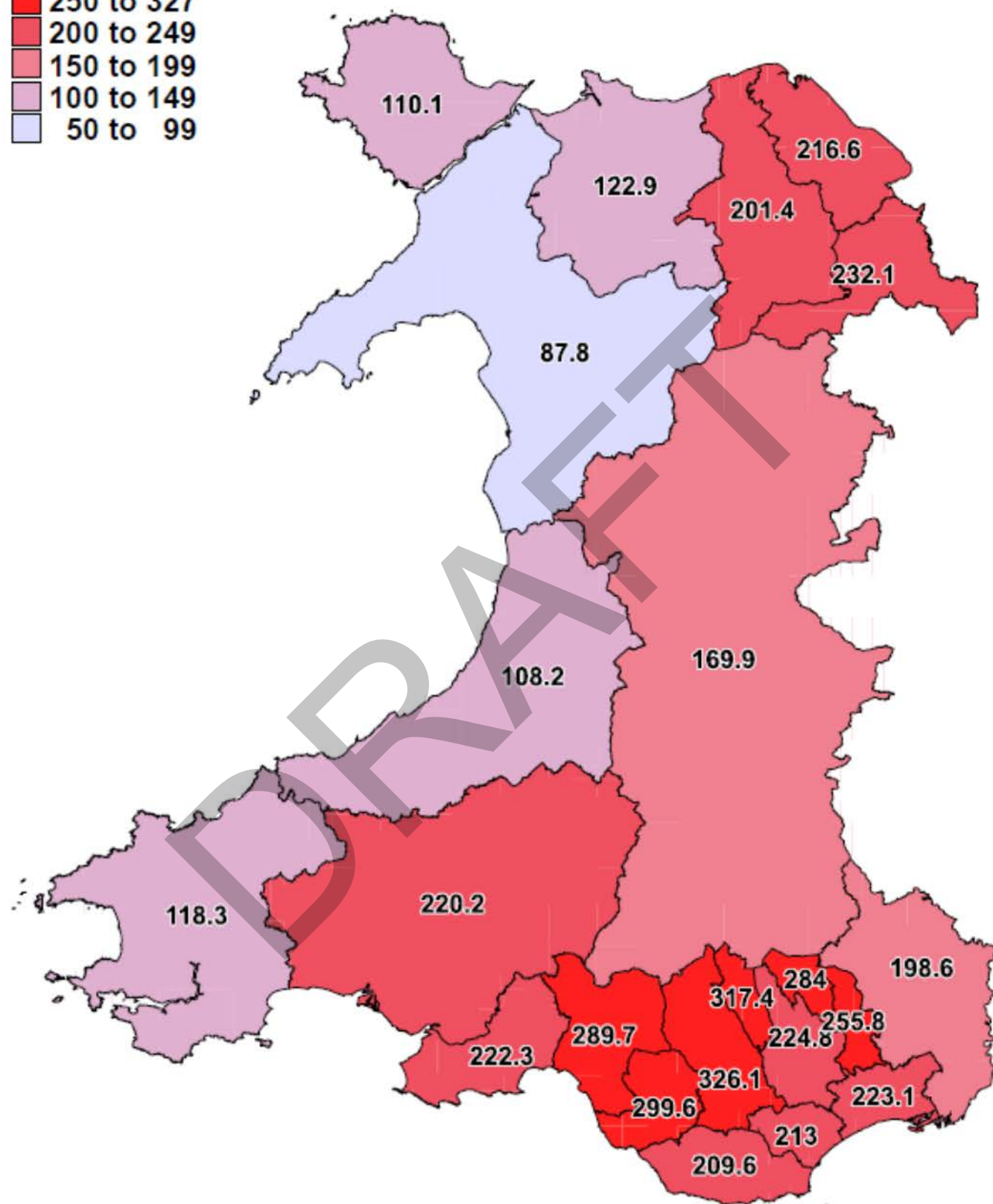
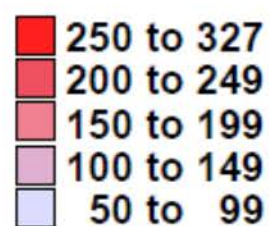
- We are one of the first in Wales to prepare an **Economic Recovery Plan** (See Well-being Objective 6)

COVID-19

- **Community Impact Assessment of COVID-19**
To learn from how we responded to the pandemic we are identifying transformational new ways of working
(See Well-being Objective 15)

Wales COVID-19 death rates

Deaths per 100,000 people - occurring up to end March 2021

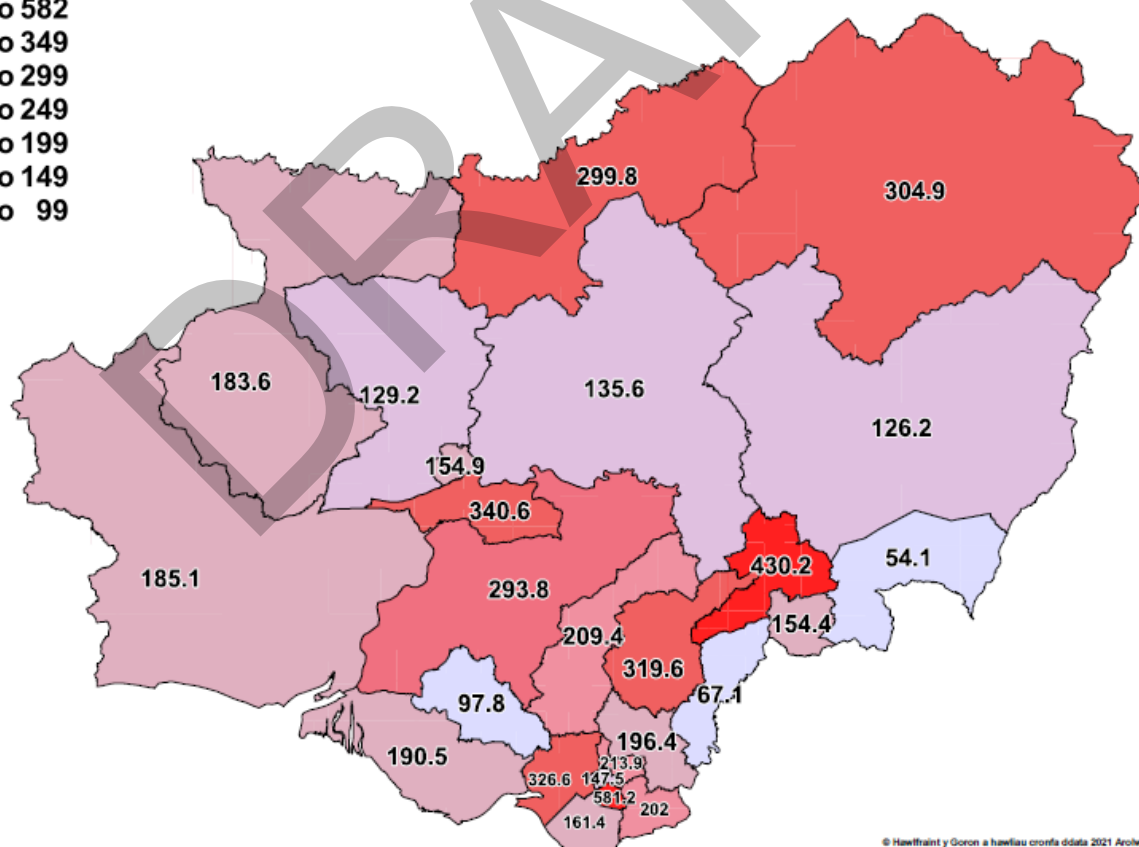
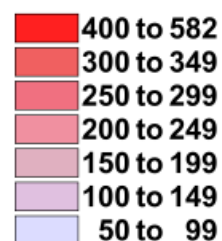


COVID-19 Deaths in Carmarthenshire to end of March 2021

Carmarthenshire Middle Layer Super Output Areas	Deaths per 100,000 people	Carmarthenshire Middle Layer Super Output Areas	Deaths per 100,000 people
Brynaman, Y Garnant & Glanamman	54.1	Swiss Valley & Llangennech	196.4
Yr Hendy & Tŷ-croes	67.1	Bynea & Llwynhendy	202.0
Cydweli & Trimsaran	97.8	Glyn & Pontyberem	209.4
Llandeilo, Llangadog & Maenordeilo	126.2	Dafen & Felin-foel	213.9
Carmarthen West & Cynwyl Elfed	129.2	Llanddarog, Llangyndeyrn & Ferryside	293.8
Abergwili, Llanegwad & Carmel	135.6	Llandovery, Cil-y-cwm & Cynwyl Gaeo	304.9
Llanelli North	147.5	Llanfihangel-ar-arth & Llanybydder	317.5
Ammanford & Betws	154.4	Llan-non, Cross Hands & Pen-y-groes	319.6
Carmarthen North	154.9	Llanelli West	326.6
Llanelli South	161.4	Carmarthen South & Llangynnwyr	340.6
Tre-lech, Cenarth & Llangelor	183.6	Llandybie & Saron	430.2
Whitland, Laugharne & Llansteffan	185.1	Llanelli Bigyn	581.2
Pembrey & Burry Port	190.5		

The area with the lowest number of deaths per 100,000 population in Carmarthenshire is *Brynaman, Y Garnant & Glanamman* and the highest was *Llanelli Bigyn*.

Carmarthenshire COVID-19 death rates per Middle Layer Super Output Areas Deaths per 100,000 people - occurring up to end March 2021



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INTRODUCTION TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT

At the time of preparing this report, Council resources remain committed to dealing with the crisis/recovery. There are some gaps in the information available, for instance, due to the pressures of dealing with the crisis Welsh Government has agreed that comparative *Out turn data* will not be published for 2020-21. We would usually compare our results to other Councils results. In past years we have also reported the results of the National Survey for Wales but much of this is unavailable.

This Annual Report is produced by the Council because we believe we should provide comprehensive and balanced information to the public about our services, so that they can see how we are performing and the challenges we are facing. It is also a statutory duty under the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (*See Appendix 1*). In addition, establishing the baselines will be useful to assess recovery.

Working with Partners

As a Council we are not alone in working to improve the lives of Carmarthenshire's citizens. We are collaborating with other public bodies. We have set up a *Public Services Board* (PSB) and this partnership has published a [Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan](#). All the separate public bodies in the partnership publish their own Well-being Objectives and we will be working to meet many common objectives. The PSB has also published an [Annual Report for 2020/21- To be linked when published](#)

Consultation undertaken by the Council

- ⦿ During the pandemic we undertook a *Parental Survey* conducted with parents, carers and guardians of pupils, with 4,433 responses and asked what they think is having the biggest impact on their child(ren)'s well-being and mental health. An overwhelming majority of respondents noted that the issue which is causing the biggest impact on their child(ren)'s well-being is that they are unable to be with their friends and peers
- ⦿ In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we consulted with *Carmarthenshire businesses* to gather their views on the impact of the pandemic on their business. In total, 574 businesses responded to the online survey in May. The responses to this engagement have helped shape our support toward these businesses.
- ⦿ In May, 2,543 (32%) of our *staff* across all departments took part in a survey on the new way of working following the COVID-19 outbreak, the results will help shape the future way of working.
- ⦿ Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, we undertook a *digital and virtual budget consultation* for the 2021/22. In response to the public feedback, the council reduced the increase of Council Tax based on the consultation results.
- ⦿ We have consulted on a number of *school projects* throughout the year. These included: consulting on the changing provision in primary schools, changing entry ages at schools, increasing capacity in schools and improving school buildings.
- ⦿ We have also assisted with a number of services on numerous consultations. These included but are not limited to: Proposals to change The Miners' theatre name, Public Services Protection orders, the use of historical monuments within the County, Active travel and Public realm safety improvements in response to the pandemic.

Equality and Diversity

Strategic Equality Plans (SEPs) are important documents that set out how public bodies will consider the needs of groups with protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. This is intended to ensure that all individuals receive just and equitable treatment in respect of service delivery and strategy/policy formulation.

During the year, we have continued to develop our Integrated Impact Assessment process, which ensures due regard and diligence when the Authority makes key decisions. This process includes our responsibilities in terms of the **Equality Act 2010** and the **Socio-economic Duty**, which came into force on 31 March 2021. The key aim of the Socio-Economic Duty is to encourage better decision making and ultimately deliver better outcomes for those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

The duty should be used to ensure that reducing inequalities of outcome now and for future generations is a central factor in decision-making. Organisations should consider current inequalities and future trends when deciding how they can have the most impact. And organisations must be guided by the voices of socio-economically disadvantaged people in doing this.

A cross-party **Equality and Diversity (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) Task and Finish Group** was set up in response to two detailed debates in the Council chamber, with the purpose of engaging residents and gathering feedback to help break down barriers and support Carmarthenshire's BAME communities.

As part of their work, the group launched a public survey in response to commentary about historic monuments across the county. The survey encouraged people to give their views on whether the council needed to take any steps in response to public discussion, and what these steps should be.

The Task and Finish Group recommended erecting prominently placed information boards near the Picton Monument and within its grounds with reference to Sir Thomas Picton encompassing his military career as well as his known links with slavery, as well as reference to the local history of the area. The group also recommended a further information board placed in the vicinity of the Court Room at the Guildhall, where a portrait of Sir Thomas Picton is displayed.

As part of our duty to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not, we have developed a **Diversity Calendar**, which aims to establish a consistent and fair timetable across all characteristics. We will review and progress our calendar and ensure that it links in with the work promoted by Welsh Government through the Community Cohesion

Welsh Language (also, please see *Well-being Objective 14*)

We are continuing to implement the **Welsh Language Standards** across the Council with significant internal communication work undertaken during 2020-21. Messages about the Standards were conveyed to staff through presentations by the Policy Team, through the communication streams maintained by Marketing and Media and through the Departmental Language Leaders.

The **Welsh Language County Strategic Forum**, which continues to be led by the Council and includes representation from the county's language promotion organisations, as well as public bodies with language officers, has also continued with its role of developing a programme of promoting the Welsh language in the county and instigated much joint planning for the implementation of the Carmarthenshire Promotion Action Plan, which is in line with the Promotion standards. The forum met four times and specific attention was given to apprenticeships and post-16 education, the Language in our communities, priority areas and the Local Development Plan.

How we measure the success of our Well-being Objectives

Success Measures

The Well-being Future Generations Act promotes a shift in focus from service productivity, to all public bodies working together to progress outcomes that improves the quality of life of citizens and communities, both now and in the future. We have a suite of indicators we use to measure the success of our Well-being Objectives; a list of these measures can be seen in *Appendix 2*.

Public Accountability Measures

There is also a National suite of measures that all Councils in Wales normally have to collect, a list of these measures can be seen in *Appendix 3*. Due to COVID-19, Welsh Government decided not to collect and publish results from authorities for 2019/20 or 2020/21.

This has been a year like no other, with our own results for some of these measures not available or not comparable to previous year due to the effects of COVID-19.

Other Assessment Information

Citizen Satisfaction



National Survey for Wales

We usually include National Survey for Wales data that's available at Local Authority level in our Annual Report. Due to the pandemic, much of the data is not available for 2020/21 as Welsh Government had to make changes to how they conduct the survey. Therefore, only a few of the 2020/21 survey results have been included in this report due to lower participation as well as lack of continuity of the questions to previous years surveys.



[Link to 2020 National Survey for Wales - quarterly and monthly results](#)

Regulatory Verdict

During the year our Regulators issued a number of reports on and these are listed in **Appendix 4**.



<https://www.audit.wales/>



<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/language>



<https://careinspectorate.wales/>

Life is for living, let's start, live and age well
in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment



Well-being Objectives

1. Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences.

2. Help children live healthy lifestyles.

3. Support and improve progress and achievement for all learners

4. Ensure all young people are in Education, Employment or Training (EET) and are following productive learning and career pathways

5. Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, helping people into work & improving the lives of those living in poverty.

6. Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county.

7. Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes.

8. Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour & obesity).

9. Supporting good connections with friends, family and safer communities.

10. Support the growing numbers of older people to maintain dignity & independence in their later years.

11. A Council wide approach to supporting Ageing Well in Carmarthenshire.

12. Looking after the environment now and for the future.

13. Improving the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity.

14. Promoting Welsh language and culture.

15. Building a Better Council and Making Better Use of Resources

Executive Board Members and the Well-being Objectives



Cllr. Emlyn Dole
Leader

WBO6 - Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county



Cllr. Mair Stephens
Deputy Leader

WBO12 – Environment

WBO15 - Building a Better Council and Making Better Use of Resources



Cllr. Cefin Campbell

WBO5 - Tackling poverty

WBO9 - Good connections and safer communities

WBO12 - Environment



Cllr. Jane Tremlett

WBO9 - Good connections and safer communities

WBO10 - Older people

WBO11 – Ageing Well



Cllr. David Jenkins

WBO15 - Building a Better Council and Making Better Use of Resources



Cllr. Linda Evans

WBO7 - Affordable Homes

WBO9 - Good connections and safer communities

WBO11 - Ageing Well



Cllr. Glynog Davies

WBO1 - Child best start

WBO2 - Healthy Children

WBO3 - Education

WBO4 - Young people



Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths

WBO2 - Healthy Children

WBO8- Healthy lives Adults

WBO14 – Welsh Language & Culture



Cllr. Hazel Evans

WBO12 - Environment

WBO13 - Transport and Highways



Cllr. Phillip Hughes

WBO12 - Environment

WBO8- Healthy lives Adults

Start Well





Well-being Objective 1

Start Well - Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences

The number of Children Looked After has significantly reduced

A systemic approach to delivering social work practice alongside our continued focus on preventative work, has seen the number of looked after children continuing to reduce year on year with more and more families being supported to stay together. This has been despite the increased challenges faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Why it is important

- Because giving every child the best start in life is crucial to reducing inequalities across the life course
- Early intervention is key to long term health and well-being. What happens during these early years has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being – from obesity, heart disease and mental health, to educational achievement and economic status
- Because Looked After Children (LAC) are more likely to have been exposed to multiple risks associated with poor long-term outcomes before entering care.

Success Measure

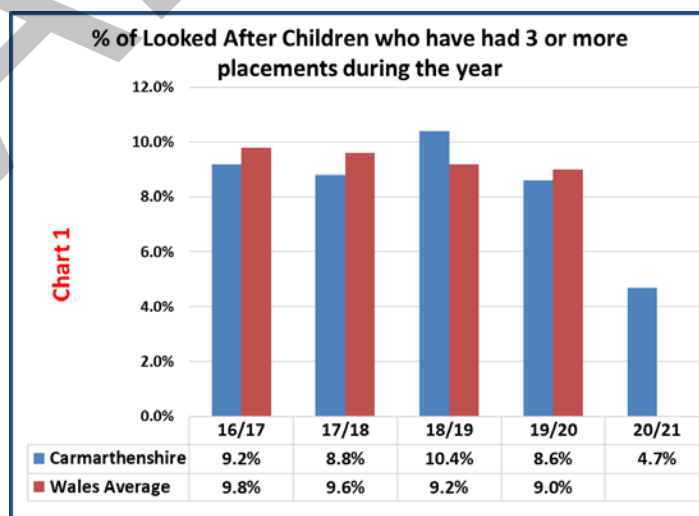
The % of children in care who had to move 3 or more times has reduced to **4.7%**



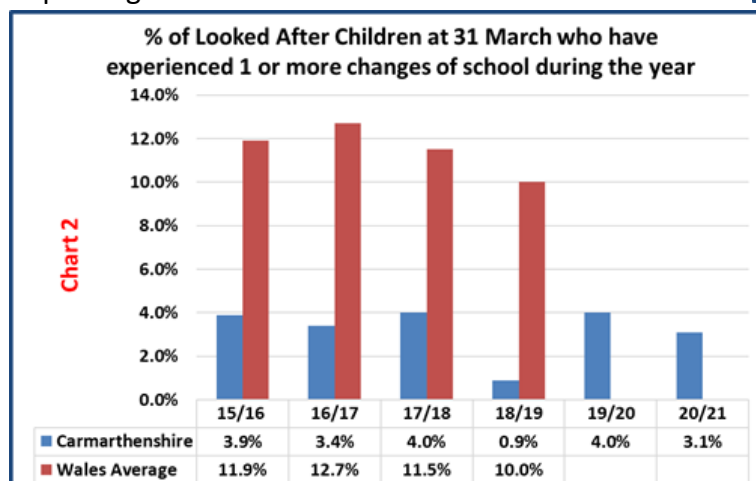
Explaining the Results

We are pleased to have seen an *improvement* in placement stability with a *reduction* in the number of children having moved 3 or more times during 2020/21, with 4.7% (7 out of 148) compared to 8.6% (14 out of 163) in 2019/20 and better than the Welsh Average of 9%. (See Chart 1)

Stability of looked after children has been excellent despite COVID-19. COVID and strict WG guidelines impacted on the opening of schools. We consistently perform well in maintaining looked after children in the same school, which is also an important factor in improving outcomes.



During 2020/21, 3 out of 96 children changed schools (See Chart 2). A summer programme of support was also put in place which was well received. Our **long-term** primary focus is on **prevention** and maintaining children at home with their families and out of the care system wherever possible, as well as providing extra resources for foster carers to support the children in their care to maintain placement stability and avoid the need to move wherever possible.



Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

Supporting Families

- ⊙ Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic both registered childcare settings, play providers, families and communities have continued to receive advice, support and guidance in ensuring that children and young people have access to play opportunities during times of lockdown and restrictions.
- ⊙ The *Childcare Assistance Scheme* enabled providers of childcare to remain open to ensure critical services continued to run. Between April to August 2020, 732 children of critical workers were supported by the scheme.
- ⊙ The number of enquiries to the *Family Information Service* has seen a 62% increase this year with 30,197 users and 89,923 pageviews.
- ⊙ *Flying Start Carmarthenshire* became the **first Flying Start in Wales to use a mobile App** to help keep in touch with families. The team developed the App as a way to increase engagement, and to signpost families to important information and promote events in the local areas. The App continues to be pivotal in delivering services, key messages and providing information to all of our families.
- ⊙ *Team Around the Family (TAF)* are continuing to re-shape the service to meet future need and have begun to develop partnership work with the 3rd sector alongside co-production, community development and use of volunteers. TAF continue working alongside schools and the *Attendance and Safeguarding Team* and *Early Help* team to provide a seamless service to education.
- ⊙ Each of the childcare teams have continued to use a systemic approach to delivering social work services. 30 members of staff including managers are about to complete the qualification Foundation year of Systemic Social Work Practice and in addition social workers from across the service undertook a 3-day Introduction to Systemic Practice. The training has helped increase confidence as well as ensuring consistency of approach across the teams. A recent Assurance check by [Care Inspectorate Wales \(CIW\)](#) remarked on the benefits of 'pod' working which '*clearly promoted a holistic and strengths-based approach to working with families. Records that clearly articulated outcome focused planning. Plans outlined clear achievable goals to safeguarded children and improve their well-being through the provision of a range of services best suited to their needs*'.



Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

- ⊙ The *Inclusion* section has continued to deliver all service areas throughout the pandemic to ALN and all vulnerable pupils. Methods of delivery have been modified following consultation with stakeholders such as families, schools, ECPS and Health thus ensuring all best endeavours are undertaken to continue to deliver statutory processes and support services.
- ⊙ ALN Transformation is reaching a point of implementation and as such the primary focus for improvement is on transitioning into the new mechanism for upholding the statutory duties for children and young adults with ALN from 0-25 as set out by the new act and statutory code of practice.

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22



Well-being Objective 2

Start Well - Help children live healthy lifestyles

Obesity in children increases in Carmarthenshire

The 2018/19 Child Measurement Programme data published in March 2021 shows that **over 30%** of children aged 4 to 5 in Carmarthenshire are overweight or obese, the **5th highest** figure in Wales.

Why it is important

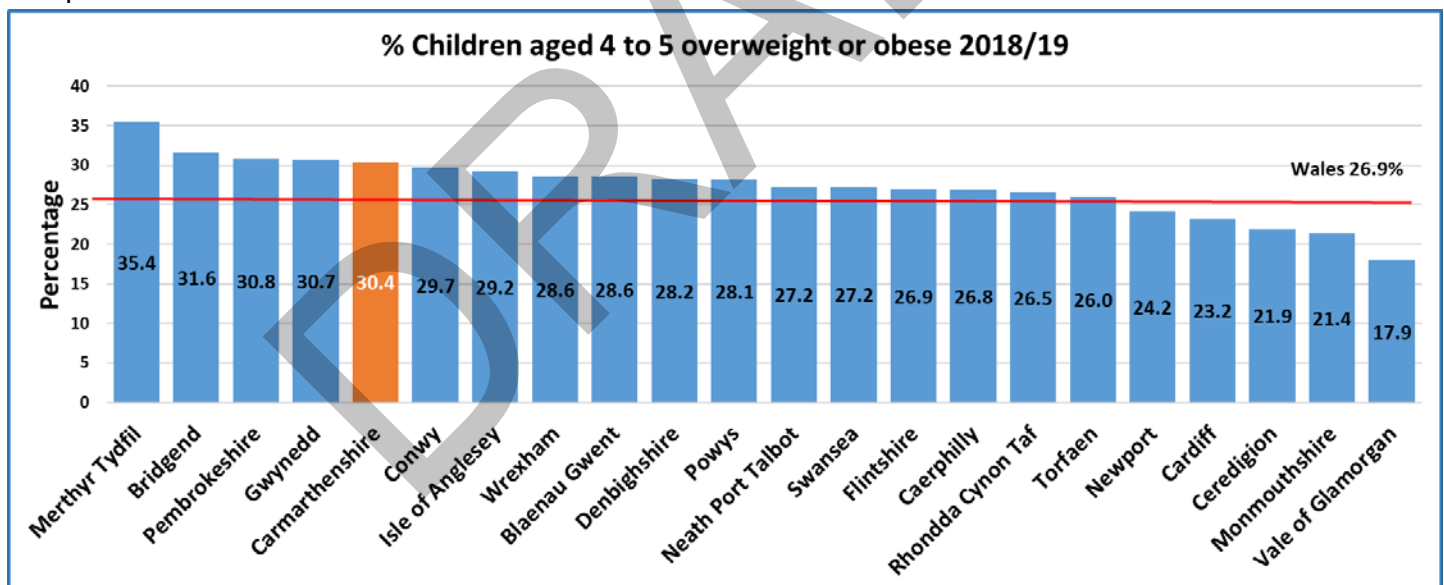
- ⦿ The Play Sufficiency Assessment identified playing outside as the most popular setting for children but also found that 32% of parents worried about their child's safety.
- ⦿ Assessment engagement activity with primary school children showed being physically active as an important factor for the positive well-being of children.
- ⦿ Living healthy lives allows children to fulfil their potential and meet education aspirations.
- ⦿ Habits established early in life remain with people to allow them to play a full part in the economy and society of Carmarthenshire.

Success Measure

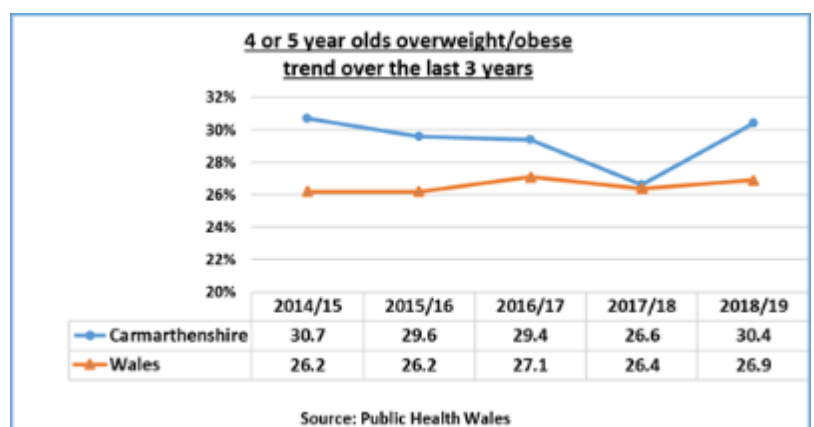
30.4% of children are overweight or obese (2018/19)

(This is an increase on the previous year of 26.6% 2017/18)

The programme of child measurements is carried out by [Public Health Wales](#) with children attending reception class in schools in Wales.



There had been a downward trend in recent years from having 3rd highest figures in Wales in 2014/15 to just above the Welsh average in 2017/18. Unfortunately, 2018/19 data (published March 2021) shows an increase in the **% overweight or obese to 30.2%**, this is the 5th highest in Wales and just below our 2014/15 result of 30.7%. Obesity in childhood often persists into adult life, leading to related health problems like type 2 diabetes, liver disease, higher rates of heart disease, and some cancers.



Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

Physical Activity

- ⊙ Leisure Services successfully secured an All Wales Play Opportunity Grant of £25K and matched funded £52k in order to completely re-develop Llansteffan Beach Playground.
- ⊙ Work related to utilising school grounds outside of teaching hours remains paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions. Welsh Government allocated two funding streams during quarter three via the All Wales Play Opportunities Grant to be utilised by the 31st March 2021. Carmarthenshire have been allocated £31,000 in revenue funding to be allocated to providing staffed play provision for vulnerable children during school holidays up until and including the Easter Holidays 2021. A total of £184,092 has been allocated to Carmarthenshire in the form of a capital grant. Advice, guidance and support has been given to Whitland Town Council in relation to developing a playground for Whitland town in line with the Section 106 Contributions regulations. Advice, guidance and support has been given to the Playworker staff within the Integrated Children's Centres in delivering virtual Play Sessions to families as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.
- ⊙ The Healthy Schools Team worked in partnership with Active Carmarthenshire in promoting the 'Million Minutes' Campaign via our Network and Cluster Meetings and utilised our Termly Cluster meetings to inform schools of the latest guidance published by Public Health Wales regarding Physical Activity Promotion during COVID-19 times and also signposted them to PE Guidance published by the Youth Sport Trust in relation to the delivery of PE lessons and Physical Activity Promotion.



Healthy Eating

- ⊙ The Healthy Schools team produced a Healthy Packed Lunch Toolkit for Families.
- ⊙ The Local Authority committed to providing free school meals throughout the pandemic providing food bags, vouchers and direct payments as appropriate. Free School Meal food bags were always as nutritional as we could make them taking into account food safety (dependent how long they would be taking to transport). We also offered ideas of what to make with the items, e.g. tuna pasta salad.

Mental Health

- ⊙ The Healthy Schools Scheme has undertaken the following work to address Mental Health:
 - Organised and funded 6 x 'Strategies to Support an Anxious Young Person' Courses;
 - Organised and funded 2 x Youth Mental Health First Aid Training Courses;
 - Organised and Co-ordinated 2 x Secondary School Personal and Social Education (PSE) - Professional Learning Community (PLC) activities which had Mental & Emotional Health & Well-being as a focal area;
 - Contributed to the Consultation regarding the Whole School Approach to Mental Health by providing suggestions on how to improve the Whole School Approach to Mental Health Assessment Tool for schools;
 - Played an instrumental role in establishing a Task and Finish Group for the production and publication of a Transgender Toolkit for Schools.

Raise Awareness

- ⊙ The Healthy Schools Scheme has created and updated several Directories of resources which promote Physical Health, Mental and Emotional Health, Healthy Eating and an increased awareness of Healthy Lifestyles, uploaded onto the Healthy Schools Network on Hwb, Sharepoint and Council website. The resources were designed for use by pupils of all ages and their families, to be utilised by the School Hubs, families with pupils learning from home and for blended learning by schools during the second lockdown.

- ⦿ The Team also placed emphasis on the importance of Outdoor Learning / Provision and have informed schools of relevant training being delivered and excellent websites that can support them in increasing Outdoor Learning provision. As a result, a number of teachers attended training that was delivered by Natural Resources Wales and have signed up to the SOUL Website (Outdoor Learning Website) which provides free resources for schools.
- ⦿ The Health and Wellbeing area of learning is a key focus area as we prepare for the new Welsh curriculum. A cross-disciplinary strategic group is focussing on supporting schools to undertake purposeful activity within the area of learning, as exemplified by the health and happiness programme, which was developed to assist schools over the course of the pandemic. Physical literacy is an important consideration, with further opportunities to learn in the outdoors e.g. via our Learning through Landscapes project.

The way we work

Million Actif Minutes

With the news that schools across Wales would not be opening their doors for some time in the new year due to another lockdown, the Actif Communities team set a fun and engaging challenge for schools that would capture the attention of the County.

The Million Actif Minutes Challenge aimed to engage and motivate children and young people to get active through these difficult times. Schools promoted physical activity, PE, resources available from Actif Communities and activities from National Governing Bodies across Wales in a bid to get children moving more.

The aim of the challenge was for all schools to collectively achieve 1,000,000 active minutes across the County with each school receiving their own specific target which was based on the number of pupils in the school. The schools were challenged to reach their targets in order to be included in a live draw with a chance of winning £500 worth of sports equipment.

The challenge started on the 1st of February and a whopping 76 schools registered to be part of this countywide challenge. The challenge itself was initially aimed at school pupils but due to the influx of emails from staff who wanted to take part, it was decided that they the challenge would also include staff members too!

Within the first 2 weeks an amazing 580,000 active minutes were recorded, with 880,115 by the third week and then a final figure of **2,033,874**



Outdoor Learning in Carmarthenshire Schools

Schools across Carmarthenshire are embracing the great outdoors for learning.

With a strong focus on supporting the health and well-being of learners and staff, Local Authority teams have been highlighting the physical, emotional and educational benefits of outdoor learning. Schools have been supported through a range of training opportunities, resources and projects, resulting in some wonderful developments across the county.

Many schools have constructed outdoor classrooms, and most are keenly developing their garden areas and outdoor spaces. During *Outdoor Learning Week in April*, a fantastic range of cross-curricular learning was captured and shared on school websites.



Pupils have been seen out and about in the local area looking for signs of spring. This term they are planting fruit, vegetables and learning about healthy eating. Many are helping to improve biodiversity by creating 'wild' areas in the locality.

Several projects have been initiated to support the outdoor learning agenda, including: *Walk The Global Walk, The Lightbringers and Lost Words Projects*, which all promote connection to nature and awareness of sustainability issues. Supported by the Incredible Edibles team, pupils are creating 'peace gardens', which will provide places for children to relax, reflect and learn.



Two Erasmus projects, 'Utopia' and 'Growing Together For Successful Futures', are also underway to enable our teachers to learn from best practice in countries such as Sweden and Greece.

The *Carmarthenshire Outdoor Schools* (CODS) programme has been established to support and guide schools in their quest to be healthier, happier places for all.

Video: Outdoor learning at Johnstown Primary School

<https://www.i2e.com/johnstown-primary-school/Mr+C/Outdoor+Learning+Autumn+2020/>

Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 3

Start Well - Support and improve progress and achievement for all learners

Support for progress, achievement and well-being has continued in difficult circumstances

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 and the situation at the moment, we do not have end of key stage data for the summer term 2020 for Foundation Phase, Key Stage (KS) 2 and KS3. Schools are currently re-assessing pupils and gaining a new baseline for individuals following the lockdown period. KS4 and KS5 pupils were awarded their predicted grades. *We do not have access to this data centrally as a county therefore comparison to previous years cannot be made.*

Why it is important

- ⦿ We all want all of our children and young people to have the best possible start in life by supporting them to gain the skills and knowledge they need to lead happy, healthy, fulfilling lives.
- ⦿ We want to improve outcomes for all ages through lifelong learning, to enable them to thrive in 21st Century living and the world of work.
- ⦿ Research by *The Institute of Education* suggests that attending a good pre-school and primary school can have more impact on children's academic progress than their gender or family background (Taggart, 2015)
- ⦿ Our service remains committed to both the principles and priorities as outlined in the Welsh Government's most recent strategic document [Education in Wales: Our National Mission](#).

Success Measures

Average score for Year 11 pupils - based on Teacher assessment rather than examinations due to COVID-19

- ⦿ The last published average score based on the **best 9 exam results** for Year 11 pupils during 2019/20 (2018/19 Academic Year) is 367.2 where girls had an average score of 378.5 and boys 356.4. This is an improvement on the previous year and well above the Welsh average of 354.4.

Attendance at Primary and Secondary Schools - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

- ⦿ Due to the pandemic, the disruption to Schools and the need for home learning for most of the year, **attendance data has not been recorded in the same way and therefore not reported**. The last published data was for 2019/20 (2018/19 Academic Year), this showed that Secondary schools had declined further to 93.5% with Primary school attendance staying the same at 93.9%.

Satisfaction with Child's Primary Schools - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

- ⦿ Due to COVID-19, there is **no updated data available for the National Survey for Wales measure of satisfaction with child's primary school**. The most recent data of 2019/20 showed that 95% of participants were satisfied with their child's primary school in Carmarthenshire, this had increased from the previous year of 84% and above the Welsh average. This can be volatile dependant on the households questioned during the year.

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

- ⦿ Officers from the Education and Children's services department provided support in line with local and national priorities providing schools with a bespoke range of support in line with the priority areas for individual schools and the current COVID Pandemic context. Educational support advisers, Inclusion officers, Educational Psychologists Behavioural support officers and Social Services work closely alongside our schools and settings, supporting evaluative processes and ensuring that the support provided and facilitated by the local authority, partner schools and the region is impacting positively on the learning experiences of the pupils, their progress and their well-being.
- ⦿ Investment in Schools continues as part of the Modernising Education Programme:



New £4.3m school for children and staff at Ysgol Rhys Prichard



Children in Five Roads move into new £4.5m school



£4.5m investment transforms Ysgol Llangadog for staff and pupils

- ⦿ The current Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) document is now in its penultimate year. We will continue to ensure that the key messages are adhered to and that specific changes in school provision continue to progress. Due to COVID-19, interaction with school leaders regarding moving along the language continuum has been delayed. However, dialogue on the WESP continues with the focus on language progress.
- ⦿ The past twelve months has proved challenging for school governors. We have worked with them to develop their digital skills to facilitate on-line meetings. We continue to encourage and promote participation in the governorship of schools.
- ⦿ Following a review of our specialist behaviour support services, the new Four Phase Model has been implemented; in Phase 1 increasing the provision in schools; Phase 2 more robust packages of support from central team to be delivered on site; and improving provision in Phase 3 and 4 which are the off-site Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and long term Emotional, Social and Behavioural Difficulties (ESBD) settings. The Behaviour Support Community Team is in development to increase capacity working directly with whole school processes for training and advice to support and upskill staff to work with individuals with the long-term aim of upskilling schools to work with complex pupils reducing the number of pupils requiring long term specialist provision and working more in line with a short-term intervention model.

The way we work

The Health and Happiness Programme

In the spirit of hopefulness, the school improvement team created an approach to classroom routines and activities that can be used to support staff and their pupils return to school in a safe and joyful way. All age groups and varied levels of need were considered. The psychological approaches and principles presented in the *Health and Happiness Programme* can be applied flexibly by schools and can be interpreted to suit the school's context. Research has identified five key principles that support recovery following a serious incident or event: *A sense of safety; a sense of calm; a sense of self and collective efficacy; social connectedness and the promoting of hope.*

For many pupils, returning to school is a welcome return. However, for others, it is a time of worry and anxiety. Some pupils may be carrying a large emotional burden and school might be their only place to talk about this. Adults in school who listen with empathy perform an important therapeutic function, without being therapists. Activities set out in the programme allow time and opportunities for pupils to talk about their experiences and emotions.

The Health and Happiness Programme is divided into 3 main areas:

- a sense of place, a sense of belonging
- looking after our bodies and minds
- our learning journey

An inclusive activity page is presented for each school phase for each of the 3 main areas. All activities are colour coded demonstrating their relevance to the 5 ways to good well-being. The programme also includes extended literacy and numeracy activities and a wealth of suggestions and activities promoting the Power of Story. The programme is interactive with hyperlinks to additional resources and materials. It also includes live links to supportive websites and apps.



The Lightbringers' Project

The Lightbringers' Project was inspired by the book *The Lightbringers/Y Lanternwyr*, created by Karin Celestine, 'a story of hope... that the light will always return, even in the darkest of days.'

The project was launched in January 2021 to offer support and educational inspiration to school communities during the darkest days of the pandemic building upon the principles of the *Health and Happiness Programme*. All Carmarthenshire schools received bilingual copies of the book, along with a bank of practical ideas and resources to support health, well-being and a collaborative approach to the Curriculum for Wales. Although much of the project has had to be delivered online, it supports a holistic approach to 'blended learning', providing a range of cross-curricular ideas for schools and families to connect with nature and be creative. As part of the project, pupils have enjoyed working with the author, Karin Celestine; Rufus Mufasa, Poet for Future Generations; art specialists and well-being experts.

The first unit, 'Shine A Light', culminated with the Lantern Challenge, when windows across Carmarthenshire were illuminated with beautiful lanterns, shining out positive messages of friendship and solidarity.

The Lightbringers' Project has provided opportunities for families to enjoy learning together, whilst promoting strategies to support positive mental health across the wider school community. The positive impact of this work has been recognised by headteachers and has recently received recognition in the Senedd: https://twitter.com/senedd_hmj/status/1359578890419789825?s=12.



Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22 will show this Well-being Objective 3 combined with Well-being Objective 4 to become -

Start Well - Support and improve progress, achievement, and outcomes for all learners



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 4

Start Well - Ensure all young people are in Education, Employment or Training (EET) and are following productive learning and career pathways.

Work towards ensuring EET continues

The number of Year 11 NEET young people in Carmarthenshire, has remained constant compared to two years ago. However, we have seen a decrease in Year 13 NEET young people in 2021. The results are obtained from Careers Wales Destination Survey which was not concluded in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak, therefore we cannot compare to the previous year. Despite COVID-19 we have worked closely with schools to support pupils at risk of NEET, delivering qualifications, ensuring successful transition to college and improving engagement with additional activities and support.

Why it is important

- Reducing the number of NEET young people reduces the effects of poverty and the wider cost to society of support services, reliance on benefits and offending.
- It is essential to maximise the life opportunities of children, ensuring that as many young people as possible are able to progress to school 6th forms, Further Education Colleges, apprenticeships, training provision or work.
- It enables young people to contribute positively to their local communities.

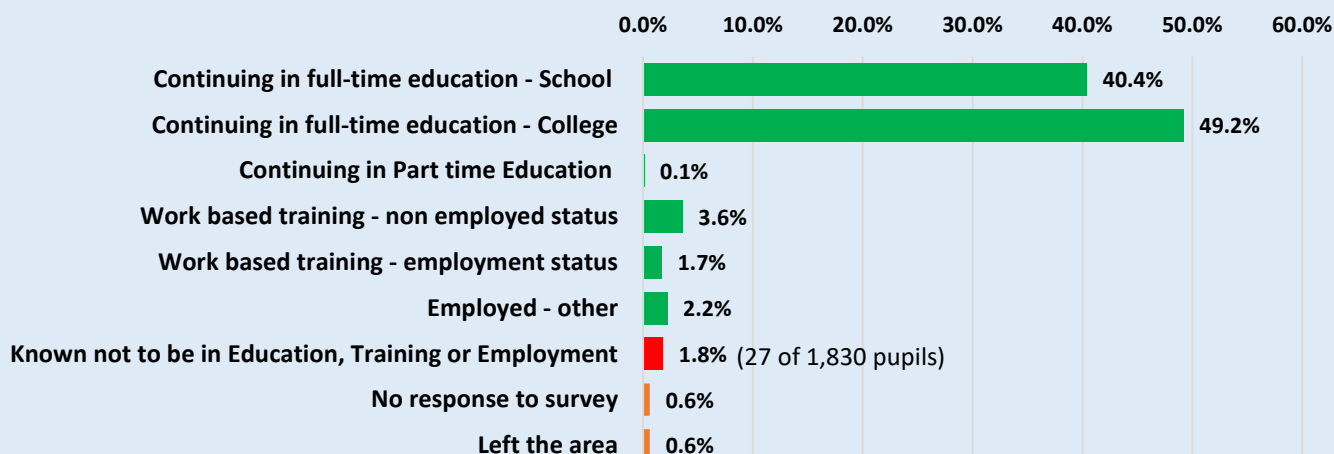
Success Measures



Explaining the Results

- 1.8%, or 32 of **Year 11** pupils becoming NEET in 2020/21 (2019/20 Academic Year), this equates to 96.1%, or 1,765 pupils remaining in Education, Employment or Training. A small number of pupils (22), either did not respond to contact or were known to have left Carmarthenshire. The result ranked 15th in Wales and above the Welsh average of 1.7%.

Destination data for Carmarthenshire Y11 pupils (Academic Year 2019-20)



- 3.5%, or 23 out of 652, **Year 13** pupils were known to become NEET, with 15 pupils either not responding to contact or being known to have left the area. The result ranked 9th in Wales and was equal to the Welsh average. Factors previously affecting the result include the rising cost of higher education, young people's awareness of training and employment opportunities and limited identification of this group of young people by schools following the A Level results. We will seek qualitative data to improve on this situation.

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

- Since the *Cynydd* project began four years ago 141 young people have been referred to the team, with only 15 (11%) of those young people not being in education or training. Although the pandemic saw a decline in referrals, there were 32 young people referred and 75% of them went on to further education, a traineeship or work.
- Post 16 staff have maintained contact with the children and young people they support. If any child/young person is deemed to be vulnerable/at risk, permission has been sought from the Head of Service as to being able to conduct face to face visits. When and where possible, detached youth work has taken the place of youth club delivery, and Streets and Bwlch Youth Centres have been permitted to re-open via Silver/Gold Command. The centres are being utilised for appointment only drop-ins for vulnerable children and young people. The same applies to Dr Mz Youth Centre under partnership arrangements.
- A post 16 learning review has been initiated, which will encompass the appropriateness of learning pathways at Key Stage 4 into post compulsory education, world of work and training. This will also involve liaising closely with our local Further Education provider.
- During the past year the Community Learning Service has developed new and innovative blended learning opportunities for Essential Skills and ESOL learners. Staff have undertaken training in Digital Pedagogy and supported learners in their digital learning as well as their literacy, numeracy and language learning. Learners have remained engaged and achieved outcomes where possible.
- The Youth Support Service has signed up to the Participation Charter in the final quarter of this year, following on from discussions with Children in Wales, and resulting from work linked to the last self-assessment that was completed by the service. This means that each team within the service will undertake a self-assessment against the National Participation Standards from March 2021 onwards in terms of more effectively engaging those children and young people that are NEET.
- YEPF delivery has continued throughout the year. Use has been made of MS Teams to hold Support into Employment, Education and Training Meetings, as well as Vulnerability Assessment Profile Meetings. Liaison has continued with Careers Wales. Youth Support Workers have provided one to one support to children and young people.
- The Local Authority and Regional Consortia are developing a Professional learning offer for Curriculum for Wales aligning with inclusion team. Ensuring good pedagogy meets individual pupil needs at all levels. All Carmarthenshire schools have started the Journey to curriculum for Wales planning. The engagement and progress to end goal varies due to different circumstances schools find themselves in. 88 schools have engaged with ERW's offer last year and 105 have now engaged with ERW's training opportunities this year. Science and Technology project supported by ERW saw 42 Schools engaged using the small and rural schools' grant. A Task and Finish group is being initiated to address key areas of need e.g. Assessment informing curriculum design (Cross departmental work).
- We have identified several areas for service development: Well-being and Music Therapy, Music for All Initiative (Music for Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Learners) and Year 6 Transition (Performing Arts). These have been identified through pilot initiatives and suggestions / proposals from Head Teachers.

- ⦿ We have extended and developed the Seren Programme for More Able and Talented (MAT) pupils to pre-16 learners. We have merged with Ceredigion to help provision for pre-16 learners in three counties (Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion). We have provided Brilliant club, a non-profit organisation that aims to widen access to university for students from underrepresented groups, to all 30 schools in the 3 counties. We pioneered a partnership with Aberystwyth's new vet school with events for years 8 and 9 and 10-12 and piloted a humanities project around the theme of the holocaust with University of Wales Trinity St David's for students from all schools. We also ran masterclasses in specialist subjects; philosophy; physics; literature and writing; Humanities and Mandarin.

The way we work

Council offers a step on the career ladder with successful apprenticeship programme

Appropriate picture to be added

Over 160 apprentices are working with Carmarthenshire County Council, supporting the authority in a variety of roles whilst progressing their career. The council runs a long and successful apprenticeship programme and is recognising the contribution apprentices make during National Apprenticeship Week (February 8-14). Apprenticeships are a great opportunity for people to develop practical skills and get ready for the world of work. The programmes provide a mix of workplace and academic modules leading to a nationally recognised qualification. Many apprentices go on to full-time employment with their apprenticeship employer or move on to the next stage of their career with another employer.

Over recent years Carmarthenshire County Council has worked with many apprentices to complete a wide range of qualifications. Currently, the authority has 166 apprentices undertaking many different roles, working towards several different qualifications. Over the last year, despite being in the midst of a pandemic, 10 new apprentices have joined the council's team.

They include Alaw Roberts and Eve Bryan who are *MakerSpace* apprentices based with Carmarthen and Ammanford libraries; Alex Caswell, Evan Davies and Ben Cooke who joined the council as *Next Steps* apprentices, working on property maintenance.

And Finn Quick, Elliot Lewis, Rhydian Jones, Tomos Williams and Elliot Brice who are undertaking Chartered Institute of Building higher apprenticeships in construction management.

Council apprenticeships are also flexible - Poppy Evans started her apprenticeship with the council as a business support assistant but has recently progressed into the Children and Family Services team helping to engage and recruit new foster parents.

Poppy, who is taking her apprenticeship through the medium of Welsh, is one of 10 apprenticeship ambassadors for Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's 2020/2021 academic year and runs a successful vlog about her apprenticeship experience.

Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22 will show this Well-being Objective 4 combined with Well-being Objective 3 and become-

Start Well - Support and improve progress, achievement, and outcomes for all learners



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective

Live Well



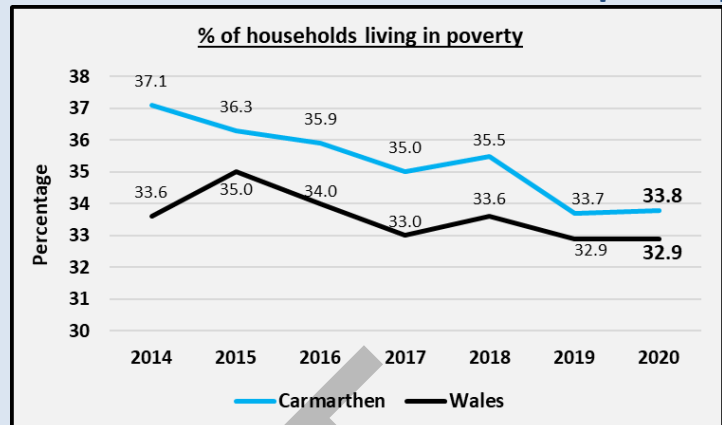


Well-being Objective 5

Start Well/Live Well - Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, help people into work & improve the lives of those living in poverty

Over a third of households in Carmarthenshire continue to live in poverty

During 2020, **27,691** households in Carmarthenshire were classed as living in poverty, this is a slight increase on the previous year of 27,576.



Poverty is defined as when a "household income is less than 60% of the GB median income" (in 2020 less than £19,967)

Why it is important

- ⊙ Poverty and deprivation have serious detrimental effects across all aspects of well-being. It limits the opportunities and prospects for children and young people, damages the quality of life for families and communities
- ⊙ Poverty can be a barrier to full participation in society and is too often an intergenerational experience which poses a significant threat to experiencing positive well-being both now and, in the future,
- ⊙ Two Carmarthenshire wards (Tyisha and Glanymor) were in the top 20 worst wards for childhood poverty in Wales (both at 41.3%) *Source: End Child Poverty, Loughborough University, 2019*

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

Households Living in Poverty - see comment and chart above.

Homelessness Prevention

46.4% of households threatened with homelessness were successfully prevented from becoming homeless

The same as the previous year (46.4% 193/416 x100)



- ⊙ Of the 377 households **threatened with homelessness** during 2020/21, **175 were successfully prevented from becoming homeless - 46.4%**, the same % result as 2019/20 but a reduced number of households threatened with homelessness. As a result of COVID-19, Welsh Government changed the law around homelessness in that all single homeless people regardless of their previous history were deemed a priority and local authorities were required to provide both temporary and permanent accommodation. This new demand resulted in a new cohort of people presenting themselves to us (rough sleeping and sofa surfers) Their circumstances made it difficult for us to undertake prevention work. Regardless of these increased new demands, overall, we were able to maintain our homeless prevention work compared to last year.

Gap in exam results for pupils receiving Free School Meals and those who do not - updated data is unavailable

- ⊙ The last published data on the **gap** between **exam results** for pupils receiving **Free School Meals (FSM)** and **those who do not (Non-FSM)** was for the period 2019/20 (2018/19 Academic Year) at **17.9%**, this had reduced by 1.8 percentage points from the previous year and continued to be the 7th smallest gap in Wales.

Living in material deprivation - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

- ⊙ The 2019/20 National Survey for Wales showed that **11.3%** of participating households in Carmarthenshire were classed as **living in material deprivation**, this is below the Welsh average of 12.9% and a reduction on the previous year of 13.5%. Due to COVID-19, there is no updated data available for the measure.
- ⊙ According to the 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) which is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales, Carmarthenshire has 3 areas within the 100 most deprived areas in Wales. These are Tyisha^{area2} ranked as 17th most deprived area in Wales, followed by Glanymor^{area4} in 68th and Bigyn^{area4} in 84th position.

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

Preventing poverty

- ⊙ Flying Start is the Welsh Government targeted Early Years programme for families with children under 4 years of age in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales. It aims to mitigate the impact of deprivation and poverty on families through the delivery of services in the first 1000 days of a child's life. During 2019, *Flying Start Carmarthenshire* became the **first Flying Start in Wales to use a mobile App** to help keep in touch with families. See Well-being Objective 2.
- ⊙ As an *employer*:
 - We are committed to guaranteeing the equivalent of the **"real living wage"** as set by the Living Wage Foundation by paying a supplement to those workers whose total hourly pay falls below the living wage. We are now paying the Living Wage supplement to only 115 employees therefore ensuring that our whole workforce is paid at least the real living wage.
 - Signposting information is available to financial advisory services for staff and our occupational health service will also provide support and signposting where necessary.
 - The Council has also adopted the **'ethical employment in supply chains'** code of practice which asks our suppliers to consider paying the Living Wage as a minimum. This is incorporated into our procurement and tendering processes.
- ⊙ In *Revenues and Benefits*:
 - We provide benefit maximisation advice, help to service users to identify how expenditure can be reduced, referral to specialist support, help to apply for grants and benefits and the issue of foodbank vouchers.
 - Whilst processing claims, Housing Benefit staff are often able to identify if people need to be referred for more detailed benefit maximisation advice, personal budgeting or debt advice. In addition, they provide support in completing applications for benefits.
 - Our Council Tax recovery team also identifies when individuals could be claiming Council Tax reduction or benefit from budgeting or debt advice.
 - We administer a number of benefits payment schemes accessed by our residents needing support to pay their rent or council tax bills:
 - Housing benefit helps people on low incomes to pay their rent. It can cover rent to a private landlord, to a Housing Association, or if you pay rent to Carmarthenshire County Council; 9600 claimants received Housing Benefit in 2020/21.
 - Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) is a short-term payment which can be applied for by those claiming Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (with Housing costs) but are finding it difficult to pay their rent and 816 claimants received DHP in 2020/21.
 - The Council Tax Reduction scheme supported 16,541 households in Carmarthenshire in 2020/21 in paying council tax bills for people on a low income who claim benefits or Universal Credit.
 - Staff at the Council's Hwbs provide advice and assistance to residents on several Council services face to face, with customers able to return their benefit application forms to the Hwbs where staff check that all supporting evidence is included.

Helping people into work

	2019/20			2020/21		
	Participants	Qualifications	Got a job	Participants	Qualifications	Got a job
Workways+	184	155	70	111	30	55
Volunteering	84			29		
Communities for work	53	33	28	111	16	7
Communities for work+	101	180	45	154	79	58

The impact of the Pandemic had a significant impact on the above figures and some teams were redeployed.

Improving the lives of those living in poverty

- ⊙ In 2019/20, Carmarthenshire had 17.4% of children (4,771 pupils) who are eligible for **free school meals** in Wales (18%). However, as of 27th January 2021, there was a 16% increase with an additional 766 pupils eligible pupils in Carmarthenshire since January 2020.
- ⊙ **Free breakfast in primary schools** - This service, which is provided at 95 schools in the county (89 in the month of March with the others coming back slowly), was greatly disrupted during the last year by the pandemic. When schools first re-opened in some schools Breakfast 'bags' were served just before the start of the school day. Clubs are now offering limited numbers/spaces due to social distancing rules, with an average daily number of 1,898 children being fed between during March 2021.
- ⊙ **Pupil Development Grant** - This Welsh Government funded grant is available to families on low incomes for the purchase of school uniform, sports kit and equipment. Funding is available to pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals entering certain years in primary and secondary school and also to all looked after children. Funding of up to £125 is available to each eligible learner, with those in Year 7 being entitled to a maximum of £200. The grant is administered by the Council and the total allocation to Carmarthenshire for 2020/21 is £5,221,000.
- ⊙ Providing housing advice is one of the main functions of the **Advice and Tenancy Support team**. The team have a co-ordinating role in terms of ensuring clients in difficulties get welfare benefits advice and support. Staff also support council tenants to claim the correct benefits, including assistance with completion of forms, complete applications to reduce the cost of water rates, signpost to energy efficiency help and advise on eligibility for free school meals and uniform grants
- ⊙ During the pandemic we have prioritised all **homeless** people resulting in 193 households prevented from being homeless. Previously we prioritised families and vulnerable single people, but the pandemic resulted in a new cohort of people presenting themselves to us.
- ⊙ Since January 2019, eligible working parents of 3 and 4 year-olds in Carmarthenshire have been able to access 30 hours a week of Welsh Government funded early education and childcare. The childcare offer was suspended by Welsh Government in March due to COVID 19 but was reinstated in September 2020. The Childcare Offer fully resumed during the last quarter of the year with various promotional methods
- ⊙ There are currently **16 Food Banks** in the County and the Council has been directly providing funding in supporting many of these during COVID-19.
- ⊙ The Tyisha project is continuing to deliver a bold and transformational plan to create vibrancy, cohesion, and sustainability for the community. In turn this will provide the residents and future generations with ambition, aspirations and investment for their future.
 - We are working to deliver new homes, better green space, improve waste issues, tackle crime, reduce poverty and deprivation by working closely with partners.

- We are being proactive both, in developing a sense of place for the longer term but also on an operational daily basis. We now have a dedicated team of community wardens, development officers, housing officers to tackle the core issues at Tyisha which the residents are telling us.



We have committed to undertake a fundamental review of our approach to Tackling Poverty and prepare a cross-departmental Council action plan to respond to key issues relating to poverty, rural poverty and child poverty. We will discuss this further with relevant stakeholders and Carmarthenshire PSB members during 2021-22.

The way we work

Council recognised for help to food banks



We have been recognised nationally after gifting over £42,000 in food vouchers to foodbanks during the coronavirus pandemic.

Egni Sir Gâr Cyfyngedig won a community award in the British Renewable Energy (REA) Awards 2020 after distributing the vouchers to 14 food banks across the county out of income generated from rooftop solar panels.

The REA judging panel said: "They have responded very generously compared to their income stream. What a remarkable and impactful immediate response to a crisis. If only other organisations followed their lead."

The donation represents a value of approximately £70,000 for every mega-watt of solar installed, which is the highest single payment per megawatt of installed solar for any community benefit society, commercial solar farm or portfolio in the UK.

The Council's Executive Board Member for Resources and Director of Egni Sir Gâr, Cllr David Jenkins, said: *"The last year more than ever before people are having to use the foodbanks to put food on their table so we didn't hesitate to repurpose these funds when they became available to help more families that are struggling and cannot afford the essentials of life."*

Egni Sir Gâr Cyfyngedig is an energy community benefit society established by Carmarthenshire County Council in 2015. Since then, it has installed 16 rooftop solar on council owned buildings. With a total capacity installed of 636 kWp (kilowatt peak), the electricity generated by these sites over the last 12 months equates to the equivalent of over 290 tonnes of CO₂e offset which contributes towards the council's commitment to become a net zero carbon local authority by 2030.

If you are struggling and cannot afford food, then please contact your local food bank.

Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 6

Live Well - Create more jobs and growth throughout the county

Median Gross Weekly Pay has increased by 7% in Carmarthenshire (from £536.2 to £572.1)
Carmarthenshire has gone up from 8th in 2019 to 3rd highest wage in Wales for 2020.
This is now above the Welsh average of £541.7

Why it is important

- ⊙ Providing secure and well-paid jobs for local people is central to everything we are seeking to achieve.
- ⊙ Increasing employability is fundamental to tackling poverty, reducing inequalities and has a dramatic impact on our health and ability to function in everyday society.

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

Median Gross Weekly Pay - See updated data above

Employment



Employment figure is TBC%

(April 20 – March 21)

(Previously 71.5%)

TBCth highest in Wales

Source: ONS – Annual Population Survey

Employment figures in Carmarthenshire at the end of March 2020 is **71.5%**, this is slightly down from 71.6% the previous year. This is below both the Welsh (73.7%) and UK average (75.9%), both of which have increased. We have also moved from 15th to 16th in Wales.

Although employment rates are not purely the Council's responsibility, these figures are disappointing. However, we have continued to put a number of funding initiatives in place again during 2019/20 to stimulate jobs and growth in the county in the form of Property Development Fund, Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund and Business Grants and created 393 jobs. The employment figures for 2020/21 are expected to drop in Carmarthenshire as in many parts of the UK due to effect of COVID-19. **Employment figures April 2020-March 2021 due to be published July 2021**

Qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above



40.7%

Qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above

@ December 2020

(previously 41.4% December 2019)

Source: ONS – Annual Population Survey

40.7% of working age adults living in Carmarthenshire are **qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above** @ December 2020, this is a slight decline on 41.4% the previous year and falls just below the Welsh average of 41.4%. This result moves us from 5th **highest figure** in Wales the previous year down to 10th.

Satisfied with jobs - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

- ⊙ The 2019/20 National Survey for Wales showed that **78.9%** of those participated were moderately or very **satisfied with their jobs**, this is below the previous result of 82.5% and we have moved down from 11th to 17th position in Wales. Due to COVID-19, there is no updated data available for the measure.

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

Pentre Awel

- ⊙ Pentre Awel will deliver significant benefits in respect of employment, recruitment and training, supply chain and community engagement. A cross-departmental team has worked extensively to prepare the highest value tender to be placed by the Authority at circa £70m. The development of quality criteria, greater quality vs. price apportionment (a departure from the default position) and emphasis on community benefits aims to maximise local social and economic impact. Reflecting on the year, important milestones have been achieved which will set the project up well moving forward. These include:
- City Deal Business Case approval by UK and Welsh Governments on 17th March 2021;
 - Pre-Application Consultation undertaken for the Hotel site in January;
 - Completion of RIBA Stage 3 design;
 - COVID-19 service planning to ensure Pentre Awel is responsive to new ways of working;
 - Ecology work (protected species surveys, translocation) for planning conditions;
 - MoUs with education, health and research partners.
- ⊙ We provided additional support to help and advise Carmarthenshire businesses and residents when the pandemic struck. A dedicated help line was established and was available seven days a week initially. Council officers were on hand to provide guidance on financial support and other help for businesses tackling the effect of the pandemic. Plus, a *dedicated business team* was established to speak to businesses directly.
- ⊙ **We helped over 4,000 businesses to receive Welsh Government's business rates grant payments of between £10,000 and £25,000 with a total amount of over £46 million.**
- ⊙ Lack of footfall in town centres had an impact on trade in our *market halls*, we offered our tenants free rent between April and June 2020 during the first national lockdown, and offered a 25 per cent concession on rent from July to September to traders who demonstrated that their turnover was affected. Traders were also supported by a range of Welsh Government grants
- ⊙ 1,000 businesses responded to a *questionnaire/telephone survey* conducted in May 2020 to find out more about the impact that COVID-19 had, had on Carmarthenshire businesses - identifying what was important to them in the short, medium and long-term, so that going forward we can provide them with the assistance they most need. The findings of this engagement will provide the platform upon which we will develop our economic response and recovery proposals going forward
- ⊙ A new online showcase was launched shining a spotlight on the best of Carmarthenshire's local independent businesses. [100% Sir Gâr](#) has been developed by ourselves with support from town and community councils, business, and retail groups, to give local retailers and producers a platform to highlight their products. Any local independent business or producer can sign up to be included and take advantage of the free marketing opportunity. By signing up they are able to access support to grow and improve their business. 100% Sir Gâr is a virtual shop window, highlighting a wide range of wonderful home-grown and handmade products by talented local people to become a vital resource for people shopping, as well as supporting local traders when they need it the most.
- Shelley Williams-Davies, who runs *Attic Vintage Interiors*, in King Street, Carmarthen, said: *"100% Sir Gâr will give us an opportunity to attract new customers and showcase what our shop has to offer. We hope it will encourage people to support small local independent businesses too."*
- ⊙ **97.3% of our invoices** were paid within 30 days – our best ever performance. Prompt payment is essential for businesses especially at a time on uncertainty due to the pandemic.



- © The [Regional Learning and Skills Partnership \(RLSP\)](#) worked with employers and training providers to measure the economic and skills impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and produced reports on the impact across the region. The RLSP identified a number of key skills that have arisen as a result of the pandemic that links to the City Deal projects. Work continued with businesses to understand the economic impact of COVID-19 and the impact on skills and training. The Skills and Talent Business Plan is nearing completion, with presentations having been made to the City Deal Programme Board and the Employer Strategy Board with a review by Welsh Government in April 2021.

The Way We Work

How We Have Helped Our Businesses



Having been made redundant from his former employer, *Ryan Jones* set up his new business, *Pentre Plumbing & Heating*, in April 2019.

With the help of a grant of almost £3,000 from the *Carmarthenshire Business Start Up Fund* operating at that time, Ryan purchased all the tools and equipment necessary for delivering his services and very quickly won contracts with clients such as Leekes and Ammanford Town Council, as well as building a reputation as a domestic plumber and heating engineer. This venture has not only created and secured a full-time job for Ryan going forward but has also laid the foundation to possibly creating another job within the business in the near future.

Having become much in demand as a reputable plumber, the arrival of COVID-19 and the closure of Leekes, Ammanford Town Council's facilities and cancellations from domestic clients not wanting any trades people in their homes, meant that unfortunately

Ryan's work all but stopped.

Ryan sought support through the Council's newly set up **COVID helpline** where he was referred to a business support officer for advice. Being a start-up business with no business rates liability meant that, unfortunately he fell through the net of many of the business support schemes which were being introduced at that time, but he was held on a reserve list and advised to apply for Universal Credit to help him through the lockdown period.

Upon the launch of the *COVID Start Up fund* introduced by Welsh Government in June and being delivered by Carmarthenshire County Council, Ryan was contacted and advised to apply as he met the criteria. Through this scheme, Ryan received £2,500 to help keep his business afloat until he can fully resume his services.

Ryan said *"I am grateful to Carmarthenshire County Council for the support they have given me in establishing Pentre Plumbing & Heating. From starting up last year to maintaining support when all went quiet during lockdown, their assistance has been invaluable to keeping the business going and sustaining my job"*.

Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 7

Live Well - Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes

We have delivered over 1,000 additional affordable homes

Good quality, affordable homes are the bed rock of healthy and sustainable communities. We have delivered **1,129** additional affordable homes since 2016 as part of the affordable homes plan

Why it is important

- Good quality affordable homes promote *health and well-being*, meeting the individual needs of the residents, building strong sustainable communities and places where people want to live.
- Good quality energy efficient affordable homes are good for the People and the Environment – our homes are well insulated and have the latest innovative technologies (solar panels and batteries to store energy) that do not only significantly reduce our carbon emissions, they promote affordable warmth for our tenants. The average savings to fuel bills can be as much as 60% per year.
- It's good for the *Social Structure* - well-placed affordable housing developments allow communities to welcome a wide range of families and to create a vibrant, diverse, group of residents.
- It's good for the Economy – Our plans to increase affordable housing will see the investment of over £150m over the next ten years in the county. This will help stimulate the local economy, grow the construction industry, the local supply chain and the green economy. This will also create jobs for local people as well as providing more homes to help local people remain in their communities.

Success Measure

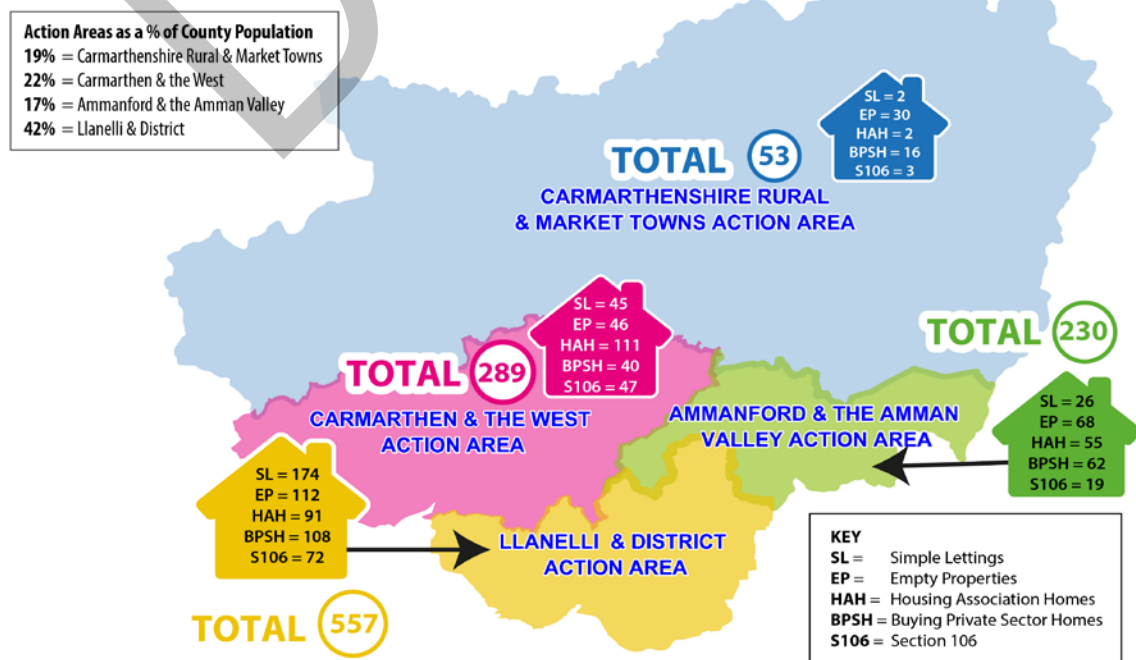
+ 158 Additional Affordable Homes during 2020/21



Explaining the Results

Affordable Homes Performance – Overall Performance from April 2016

1,129 Affordable Homes Delivered



Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

- Through our Affordable Homes Delivery Plan we aimed to deliver over 1,000 additional affordable homes between 2016 and 2021. We are pleased to report that we have exceeded this target and delivered **1,129** additional affordable homes. We have delivered the homes through the following solutions:

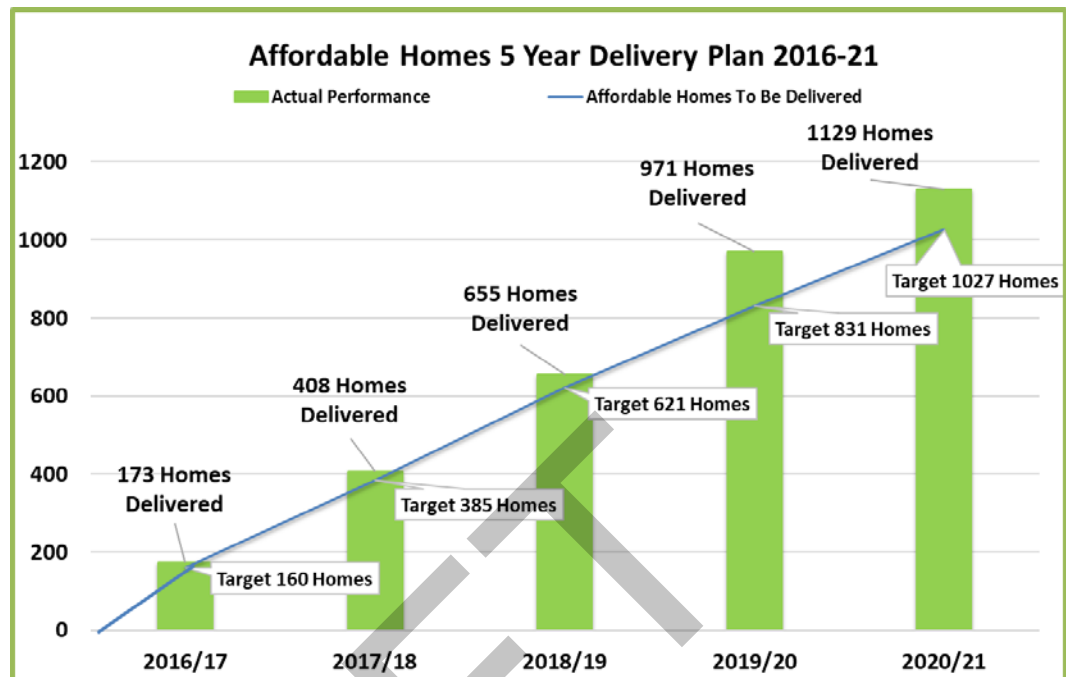
247: Simple lettings agency
(32: 16/17; 63: 17/18; 61: 18/19;
61:19/20; 30 20/21)

256: Empty homes brought back into use
(28: 16/17; 63: 17/18; 67: 18/19;
64:19/20; 34 20/21)

245: Buying private sector homes
(45: 16/17; 69: 17/18; 81: 18/19;
43:19/20; 7: 20/21)

240: Housing Association new build development
(45: 16/17; 20: 17/18; 17: 18/19;
107:19/20; 51: 20/21)

141: Section 106 Contribution by Developers
(23: 16/17; 20: 17/18; 21: 18/19;
41:19/20; 36 20/21)



Our new energy efficient affordable homes are well insulated and have the latest innovative technologies which will reduce our carbon emissions by on average 70% and reduce fuel bills for tenants by up to 60% promoting affordable warmth, growing the green economy and creating sustainable communities.

- In September 2019, we published our plans to build over 900 new council homes in our communities. Our plans will help stimulate the local economy and grow the green economy creating energy efficient homes and much needed local jobs. Our new build standards exceed the requirements of the Building Regulations and follow the principles of the Cardiff University's Welsh School of Architecture SOLCER house model for energy and include:
 - Highly insulated walls, roofs and floors
 - Triple glazed windows
 - Solar PV Panels
 - Battery Storage for any unused electricity produced by the solar panels
 - Electric car charging point
 - LED lighting
 - Achieve an average energy rating (SAP level) between 98 and 105

- ⦿ We currently have 8 council new build developments onsite including: Dylan, Garreglwyd, Glanmor Terrace, Gwynfryn, Maespiode, YMCA in Llanelli, Coleshill Terrace and Glanamman. These developments will create 145 new affordable homes. With a further 18 sites being prepared for either planning or tender. This includes 6 sites in rural areas that will be developed on a mix tenure basis and will provide homes for low-cost home ownership
- ⦿ In May 2020 the Future Generations Commissioner published a [report](#) on the progress of the Well-being of Future Generations Act the report states: *“Carmarthenshire’s new build programme is identified as an excellent example of what can be delivered in the social housing sector”*.



**Building over 30 new innovative council homes
in Glanmor Terrace, Burry Port**

Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 8

Live Well - Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour and obesity)

Excellent progress has been made in diversifying our health and well-being offer for the residents of Carmarthenshire by developing opportunities to engage online whilst supporting people to stay healthy locally during this challenging year

Why it is important

- ⊙ Our way of life is changing, people are living longer with a higher quality of life.
- ⊙ The challenge is to prevent ill health.
- ⊙ Living healthy lives allows people to fulfil their potential, meet educational aspirations and play a full part in the economy and society of Carmarthenshire.
- ⊙ Many of the preventive services and interventions required to maintain health, independence and well-being lie outside health and social care.
- ⊙ Playing a part in providing accessible, inclusive, exciting, sustainable services, which promote and facilitate learning, culture, heritage, information, well-being and leisure.

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

The following two [National Survey for Wales](#) results are based on a lower response level compared to previous years due to restrictions and resources due to COVID-19:-

General Health Good or Very Good



70% of Adults who say their general health is Good or Very Good
Previously 70%

Source: National Survey for Wales

70% of Carmarthenshire participants said their **general health is Good or Very Good**, this is the same as the previous year, comparatively we have moved down from 15th to 18th position in Wales. We continue to work with partners such as Public Health via the

Public Services Board to promote a healthy environment for Carmarthenshire residents, including exercise, nutrition, and cleaner air.

Long-term Illness



51% of Adults who say they have a long-term illness
Previously 51%

Source: National Survey for Wales

51% of Carmarthenshire participants **said they had a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity**, this is the same as the previous survey result, we have moved up from 15th position in Wales to 6th. Whilst this measure has numerous influences we continue

to see increases in the number and impact of schemes such as National Exercise Referral scheme with almost 1,400 referrals in the past 12 months.

Due to COVID-19, there is no updated data available for the following two National Survey for Wales results:-

Adult Mental Health - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

- ⊙ The 2018/19 **Mental well-being score** showed Carmarthenshire participants having a score of 51 out of a possible score of 70, same as the average score for Wales. This is based on 14 positively worded statements asked as part of the survey which represents positive attributes of well-being and covers both feeling and functioning as opposed to mental illness or disorder and is suitable for use in the general population.

Less than 2 Healthy lifestyle behaviours - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19.

- ⊙ The combined 2018/19 & 2019/20 result showed that **12.4%** of participants have **fewer than two healthy lifestyle behaviours** this had declined on the previous result of 8.8% and moved down from 5th best to 18th in Wales.

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

- Our specialist social work team have assessed 138 adults with drug and alcohol problems in the past year.
- £130k from the Valleys Regional Park fund has been invested in Llyn Llech Owain which has included a new toddler play area, improvements to the entrance and walkways, improvements to the Boardwalk and Visitor Centre and an enhanced outdoor area for the café.
- Our Library services have provided online access to residents throughout the pandemic, with 226,543 visits being made to our Libraries Corporate website, and a new 'click 'n collect' service being established in the three regional libraries.
- Over £500k has been spent at Ammanford Leisure Centre to re-furbish the wet side changing rooms, with further plans to upgrade the all-weather pitch and improve car parking facilities on site.
- Carmarthen Leisure Centre's external upgrades are nearing completion, with a new 2G AstroTurf surface laid, the 4x external community Tennis Courts re-surfaced, the Athletics Track re-surfaced and widened, and additional parking and traffic calming measures in place. Works are also well underway in Llandovery, where there is a £350k investment into the school conversion to provide the town with health & fitness facilities adjacent to, and complimenting, the swimming pool.
- Plans for the new leisure facility in Llanelli are now moving forward with over £25 million earmarked for a new leisure centre on the Pentre Awel site.
- During COVID-19, we have supported Sport Wales with 66 Sports Club Applications for the Emergency Relief Fund, totalling over £40k of funding to protect clubs during lockdown. In recent months, our internal Actif community sports team have been critical in promoting and supporting the award of Emergency Relief Funding, where Sport Wales (funding body) relied on our guidance and advice in allocating a proportion of the £500k+ of national funding to clubs and organisations in Carmarthenshire. This will continue as Sport Wales switch to an £8m+ 'Sport Relief Funding' mechanism moving forward.
- Due to the pandemic the National Exercise Referral Scheme was suspended, despite this we have maintained contact with 583 of our National Exercise Referral clients, making 13,657 contacts taking nearly 6,820 hours, with 693 home programmes sent to vulnerable clients.
- We have created a number of online fitness classes for our Actif Leisure members to access free of charge, during the period that our leisure facilities have been closed, whilst developing a new Actif Anywhere offer to deliver online memberships and activities in future.



John is 72 years old and lives alone following the death of his wife. He lives in the South of Carmarthenshire but was not a member of Actif until he saw an advert for the new Actif Anywhere digital platform in September.



The platform has been a life saviour for John during the pandemic as he would have otherwise spent the vast majority of his time alone. John has a background in martial arts and now practices Thai Chi.

Since the launch of the platform, John has been identified as being one of the major attendees and one of our biggest advocates. He has attended over 170 sessions to date and is now sometimes joined by his daughter or grandchildren when they visit. Over months, John trialled all the classes that have been on the timetable and has since found his favourites in Yoga, Dance, HIIT, Boxfit, legs bums & tums and Walk your way to Fitness. John says:

"Good morning all, just finished HiiT with Cath. Woke me up from my slumber, warmed me up from a chilly morning and set me up for the rest of the day. Thank you all at Actif Anywhere."

Beach Wheelchairs

Hi..

Last year I emailed you, asking about the possibility of introducing beach wheelchairs to Pembrey. I just need a few minutes each week breathing in the sea air to get myself calm and happy, and I'm usually content to just sit in my chair or scooter at the top of the beach for 20 minutes while hubby plays with the dog.

This used to be a nightmare, as getting onto the beach was very difficult, usually involving my husband dragging the chair backwards across the sand with the help of anyone available... but your fabulous chairs will change all that.

The chair itself was amazing, very comfortable indeed, and it moved so smoothly across the sand, hubby was really impressed.

So, a huge thank you for all your team has done, it is really, much appreciated.

Sian

Mental Health

People Speak Up is a social, mental-health, arts, health and wellbeing enterprise with inclusion, individual empowerment, and community involvement at its heart. It works closely with the local Carmarthenshire community and arts/health networks.

Reaching 450 / overall attendance of 2,000 / 15 projects
from the start of the pandemic in April 2020 – March 2021

- **Stories By Phone** – Our professional applied storytellers and practitioners facilitated weekly calls to people living in isolation and living with dementia: <https://wahwn.cymru/knowledge-bank/stories-to-the-door-and-stories-by-phone>
- **Story care & Share** – weekly wellbeing and mental health creative story sessions for ages 18+, this was adapted during the pandemic to Zoom, currently we are running workshops online and face to face.
- **Care Home sessions** – Weekly storytelling sessions, pre-pandemic at our base and at care homes. Since the pandemic, we have worked over zoom.
- **Intergenerational** - Main aim is to bring older and younger people together to re-connect through sharing time by working with professional storytellers, Spoken Word Artists & Visual Artists: <https://youtu.be/rVnLSsh4Dco>
- **Creative companions** – Bringing young volunteers together to an older person living in isolation, to create resilience and cohesion.
- **Young people Speak up** – Well-being creative sessions for ages 11-24/ adapted on to various platforms and face to face. These young people are integrated into all our other projects with mental health, connectivity, training and volunteering being our main objectives.

Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective

Age Well





Well-being Objective 9

Live Well/Age Well - Support good connections with friends, family and safer communities

We have seen remarkable spike in community spirit

Over the past year, in the face of the huge challenges of COVID-19 we have seen our communities supporting each other. Neighbours helping each other, colleagues supporting each other, and strangers working together for community good.

In a recent commissioned survey of Mid and South West Wales 77% of the interviewees referred to community cohesion as good, rising to 92% who said good but needing improvement. However, there is some concern that these gains may be short lived.

Why it is important

- ⦿ Safety and a feeling of belonging are important to personal well-being and more people appreciate the value of kindness and being part of a community.
- ⦿ Public bodies have clear obligations to create and support cohesive communities in Wales. Cohesive Communities is one of the National Goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act. A Cohesive Community is an area where those from different backgrounds share positive relationships, feel safe in their neighbourhood, and have a sense of mutual respect and shared values.
- ⦿ Community Resilience is also essential to enable communities to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations. The COVID-19 crisis has shown what can be achieved when communities work together.

Success Measures

A sense of community - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

Feeling Safe - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

We normally measure the success of this Well-being Objective with the above National Survey for Wales results but unfortunately due to COVID-19 these questions were not asked during 2020/21. The most recent data published in June 2019 showed that **51.6%** of participants felt they had a '**Sense of Community**', 14th position in Wales. With the number **feeling safe** was **76.1%** and in 7th place.

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

Community Cohesion

In order to ensure our communities are as cohesive as possible, we work with organisations at a grassroots level to develop initiatives that bring people and communities together and provide opportunities for people from different backgrounds to meet and get to know and understand one another.

- ⦿ During 2020, we ran two Community Cohesion Small Grants funds for projects across the region. We have funded 20 projects across the region, two examples are:
 - Story Connections – People Speak Up Llanelli. This project brought approximately 200 people from diverse communities together to share space and create stories and involved a wide range of partners including Syria Sir Gâr, Llanelli Pride, Ffwrnes Theatre and Youth service.
 - 'Faces & Places' project which is celebrating diversity across Mid & West Wales.

The Cohesion team have recently completed a research project, delivered by Premier Advisory Group to look at the impact that Brexit and COVID-19 had on communities. The purpose of this was to provide an evidence base, identifying potential community hotspots, tensions and issues and recommendations as to how we embed good practice into our work moving forward. We are now considering how to embed several recommendations into our policies and strategies.



- One of the key areas of work that we are engaged with is to raise awareness of *Hate Crime* and how to report it. Ensuring people understand what constitutes a hate crime, what is and isn't acceptable behaviour is so important and we work closely with agencies like Victim Support to develop campaigns and projects which support this work.
- Another key area of our work is to promote a *Cohesion calendar* of events and campaigns throughout the year, focusing on National campaigns and highlighting these with a regional or local perspective if possible.
- We have developed a perpetrator intervention programme on a regional basis to combat *Violence Against Women and Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence*
- The pandemic has provided opportunities for criminals to exploit persons who may be more exposed to fraudulent approaches due to lockdown/shielding and isolation from support networks with 2020 seeing an overall rise in the numbers of frauds reported nationally. trueCall Nuisance Call Blocking Devices which have been installed in elderly and vulnerable residents' homes in the county have for the year 2020/21 blocked 16,277 nuisance calls – based on national intelligence 4,883 of those calls were identified as calling from numbers used by known criminals.
- An *innovative alert system Seraphimbeta®* was developed in the wake of the pandemic to notify authority officers when a trueCall user was experiencing high volume of calls from suspected fraudsters. The system has generated 66 high level alerts leading to welfare calls and officer intervention to prevent vulnerable residents engaging in telephone fraud. Funding has been secured to develop the wider call blocking project further.

Sir Gâredig – Sharing Carmarthenshire's kindness

- This year, the act of kindness to others has been more prevalent than ever due to COVID-19, therefore Sir Gâredig – Sharing Carmarthenshire's kindness was introduced with the aim to connect people in need with those that can help. It was an opportunity to provide a focal point for community activities and a friendly term that people could use to share positive stories, images, and video on social media. This campaign was also an opportunity for people to be inspired to sign up and volunteer within their communities. To help their neighbours and share the good work and kindness that is being shared across Carmarthenshire.



Community Safety in Tyisha

Partner organisations are working closely together to tackle the drug, alcohol and anti-social behaviour issues in Tyisha, aiming to make the area a safer place to live. A survey has been completed by 217 residents in Tyisha – 10% of households - to give information on how they feel about policing, reassurance and safety in their neighbourhood. The results are being analysed and an action plan will be developed to tackle local concerns.

Two community wardens, part funded through a partnership bid with Dyfed Powys Police to the Home Office 'Safer Streets' fund, have been recruited by the Council and are working in Tyisha and Glan-y-môr to provide reassurance and support to the local community and raise awareness of crime prevention measures. The community wardens are setting up Neighbourhood Watch schemes and are working with partners to reduce crime relating to drug and alcohol use and to tackle anti-social behaviour including the use of CCTV and video doorbells provided by the Safer Communities Partnership using Home Office 'Safer Streets' funding. The Council are also working in partnership with neighbourhood policing teams and local housing associations to tackle anti-social behaviour within tenancies and deliver robust action plans to prevent it from reoccurring.

The Council introduced a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) into parts of Llanelli Town Centre in October 2020 to help combat alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour in public places and improve the quality of life for the local community.

Tackling Serious Violence and Organised Crime

We have continued to work closely with police and other partners to *successfully tackle 'County Lines'*, including the sharing of information and participating in targeted weeks of action. County Lines is a term used for illegal drug-dealing networks, usually controlled by a person using a telephone number – the 'county line'. They distribute drugs via 'runners' who are vulnerable children and adults recruited to transport drugs and cash all over the UK. This crime is often associated with other serious crimes such as sexual exploitation, violence, money laundering and human trafficking.

A new '*INTACT*' Strategy for 2021-24 has been developed by partners to tackle Serious Violence and Organised Crime across Dyfed Powys. A work plan has been produced, information and awareness sessions arranged for staff of partner organisations and clear prevention messages are being promoted widely to the public, with a new theme per month. A new Early Intervention and Prevention Team is being introduced, consisting of 10 community support officers across the region and an analyst. This team will aim to prevent children, young people and vulnerable adults from engaging in, or becoming victims of Serious Violence and Organised Crime. This team will develop and deliver early intervention activities, identifying opportunities for diversion activities, undertake targeted vulnerability patrols and support partners when working with young people.

Zero-tolerance approach to racism pledge

We have pledged to take a zero-tolerance approach to racism within the authority.

We have joined other organisations and individuals who have signed the policy as part of the Zero Racism Wales campaign which has been launched by Race Council Cymru.

By signing the pledge, we have committed to promoting a zero tolerance to racism approach throughout the organisation, this means that:

- ⦿ We will take a stand against racism and promote a more inclusive and equal society for all.
- ⦿ We will not tolerate racial prejudice, discrimination, harassment, victimisation, abuse, or violence against any individual.
- ⦿ We will stand in solidarity, come together, and say no to racism, in all its forms.
- ⦿ We will promote good race relations between people from diverse ethnic backgrounds in organisation.
- ⦿ We will promote equal and fair opportunities for people from diverse ethnic backgrounds to attain promotion.
- ⦿ We will eliminate unlawful race discrimination, harassment, victimisation and abuse.

Living in the community

We have redeveloped a property to provide accommodation for individuals stepping down from residential care.

The individuals have lived together for many years in a care home in Carmarthenshire which was scheduled for closure. Given their significant and complex needs, the likely outcome was that they would be placed in various other residential establishments. An Intermediate Care Fund grant was utilised in this project to find a suitable large residential property with outdoor space to meet their needs and maintain their longstanding relationships.



A property was purchased, and three individuals moved in in October 2020 with 24/7 support. They have been encouraged to be involved in the decoration and set up of their new home, particularly in the personalisation of living areas and their own rooms. They have also renamed the property.

The local community affords many opportunities for participation, as well as there being many leisure pursuits available within easy travelling distance. Family members have been consulted throughout and are now looking forward to visiting their relatives in their new home, maintaining these important links.

Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will have specific emphasis on *Community Cohesion* within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22 and will be renamed:

Live Well - Support community cohesion, resilience, and safety



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 10

Age Well - Support the growing numbers of older people to maintain dignity and independence in their later years

Support for older people has continued despite the pandemic:

We have continued to support older people and ensure that they can remain as independent as possible and maintain their dignity, despite the challenges that the pandemic has presented.

Why it is important

- ⦿ Consultations have demonstrated that 'what matters' to individuals is to be able to be as independent and well as possible for as long as possible.
- ⦿ Our frail population demographic is increasing and will require support to remain as independent as possible.
- ⦿ It is essential that we lay robust foundations to future proof the availability of services that promote and support ongoing well-being and independence for our frail older adult population.

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

Good Social Care Service available in the area



66%

Agree there's a good social care service available in their area
(Previously 47.5%)

Source: National Survey for Wales

According to the monthly [National Survey for Wales](#) questionnaires completed between May and September 2020, **66%** of participants believed that there is **good Social Care Service available in the area**. This result is based on a lower response level than previous years due to lower participation because of COVID-19.

This is a good improvement on the previous result of 47.5%, which maybe partly attributable to the pandemic which highlighted the excellent work and commitment shown by Social Care staff during this period.



99%

of people we surveyed during the pandemic within Adult Social Care said that we responded quickly to their needs

"Very, very fast response to my needs in a time of national lockdown"

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-1

- ⦿ We implemented new processes and procedures to ensure effective and safe assessment and support of individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ⦿ We revised the approach to support discharges from hospital to ensure that risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised for all.
- ⦿ We provided alternative support instead of day services and respite which have not been possible during the pandemic; this has included increased support to individuals and their carers at home as well as an increase in uptake to the CONNECT project to ensure that people can have regular social contact. (see *Well-being Objective 11*)
- ⦿ Wide scale consultation with service users and their carers who attended day centres prior to closure due to COVID-19 restrictions has resulted in a revised model of support in partnership with the third sector. This is including a pilot of 1 to 1 support at home and the development a virtual offer which allows people to join activities that they are interested in.



- A Care Inspectorate Wales Quality Assurance Check 2021 found that the local authority ensures people's voices are heard, their choices respected, and people routinely achieved self-identified outcomes and that the Delta/Connect project has been successful in promoting prevention and early intervention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies.

Supporting Care Homes in the County During the Pandemic

Within weeks of the national lockdown, multiple care homes were being hit by COVID-19 outbreaks, with significant numbers of staff and residents contracting the virus. Carmarthenshire County Council was in the unprecedented position as a commissioner of care home placements, and the key agency to help, advise and support care homes to deal with the challenges they faced linked to COVID-19. Carmarthenshire has the highest number of care homes of any county in Wales with 91 care homes, despite only having the 4th largest population of 188,771.



Faced with this challenge a Daily Operational Command virtual meeting was set up with all aspects of the Health and Social Care integrated community services system represented.

The aim was to help prevent acute hospitals becoming overwhelmed by ensuring safe and timely discharge from hospital and preventing admissions to hospital where not necessary, as well as ensure that care providers were effectively supported. This enabled rapid identification of the parts of the system that were experiencing pressure, and a joint problem-solving approach to alleviate the pressure points and ensure availability of hospital beds for those that most needed them. This was the first time that a wide range of services had been brought together, which was a significant achievement.

The Daily Operational Command was overseeing the impact of the temporary closure of admissions to Care Homes on the whole Health and Social Care system - when the availability of Nursing beds became very limited, the issue was escalated, and it was decided to re-open the Field Hospital to prevent long delays in being able to discharge patients awaiting these placements.

A Care Home Escalation Procedure was developed. This set out a blueprint on how outbreaks should be managed, adopting a standard multi-agency approach to support care homes through outbreaks. The Council's Commissioning Team took the lead on a multi-disciplinary team which included Commissioning, Care Management, Health Board Infection Prevention and Control, Environmental Health, Community Nursing and Primary Care to support the home with infection control reviews, help maintain acceptable staffing levels and nursing support and remained in place until the outbreak had ended. The processes which were put in place enabled a rapid response to an outbreak situation and the measures of success were that at no point was availability of acute hospital beds significantly compromised, and at no point was any care home unable to provide appropriate care for its residents.

Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22 will show this Well-being Objective 10 combined with Well-being Objective 11 to become -

Age Well - Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later years



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 11

Age Well - A Council-wide approach to support Ageing Well in Carmarthenshire

Over 10,000 pro-active well-being calls were made over the last year

Why it is important

- ⦿ Ageing well – ‘*adding life to years, not just years to life*’ – is important for each of us, and for our country as a whole. Older people should be seen as a vital part of society and should be able to have more opportunities to participate in and contribute to our economy and our communities. Older people are a significant asset to our community and economy.
- ⦿ Wider services can make an important contribution in supporting and sustaining the independence of older people and reducing the demand on Social Services and Health Care.
- ⦿ The *Older Peoples Commissioner, Heléna Herklots* sets the ambition of ‘Making Wales the best place in the world to grow older’.

Success Measure

Feeling Lonely - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

We normally measure the success of this Well-being Objective with the above National Survey for Wales result but unfortunately due to COVID-19 there is no updated data available for the measure. The most recent data published in June 2020 showed that **16.2%** of participating adults in Carmarthenshire **classed themselves as lonely**, this was above the Welsh average of 14.43% but had reduced from the previous result of 18.3%.

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

- ⦿ We have rolled out of the CONNECT programme across Carmarthenshire that provides proactive well-being support, including proactive well-being calls and digital inclusion.
- ⦿ We have funded intergenerational projects where connection between children and older people were promoted, such as the school children ‘virtually’ attending care homes.
- ⦿ We have increased digital inclusion of older people in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ⦿ We have launched *Connect to Carmarthenshire*, time-banking platform and active volunteering schemes in partnership with the third sector to promote social connectedness.



CYSYLLTU
Sir Gâr
CONNECT
Carmarthenshire

Carmarthenshire Project CONNECT finalists for an award

Carmarthenshire has designed and implemented an innovative and large-scale programme focused on supporting older people's independence and #wellbeing through a technological and digital approach that has been acknowledged as good practice not only across Wales but across the UK. This programme is called **CONNECT** and is delivered in partnership with Delta Well-being, health and social care and the third sector, funded by Welsh Government Transformation funds.



The project in Carmarthenshire is a finalist in the Public Sector Transformation Award for Excellence, as it exemplifies our ambition of working across sectoral boundaries to deliver a radical, person-centred approach to well-being, care and support. It involves implementing a new model of self-help and pro-active care, enabled by Technology Enabled Care (TEC), improving the well-being of individuals, which in-turn allows people to stay independent for longer, reducing demands on long term or acute care.

This programme is based on a model operating Spain which we adapted to fit in Carmarthenshire. This has not been done before in the UK and certainly not at the scale implemented in Carmarthenshire. Since February 2020 nearly 2,000 Carmarthenshire residents have been supported by the project and it has been instrumental in our response to the COVID pandemic. We do this is through:

- Well-being calls
- Digital support and TEC packages
- Help to re-engage with the local community (digitally currently, but physically longer term)
- Access to an appropriate Community Response Team 24/7, if in crisis



Over **10,000** pro-active well-being calls were completed between April 20 and January 21

An additional **9,000** well-being calls to provide COVID support



When surveyed **88%** of clients feel considerably safer with the service

Raymond's story...

Widower Raymond moved into sheltered accommodation after his beloved wife sadly lost her battle to cancer a few years ago. He was referred to CONNECT after being hospitalised for six weeks.

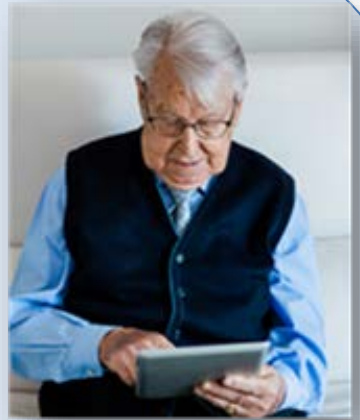
Paying tribute to his family, he said although he had always received great support from them due to COVID-19 he was unable to see them as he had received a shielding letter advising him to self-isolate.

Without being able to spend time with his loved ones and friends socially, and with no sporting activities taking place to go and watch, he began to feel "very depressed and lonely."

Through CONNECT, Raymond receives vital weekly well-being calls. This includes checking he has enough food at home and can access any prescriptions or medication.

Speaking about the benefits of the well-being calls he told us, "I really look forward to the calls. I appreciate them. It's nice to have a friend to talk to. I used to feel depressed in the week, but now I look forward to the calls every Monday morning. They have helped me regain my confidence, which is important. These calls help save lives as without them, I'd feel very down and would likely need more help from the NHS. I really feel like a different person after we've spoken."

Through the CONNECT service, Raymond also has a red button lifeline which he can press any time he needs help or support, and it goes directly through to the team's 24/7 Monitoring Centre. CONNECT also enables Raymond to have access to a 24/7 Community Response Service, if in crisis.



Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22 will show this Well-being Objective 11 combined with Well-being Objective 10 to become -

Age Well - Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later years



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective

Healthy, Safe & Prosperous Environment



Well-being Objective 12

Healthy & Safe Environment -

Look after the environment now and in the future

First local authority in Wales to publish a climate change action plan

In February 2020, we became [the first local authority in Wales to publish a climate change action plan](#) detailing how we work towards becoming net zero carbon in the next 10 years.

We were one of the first councils in the UK to declare a climate emergency, pledging, the ambitious and challenging target of becoming net carbon zero by 2030 - 20 years ahead of Welsh and UK government targets. Actions include developing new carbon reductions from council's buildings, purchasing more energy efficient fleet, collaboration with other public bodies to deliver wider change, exploring opportunities for tree planting and renewable energy generation on council-owned land.

Why it is important

- ⊙ The Natural Environment is a core component of sustainable development. The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 expands the duty placed on public bodies, requiring them to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience.
- ⊙ A biodiverse natural environment, with healthy functioning ecosystems, supports social, economic and ecological resilience. Carmarthenshire's natural environment is the natural resource on which much of our economy is based – tourism, farming, forestry, and renewable energy. It is a major factor that attracts people, both young and older to live, work and visit the county, bringing inward investment with them.
- ⊙ There is a strong relationship between residents' well-being and their surrounding environment from providing recreational opportunities, to psychological positivity, health benefits and a connection to heritage and culture.

Success Measures



We generated **TBC kWh** of renewable energy during 2020/21
(increased from 997,480 kWh in the previous year)



The Council's Energy Consumption (kWh) increased by **TBC%**
from 70,332,291 kWh in 2019/20 to **TBC** kWh in 2020/21



Our recycle rate is **66.08 %**
(This is an increase on the previous year's figure of 64.66%.
(Fly-tipping has increased by 29% and kerbside collection increased by 22%)

Explaining the Results

- ⊙ Renewable energy**updated figures due in TBC**
- ⊙ Energy Consumption by the Authority see table below. **Updated figures due in TBC**
- ⊙ **Recycling** increased in 2020/21 to 66.08% (51,494 Tonnes) from 64.66%(50,544 Tonnes) the previous year. We continue to exceed Welsh Government statutory targets (64% March 2020) avoiding any financial penalties.
 - Thanks to residents and the way in which they have used our recycling services, there has been a significant increase in recycling.
 - Looking ahead, how we collect recyclable materials in future and the way our residents use our recycling services will become even more important so that we can meet even more stringent recycling targets and our carbon reduction ambitions.
 - The recyclable material that we collect is used to make new products and can aid the circular economy, thereby minimising the need for raw materials and reducing our carbon footprint.

- In order to allow that waste material to be efficiently used to make new products, we have to ensure that the quality of the materials is the best it can be and that these materials are not contaminated, which could render them unusable for recycling.
- Consequently, looking ahead, we will need to review our kerbside waste collection strategy to address current problems, but this will mean that as residents of Carmarthenshire we all will need to have an open mindset towards new ways of collecting recyclable waste and to adopt the most effective way of recycling in the near future; ultimately, we are safeguarding our environment for future generations.

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

Net Zero Carbon

- ⦿ Working towards Net Zero Carbon we are trying to reduce energy consumption and emissions and the table below shows that whilst consumption has increased emissions have reduced.

Updated table extracted from the [Net Zero Carbon Action Plan Report-February 2020](#):

Updated table extracted from the [Net Zero Carbon Action Report February 2021](#).

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20 vs 2020/21	
	Results				Progress	% change
Non-Domestic Buildings						
Consumption (kWh)	63,690,923	64,857,362	66,407,242	TBC		
Carbon Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	16,258	14,822	14,443	TBC		
Street Lighting						
Consumption (kWh)	4,873,979	4,202,381	3,925,149	3,875,843	Improved	1.3%
Carbon Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	1,874	1,291	1,088	981	Improved	9.8%
Fleet Mileage						
Mileage (Miles)	5,121,289	*5,293,249	5,154,668	4,427,070	Improved	14.1%
Diesel Used (litres)	1,441,751	1,434,583	1,419,336	1,267,437	Improved	10.7%
Carbon Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	3,852	3,856	3,814	3,407	Improved	10.7%
Business Mileage						
Mileage (Miles)	3,948,586	3,846,615	3,971,513	2,251,986	Improved	43.3%
Carbon Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	1,159	1,118	1,132	621	Improved	45.1%
TOTAL						
Consumption (kWh)	68,564,902	69,059,743	70,332,391	TBC		
Mileage (miles)	9,069,875	8,829,043	9,126,181	TBC		
Carbon Footprint (tCO ₂ e)	23,143	21,087	20,477	TBC		
Note:* This figure has been updated to correct for incorrect mileage entries						

- ⦿ Street Lighting makes up 6% of our carbon footprint, with 1,088 tCO2e emitted in 2019/20. This is a decrease of 16% from 2018/19. We have completed the conversion of almost 100% of our 20,000 streetlights to low energy light-emitting diode (LED) lighting, funded by the Welsh Government's interest-free Wales Funding Programme. This has resulted in a 33% decrease in electricity consumption from street lighting over the past five years.
- ⦿ We have replaced almost 5,000 community lights with LED units working in partnership with Town and Community Councils.
- ⦿ We completed Phase 1 of our Re:Fit Cymru Programme, a £2.5m project funded by an interest free loan from the Wales Funding Programme, which aims to carry-out energy efficiency opportunities in our non-domestic buildings. Despite COVID-19 restrictions, energy efficiency measures were delivered across 17 schools and 13 other Council buildings including leisure centres, care homes and Council office buildings.

These measures will result in overall carbon savings of 675 tonnes of carbon equivalent (tCO₂e) and cost savings of £315,726 each year.

- ⊙ Business Mileage in 2020/21 has reduced by 1,719,527 Miles (43.3%) and amount paid has reduced by £757,904 (43%). The reduction in mileage has reduced our carbon emissions to 621 tCO₂e (45.1%). In addition, numbers of staff working from home has reduced the commuting mileage and emissions.
- ⊙ A major audit of all our electricity and gas meters has recently been completed. This will allow us to work with our energy suppliers to roll-out a comprehensive programme of smart meter installation as soon as possible. We will then focus on extending smart meters to our water consumption.
- ⊙ We continue to work with Welsh Government Energy Service (WGES) to explore and deliver large-scale renewable energy projects. WGES are currently reviewing our land holdings to determine feasibility for renewable energy. We are also actively pursuing other opportunities, including a possible power purchase arrangement with Hywel Dda UHB linked for a proposed 500 kWp solar farm at their Hafan Derwen site – some 50% of the generated electricity would be available to supply our adjoining Parc Dewi Sant offices



United Nations



The [Walk the Global Walk](#) international project in Carmarthenshire.

- Over the last three years, growing numbers of Carmarthenshire schools have been working to raise awareness of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- They have published Carmarthenshire Global Goalkeepers Climate Action 8-point [Manifesto](#) and presented this at the December 2020 Youth Climate Summit Cymru hosted by Welsh Government. The Council has endorsed the manifesto and agreed to include this action plan in its Corporate Strategy for 2021/22.
- This work is part of the EU-funded Walk the Global Walk project which involves schools in 12 nations.
- During the first lockdown, the Walk the Global Walk project carried out a series of events online. For example, a model UN debate on climate change as well as an international summer school involving pupils from different countries.

***"Thank you to connecting us to the outside world."** Carmarthenshire pupil*

Natural Environment

- ⊙ Ash dieback is a fungal disease which is having a devastating effect on ash trees across the UK – it is thought around 95% of ash trees could die from the disease. The council is currently having to remove affected trees for which it is responsible along A and B roads throughout the county as the trees are at risk of falling posing a serious risk to the public. Other landowners are also having to take similar action.
 - Carmarthenshire County Council has been actively looking for areas where new trees can be planted to help make up for the loss of trees that are being affected by ash dieback disease.
 - As well as helping to make up for the loss of ash trees, these will bring a number of other benefits. These new woodlands will, in time, absorb carbon dioxide, improve air quality and soil structure and support biodiversity by providing new wildlife habitats.
 - We have removed **648** Ash trees from our Council owned highways and **370** Ash trees from the Council owned sites. We are planning to plant 8.8ha of new trees and have started with planting **77** trees at St David's Park.

Bio- Diversity

Returning land to a species rich grassland which supports pollinating insects, reptiles, birds, and mammals.

Llyn Llech Owain Country Park in Gorslas is owned and managed by Carmarthenshire County Council. The park is a popular destination for local people to enjoy Carmarthenshire's spectacular countryside, which has become all the more important in the last year.



Within the park there are some special habitats which are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). One of these sites on the northern side of the park contains a large area of grassland and heathland which had started to become neglected due to lack of grazing.

In March, we were fortunate to have funding from the Green Recovery Grant to pay for the installation of fencing around the site and have arranged for native breed cattle to graze the site this summer to return the site to a species rich grassland which supports pollinating insects, reptiles, birds and mammals.

The site will give visitors the opportunity to see nature friendly farming in practice, showcasing the benefits this has for both habitat management and sustainable food production.

Flooding

The County has been subject to a number of significant weather events in recent years.

- Storm Callum caused widespread damage in 2018.
- Storm Lorenzo and Hannah in October 2019 and Storm Ciara and Dennis in February 2020
- During 2020-21 Storm Ellen and Storm Francis in August and Storm Aled in October

It is considered that the frequency of these events is increasing and are linked to climate change.

During the recent storms this year members of staff worked to support affected communities. We worked with Natural Resources Wales and emergency services to prepare for and respond to the rising waters.

- ⊙ We have assisted in the management and investigation of significant flooding through the winter of 2020/21. While affected by COVID-19, all high-risk flood assets have been inspected.
- ⊙ We worked with Natural Resources Wales and emergency services to prepare for and respond to rising water at Llanybydder, Newcastle Emlyn and Pontweli, and in Carmarthen around Pensarn and the Quayside.
- ⊙ We have developed operational plans and purchased mobile pumps to manage flood risk in high risk areas of Carmarthen.
- ⊙ We have invested in a bespoke weather service to better inform officer of storms and heavy rainfall events
- ⊙ All high-risk flood and coastal erosion risk management assets were inspected.
- ⊙ We have continued to develop our capital works portfolio and are continuing to develop schemes to manage flood risk in Pensarn, Llanybydder, Pont Tywelim, Llangennch, Ammanford and Newcastle Emlyn.
- ⊙ We are also developing a natural flood risk management scheme in Ammanford that will seek to use natural process to manage flood risk.
- ⊙ We have worked to address coastal erosion of the MCP and Bynea and coastal erosion at Burry Port and Pembrey.
- ⊙ As a Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) we are working with professional and amateur developers to advise them on sustainable drainage systems and adopt the systems when applicable.

Air Quality

- There is evidence that air quality has improved across the County during lockdown. Across all sites in 2020 the greatest improvements to Air Quality were observed during the first lockdown, particularly during the months of April and May as non-essential travel was restricted. The busiest roads that normally experience the highest levels of Nitrogen Dioxide with higher traffic counts benefitted the greatest, reporting around 50% decreases compared to 2019 [Impact of COVID-19 Lockdown on Air Quality Report](#)

Waste Services

- As a result of the changes in residents' lifestyles due to the virus, front line services saw a staggering increase in kerbside collection recycling tonnages. Blue bag recycling and food waste increased by 28% in addition to 706 tonnes more bulky waste materials being collected via our appointment-based collection service. Changes to the number of appointments per day had to be made to accommodate the demand for the service!



Residents kept the crews morale high with their paintings, thank you notes and posters and home baking treats, several are now on display in their cabs. Domino's Pizzas donated over 100 pizzas to the key works at our operational depots, and at Easter Morrison's Carmarthen donated easter eggs.

Due to the closure of the Household Waste Recycling Centres, we established additional temporary outlets for blue bags in order to meet Welsh Government 'essential travel – stay local' messages and as a result 67,000 rolls have been delivered to outlets and a further 40% increase in home deliveries achieved due to demand. Once more, our programme of annual deliveries of blue recycling bags and food waste liners are well under way with operational crews working additional hours in order to ensure that all 91,274 households receive their recycling bag packs by the end of spring 2021!

The way we work

Some of the changes we have made during the pandemic have proved so successful that we will change the way we worked before the pandemic.

Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) - online appointment system to visit

In order to make sure Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) were opened after the first lockdown on 26th May adhering to all government guidelines, officers rallied to set up an appointment-based system online to make residents visits safe for all concerned whilst making it as easy as possible for people to dispose of their waste. The result of this has seen 85,000 appointments successfully made since reopening. Partnership working with Cwm Environmental, IT, marketing and media and customer services was paramount to this success.



Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 13

Healthy & Safe Environment - Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity

Helping to gain access through the pandemic

Our Transportation and Highway related services facilitate the safe movement of goods and people. Enabling access to raw commodities and markets as well as providing opportunities for people to gain access to employment, education, health, leisure and social activities. We have continued to develop Active Travel by investing in shared paths and cycle paths, improved the road infrastructure to encourage economic activity and maintained a rural bus service through our Bwcabus and country cars service.

Why it is important

- ⊙ *Transportation and highways* play a key role in sustaining our community. A modern, successful economy is reliant upon the safe and efficient movement of people and goods; providing opportunities for people to gain access to employment, education, health, leisure, social and retail services.
- ⊙ *United and connected* is one of the Welsh Government's four aims in its 'Taking Wales Forward' plan. Providing integrated and affordable access for businesses, residents and visitors can stimulate economic development, reductions in deprivation and social exclusion and an increase in well-being.
- ⊙ *Sustaining access to services* through Active Travel plans will deliver improvements in health and well-being for all sections of the community including walking, cycling, passenger and road transport.
- ⊙ By 2030 South West Wales will be a confident, ambitious and connected City Region.

Success Measures

Roads that are in poor condition:

4.1% of our A Class

(An improvement on 5.4% in 19/20)

3.4% of our B Class

(An improvement on 4.7% in 19/20)

12.0% of our C Class

(An Improvement on 12.5% in 19/20)

Our road casualty numbers have **increased** with **TBC** people being killed or seriously injured on the roads

(111 in 2019)

(2nd highest in Wales)

Source: Stats Wales

Updated data will be published in July 2021



Explaining the Results

- ⊙ **Road conditions in Carmarthenshire have improved during 2020/21.** Carmarthenshire has the second largest highway network in Wales (3,482 Km of highways) and more than double the Welsh average of 1,578Km. We also have the third highest traffic volume in Wales at 2.06 billion vehicle km/per year (2018) far higher than the Welsh average of 1.33 billion (Cardiff highest at 3.0 billion followed by Rhondda Cynon Taff at 2.15 billion). The % of A class, B and C class roads in Carmarthenshire in a poor condition (red zone) has reduced; with the % of A class roads in poor condition decreasing from 5.4% to 4.1%, B roads from 4.7% to 3.4% and C roads from 12.5% to 12.0%.
- ⊙ **A total of 111 people were killed or seriously injured** on Carmarthenshire's roads in 2019, this is the 2nd highest figure in Wales behind Powys and an increase on 2018 of 97. These include 25 motorcyclists and 27 persons aged 16-24. Although we cannot control the number of road traffic incidents on the county road network, we do work with partner agencies to encourage the safer use of the road, engage with high-risk road user groups (motorcyclists, the elderly, young drivers), invest in targeted road safety engineering projects and assist the Police with speed enforcement campaigns and address community concerns about speeding. **Updated data will be published in July 2021**

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

- It was crucial that in order to help as many of our *town centre businesses to get back* operating safely as soon as possible, we needed to create safe town centre environments and enable sensible movement throughout, that gave residents and businesses confidence to resume activity and business. Priorities include: Signage; Communications with businesses; Public Conveniences; Bus Stations; Car Parks; and Street Furniture issues (e.g. benches) – with the aim for better access to the town’s public transport link. We introduced a range of traffic management and access measures in town centres along with public messaging to encourage shoppers and visitors back to our town centres.
- Despite the restrictions brought about by COVID-19 we also delivered a full capital programme which included the implementation of 25 highway support schemes and 97 road surfacing schemes.
- Public transport* was significantly reduced during lockdown, and in fact usage has plummeted even before the formal lockdown. This created an issue for operators where there was significantly reduced income on those routes which they managed to maintain a service on. This has created a funding issue going forward. It could take a considerable amount of time to restore patronage levels, and with many having grown familiar with home working there could be long-term adverse effects on service levels. Despite the challenges there may be an opportunity to re-visit and re-prioritise provision according to need.

“Bwcabus drivers have gone above and beyond...assisting key workers...they are wonderful and are so very appreciated”

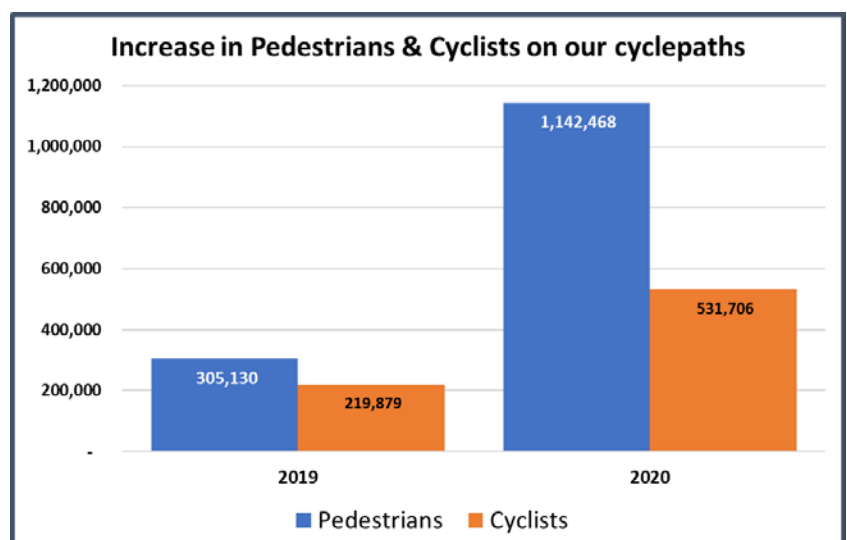


- School transport* was provided during the period that schools reopened in late June and July. Transport was available in accordance with our usual policy but only to those who specifically requested it. Transport operated as normal from September. The need to provide social distancing between driver and passenger created quite a challenge as it means that some seats nearest the drivers need to be left unused, creating loading issues and the need for additional vehicles. There is also concern that there may be a shortage of drivers and passenger assistants, bearing in mind the older age-profile of many of these.

Active Travel

This year due to the pandemic and more people working from home there is an increase in the numbers of walkers and cyclists.

Data based on a sample of our cycleways through the year shows that we had 837,388 (274%) more walks taken and 311,827 (142%) increase in cycling during the year.



The total number of recorded walks on all our cycleways in 2020 was 1,308,706 and 601,613 cycle counts, but we don't have comparable data for 2019 on all our cycleways.



- ⦿ £1,050,000 for the Llanelli Masterplan: providing the first step in creating an easily accessible and mostly traffic free shared use route through the spine of Llanelli.

The way we work

- ⦿ Roadworkers from our Cillefwr, Glanamau and Trostre depots initially assisted with food deliveries to our schools from Castell Howell in Crosshands, and then assisted with food packages being delivered direct to homes from schools.

We also had a number of roadworkers from our Trostre depot redeployed each day to the Waste / Refuse Unit as drivers in a support vehicle on refuse rounds. The support vehicle ferried one loader around the refuse round following behind the Refuse lorry.



Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 14

Healthy & Safe Environment - Promote Welsh Language and Culture

We will increase the confidence of Welsh speakers and therefore the use of the language in every sphere of life and encourage and support the county's organisations to make the Welsh Language an increasingly natural medium for their services.



Why it is important

- ⦿ Carmarthenshire is a stronghold for the Welsh language and is considered to be of high strategic importance in its future.
- ⦿ Bilingualism is beneficial to both the economy and individuals through cognitive and social benefits.
- ⦿ It is a unique selling point. Tourist and hospitality industries throughout Europe are now realising the importance of offering unique experiences. Having two languages and a sense of Welsh history and culture places Carmarthenshire in a strong position.
- ⦿ Engaging in cultural activity has demonstrable positive impact on starting well, living well and ageing well.

Success Measures

We normally measure the success of this Well-being Objective with the below National Survey for Wales results but unfortunately due to COVID-19 there is no updated data available for these measures:

People who can Speak Welsh - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

The most recent data published in June 2020 showed that **37.4%** of participants said they could **speak Welsh**, this continues to be 4th highest in Wales despite a slight decline on the previous result of (37.8%). The National Survey for Wales gives a good annual indication, based on a sample of the population, of the number of Welsh speakers, however, the Census is the only source that gives a whole population figure, with 43.9% (78,000 speakers) noted in 2011, the highest number of Welsh speakers in any county.

People who visited Arts Events, Historic Places and Museums - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

The most recent data published in June 2020 for participants from Carmarthenshire **attending an arts event, visiting historical places or visiting a museum** had increased. Both visits to Arts events and museums were below the Welsh average of 70.4% and 42.5% respectively but the % visiting historic places are above the Welsh average of 62.5. *Please note that the questions asked whether they attended or visited these places in Wales and not specifically in Carmarthenshire.*



Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

Language

- Our Marketing and Media team have ensured compliance with the Welsh Language Standards in all communication during the pandemic. This includes all web based and social media-based information and all emergency messages.
- We have continued to promote our Work Welsh opportunities to our staff and have seen an increase in the staff accessing the online Croeso modules available through the National Centre for Learning Welsh. In March 2021, Carmarthenshire were awarded the 'Employer of the Year' award at the Work Welsh 2020-21 Awards through Aberystwyth University. These awards were given across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. We were presented with the Welsh in the Workplace award for our work in creating a very supportive environment for Welsh speakers and learners.
- During the year, we have continued to support our pupils and parents within Welsh-medium education and have circulated the 'Welsh homework? No problem!' guide to all parents. The aim of the guide is to alleviate any concerns parents may have in supporting their children to study and complete homework through the medium of Welsh.
- To support our staff to use the Welsh language daily and whilst using new technology, a new electronic guide was prepared to explain the key features available. Technology facilitates the use of the language daily and with staff working remotely and accessing more online meetings, the guide signposts to online resources and features within Outlook and Teams.

Culture

- A new Archive Building is nearing completion at the rear of Carmarthen Library.
- Funding has been secured to secure the future of Oriel Myrddin as the foremost visual arts and crafts gallery in West Wales. A development project that will see £1.9m invested to refurbish and extend the gallery which will in future have the capacity and security standards to attract loans from National art collections.
- £1m has been invested in Abergwili County Museum and improvements have been made to the roof and entrance to the building to return the Bishop's Palace to its former glory.
- A West End at Christmas concert was filmed at the Ffwrnes Theatre for care home residents and staff across West Wales. Care homes were offered a link to watch the concert on YouTube or a DVD sent in the post.
71 individual care homes across West Wales registered for the online link to watch, with a further **100** homes receiving DVDs.
- Theatrau Sir Gâr supported colleagues within Carmarthenshire County Council to successfully make a bid for capital funding from the Integrated Care Fund bid which funded new smart TVs, tablets, and other digital equipment to enable care homes across Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire to become more connected during the pandemic. Our live streaming of concerts coincided with this bid and helped the care homes to access theatre which they had been unable to do previously.
- A series of 4 Welsh language gigs were streamed as part of our 'Yn Fyw o'r Ffwrnes series' featuring ALFFA, GWILYM, MELLT and Eädyth, with Eädyth's set coinciding with Welsh Music Day 2021.



Abergwili County Museum



Welsh in Business

The private sector is not obliged to operate bilingually by law. However, Carmarthenshire County Council, like the Welsh Government, is keen to see the county's businesses reflect the bilingualism of our residents and offer people the opportunity to use their Welsh. Our aim, therefore, is to promote the Welsh language, and facilitate and support its use, with Carmarthenshire's businesses, in accordance with our Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. During 2020-21 we took the opportunity to do this by producing a comprehensive leaflet, *Welsh in Business*, to assist the county's businesses to operate bilingually, and this was done in partnership with the regional business officers of the *Welsh Government & the Mentrau Iaith*.

Research was gathered from the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office and Welsh Government to provide a sound basis for the information in the leaflet. The team then worked with *Helo Blod* officers on the design and content of the booklet from the outset, collating local case studies to give the leaflet a local flavour and to ensure that it was relevant to Carmarthenshire. The content was designed to reflect the message that the Welsh language is for everyone; for those businesses who want to take small steps towards increasing their use of Welsh to reflect the bilingualism of the county, as well as for businesses who want to operate fully bilingually.

A distribution plan was created involving several new partners. It was arranged for the Council to disseminate the electronic link through our work with economic development, trading standards, leasing, tourism and childcare. We also worked with business promotion agencies to ensure that it was included in the they used to give advice to businesses. *Menter a Busnes* sent the booklet to all businesses on the *Cywain project* for example.



Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective

Building a Better Council & Better Use of Resources





Well-being Objective 15a - Building a Better Council

When the pandemic struck, we were in a good position in terms of IT

Our [Digital Technology Strategy](#) set out a new approach that would underpin just about everything we do as a Council and when the pandemic struck we were in a good state of preparedness. We had been taking advantage of new digital platforms so that our residents and businesses could find information or complete their dealings with the local authority in ways that are convenient to them and also saved public money. This vision and investment put us in a favourable position at the onset to move services on-line and to facilitate home working.

Why it is important

- ⦿ The general purpose of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the well-being of Wales take the needs of future generations into account. To make this work there are 7 key areas of corporate change that are required by the Act.

1 Corporate Planning	Covered by Building a Better Council
2 Performance Management	
3 Workforce Planning	
4 Financial Planning	Covered by Making Better Use of Resources
5 Assets	
6 Procurement	
7 Risk	

Success Measures

We normally measure the success of this Well-being Objective with the above National Survey for Wales results, but unfortunately due to COVID-19 there is no updated data available for these measures. The most recent data published in June 2020 showed that:

People can Access Information - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

- **71.2%** of participants agreed that they **could access information about us in the way they preferred**, below the Welsh average of 74.9%, and in 17th position.

People can find out what services we provide - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

- **74.6%** agreed that **they knew how to find what services we provide**; below the Welsh average of 75.8% and in 13th position in Wales.

People have opportunity to participate in making decisions - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19

- Only **9%** agreed that **they have an opportunity to participate in making decisions about the running of our services**. Well below the Welsh average of 17% and in 21st position.

We also measure our success with **Staff Sickness data**, the 2020/21 result shows that: -



Staff Sickness dramatically reduces to

7.7 days per year

(previously 10.7 days)

Sickness levels within the Authority have reduced by an average of **3 full time equivalent days** per employee during 2020/21.
From 10.7 days in 2019/20 to 7.7 days.

Short-term sickness has reduced by over 50% during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic with shielding and working from home being key factors in this.

Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID-19

Building new and better ways of working is something that we have trying to do for some time. However, the pandemic accelerated changes to the way we work and has taught us much.

Through a talented and committed workforce and continued investment in our digital infrastructure we are now well placed to deliver even better public services. By using what we have learnt and modernising the way we provide services, we have the opportunity to make work better for everyone whilst building a better, more productive, and healthier Carmarthenshire now and for the future generations.

Corporate Planning

- Our *Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives* were last refreshed in June 2019 and as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit and Climate Change we have refreshed the Corporate Strategy for 2021/22.

Performance Management

- An *Annual Report* was produced for 2019/20 and published in October 2020.
- Many of the actions and targets set for the year were blindsided by the pandemic and a *Community Impact Assessment* of COVID-19 was published in October 2020 to account for the first half of the year.
- We have been reporting at half year and quarterly on Performance Measures and Regulatory Report Recommendations.

Workforce Planning

- An integral part of the business planning process. In 2015 we developed a toolkit for managers and held bespoke development sessions. We will be running further development sessions for managers (facilitated by the LGA) to help managers respond to future service demands. To support the process, we continue to provide people data for managers' use.
- We have launched a new appraisal process that focuses on the individuals' strengths. It aims to **recognise** good work and successes, to help individuals and the service **grow** by exploring what individuals have done well, and how we can work **together** to achieve our ideas. Initial discussions have begun with schools to support the development of an appraisal process for non-teaching staff.
- During the pandemic we developed creative digital solutions to keep the organisation learning and to re-skill staff so that they could be deployed to critical service areas. We also undertook a skills audit which will provide a valuable resource for services to call on
- We redeployed 900+ staff during the pandemic to support essential service delivery.

Staff Health & Well-being

- We have continued to ensure we fully *support staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle*, which includes proactive and preventative actions, education to raise awareness on key health topics and, where necessary, ensuring the careful management of staff sickness absences in the interest of the staff and the provision of services.
- 160 volunteer *Well-being Champions* have been trained and are working, encouraging and motivating their colleagues - developing clubs, teams, activities and corporate messages which improve mental and physical health and well-being.
- The Council has achieved the highest award in recognition of the work we do to support our staff's health and well-being. The *Platinum Corporate Health Standard* is the quality-mark for workplace health promotion in Wales led by the Welsh Government.



We are the first Authority in Wales to achieve the [Platinum Corporate Health Standard](#)

Mental Health of Staff

- We have re-signed the *Time to Change Pledge* which confirms our continued support, priority and work on reducing mental health discrimination and the stigma around the topic. Alongside this, work continues on our mental health action plan which works in partnership with the Authority's well-being agenda.
- Since first signing the pledge in 2015, we have created a mental health e-learning module and rolled out mental health awareness training for managers and all staff across the Authority.
- We are also looking to recruit mental health first aiders/supervisors across the authority and in our schools as well as recruiting a new Well-being Coordinator which will focus on mental health and initiatives supporting this work.

The way we work

From a strategic perspective, the *Transformation, Innovation and Change (TIC) team* has been responsible for evaluating the Council's response to the COVID-19 crisis to ensure that any learning and positive changes are used to inform the approach to the re-setting of services and the Council's future strategic and operational delivery framework. The review focused on the following key questions:

*"Life has changed, and work life is changing too. Building on the learning through the pandemic, Carmarthenshire is transforming its working practices and accommodation to modernise, and support the shift to, the way we need to work. We will create vibrant, collaborative, and dynamic workspaces that are fit for purpose and flexible enough to sustain the way everyone works to deliver outstanding services. **Case for Change (March 2021)**"*

What's gone well and how this may have contributed to better/smarter ways of working?

What hasn't gone well and why?

What specific learning and examples of good practice do we need to ensure are now embedded in future ways of working?

What further support/other arrangements need to be put in place to ensure that any positive changes are sustainable?

An example of a new way of working developed during the COVID-19 pandemic that we will continue with...

The Adult Learning Disability Day Service

These services were severely reduced at the start of lockdown period. To mitigate the impact of this on service users, services were provided virtually according to individual plans and interests such as cooking, gardening, bingo, karaoke etc. Targeted support was also provided for those with the greatest needs via an overnight support at home and emergency respite care.

- Service Users have been able to access a broader range of virtual sessions and engage with a wider number of participants, which has resulted in new peer groups being formed.
- Carers have been able to participate alongside service users in the online activities, which has allowed them to see how their dependant engages and responds to the sessions, engage with other carers, and strengthen links with support staff and, likewise, form peer groups.
- Staff have been given the opportunity to be innovative in developing and delivering online sessions, engage with a broader range of services users and their carers.

Activities have been expanded to provide service users with additional "life skills. For example, virtual cooking lessons also factored in elements of menu planning, how to shop for ingredients, food preparation, cooking and cleaning up.



Chris Boner
Baking



Dean Bonnell with a
Woodworking Activity Pack

With reduced capacity in our building-based service as we need to develop more community-based options to ensure everyone gets the support they need.

The transformational journey for service delivery has always aspired to make better use of facilities and services available in local communities. The service is working closely with colleagues in leisure and third sector partners to provide service users with access to a cohesive range of community-based services. This will also have a positive impact on travel costs and support the net zero-carbon agenda as we reduce the number of service users who have to travel [some distance] to building based activities.

Supporting adults to grow, develop and feel safe, belonging to their community

Going forward...

During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22 and will be renamed:

Better Governance



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective



Well-being Objective 15b - Making Better Use of Resources

The financial position faced by Local Authorities across Wales has been greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with Welsh Government Funding and Grants to support our community during this pandemic

Why it is important

- There are increasing demands and expectations yet less resources are available. Under these conditions we need to work even more efficiently and effectively to maintain services and improve where we can, delivering *'more (or even the same) for less'*.
- The general purpose of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the Well-being of Wales take the needs of future generations into account. To make this work there are **7 key areas** of corporate change that are required by the Act.

- 4 Financial Planning
- 5 Assets
- 6 Procurement
- 7 Risk

**Making
Better Use
of Resources**

Success Measures

'Do it online' payments - See infographic and comments below

Organisational 'running costs' - See infographic and comments below

People agree that the Council asks for their views and as part of Carmarthenshire County Council budget consultation we sort views of members and public before setting the budget - updated data is unavailable due to COVID-19



Financial impact of the pandemic was £30m

(£20m extra costs and £10m lost income). This will be claimed back from Welsh Government.



£72m of Grants paid to support local business.

£308K of Self Isolation Grants were paid.

410 person weeks of targeted recruitment & training

16.09% increase of *'Do it online'* payments (From 46,044 to 53,454 transactions)

Explaining the Results

- Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and with increased access to online services, this has created a natural shift with many customers contacting us, submitting forms and documents and paying for our services electronically with a 16% increase in the number of online payments from 46,044 in 2019/20 to 53,454 transactions increasing customer satisfaction and efficiency of service.
- There is a forecasted underspend of £1.98 million of which £1.7 million relates to Capital charges not incurred during the year due to capital schemes being delayed due to the pandemic.
- The 2019/20 National Survey for Wales showed the number of participants agreed that *we ask for their views before setting our budget* was 9% (Welsh average 9.2%), this is a decline on the previous year of 11.3% and in 9th position (previously 7th). Due to COVID-19 there is no updated data available for the measure, although we continued to hold our annual budget consultation and engaged with councillors and members of the public.

- ⦿ We have supported local businesses and town centres with payments to the sum of £72 million being paid from the 1st April 2020 in Discretionary and Non-Discretionary grants to ensure the survival of local businesses.
- ⦿ £308K of financial support has been paid to eligible claimants who have been contacted by NHS Wales, Test, Trace, Protect Scheme to isolate on or after 23rd October 2020 via the Self Isolation Payment Scheme.
- ⦿ Through our delivery of Community Benefits over 410 person weeks of targeted recruitment and training was delivered in 2020/21 through the Council's 21st Century Schools project across the County.

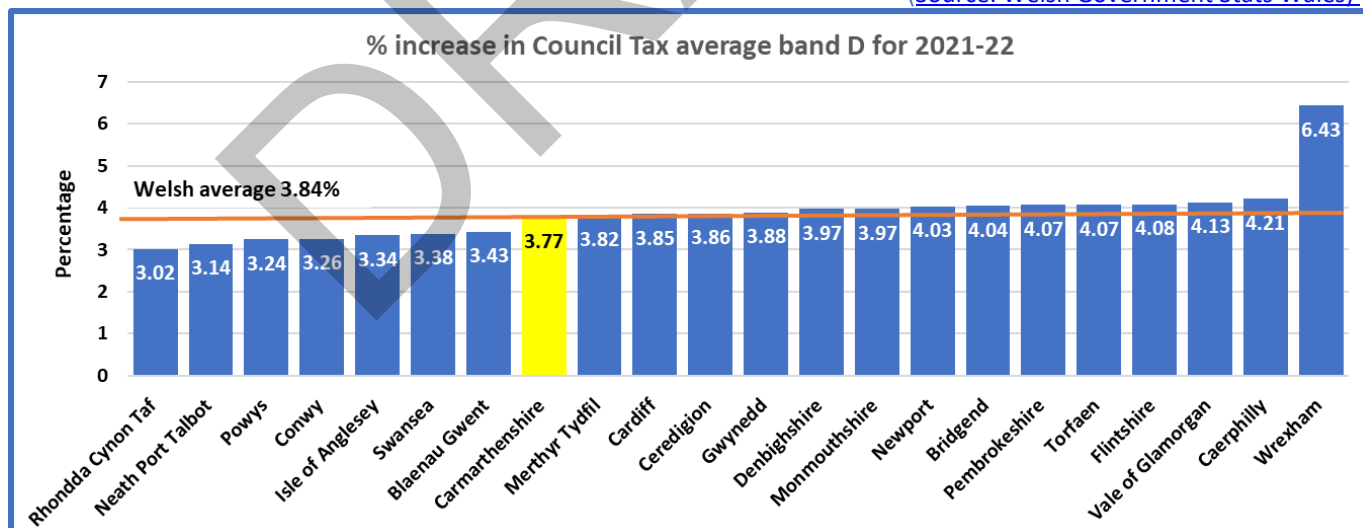


Progress on this Well-being Objective taking account the effect of COVID19

Financial Planning:

- ⦿ It was agreed at full Council in March 2021 that the Council Tax increase for 2021/22 will be set at 3.45%, for County Council services. The table below illustrates the average increase to be paid for residents in Carmarthenshire including Town and Community and Police and Crime Commissioner. This is the 8th lowest increase in Wales and below the Welsh average of 3.84%.

(Source: Welsh Government Stats Wales)



- ⦿ Our financial reporting arrangements have been adapted throughout the year with consideration given to address any underlying pressures with the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the emerging impact of the post Brexit trading arrangements.
- ⦿ A mixed method approach to ascertain views of the 2021-24 budget took place including Councillor involvement and Public Consultation. The survey was advertised via social media, local and regional press and radio and via various groups including Equality Carmarthenshire, Ageing Well Network, the Carmarthenshire Disability Coalition for Action and via Town and Community Councils. All responses received were considered as part of the budget setting process.

Assets:

Asset Management

- Recent examples of where we've reduced accommodation and generated revenue from lettings or capital from sales are:
 - Nant Y Ci, Carmarthen
 - Parc Dewi Sant (Block 14 and part of Block 3 and 8), Carmarthen
 - 5-8 Spilman Street, Carmarthen
 - 2-4 Coleshill Terrace, Llanelli
- We have continued to support local ownership of assets through our *Community Asset Transfer* work with most of Council playing fields and playgrounds transferred to Town and Community Councils and community groups enabling new sources of funding and safeguarding these assets for future generations.
- We have also supported our business tenants in meeting the challenges faced over the last 12 months with rent concessions and flexible terms.

Facilities Management

- As a result of continued office accommodation rationalisation and the ongoing working from home strategy, two buildings were able to be closed and several others had restricted opening hours or days. Our Property team carried out additional legislative checks on these sites, such as Legionella flushing, which was needed due to the increased risk due to the reduced number of staff.

Agile working areas were created in various offices - Tŷ Elwyn, Llanelli; 3 Spilman St / St David's Park, Parc Myrddin and County Hall, Carmarthen; and Town Hall / Tŷ Parcyrhun, Ammanford.

Cleaning Services

- As infection control and cleaning in schools played a significant role in enabling schools to reopen at the end of June, we launched a significant recruitment drive in May and June. Within a short window of 4 weeks, we employed and trained over 150 new employees to increase the team of cleaners from around 550 to 700.

The revised cleaning regimes and recruitment required a huge retraining programme which was supported by redeployment of additional staff from other services including Public Protection, Highways and Planning Services. Cleaning arrangements were enhanced across all our buildings to ensure the safety of our staff and the public.

Risks:

- The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed by the Corporate Management Team every 2 months and by Audit Committee every 6 months. Corporate, Departmental and Service Risks are updated in line with the Risk Management and Contingency Planning strategy 2018-22 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Procurement:

- We had some difficulties in sourcing high demand products such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), so we were actively engaging with partner organisations such as Welsh Government, NHS and other Local Authorities within Wales to source these products from specialist suppliers.

Through the Environment Directorate we set up a PPE, hygiene and cleaning store, that has been operating for all non-social care settings across the Authority.

- We have undertaken a considerable piece of work with the *Centre for Local Strategies (CLES)* with the Council being key partners in the PSB foundational economy challenge fund project. The project looked at the Council's current approach, our Procurement Spend, engagement with key stakeholders and suppliers to develop an advanced progressive procurement action plan that will further support opportunities for the Council to build community wealth into our procurement activity. Embedding this approach will be central to the County's wider Economic Recovery Plan.

Making Better Use of our Resources by Supporting our Suppliers and Providers virtually



Due to COVID-19 and the restrictions placed on Supplier Engagement, we have adapted our ways of working and have held virtual Procurement Surgery Sessions and Webinars to further enhance procurement support available. Procurement support is now offered virtually to suppliers and providers and we have worked with Business Wales to hold 'Live Tender Workshops'.

The aim of the Workshops initiative managed by our Corporate Procurement team and delivered by Business Wales Tender Advisers is to pro-actively engage with suppliers who require this level of assistance with submitting their tenders via the electronic tender portal, Bravo; an example being a Virtual Market Engagement Event for the Flying Start Programme tender whereby 25 providers attended. Due to the nature of the business of the organisations who had an interest in this tender, the event was held on a Saturday allowing childcare providers the opportunity to attend the virtual session.

A briefing paper was drawn up for the event summarising the requirements and specification of the tender which provided as much information as possible to providers prior to the tender advertisement. This allowed opportunity for providers to ask more relevant/pertinent questions at the virtual event. This was followed by a Live Tender Workshop for the Flying Start Childcare Programme organised by us and run in conjunction with Business Wales Tender Support Team whereby 7 Providers attended



Going forward...

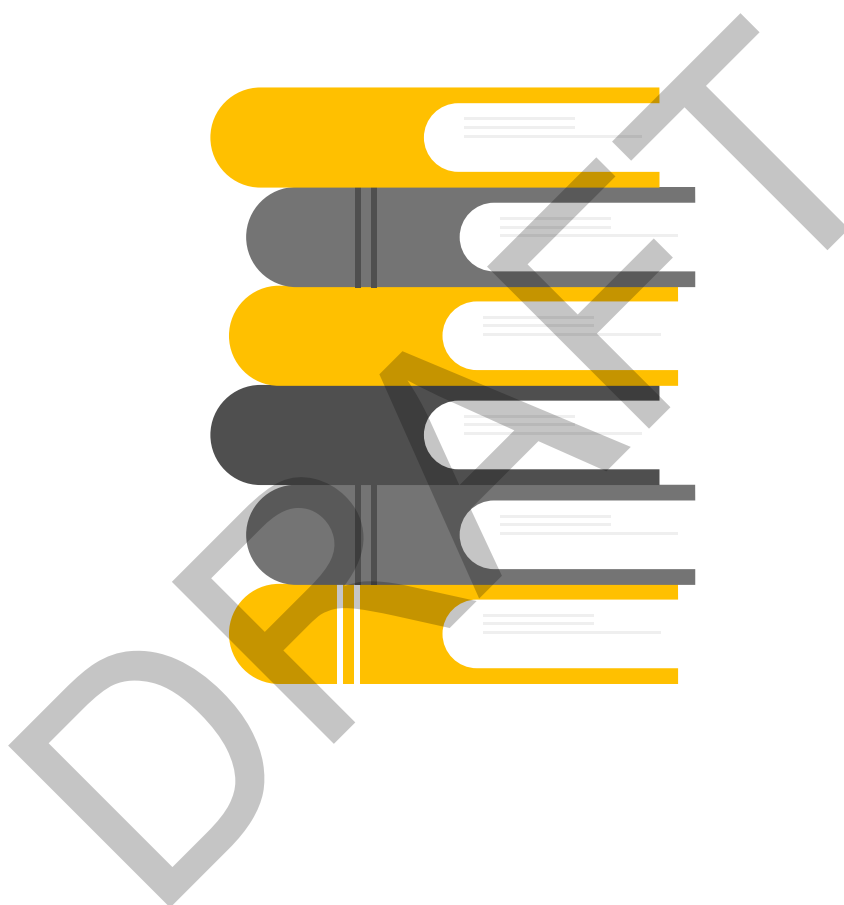
During our annual review of the Well-being Objectives, this Objective will remain a Well-being Objective within the updated Corporate Strategy for 2021/22 and will be renamed:

Better Use of Resources



View our [detailed progress here](#) against this objective

APPENDICES



Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 are separate but interconnected legal obligations. Our Well-being Plan combined both requirements and this Annual Report does the same.

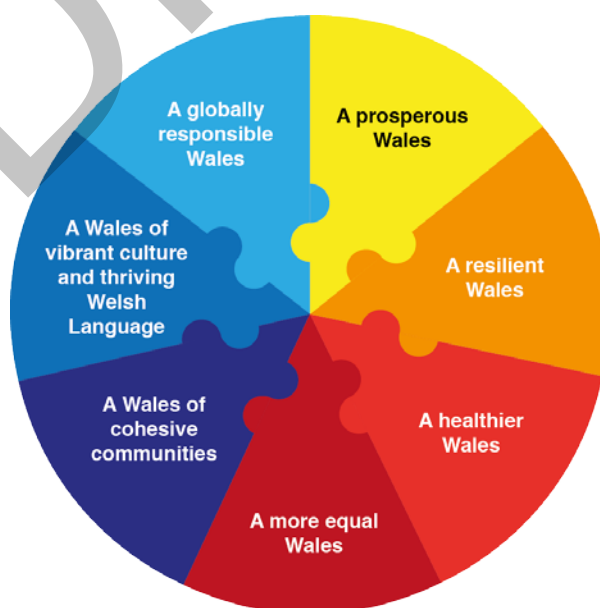
The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009

- The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires the Council to set Improvement Objectives every year. They do not have to change every year or be deliverable within one year.
- Our Improvement Objectives are essentially the same as our Well-being Objectives as they are based on a thorough evidence-based understanding of the communities we serve and local needs. We compare our Service performance and satisfaction results with all Councils in Wales to make sure we improve where we most need to.
- We have a duty to improve, often delivering 'more (or even the same) for less'.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

This is an Act introduced by the Welsh Government which will change aspects of how we work. The general purpose of the Act, is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the well-being of Wales, take the needs of future generations into account. The Act is designed to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales, in accordance with sustainable development principles. The new law states that:-

- We must carry out sustainable development, improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The sustainable development principle is **'... the public body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'**
- We must demonstrate 5 ways of working:
Long term, integrated, involving, collaborative and preventative (see **Appendix 1**)
- We must work towards achieving all of the 7 national well-being goals in the Act. Together they provide a shared vision for public bodies to work towards.



For the first time in Wales, the Well-being of Future Generations Act, provides a shared vision for all public bodies in Wales to work towards. As a public body subject to the Act we were required to set and publish Well-being Objectives that maximised our Contribution to the Well-being Goals.

How our Well-being Objectives contribute to the 7 National Well-being Goals

Carmarthenshire's 2019/20 Well-being Objectives			7 National Well-being Goals						
			Prosperity	Resilience	Healthier	More equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant culture & Welsh Language	Global responsibility
Start Well	1	Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	2	Help children live healthy lifestyles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3	Support and improve progress and achievement for all learners	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
	4	Ensure all young people are in Education, Employment or Training (EET) and are following productive learning and career pathways	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Live Well	5	Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, help people into work and improve the lives of those living in poverty	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	6	Create more jobs and growth throughout the county	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	7	Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8	Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour & obesity)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Age Well	9	Support good connections with friends, family & safer communities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	10	Support the growing numbers of older people to maintain dignity & independence in their later years	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	11	A Council-wide approach to support Ageing Well in the county	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
In a Healthy, Safe & Prosperous Environment	12	Look after the environment now and for the future	✓	✓	✓				
	13	Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	14	Promote Welsh Language and Culture	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	15	Building a Better Council and Making Better Use of Resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓


Success measures for our Well-being Objectives

Well-being Objective		Success measures	Updated for 2020/21	
			YES	NO
1	Best Start in Life	Children in care who had to move 3 or more times (PAM/029)	YES	
2	Children - Healthy Lifestyles	Childhood obesity (Child Measurement Programme NHS)		NO
3	Improve Learner Attainment for all	Educational attainment - Average Capped 9 points score (Year 11 pupils) (PAM/032)		NO
		School attendance rates (Primary) (PAM/007) (Secondary) (PAM/008)		NO
		Satisfaction with child's primary school (NSW)		NO
4	Reduce NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, Training)	Number of leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) (PAM/009) Year 11 & Year 13 (5.1.0.2)	YES	
5	Tackle Poverty	Gap in the Average Capped 9 points score (Year 11 pupils) for those eligible for Free School Meals and those who are not eligible (NWBI)		NO
		Households successfully prevented from becoming homeless (PAM/012) (NWBI)	YES	
		Households in material deprivation (NWBI)		NO
		Households Living in Poverty (CACI's 'PayCheck' Data)	YES	
6	Creating Jobs and Growth	Employment figures (ONS – Annual Population Survey) (NWBI)	YES	
		Average Gross weekly pay (ONS – Annual Survey of hours and earnings)	YES	
		Number qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above (Stats Wales) (NWBI)	YES	
		People moderately or very satisfied with their jobs (NSW) (NWBI)		NO
7	Affordable Homes	Number of affordable homes in the County (7.3.2.24)	YES	
8	Healthy Lives	Adults who say their general health is Good or Very Good (NSW)	YES	
		Adults who say they have a longstanding illness (NSW)	YES	
		Adult mental well-being score (NSW) (NWBI)		NO
		Adults who have fewer than two healthy lifestyle behaviours (NSW) (NWBI) (Not smoking, drinking > 14 units or lower, eating 5 portions fruit & veg the previous day, having a healthy body mass index, being physically active at least 150 minutes the previous week).		NO
9	Supporting Good Connections	% Say they have a sense of community (NSW)(NWBI) (Derived from feeling of belonging; different backgrounds get on, treat with respect'.)		NO
		People feeling safe (NSW)(NWBI) (At home, walking in the local area, and travelling)		NO
10	Independent Lives	Agree there's a good Social Care Service available in the area (NSW)	YES	
		Number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (PAM/015)	YES	
11	Ageing Well	People who are lonely (NSW)(NWBI)		NO
12	Healthy and Safe Environment	Renewable energy generated (kWh)	YES	
		Council's Energy Consumption (kWh)	YES	
		Rates of recycling (PAM/030)	YES	
13	Highways & Transport	Road conditions (PAM/020, PAM/021 & PAM/022)	YES	
		Road casualties (5.5.2.21)	YES	
14	Welsh Language & Culture	Can speak Welsh (NSW)(NWBI)		NO
		People attended arts events in Wales in last year (NSW)		NO
		People visited historic places in Wales in last year (NSW)		NO
		People visited museums in Wales in last year (NSW)		NO
15	Building a Better Council and Making Better Use of Resources	'Do it online' payments	YES	
		People agree that they can access information about the Authority in the way they would like to. (NSW)		NO
		People know how to find what services the Council provides (NSW)		NO
		People agree they have an opportunity to participate in making decisions about the running of local authority services. (NSW)		NO
		Staff sickness absence levels (PAM/001)	YES	
		Organisational 'running costs'	YES	
		People agree that the Council asks for their views before setting its budget. (NSW)		NO

Key: PAM – Public Accountability, National Measures; ONS –Office for National Statistics; NSW - National Survey for Wales; NWBI – National Well-being Indicator.

Public Accountability Measures (PAM)

Public Accountability Measures (PAM) - is a National suite of measures that all councils in Wales have to collect, but due to COVID-19, DataCymru who centrally collect the data on behalf of Welsh Local Government Association decided not to collect data for 2019/20 or 2020/21. Therefore, we cannot measure how we perform against other authorities for 2020/21.		Our 2019/20 result	Our 2020/21 result
WBO1 - Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences			
1	% Children in care with 3 or more placements in the year (PAM/029)	8.6%	4.7%
2	Percentage of child assessments completed in time (PAM/028)	Change in definition	93.6%
WBO3 - Support and improve progress and achievement for all learners			
3	% Pupil attendance in primary schools (PAM/007)	93.9%	Not available
4	% Pupil attendance in secondary schools (PAM/008)	93.5%	Not available
5	Average Capped 9 score for pupils in year 11 (PAM/032)	367.2 score	Not available
WBO4 - Reduce the number of young adults that are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)			
6	% of Year 11 Leavers not in education, employment or training (NEETS) (PAM/046)	Not available	1.8%
WBO5 - Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, helping people into work and improving the lives of those living in poverty			
7	% of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless (PAM/012)	46.4%	46.4%
WBO7 - Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes			
8	% Private sector dwellings returned to occupation (PAM/013)	7.72%	6.99%
9	Number of new homes created as a result of bringing empty properties back into use (PAM/045)	0	0
10	Number of additional affordable housing units delivered per 10,000 households (PAM/036)	22	11
11	Average number of calendar days taken to complete all housing repairs (PAM/037)	13.8 days	10.5 days
12	% of homes that meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) (PAM/038)	100%	100%
13	% of rent lost due to properties being empty (PAM/039)	3.4%	4.3%
WBO8 - Help people live healthy lives (Tackling risky behaviour and Adult obesity)			
14	% of Quality Indicators (with targets) achieved by the library service (PAM/040)	97.5%	86.1%
15	Visits to Sport & Leisure facilities per 1,000 population (PAM/017)	7,768	673
16	% of people referred to the National Exercise Referral scheme that complete the 16-week programme (PAM/041)	57.4%	0.00%
17	% of NERS clients whose health had improved on completion of the exercise programme (PAM/042)	78.4%	68.4%
18	% Food establishments that meet food hygiene standards (PAM/023)	96.02%	88.65%

Public Accountability Measures (PAM)		Our 2019/20 result	Our 2020/21 result
WBO10 - Support the growing numbers of older people to maintain dignity and independence in their later years			
19	Days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (PAM/015)	176 days	347 days
WBO12 - Looking after the environment now and for the future			
20	% of all planning applications determined in time (PAM/018)	71.6%	60.3%
21	% of planning appeals dismissed (PAM/019)	80.0%	53.8%
22	% of streets that are clean (PAM/010)	98.0%	97.7%
23	Average number of working days taken to clear fly-tipping incidents (PAM/035)	2.5 days	10.5 days
24	Kilograms of municipal waste that is not reused, recycled or composted during the year per person (PAM/043)	156.3Kg	155.8Kg
25	% Municipal waste reused, recycled or composted (PAM/030)	64.66%	66.08%
WBO13 - Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity			
26	% A roads that are in poor condition (PAM/020)	5.4%	4.1%
27	% B roads that are in poor condition (PAM/021)	4.7%	3.4%
28	% C roads that are in poor condition (PAM/022)	12.5%	12.0%
WBO15 - Building a Better Council and Making Better Use of Resources			
29	Number days lost due to sickness absence. (PAM/001)	10.7 days	7.7 days
30	Number of apprentices on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes per 1,000 employees (PAM044)	34.4	27.0
 <p>Some measures are not fully comparable year on year because of disruption in service due to COVID-19. Full result details and comments are available in the Commitment updates link at the bottom of each Well-being Objective</p> <p>Please note that not all Well-being Objectives (WBO) have allocated National Measure(s)</p>			

Regulatory Reports 2020/21

Several regulatory reports were issued during the last twelve months.

- ⊙ Local reports, specific to Carmarthenshire are highlighted below.
- ⊙ National/Thematic reports are undertaken by regulators to look at all Councils in Wales (in an integrated programme of work consulted and agreed upon with local government) to identify best practice.
 - Most of these reports contain recommendations. Sometimes the recommendations are for Welsh Government only or and/or local government.
 - Not all recommendations contained in reports may apply to Carmarthenshire as in some instances we could be the area of best practice proposed, be already doing what is identified or it may be, just not be applicable.
- ⊙ All these report recommendations are entered onto the Council's monitoring system and any reasons for discounting recommendations are explained and recorded. Progress against relevant recommendations is monitored and reported.
- ⊙ COVID-19 has seriously disrupted agreed regulatory work during 2020/21.

The following list of regulatory reports were issued during the last twelve months:



July 2020	Rough Sleeping in Wales- Everyone's Problem; No One's Responsibility
August 2020	Financial Sustainability Assessment Carmarthenshire County Council
September 2020	Better Law Making
October 2020	National Fraud Initiative Commercialisation in Local Government
January 2021	Carmarthenshire County Council Annual audit summary 2020



March 2020	National review of the use of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) in Wales
July 2020	Local authority annual performance review letter 2019/20 This letter summarizes the evaluation of performance of social services (adults and children's services) during 2019/20.
September 2020	Prevention and promotion of independence for older adults National review of care homes for people living with dementia
August 2020	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Annual Monitoring Report for Health and Social Care 2018-19
April 2021	Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021: Carmarthenshire County Council

June 2020	A level Welsh First Language
July 2020	Community schools: families and communities at the heart of school life
July 2020	Learner resilience - building resilience in primary schools, secondary schools and pupil referral units
August 2020	Business and social studies subjects at A level
October 2020	The Value of Youth Work Training
October 2020	Celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion
November 2020	Preparing for the Curriculum for Wales
January 2021	Post-16 partnerships
January 2021	Local authority and regional consortia support for schools and PRUs in response to COVID-19
March 2021	Developments in remote and blended learning practice
March 2021	Support for learners' mental health and emotional well-being
March 2021	English language and literacy in settings and primary schools
March 2021	Welsh language acquisition



In May 2020, the Future Generations Commissioner published the **Future Generations Report 2020** on the progress of the Act over the last 5 years and made a number of recommendations for public bodies, which we will consider as part of our future service planning and development.

In addition, the *Commissioner* has also made some post pandemic recommendations for public bodies in Wales to consider as noted below. We will take account of these as part of our recovery planning:

1	Develop an economic stimulus package that leads to job creation and supports the decarbonisation of homes, through building new low carbon affordable housing and investing in a national programme to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes.
2	Invest in better ways to connect and move people through improving digital connectivity, active travel and public transport.
3	Invest in skills and training to support the transition to a better future, creating new greener jobs.
4	Invest in nature and prioritise funding and support for large-scale habitat and wildlife restoration, creation and connectivity throughout Wales – including for natural flood defences, to implement the new national forest, and to ensure land use management and agriculture supports secure local food chains and distribution.
5	Invest in the industries and technologies of the future, and support for businesses that will help Wales to lead the low carbon revolution and lock wealth and jobs into local areas with investment in the foundational economy

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7th July 2021

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES
ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES IN
CARMARTHENSHIRE 2020/21**

Purpose:

There is a statutory requirement for the Director of Social Services to report annually to their Council on the delivery and performance as well as plans for the improvement of the whole range of Social Services.

This is the annual report by the Director of Social Services on the performance of our Social Care Services in the county. It sets out the challenges of an unrepresented year due to COVID 19 and highlights those areas to be developed in the current year. It relates to performance for the year 2020/21.

This report provides CMT/Members with the opportunity to question the content and gives an opportunity for the Statutory Director to consider any comments elected Members may have for the future. It should be noted the report is still in Draft and will be further proofread and reformatted prior to completion.

To consider and comment on the following issues:

That the Annual report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the performance of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2020/21 be approved.

Reasons:

Political scrutiny of this report is considered by the Director to be an important element in the development process and will be amended throughout the various stages to the final publication of this report in the summer of 2021.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: YES

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. J. Tremlett (Social Care & Health Portfolio Holder)

Cllr. G. Davies (Education & Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Directorate

Communities

Name of Head of Service:

Jake Morgan

Designations:

Director of Community Services
(Statutory Director of Social Services)

Tel Nos.

01267 224698

E Mail Addresses:

JakeMorgan@carmarthenshire.
gov.uk

Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee

7th July 2021

Subject:
**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL
SERVICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES IN
CARMARTHENSHIRE 2020/21**

The Annual Report examines each Service area within Social Care and shows how service strategies, actions, targets and service risks will be addressed and delivered operationally by the service this year based on the approved budget.

The Annual Report (attached) comprises an overview provided by the Director of Social Services, which provides information on how we have performed in 2020/21 and an assessment on the future, together with our strategic priorities for 2021/22.

The Report links closely with the Directorate Business Plans for Community Services and Education & Children's Services departments.

Following publication of the report to the public (after it has been presented to full Council), Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and Welsh Government will complete their analysis and review of the report. There will be a formal meeting with CIW in October to discuss their analysis and proposed plan. This will be followed by an Annual Letter to Council in late November/early December, confirming their analysis and inspection plan. The process will link in closely with the Wales Programme for Improvement and the Annual Letter from the Wales Audit Office.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?	YES
-----------------------------------	------------

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: **Jake Morgan** Director of Social Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The Annual Report will be an important contribution to the Council's Improvement Plan.

2. Legal

The Annual Report forms an important part of the statutory duties of the Director of Social Services:

"The Director will present to Council, publish and report on an annual statement of plans for performance and improvement".

3. Finance

The financial implications are included in the report. Budget pressures are identified clearly.

4. ICT

The PIMS system will be used to provide evidence of the Annual Report. Comment is made in the body of the report as to the need to better integrate Health & Social Care IT.

5. Risk Management Issues

Key risks have been addressed in this report with a link to the departmental and corporate risk register.

6. Physical Assets

Physical assets are included in this report in relation to service delivery.

7. Staffing Implications

Workforce is a critical element included in the report. In particular, the development and retention of social workers to ensure that they continue their professional development and remain with Carmarthenshire.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jake Morgan

Director of Social Services

1.Local Member(s)

Not applicable.

2.Community / Town Council

Not applicable.

3.Relevant Partners

Not applicable.

4.Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Not applicable.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED:
YES**

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection

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Directors Annual Report 2021/22

Jake Morgan

Statutory Director of Social Services at Carmarthenshire
County Council

April 2021 DRAFT

carmarthenshire.gov.wales

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Dates of Political meetings

DMT	15 th June
CMT	17 th June
PEB	28 th June
Scrutiny	7 th July SC&H 8 th July C&ED
Ex Board	26 th July
County Council	15 th September

Introduction



This is my eighth annual report as Statutory Director of Social Services. Although Social Services is only a part of my corporate role there is a statutory requirement on me to report annually on the council's Social Service's functions. Appended to this report is the Statutory Notice I issued last year. This was issued under the Code of Practice contained within the Social Services and Wellbeing act where the Director of Social Services has a duty to advise on the challenges, risks and circumstances where staff issues affect our ability to discharge statutory responsibilities.

This has, by any measure, been an extraordinarily difficult year. COVID 19 has tested every element of our organisation and our ability to discharge our Social Services functions. Our priority throughout has been to protect the most vulnerable in the community, the elderly and disabled whose health and lives have been so at risk because of Covid 19. During this time our teams in adult and children's social services have never faced such challenges and been so needed by our communities. It has been a year where the whole of society has recognised the central role Social Services functions play in all our lives and the importance of these services in keeping children and vulnerable adults safe. The council can be proud of the role its staff have played in supporting the most vulnerable.

The whole Country started the year unprepared for the pandemic in every way. It is easy to forget the emergency in March and April last year when public health advice felt short of to acknowledging the need for PPE in the care sector; When there was rapid discharge from hospital into nursing homes wholly unprepared to manage COVID 19 outbreaks and where basic protective equipment for staff at risk was nationally auctioned to the highest bidder by unscrupulous distributors. At this time vaccination programmes were a distant hope and our care staff faced anxiety daily. We all felt frustration at the slow pace of guidance change on PPE in relation to social care staff (See my statutory notice pg 28-31) The consequence of this was that even in June 2020 we were not always able to provide the protection to staff in social care that we felt was necessary. The corporate and political support in the council and from ADSS Cymru in advocating for action nationally was critical in ensuring a change of guidance.

Our partnership with health has strengthened throughout the pandemic with the authority leading on the creation of 3 field hospitals in the county and our integrated structure adding significant value in ensuring there was a coordinated approach. The role of key clinical health staff in supporting the care sector was invaluable. Review and reflection is needed locally and nationally on the use of 'do not resuscitate' instructions on the elderly in care and consideration whether the process used was the one we would want in the future.

As a Director you really find out about the strength and values of your team and organisation when you face adversity. For 6 months my team met 7 days a week to problem solve, manage risk, and support the care sector through the most difficult times it has ever faced. Unwavering support politically and corporately demonstrated the values of the organisation where the number one priority was to do whatever we can to best protect the most vulnerable. They did a great job and this was confirmed by the

Inspectorate earlier this year:

“The local authority ensures people’s voices are heard, their choices respected and people routinely achieved self-identified outcomes. Leaders have a line of sight on front line practice with clear plans that have led to creative practice.”

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021”

In the second wave in December the rapid rise of infections led to a total collapse of several of our private sector care homes. These homes found themselves with no staff or management and sick and frail residents having no one to care for them. In these circumstances I was constantly humbled by the lack of hesitation from our staff and managers from our in-house service who worked additional shifts in unfamiliar and risky environments to keep residents cared for. These staff were supplemented by corporate and leisure staff who volunteered to fill gaps where they had every right to simply stay at home. With limited family members in homes and overstretched care staff it fell on some of these staff to read to and care for the elderly who were frail, vulnerable and in many cases sick with COVID 19. We owe these staff a huge debt of gratitude.

In these days of social media comment, it is easy to be cynical about *‘the council’* and Local Government. However, looking back at Christmas Eve 2020 when I had the call that a home had collapsed with the whole staff team off with COVID 19 it was *‘the council’* and Local Government with our amazing staff who stepped up in these most difficult of circumstances. Over this period, I have never been prouder of the care sector and Local Government as a whole.

There has been extraordinary work nationally and locally to get us in the position we are now. We now have near unlimited protective equipment provided by government free to the whole care sector, benefit from the most successful vaccination programme in Europe and continue to receive substantial funding for the stretched care sector. Whilst the full impact on the mental health of our children and vulnerable adults is still being fully assessed the additional funding provided by the council for mental health services is further evidence that supporting and protecting vulnerable people remains a priority for the council.

In making statements about the state of Social Services in the county I always try and triangulate our internal judgement with both performance data and external independent evaluations. To this end we commissioned an independent external evaluation of our support to care homes. This independent evaluation is summarised in Appendix 4. In addition, Care Inspectorate Wales produced an evaluation of the whole of our Social Services functions through an inspection in February. This is attached to this report in Appendix 3. These outside views enable me to have real confidence in the positive statements I make in this report.

Of course, there is now much to do as we navigate the recovery from the pandemic, evaluating the impact on services and face those issues that have inevitably been put on hold. Budget pressure will undoubtedly play a part as the number of older people continues to grow and mental health in particular faces growing pressures. However, if the pandemic has

taught us nothing else then our staff and the organisation is more resilient than we could ever have known, and this gives me real cause for optimism moving forward.

Jake Morgan, Statutory Director of Social Services

Overview of an Unprecedented Year

A simple way to look at the impact of COVID 19 on Social Services for adults and children in the last year is to see it in four phases:

Phase one from March to May 2020 reflected high levels of risk, high levels of concern regarding the lack of adequate protection for residents and staff in care and nursing homes and the lack of protective equipment. (see statutory report in Appendix 1 and 2) This was a period of crisis management locally and nationally as we dealt with the overall lack of national preparedness for a pandemic of this type.

Phase two from May to October 2020 we established preventative services; embedded safe systems of work; distributed PPE, introduced testing and track and trace systems; mainstreamed agile working and monitoring of vulnerable children and established systems for infection control.

Phase three from November to January we experienced a second wave of COVID 19 with devastating effects in some of our care homes, staff absences increased due to larger numbers being tested and the total collapse of several care homes in the county. The pace of escalation in the number of those infected during December was extraordinary. This period whilst managed extremely well by our teams was challenging with staff already fatigued but continuing to work hard to keep people safe. At the end of this phase the roll out of the Covid vaccinations had begun, with care staff among the first in the County to receive their vaccinations.

Phase four from February to the end of March was a recovery from the second wave with infections low, care homes operating effectively, and a number of reviews and external inspections having been completed to ensure lessons were learnt and that we were prepared should there be further outbreaks. The vaccination programme was demonstrating its effectiveness with 97.7 % of care workers vaccinated and 96.4% of residents in care vaccinated. (at the time of writing this report) All the signs are that this programme is effective in protecting the most vulnerable residents in the county.

During this time, it was imperative that we continued to deliver essential services and meet our statutory responsibilities to support those in greatest need. At times we made difficult decisions on prioritising our resources for the most critical services as necessary. Emergency planning across Social Services, the Council and the region saw us develop a coordinated response across in-house and commissioned services supported by a strong partnership with the Health Board to keep those for whom we provide care and support as safe as possible.

Staff from different services were redeployed to areas of need, and we continue to work to the guidance issued by the UK and Welsh Government in relation to safe working practices. We have received an impressive response from the community,

with individuals, groups and businesses working together to support friends, neighbours and strangers. We hope that the networks built will remain after the pandemic has subsided, continuing to support those in need.

We have set a **budget for 2021/22** which balances our resources with known demand. However, demand across Children and Adult Services is volatile and we have seen a steep rise in demand for domiciliary care since March. This is reflected in the financial uncertainty we face. A contingency fund established by the Council for Social Services is a prudent approach in the circumstances.

The Council has made a commitment to protect budgets within Social Services and invest in our mental health services. This will ensure that we are able to continue to deliver high quality services that put people at the centre of their care and support.

We have drawn down substantial financial support from the Welsh Government Hardship Fund to help offset some of the additional costs associated with Covid. We have claimed a total of just over £9million to date. It is difficult to predict at this stage how this crisis will impact on long-term demand and consequently spend, but we will continue to monitor the position closely.

We have seen an overall reduction in the number of funded residential and nursing placements for older people, which has had a positive impact on the budget albeit not quite offsetting the rise in demand for domiciliary care, direct payments and mental health services.

Children's services have continued to function effectively during the Covid 19 Pandemic and lock-down working arrangements. Service delivery has been prioritised according to a regionally agreed model. This has ensured the safeguarding of children and young people residing in Carmarthenshire whilst also ensuring that our staff and the families we visit, stay safe by applying social distancing. The pandemic has demonstrated the benefits and opportunities of digital working with contact enhanced with many of our children and young people. However, a return to a greater level of in person contact will be essential in children's services as we move forward.

For young people leaving care, especially those who may not have previously been in regular contact has had a huge potential to increase engagement, develop better insight and improve outcomes. Whilst the focus has been on the pandemic it is also good to reflect what an excellent job our service has done in continuing to support children and families during this unprecedented year.

The Council's ability to maintain and even reduce our number of looked after children through good practice, investment in prevention and long term effective management is an area that is receiving positive national attention.

"In children's services, the pod meetings were embedded and highly regarded by all staff as an effective and supportive mechanism for themselves and the families they supported. These meetings combine a systemic and strengths based approach to evaluating work with families"

"Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 2021"

Within Mental Health and Learning Disability we have seen an increase in residential placements and high-cost community packages, as the work to place people in alternative settings was paused for the first six months of the pandemic. The impact of the pandemic on mental health, substance misuse and safeguarding and demand for services is likely to be significant and we have prepared for this in our budget setting for 2021/2022.

In relation to **supporting adults and older people**, we have continued to as far as possible to maintain business as usual. We have continued to support people who need our help in the community and need support to be discharged from hospital. We have continued to offer Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) in line with the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and carried out social care assessments where required.

We have inevitably, had to change the way we do things, and wherever possible we have tried to support people virtually when providing information and advice or undertaking assessments. We have however, also continued to visit people at home when needed on a risk assessed basis, to ensure that our assessments are thorough to inform what support we might be able to provide.

Despite all the challenges we continue to have sufficient supply of residential and domiciliary care in the county. Rural areas continue to be a challenge and work on a new commissioning framework will seek to address gaps in the next year.

At the start of the pandemic, in line with government advice and the high vulnerability of our client groups to Covid, we immediately had to close most of our **Day Services**, and suspend most planned respite in care homes. We have however tried to look at innovative ways of how we can continue to support those we support to meet their preferred outcomes and provide some degree of respite for individuals and families.

In relation to **Older People's Day Services**, we carried out a consultation with those that previously attended day services and their families in November last year on a proposal to provide alternative support whilst day services remained closed. This model includes 1 to 1 support at home, as well as greater digital connection where appropriate. Emergency respite can also still be arranged at a range of care homes across the County on a risk assessed basis, subject to a negative Covid-19 test and isolation for 14-days on admission to the care home. At the time of writing new guidance is anticipated from Welsh Government surrounding transfer to care homes, which may make bed-based respite a more realistic proposition going forward. Moving forward it is likely that day services will be required to focus on meeting the needs of highly vulnerable older adults whose carers require respite. This will require considerable remodelling of our day services.

Within **Learning Disability and Mental Health Day Services**, whilst some buildings have been closed, we have continued to provide care to our most vulnerable and we have in some instances successfully provided support in buildings following robust risk assessments. We have also offered support at home and a range of online virtual activities which remain popular with those who use our services and their

carers. Activities provided include, exercise, quizzes, and cookery sessions, Woodwork and craft activity packs have also been delivered to individual homes to enable them to join in with the virtual demonstrations.

In the autumn of 2020, some of our buildings reopened and we are gradually accommodating more numbers, prioritising those individuals and families who are struggling. However, this will be on a significantly reduced basis, so that we can maintain everyone's safety. Many services will not operate as they previously did. They will not be able to offer the range of activities or be able to support as many people as they did previously, as our priority is to keep everyone safe.

A review of the regional Shared Lives Scheme was undertaken in 2019 with a view to revising the model and structure for future sustainability. The consultation which was delayed during the pandemic is now being undertaken and a new model will be implemented following this.

The first phase of the new model for disability was also established during 2020 commencing with the 0 to 25 years old service. Initial feedback from those who use services, their carers and professionals is that this is a positive development. Phase 2 will be implemented this year.

We recognise that the pandemic has been a hugely challenging time for carers who have been managing with reduced support and respite. Through the Regional Partnership Board arrangements, we have continued to adapt our offer to carers to ensure that they can continue to feel supported. The Social Work teams and day services staff have kept in contact with carers and provided support when necessary. Many of our staff have either achieved or are undertaking the Investors in Carers Award which is an acknowledgement of the support provided to carers. All Social Work teams also have identified Carers Champions.

The pandemic is challenging for everyone, but the impact on the mental health and wellbeing of many people in Wales is significant. Contact with mental health teams has also increased by 136% over the last year, from 131 in April to September 2019, to 301 for the same period this year. For the Advanced Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP) service, it has been business as usual and they have had continued to undertake their statutory duties throughout the pandemic and often in high-risk situations.

All Mental Health Forums and Networks since March have reported increased demand and reported high levels of anxiety across West Wales and Carmarthenshire including reported significant increases in people contacting them for support for self-harm and eating disorders also.

The impact on mental health services is likely to be significant. In planning for this, the council has invested significant growth resource to address this which will be used to recruit more social work and social care staff to focus on two specific areas; early intervention and prevention and a more robust and timelier crisis response. During 2020, we have been collaborating with the Health Board and the third sector to develop initiatives in this regard developing a Single Point of Access and a 24/7 crisis response service. Substance misuse services has also seen an increase in the

volume of work and the complexity of cases as isolation and lockdown has an impact on vulnerable people's lives.

Adult Safeguarding

In relation to Adult Safeguarding, the Regional Safeguarding Board and associated subgroups have continued to meet virtually. We were part of a Regional Multi Agency Covid response group which met weekly to have assurance regarding safeguarding responses during the pandemic. Attendance at strategy meetings has been improved. MAPPA, MARAC and VAWDASV arrangements have also continued. We have continued to work within the new All Wales Adult Protection Procedures and Carmarthenshire has led on several developments across the region including the development of a Covid Threshold document and training. We are now well prepared for the implementation of the new Liberty Protection Safeguards in 2022.

We have seen a small increase in safeguarding activity and an increase in the complexity of referrals. We are now seeing in the region of 100 to 120 referrals a month.

The number of adult safeguarding reports received during 2020/21 demonstrate a direct correlation with COVID- 19 restriction periods in Wales. During enhanced restriction periods in Q1 and Q3 fewer safeguarding reports were received likely due to the limited opportunities professionals had to visit service users in person and the restricted access to service settings.

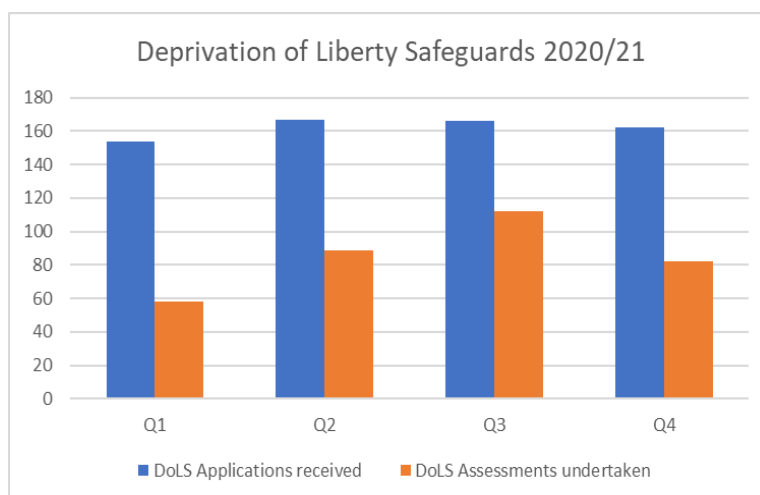


Co-produced solutions were evident and there were positive outcomes for people subject to safeguarded interventions. Safeguarding enquiries and investigations conducted in line with statutory requirements, good analysis of risk, protection plans in place and action taken when necessary. Providers and partners said they were supported by the adult safeguarding team; their willingness to offer advice, guidance and assist with training of social care workers was acknowledged.

“Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) 2021”

A robust regional approach to managing new and existing Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard authorisations has been agreed as we have had to adapt our practice when we have been unable to visit care homes. This approach ensures the principles of the Mental Capacity Act are upheld and is consistent with the guidance received from Welsh Government.

The number of DoLS applications has been consistent during the past 12 months. Due to the visiting restrictions in place for care homes, the assessments have been undertaken remotely in line with national guidance and good practice. Assessments are prioritised in terms of urgency and a robust audit process in place for ensuring the principles of the Mental Capacity Act (2005) are followed.



Seraphim Call

We have developed an innovative trueCall nuisance call blocker device monitoring tool and dashboard that correlates call blocker activity data with user risk profiles to generate an alert when a service user is exposed to a high number of telephone fraud approaches and/or exhibits behaviours that put them at increased risk of telephone fraud victimisation.

The purpose of the alert system is to safeguard vulnerable service users and initiate a welfare call and/or visit from local officers and to protect service users from fraud victimisation. The nature of trueCall means that many interventions can be performed remotely. Such protection and remote oversight has proven invaluable during the pandemic. Since April 2020, active trueCall units installed by the authority have blocked **16277** nuisance calls made to vulnerable people in the county. Based on national intelligence, **4883** of these were identified as scam calls.

Delta wellbeing

Carmarthenshire has continued to work with its TEC trading company Llesiant Delta Wellbeing, to develop a TEC Prevention Strategy for the region, and the CONNECT project in particular has come into its own. The programme combines proactive integrated tele-monitoring and wellbeing calls, with a rapid response and community-based support.

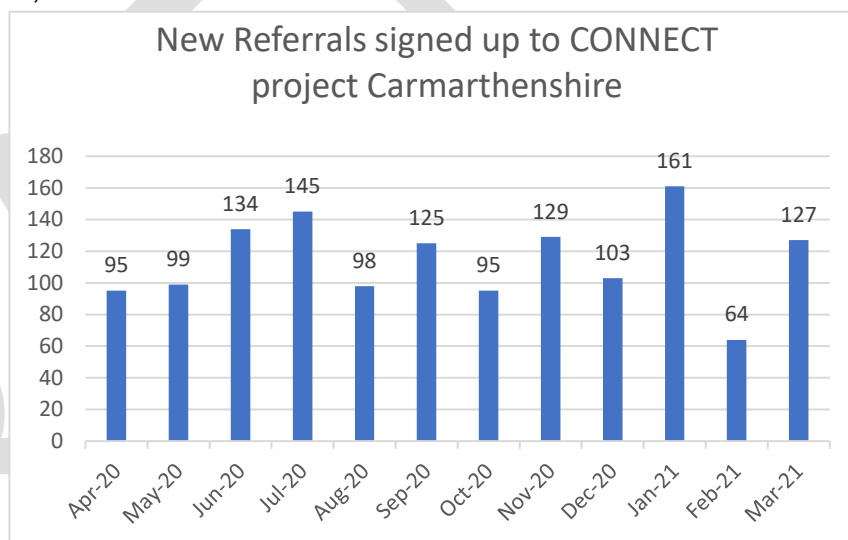
In adult services, the Delta / Connect project has been successful in promoting prevention and early intervention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies. We saw evidence of enhanced use of technology to support people's safety as well as reduce loneliness and isolation.

"Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021"

Throughout the Covid pandemic, Llesiant Delta Wellbeing has worked closely with Carmarthenshire County Council to ensure extremely vulnerable residents, who were shielding across the county, were supported appropriately. During the national emergency, staff worked 24/7 to provide the right support at the right time to our most vulnerable in the local community.

They conducted approximately 8,500 calls to residents within Carmarthenshire that received shielding letters from Welsh Government, ensuring they had everything they needed to stay safe during these difficult times. Through these calls, the team were able to check on individual's general welfare, providing peace of mind for loved ones and their families, and vitally, making sure they had enough help and support around them during the shielding period and also to prevent isolation and loneliness.

Technology Enabled Care equipment providing round the clock support if needed as well as essential food parcels or support while shopping for essentials. The team also checked if people were receiving their medication prescriptions and if pharmacies were unable to deliver, we referred this for assistance also. Delta Wellbeing's Community Welfare Response team, as part of its CONNECT service provision, was also on hand to visit people at home when required to solve any practical issues they had whilst shielding. The team went above and beyond on occasions to ensure our communities most vulnerable received the vital help they needed to prevent a possible crisis occurring.



Feedback about the outbound calls has been extremely positive and ensured any potential issues were identified and supported at the earliest opportunity as well as many expressing, they felt "reassured" by the call.

The project in Carmarthenshire is a finalist in the Public Sector Transformation Award for Excellence, as it exemplifies our ambition of working across sectoral boundaries to deliver a radical, person-centred approach to wellbeing, care and support. It involves implementing a new model of self-help and pro-active care, enabled by Technology Enabled Care (TEC), improving the wellbeing of individuals, which in-turn allows people to stay independent for longer, reducing demands on long term or acute care.

In June 2021, we established Test, Trace, Protect Strategy and team to enhance health surveillance in the community, undertake effective and extensive contact tracing, and encourage and support people to self-isolate. The Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) team's work was and still is vital, in helping reduce the spread of the Coronavirus by identifying recent contacts of people who have tested positive and giving them advice.

Contact tracing is being used to limit the spread of the virus in the community by breaking the link in transmission. Contact tracing starts with self-reporting of symptoms, followed by testing suspected cases, tracing the contacts of those who have tested positive and then protecting our families, friends and communities through self-isolation. Embedding infection control structures into the permanent work of the department will be a priority moving forward.

DRAFT

Children Services

This year has been even more challenging due to Covid 19 which has placed significant pressure on families and has led to an increase in demand for our services. This year saw an increase of Contacts/Referrals received by 770 in statutory services. However, we continue to perform well despite these pressures. During 2020/21 93.6% of new assessments were completed within statutory timescales.

We continue to follow the guidance within the CYSUR regional threshold document and multi-agency child protection arrangements ensuring early intervention, and utilisation of preventative services to reduce the need for statutory involvement

A family support ethos is strongly embedded in the authority and numbers of looked after children have continued to reduce slowly despite Covid 19. We have performed better than the Welsh Government expectation with 15 less children being looked after when compared with the same time last year. The on-going work of the specialist preventative services such as IFST, Edge of Care and Family Intervention Team (FIT) working across the teams to ensure as much as possible children remaining at home safely with families or alternatively securing permanency for children to maintain them out of the statutory services by promoting SGO's to further reduce numbers of children becoming looked after.

We found services such as the Emotional Health Support team, Edge of Care and Camau Bach have been planned and aligned to focus on the same aim. Files had clear personal outcomes recorded, particularly important in complex situations requiring co-ordination of support to address eligible need.

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We have continued to focus on maintaining placement stability with good placement support being offered across the service to achieve this. During 20/21 only 7 children (out of 148) experienced 3 or more placement moves during the year (4.7%) which is below the Welsh average of 9% and reflects the excellent work going on to support placements with foster carers.

The number of children on the child protection register has remained stable and the use of virtual meetings for conferences has continued to progress good working together with professionals in attendance, and communication with families has been good to ensure safeguarding issues for children is managed as safely as possible.

The Fostering Team has continued to recruit, train, and assess prospective foster carers as well as providing ongoing support to foster carers to enable them to care for our most vulnerable children to meet their individual needs and emotional well-being, to ensure wherever possible that children are matched appropriately to foster carers and remain in Carmarthenshire.

The team has continued to work across the region collaboratively with National Fostering Framework (NFF) and work is progressing with implementing the new arrangements in

respect of Special Guardianship Orders. The new Foster Wales Brand Campaign is being taken forward and supported regionally with the websites being updated to reflect not only preserving our local website but a National approach which we hope will assist our marketing and improve fostering recruitment both locally and nationally. Fostering are also holding regular online information sessions.

As a result of Covid restrictions assessments have been completed using a combination of remote and various forms of face-to-face visits. Social Workers have made a lot of effort to ensure children are seen and sufficient relevant information is gathered for assessments despite the challenges of doing that during the last year. The monthly audit of assessments by senior managers has continued to ensure they are outcome focused, evidencing the voice of the child and reflect the underpinning principles of the SSWBA. This had led to discussions with social workers and managers about strengths as well as areas for further development.

In children's services, the pod meetings were embedded and highly regarded by all s as an effective and supportive mechanism for themselves and the families they supported. These meetings combine a systemic and strengths based approach to evaluating work with families.

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Mid & West Wales Adoption Service (MWAS) has continued to recruit, assess, and approve adopters. The level of enquiries has remained high and to respond to demand the required preparation training has been taking place every 2 months plus additional sessions where necessary. The content and delivery of training is now consistent across the region. We are making more use of social media to communicate messages about adoption and have updated and re-launched the website to make it more accessible to those interested in adoption. <https://vimeo.com/479780913>

The demand for adoptive placements has remained high this year. MWAS has continued to place children for adoption during the year even though Covid restrictions has meant the transition process takes longer in order to ensure moves are undertaken safely for all involved. We have been able to place sibling groups and older children for adoption.

Welsh Government investment in adoption support has enabled MWAS to develop support offered to adoptive families and those affected by adoption. This has been challenging as a result of lockdown. Staff have provided support remotely as well as face to face and have been very creative in finding alternative ways of supporting families. One support worker wrote a book about returning to school for children. However some therapeutic interventions can only be delivered face to face, so it has been more problematic to find ways of doing that resulting in some delay.

Adoption Worker's Back to School Story

Rachel Cook has always wanted to write a children's story. But she has never been able to find the time to sit down and do it. And then the coronavirus pandemic happened, which gave her some free time and also the inspiration too. Rachel who works for Carmarthenshire County Council as an Adoption Support Worker, used her time during lockdown to write and illustrate Sammy Sloth Goes Back to School. The story will hopefully help children who are felling anxious about going back to school after being home for so long. Rachel, aged 36, who has always worked with vulnerable children and children with additional learning needs said: "I have always enjoyed being creative and have dreamed of writing short children's stories and illustrating them for a long time. I never imagined that the first story I would write would be about a pandemic, but in times of so much change and uncertainty I found myself thinking of the many children I've supported over the years through transitions and how challenging this would be for so many. Children often find change particularly challenging, and with the changes approaching us as we begin to return to school, with it may come a mix of emotions and feelings. Stories are a natural way for children to learn about their feelings, to help them learn that their experiences of feeling worried or nervous about returning to school are faced by many. This story focuses on the familiar, particularly around relationships, as sometimes feelings of anxiety come from the unknown, and while we may not know everything about what school will look like in the coming months, by thinking of some of the things that will be staying the same, we can help our children feel more secure". The council's Translation Team has translated the story into Welsh, and the council has arranged to print copies to put into the county's primary schools.



Executive Board Member for Education and Children's Services Cllr Glynog Davies said: "This is a wonderful story which I am sure will help a lot of children feeling uncertain about returning to school. I would like to both congratulate and thank Rachel, I am delighted that the book will be going into primary schools for pupils to enjoy."

This year Adult and Children's Services have collaborated to create and implement a **0-25 disability service**. This will ensure support is based on children's needs, not their age so that they receive the services they need when they need them and where they can best access them. We have invested in the Early Help service to provide access to Information, Advice and Assistance to families sooner. We have also developed a multi professional approach within our statutory team so that the support needs of every family will be overseen by a team incorporating adult and children's social workers, specialist health and educational psychology staff. They

will employ a systemic relationship-based approach, building on the strengths of families to overcome their own problems. We continue to meet with parents of disabled children on a monthly basis. Our 'Working Together' groups have been used to review services and ensure we are focussed on delivering better outcomes for families.

We found a strong emphasis on professional disciplines working together; for example an education psychologist being part of the 0-25 Disability Team and other specialist posts in this team providing specialist knowledge. We received positive responses from staff about the 0-25 Team structural changes that occurred last year

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We have also been developing a 'local offer' of support for disabled/autistic children and young people and their families. This will include the piloting of a proactive provision of information, advice, and assistance to families with Delta Wellbeing. A working group has been formed by Early Help Manager with representation from our parents' group to begin developing the content.

We are currently undertaking a review of our residential services for disabled children to ensure that they prepare children for adult life. Consultations have taken place with parents, managers, staff, and a number of changes agreed which will be taken forward to enable us to maintain the high quality of the existing service as well as plan for the future demand. The new residential services manager commenced in post from January 2021. They will undertake a programme of work to review our existing services as well as develop new services to prevent young people with a learning disability needing to leave Carmarthenshire to access residential college.

Family Information Service (FIS) has continued to ensure families and professionals have received Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) and been kept up-to-date with services, information, resources, and developments especially in relation to Covid-19 and priority issues. FIS social media platforms are continuing to grow and develop and the number of enquiries to FIS has seen a 62% increase over the last year.

Families First projects adapted quickly and innovatively to the changes in delivery during the pandemic and during the year 8362 individuals (2409 families) received support from the FF programme, 45% were new families.

Flying Start homework packs were successful in providing Early Years Learning for those FS children unable to attend their nursery due to the pandemic. Since September over 677 packs have been delivered. The Flying Start App has been pivotal in reaching families, delivering services, and providing key messages and information to all our families.

Team Around the Family (TAF) has continued providing targeted support to children and families mostly via the telephone and digital means and supporting families outdoors in accordance with WG requirements as well as visiting schools when they re-opened. <https://youtu.be/owHIBYyAFKY>

During the first lockdown the number of domestic abuse reports rose steeply. The Schools Safeguarding and Attendance Team (SSAT) responded to this by increasing awareness in schools of the impact of domestic abuse and promoting support services, and the Domestic Abuse Toolkit for schools was updated.

A child protection policy specific to Covid 19 was developed including information on Domestic Abuse. Families open to the team were RAG rated and where needed daily contact provided, especially as many children have struggled to cope with the impact of the pandemic alongside the periods of school closures, self-isolation, and remote learning.

Just before lockdown in March the numbers of electively home educated children (EHE) increased and continued to rise where on average 25 children were becoming EHE each week. The long-term failure of government to produce appropriate legislation to enable us to support and monitor these young people is well documented and subject to considerable concern from the regional safeguarding board, Children's Commissioner and the National Safeguarding board advising government. This issue will continue to be raised with government to act from Directors of Education and Directors of Social Services.

The Young Carers' team have continued to provide a range of services and support for young carers including emotional support and counselling.

Care Leavers have continued to be seen and have also had access to advocacy services and the team have provided a range of training and support. As at 31/3/21 out of the 132 care leavers – 15 are in University, 34 were in FE, 22 at school, 3 in 6th form, 16 in full-time employment, 11 in full-time training, 1 in full time paid work placement. 7 young people have been working as Key Workers alongside their studies and 10 young people who work full-time are Key Workers.

Educational and Child Psychology Service (ECPS) and Emotional Health Team (EHT). ECPS and EHT have continued to provide consultation, assessment, training, and therapeutic interventions through remote means and where essential face-to-face. Additional pastoral support has been provided to school who provided Childcare Hubs for children of essential key workers and those who were vulnerable during lockdown. Continued to support Emotional Literacy Support Assistants and worked to rapidly introduce safe processes for pupils to continue to receive counselling during lockdown and piloted therapeutic interventions with year 5 pupils and below through the whole school approach to emotional well-being.

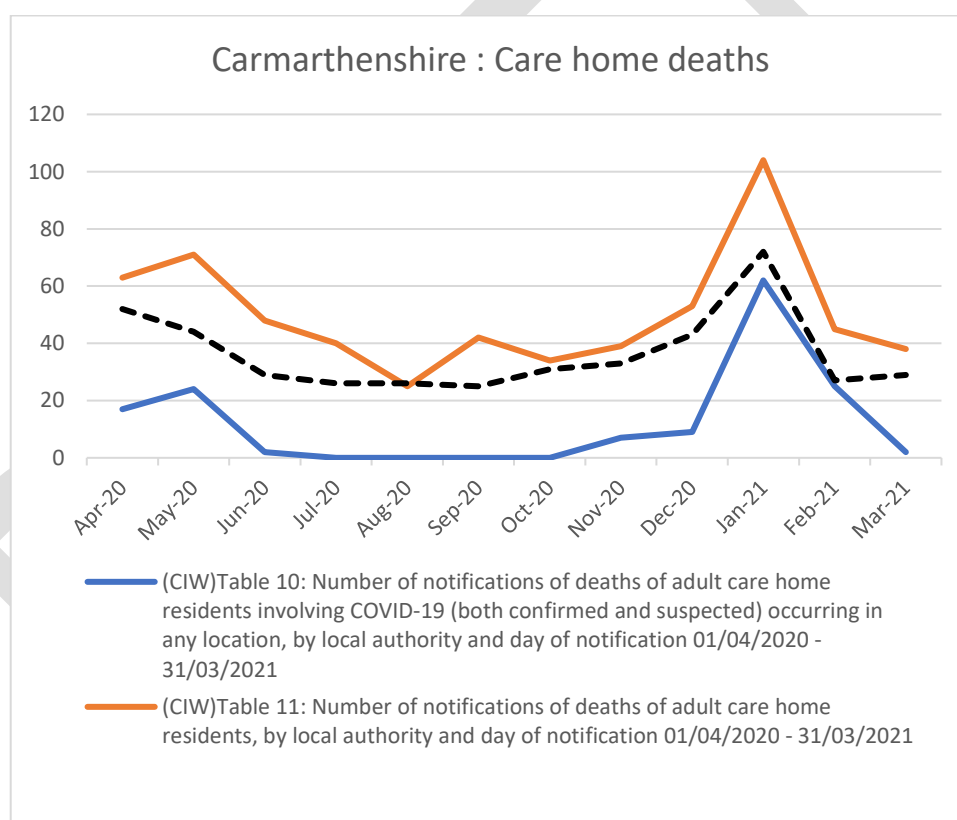
We found services commissioned through education colleagues making a positive difference to children's outcomes.

"Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021"

Direct Care Provision

Care Home

The most significant area of risk and greatest impact of Covid-19 has continued to be in relation to the care home sector in Carmarthenshire, in particular care homes for older people. In the second wave, we have experienced significantly more care home outbreaks and a very high level of homes under 'exclusion' to new admissions due to positive cases. In total, 33 older people care homes were subject to exclusion and of these, 16 were deemed as outbreak status. In addition, 23 care homes for people with a learning disability and or mental health were also subject to exclusions with 8 of these experiencing an outbreak. Outbreaks have looked very different in the second wave due to very high community transmission rates, and significant advances in both TTP (Test, Trace and Protect) and testing regimes.



Whilst there is a deep sadness felt by the sector for every individual lost to Covid 19 the external evaluations Appendix 3 and 4 has reassured the local authority that we have done everything in our power to support care homes within the County. Where things have not been right we have advocated and learnt to improve practice going forward.

The advances in testing and TTP processes led to much greater protection for both staff and residents and have undoubtedly helped reduce the number of potential deaths. However, these developments have also brought significant challenges which has meant that we have on several occasions been in positions where 50% of

a workforce establishment to be off work at the same time. Covid test results tended to come back in batches, so it was common for significant numbers of staff need to self-isolate at once.

We therefore developed a suite of options to be able to support homes with a workforce response when needed. This has included block contracts with agencies, deployment of our own staff, mutual aid from both Pembrokeshire County Council and the Health Board to support with staffing, management on call arrangements over weekends and bank holidays and in the two most serious cases the Local Authority temporarily taking over the management of the home. Thankfully, following the reduction in community transmission of Covid and the roll out of the vaccination programme, at the time of writing the report we had no care homes in an outbreak situation and only a handful under 'exclusion'.

Most of the care and support in Carmarthenshire is delivered by the independent commissioned sector. The Commissioning team in Carmarthenshire has played a significant part in supporting these services during the pandemic. The range of support has included:

- Coordination of the numerous communications and guidance.
- Coordination and supply of PPE.
- Proactive communications including a 24/7 helpline at the peak of the pandemic.
- Support for risk assessments surrounding admissions/returns from hospital.
- Initiating provider performance arrangements to address any Covid-19 or other concerns in relation to service provision.
- Support with testing and infection control.
- Financial support.
- Coordination of support and liaison with care homes experiencing outbreaks.

Providers told us about good communication and positive meetings with local authority commissioners during the pandemic. They said there was good communication and a culture of working collaboratively and making decisions together. We heard how the relationship between providers and care management teams had been strengthened during the pandemic.

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Visiting care homes by families and friends has, and remains, a challenge. Within our own homes, we continue to follow Welsh Government guidance which has allowed us to implement a plan to allow managed visits, balancing infection control issues with the need for residents to see their loved ones. With external homes, we have encouraged them to follow the Welsh Government guidance.

In-house and external care homes have continued to face the following challenges:

- Increased number of vacant beds, due the numbers of residents who have sadly passed away during the pandemic, and difficulties surrounding new admissions linked to 'exclusion' status.
- Financial impact in terms of increased staffing needed due to shielding staff and residents being isolated; and
- Managing the mental and physical impact on staff e.g. Additional workload, dealing with end of life situations with little or no family involvement and pressures for the teams.

Wherever possible, we are taking the opportunity to reflect on how we can improve and do things better in the future. For example, we commissioned an independent review to evaluate our approach to supporting care homes (Appendix 4) in the first wave, and this has been hugely valuable in informing how we have responded in the second wave.

Domiciliary Care

Domiciliary Care services were also affected, with the Support from Executive Board and the Chief Executive we were able to take early action to support the domiciliary care workforce. These steps included:

- Redeploy day service and Leisure officers to deliver care.
- Reconfigure larger packages of care based on risk assessments.
- Introducing fast track training and rolling recruitment.
- Putting in place a recruitment and retention package for in house care staff. This is reviewed monthly.
- Increasing commissioned domiciliary care rates temporarily by a pound an hour.
- Introducing upfront payment for commissioned hours for domiciliary care agencies to ensure cash flow is maintained in the sector.

Our fast track recruitment process has been extremely successful. At the time of writing 25 new carers have been appointed in-house with this number compensating for the additional Covid 19 related absence. General sickness was substantially down and many staff who work part time are willing to do additional hours.

I am particularly proud of our in-house workforce who have demonstrated remarkable resilience and commitment and continued to deliver care to our most vulnerable throughout the pandemic even at the start when there was insufficient PPE. There were sickness challenges during 2020 although only a third was covid related so many have worked extra hours and have been flexible to cover calls. Senior staff and supervisors have also undertaken front line duties when necessary. Staff have also been vigilant in the application of safe working practices and use of PPE.

During the pandemic, a small independent domiciliary care company was transferred into the service. A new Senior Manager for domiciliary care was also appointed and commenced in March 2021. Regular compliance meetings with CIW for all registered services have taken place during 2020/21 and have been very positive. A key

objective going forward is to grow the in-house domiciliary service which will include supporting those with more complex needs.

Our children's residential sector worked throughout the pandemic and have been extraordinarily successful at protecting vulnerable children in their care.

Complaints and Compliments

Adults

At the end of Q4 20/21, the department received a total of 277 compliments, this is an increase of 156% compared to last year. The highest number of compliments are under our In-House Domiciliary care team who account for a total of 89 of these compliments.

A total of 34 complaints were recorded at either Stage 1 or 2 in relation to Adult Social Care. It provides a positive picture of the department's performance in the context of 4,355 individuals that received a social care service from Carmarthenshire County Council during this period. This means that well under 1% of individuals formally complained about the service they received. There were 28 stage 1 local resolution complaints and 6 Stage 2 formal complaints, this means the department have received 46% fewer complaints compared to the same period last year. The department received a further 52 'concerns' which did not go down the formal route of a Stage 1 or Stage 2. Two out of the six stage 2 complaints were escalated from stage 1. Of the three completed stage 2 complaints, 2 were not upheld and 1 was partially upheld.

Children

At the end of Q4 20/21, 11 compliments were received by parents, carers and other agencies. The compliments included comments relating to individual social workers reports, the way they communicated with parents and other professionals as well as their written work.

There were 9 Stage 1 complaints received in relation to Children Services. 5 of the Stage 1 complaints were upheld. There were 3 independently investigated Statutory Stage 2 complaint; these were not upheld by the IIO. A further complaint was investigated by an IIO; this complaint was a historic complaint and therefore did not fall under the Social Services Complaints Procedures, however it was looked at to consider if there was any learning for the department.

We undertook a proactive survey during the pandemic to those who had received care and support services during the year and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Feedback included:

"That has been their highest priority in setting up my care plan"

"Very comfortable and felt supported in an appropriate way."

"The ladies in question were extremely patient and forgiving, knowing I have a brain injury"

Very very fast response to my needs in a time of national lock-down"

Workforce

Having the very best people working for the Authority means the very best social care can be provided for our people in the community. It is important that staff feel proud about the social care they provide and feel they are connected to the Local Authority, their communities and the teams they work within.

During the Covid pandemic, our workforce has continued to amaze us with their flexibility and resilience. Most notably, our in-house residential staff have been deployed to support independent sector care homes where needed at times of Covid outbreaks. Leisure staff were redeployed to support our front line services. Their commitment and compassion can only be described as outstanding. Recruitment and retention remains good in most areas. Social work retention is generally good with all but a small number of posts relatively easy to recruit to.

Engagement has been maintained with the Trade Unions via Department Trade Union forums and issues have been addressed as needed.

The workforce had a high level of competence in how to work with people, this has been maintained as far as possible during the pandemic. Staff told us training online has been available and is accessible to partners. Given the pandemic circumstances we found staff morale was very good.

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We recognise that the pandemic has had a huge emotional and psychological impact on many of our staff, and this should not be underestimated. We are doing all we can to support them ensuring that our staff benefit from our corporate wellbeing programme of support. We are paying particular attention to how we can support staff who have been involved in care home outbreaks, as we recognise how distressing this has been and the significant emotional toll that it has played.

Each of the childcare teams has been using a **systemic approach** to delivering social work services. 30 members of staff and managers are about to complete the qualification Foundation Year of Systemic Social Work Practice and in addition social workers across the service undertook a 3 day training event. As a result of this training staff now have the knowledge to underpin their practice which will increase confidence and provide consistency.

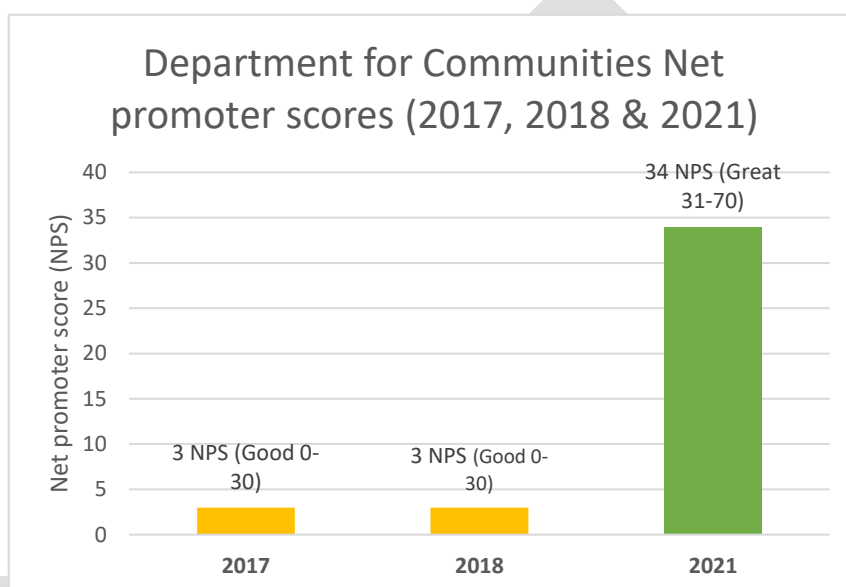
Covid restrictions have affected pod working as many staff find it harder to pick up on non-verbal communication and to be creative when discussing a case in a remote meeting. However, pod meetings continued throughout the year and staff made every effort to make them as effective as possible.

Staff continue to be positive about the benefits of the systemic approach. They find it supportive and also value how it makes the most of different perspectives in order to

understand better how a family functions as well as the impact on and meaning for the child of relationships in the family.

Outstanding support has been provided by IT services to modernise working practices as our whole workforce went agile in 2020. Moving forward we need to get the right balance between the use of digital solutions and face to face interaction.

A survey was undertaken in April 2021 on Rate Your Division as an Employer based on a Net Promoter Score analysis. We asked a question to all the staff in the Department if they would “Rate Your Division as an Employer” to understand their experience working in the department and division. The overall result was staff rated the department as a positive place to work. With staff views significantly improving from good to great since 2017.



Welsh Language

Over the last 9 months our Welsh language speaking levels have increased from 33% to 35%.

We found the Welsh language ‘Active Offer’ was being promoted with recognition of people’s first language recorded and services being delivered in people’s chosen language. Preferred language is recognised as a key factor in building effective relationships between people and practitioners.

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Conclusion and Next Steps

Overall, this report demonstrates a strong response to the pandemic and the maintenance of effective service delivery for the last year. This was confirmed early this year by the national inspectorate. We inevitably go into the next year facing the unknown, unsure whether the end of the pandemic is in sight or exactly what the new normal will be. We have a workforce that is fatigued from a difficult year and our priority must be to support them in the changes to services that will be needed if we are to continue to perform well. The business plans for the services will drive the necessary change moving forward and we can be confident that we have the workforce and management needed to adapt to future challenges. In the tables below we have set out many of the key actions needed in the coming year:

Children's services:

No	Action	By Who
1	We will ensure the regional threshold and multi-agency child protection arrangements are working effectively.	Noreen Jackman
2	We will continue to develop the Flying Start programme, promoting early intervention for disadvantaged families with children (0-3) living in specific deprived communities, ensuring good multi agency support to families.	Noeline Thomas
3	We will continue to work with partners to improve appropriate accommodation options and housing support for all vulnerable young people (aged 16-25) and implement the care leavers' accommodation framework	Bethan James
4	We will implement a joint disability service for children, young people aged 0-25 and their families to ensure our services are based on need not on age.	Kelvin Barlow
5	We will continue to aim to reduce the number of children becoming Looked After and number of care proceedings in accordance with our LAC reduction target as agreed with Welsh Government, utilising appropriately Edge of Care (EOC), Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) and Family Intervention Team (FIT).	Jayne Meredith

Adult Social Care and Integrated Services

No	Action	By Who
1	We will develop our overall approach to Integrated Services, so we are able to help develop strong communities, help people to help themselves, provide help when people need it and provide long-term support whilst keeping people safe. We will ensure we are able to do this through agreement of a vision for Integrated Services between the Local Authority and Health Board, a new Section 33 agreement setting out our collective responsibilities and agreement and of a new structure to support delivery.	Alex Williams
2	<p>We will develop our overall vision and strategic plan/pathways for prevention, proactive care including approach dementia, intermediate care and long-term care, to ensure that we can deliver the vision for integrated services and effectively manage demand.</p> <p>As part of this, we will deliver the corporate objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop the Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) service by enhancing the Multi-Disciplinary Team, to ensure that as many individuals as possible are supported to achieve preventative outcomes. (14694) • We will continue to support people living with dementia and the development of more dementia friendly and supportive communities and provisions across the County (14695) <p>We will work with partners to ensure that people remain socially connected, particularly through the use of virtual support such as the Connect project, in order to reduce loneliness, tackle inequalities and poverty (14696)</p>	Alex Williams
3	We will reshape our approach to support patient flow and home first by developing the above pathways and ensure that monitoring and escalation processes are in place to ensure effective patient flow.	Alex Williams
4	We will further strengthen the provision and use of the Welsh language within social care services, supporting our staff to learn virtually currently, to be able to provide services in the language of service users' choice and ensure compliance with the 'Active Offer' (14697)	Angharad Jenkins
5	We will develop an overall recovery model to redesign support and services during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. This will include how we safely restart day services/develop day opportunities as well as bed-based reablement.	Alex Williams
6	Establish Delta Connect as a primary prevented telecare service within the country. Develop with the health boards intervention with telecare/telehealth	Alex Williams
7	We will ensure that we have a through age approach to community support. This will include new models of service delivery to respond to Covid -19. (12540)	Sharon Frewin

8	Maintain a strong and sustainable in-house domiciliary provision for Council and support the commissioning team in developing a new framework including the redevelopment of the reablement services (13225)	Julie Duggan
9	We will continue to work with partners to transform mental health and learning disability services. We will promote independence, early intervention and prevention and ensure that support and services are accessible (14698)	Mark Evans/ Kelvin Barlow
10	Implement measures to respond to operational and strategic imperatives associated with Safeguarding including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) Liberty Protection Standards (LPS) and Violence Against Women , Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (VAWDASV)	Cathy Richards
11	Collaborate with colleagues in commissioning, housing and the Health Board to develop a range of supported accommodation	Mark Evans/ Kelvin Barlow

Departments Management Structure



Appendix 1 – Statutory Notice March 2020

EXECUTIVE BOARD

DATE: 1ST JUNE, 2020

SUBJECT:

REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Purpose:

Under the Code of Practice issued under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act the Statutory Director of Social Services has a duty to advise councillors on – amongst other things – the challenges, risks and circumstances where staff issues affect our ability to discharge our statutory responsibilities, and to brief the Chief Executive and councillors on matters likely to cause public concern, and strategies to deal with those situations.

This report reflects the position of key Social Services in Carmarthenshire during the National Emergency caused by Covid 19. This is a summary report only and does not include all areas of activity. These will be covered in the Director of Social Services annual report later in the year or by any further notes of advice deemed necessary to report.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

This summary report highlights actions and the position in:

- Domiciliary Care
- Residential Care
- Other Key Services

The Executive Board are asked to note the position and confirm these actions.

Reasons:

To inform members and the public of the position in relation to key services.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted : NO

Exec Board Decision Required YES

Council Decision Required NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. J. Tremlett (Social Care & Health Portfolio Holder)

Directorate	Designations:	Tel Nos.
Communities	Director of Community Services	01267 224698
Name of Head of Service:		E Mail Addresses:
Jake Morgan		JakeMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
EXECUTIVE BOARD
1ST JUNE, 2020

SUBJECT:
REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Under the Code of Practice issued under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act the Statutory Director of Social Services has a duty to advise councillors on – amongst other things – the challenges, risks and circumstances where staff issues affect our ability to discharge our statutory responsibilities, and to brief the Chief Executive and councillors on matters likely to cause public concern, and strategies to deal with those situations.

This is a summary report only and does not include all areas of activity. These will be covered in the Director of Social Services' annual report later in the year or by any further notes of advice deemed necessary to report.

In March we were at the start of a National Emergency with pressures growing as the incidents of Coronavirus infection grew in the county. Many services had ceased altogether with provision being modified to prioritise care to our most vulnerable clients based on individual risk assessments. The position has since developed with new systems now in place to manage risk alongside serious concerns across Wales in relation to the residential sector. Immediate service failure is still a risk in some areas and in others the service delivery model is under increasing strain. This notice reflects that overall position.

Overall the response by the council has been effective in maintaining social care services in extraordinarily difficult circumstances. Significant support financially and direct intervention and support by the Leader of the council, Lead member and the Chief Executive has contributed to the maintenance of most core provision to a good standard despite facing unprecedented challenges. The impact of the virus on residents in care homes is a serious and ongoing concern in Carmarthenshire as it is across much of Wales.

Throughout this emergency our thoughts are with those residents, care staff and families who have been impacted on so tragically by this virus.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: **Jake Morgan** **Director of Community Services**

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report	Directly relating to this update report

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: **Jake Morgan** **Director of Community Services**

1. Scrutiny Committee – N/A
2. Local Member(s) - N/A
3. Community / Town Council – N/A
4. Relevant Partners - N/A
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)
AWARE/CONSULTED:
YES

Cllr. J. Tremlett has been fully consulted with the content of the report.

Statutory Notice June 2020

Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services 30/3/2020

1. Introduction

Under the Code of Practice issued under the Social Services and Wellbeing act the Director of Social Services has a duty to advise councillors on – amongst other things – the challenges, risks and circumstances where staff issues affect our ability to discharge our statutory responsibilities, and to brief the Chief Executive and councillors on matters likely to cause public concern, and strategies to deal with those situations.

I have been a Statutory Director of Social Services for seven years and this is the first time I have issued a formal advice note to councillors outside of my Annual report. This is a summary report only and does not include all areas of activity. These will be covered in my annual report later in the year or by any further notes of advice I deem necessary to report.

As members are all aware, we are at the start of a National Emergency with pressures growing as the incidents of Coronavirus infection grow in the county. Many services have ceased altogether with provision being modified to our most vulnerable clients based on individual risk assessments.

In some cases, families have withdrawn services as the lockdown enables children to care for parents. This has helped in many of our key areas to maintain statutory provision. Overall in the circumstances our services are holding up well but there are significant risks moving forward.

2. Domiciliary care

We are facing significant challenges to maintain staffing as Coronavirus absences increase (Primarily self-isolating because of underlying conditions or household members with symptoms). I am enormously proud of the teams running our service and we continue to deliver broadly the same number of hours of care. With all sickness considered our in-house services are functioning on approximately 30% reduced staff numbers. Actions to support and maintain services include:

- Reducing continuity of care with carers deployed to cover essential calls even when this reduces established call patterns.
- Risk assessing packages of care and reducing them where we can safely.
- Redeploy day service officers to deliver care.
- Reducing larger packages based on risk assessments.
- Introducing fast track training and rolling recruitment (we anticipate an additional 8 staff will start in the coming week).
- Temporarily increasing pay rates for in house carers, offering time and a half for every hour people work over 20 hours a week. This is reviewed monthly through our emergency command structures.
- Increasing commissioned care rates temporarily by a pound an hour.

- Introducing up front payment for commissioned hours for domiciliary care agencies to ensure cash flow is maintained. At present our commissioned care agencies are managing whilst reporting they are under significant pressure. My overall assessment is that our services are maintaining well in the circumstances. However, there is a considerable risk to be managed going forward. The national policy, provision and supply of protective equipment to the sector is causing some staff and clients anxiety.

3. Residential Care

Residential care for older people is holding up well in the circumstances with placements still being made and whilst we have reduced staff numbers levels remain safe. Our commissioned care homes are reporting that staffing levels are still adequate but are under pressure with a small number of homes periodically refusing new admissions. No significant problems have yet been identified in the Learning disability, Children's or Mental Health residential sector. Our fostering and adult placement services remain stable. Actions to support the sector have included:

- Paying time and a half for every hour over 20 hours. To be reviewed monthly.
- Funding every care place for older people we purchase with a temporary additional £50 per week. This is reviewed on a monthly basis through our emergency command structures. To be reviewed monthly.
- Ensuring a no visitors policy is adhered to in all homes.
- Rhyd y gors school has been made available for emergency children's placements.
- Our residential respite children's homes remain open for emergencies only.

My overall assessment is that our services are maintaining critical provision well in the circumstances. However, there is a considerable risk to be managed going forward. The national policy, provision and supply of protective equipment to the sector is causing some staff and clients anxiety.

4. Other key Services:

All day care provision has been suspended with care packages assessed and staff supporting clients in the community where necessary.

Proactive calls from Delta and social work teams monitor those who are vulnerable. Wider council initiatives will also enhance our ability to respond to those in need thus preventing Social Service functions becoming overwhelmed.

Children's social work continues to maintain all statutory monitoring and to have the capacity to act when necessary. At least one set of care proceedings has been issued with courts still functioning effectively. Children's cases have been risk assessed by the Head of Children's Services so the most vulnerable can be prioritised for monitoring and support.

Adult Mental Health Practitioner numbers are low, and it is proving extremely challenging to maintain. It is possible that a reduced service will be offered going forward pending any temporary legislative changes although statutory requirements are still being met at present.

5. Protective Equipment:

Protective equipment for Social Care staff refers primarily to gloves, aprons, eye protectors and masks which have a water-resistant feature (there are detailed specifications as to what should be used). We include hand gel as essential and after considerable efforts we now have adequate supply for the next 2 weeks of this product. All items are disposable.

At the time of writing the National guidance is that face masks are only used where there is a suspected or confirmed case of Coronavirus. It does not, in my view reflect the nature of the care task domiciliary care workers are required to do in comparative isolation where their clients symptoms may change on a day by day basis and they are required to make decisions without the support of a location and immediate hierarchy to support any risk assessment.

Concerns regarding this area have been a permanent feature of correspondence and Dialogue between councils the WLGA and Welsh Government. Last week the Leader of the council wrote to the minister highlighting concerns.

Managing the anxieties of service users is extremely difficult for care staff along with managing their own. Care staff have reported to me as being 'terrified' before coming on shift and we are certain the lack of protective equipment being used routinely has reduced the overall capacity of the service.

Domiciliary Care – Following this guidance is challenging. Symptoms of Coronavirus include temperature, headache and/or a cough. These are common symptoms of many chronic conditions and infections that many of our clients have in the ordinary course of their lives Furthermore many infected people are not symptomatic. Thus, identifying when such symptoms relate to Coronavirus can be problematic and this causes anxiety amongst front line staff.

The national position is, in my view, made more complex by the guidance for isolation and shielding of many of our service users and those with some chronic conditions. Guidance indicates that many of our clients should '*Stay away from people, even friends and family. Do not go out at all*'.

Yet where they require care that can include feeding, washing and toileting by up to 6 different people a day we are not instructed that these carers should be given protective clothing to mitigate the risk to them or the client. All the front-line care workers and nurses I have spoken to see this apparent contradiction. I am yet to speak to someone delivering care who is supportive of the current guidance.

Care Homes The emerging evidence is that there have been a substantial number of deaths in other countries in nursing home facilities. Investigations into deaths in a Seattle nursing home in the US concluded that symptoms '*aren't enough to identify who is infected once the coronavirus enters a long term care facility*' The report concluded that '*as soon as there is a confirmed case all health care workers should don masks and other protective garments and residents should be isolated as much as possible*' The report found that of 23 residents who tested positive, only 10 had

symptoms on the day they were tested. Further indicating that symptoms alone are a poor indicator of the need to issue protective equipment (the current guidance).

Testing - My concerns are exacerbated by the delays and limited number of tests available. At present there only 80 a day for this health board area and the testing of care staff can only be requested on a case by case basis. Whilst substantial national work is underway to increase the capacity to test, we are yet to see the impact of it to the sector. Where symptoms were identified in one setting there was a substantial delay in getting results that confirmed they were negative.

Supply- The current position is that equipment will be issued 'when needed' by Health and local authorities from Welsh Government. The only source for the required standard of Facemasks is Welsh Government. We have a relatively good supply of gloves and aprons. I have not been made aware of any national shortage or supply issues by Welsh Government. Policy in issuing protective equipment is consistent across Community Health and Social Care.

As of last week, we have completed a daily return to Welsh Government at 3pm. However, I have no indication of what future supplies will be or the basis on which the current allocations have been made. Communication into those issuing equipment is limited and there is no dialogue on what amounts are released to us. This makes it extremely difficult to know what level of supplies to issue to hundreds of settings and thousands of employees across the social care sector in Carmarthenshire. At the time of writing we have approximately 5000 facemasks in store, enough for approximately one day if we were to use across the sector.

Later this week a new 24/7 store in the county will be established with a dynamic and flexible distribution process to ensure those most in need get it. This will address any shortfalls in communication and distribution that have been identified

Central to how we manage this risk is how limited the supply is nationally. It may be that we must ration because of a shortfall nationally however to advise the council on risk I would have to understand the rationale/ risk assessment for the supply we are getting.

The prudent and safest action to take to protect staff and vulnerable people would be to issue protective equipment for all community care workers to use as a matter of course in personal care. In addition, increasing the usage in residential settings is key to mitigating risk of multiple infections. Our initial estimate, based on a range of assumptions, would mean we require in the region of 25,000 masks a week for the county. Further work would need to be done on this to test these assumptions however this is not nearly achievable with the current supply from Welsh Government.

To conclude - I **am not able** to reassure the council as to the risk in relation to staff or service users without the issuing of protective equipment to domiciliary staff to use at all visits in the community. In addition, there should, as a minimum be enough stock to issue to all staff in a residential setting where there are suspected or actual cases.

6. Additional beds

- Central to the management of care pathways in preparing to meet predicted demand. Whilst there is a considerable range in terms of modelling of the virus spread we have been amongst the proactive authorities in Wales identifying, designing and building three settings for the NHS that will create more than 600 additional beds to be handed over to the Health Board in the next 2 weeks. Thus, whilst we anticipate considerable strains on the system and risk, we have already taken action that will mitigate this risk. Further expansion plans on the three sites and in our care homes is being considered. The estimated cost of this in capital build terms is £4.7 million. It is hoped this will be less as the building work progresses. It is intended that the bulk of this work for the NHS will be covered by ICF Capital regional fund although this is yet to be formally agreed.

7. Conclusion:

This report sets out the risks that are being managed well. Any significant risks going forward will be considered carefully and reported where necessary. At this stage I am not able to reassure the council regarding the use of Personal Protective Equipment.

- *The report was by state and local investigators, and scientists at the centre for disease control and prevention in Atlanta.*

Appendix 2 – CIW Assurance Check February 2021



Mr Jake Morgan
Director of Community Services
Carmarthenshire County Council
County Hall
Carmarthenshire
SA31 1JP

Date: 06 April 2021

Dear Director

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021: Carmarthenshire County Council
This letter summarises the findings of our assurance check on 1 February to 5 February.
The purpose of this assurance check was to review how well local authority social services continue to help and support adults and children with a focus on safety and well-being.

Overview

In March 2020, CIW suspended its routine programme in response to the Covid-19 pandemic to enable local authorities and providers to focus fully on responding to the challenging circumstances. A revised programme with local authorities recommenced in September to provide assurance about how people are being safeguarded and well-being promoted during the pandemic. We considered 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. We focused our key lines of enquiry within the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and have recorded our judgements and findings aligned to these: People - Voice and Control, Prevention, Partnerships and Integration, Well-being.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Our focus was on:

1. 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 wellbeing during the pandemic?
2. 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?
3. How well is the local authority providing early help, care and support and seamless transitions between services for disabled children and their families?

Summary of findings and priorities for improvement:

People - voice and control – We asked: How well is the local authority ensuring people, carers and practitioners are having their voices heard, making informed choices, and maintaining control over their lives. While also balancing the recommendations and requirements made by Public Health Wales and Welsh Government to limit the spread of COVID-19?

Overall we found the local authority ensures people's voices are heard, their choices respected and people routinely achieved self-identified outcomes. Leaders have a line of sight on front line practice with clear plans that have led to creative practice.

People's circumstances were represented in the files we reviewed, a personal element was noted in assessment and care and support plans. Practitioner analysis was clear and focused with a good balance of information proportionate to circumstance. This provided evidence of practitioners who prioritised and focused on understanding life for people they were working with. For example, we reviewed a safeguarding intervention where the practitioner made links to the third sector (Tir Dewi which provided on farm support) and other local support to meet the outcomes identified by the person.

People were able to have an influence over services they received and were supported by advocacy as appropriate. This supports a focus on what matters to people, the outcomes they want to achieve, and how they can use their own strengths and resources to promote their own wellbeing. The mental capacity assessments we reviewed indicated there were robust systems and processes in place to ensure people's mental capacity was assessed appropriately when needed. Health partners indicated there were strong links between social care and health for this process.

We found many examples of direct payments helping people to have flexibility in the care and support they received. People, including carers, were given the opportunity to tailor and manage their own support through use of direct payments. There was evidence of direct payments being utilised during the pandemic as a means of providing alternative respite. We found instances of carers' needs being considered and supported alongside the cared for person, these were often considered in an integrated holistic assessment. There was a clear intention recognised to support carers during the pandemic; one carer for example, told us about how they were able to maintain employment during the pandemic with support provided.

Carers' needs were also recognised and responded to in children's services with support ranging from financial, practical to therapeutic; all made available according to need. We found practitioners working to engage parents in complex circumstances. Where the local authority had shared parental responsibility there was clear evidence identified of parents being involved or attempts to achieve inclusion in decision making through attendance at legal meetings, conferences and reviews.

We found the Welsh language 'Active Offer' was being promoted with recognition of people's first language recorded and services being delivered in people's chosen language. Preferred language is recognised as a key factor in building effective relationships between people and practitioners. It is important the local authority builds on the 'Active Offer' for those people who are bilingual and explicitly address their preferred language in the provision of a service.

The geography and demographic of the local authority covers a large footprint with a range of services covering both highly populated and some very isolated rural areas. There was indication from some adult services staff that it can be difficult to keep track of the community based 3rd sector and volunteer resources available, this has the potential to limit options and information made available to people. This is an area the local authority should review to ensure the workforce has access to information about the range of services available.

Practitioners had high regard for approachable and supportive managers. The local authority has a culture of co-production and personal outcomes being developed with people and driven by leaders across the organisation. Staff have a shared motivation to work promptly and effectively with families. There is a clear strength based approach adopted across the service, evident in what we found about how social workers prioritise communication. The workforce had a high level of competence in how to work with people, this has been maintained as far as possible during the pandemic. Staff told us training on line has been available and is accessible to partners. Given the pandemic circumstances we found staff morale was very good.

Prevention - We asked: To what extent is the local authority successful in promoting prevention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies?

We found a positive integrated approach to a culture of prevention through joint working, supportive infrastructures across social and health care and aligned delivery systems. This was evident in a prudent approach to resource allocation ensuring the right help was available at the right time, this prevents escalation of need and improves the quality of the individual's journey through the health and social care system. We found services such as the Emotional Health Support team, Edge of Care and Camau Bach have been planned and aligned to focus on the same aim. Files had clear personal outcomes recorded, particularly important in complex situations requiring co-ordination of support to address eligible need.

In adult services, the Delta / Connect project has been successful in promoting prevention and early intervention and reducing need for increased or formal support from statutory agencies. Staff and managers understood the need to ensure people are receiving appropriate care and support as well as the importance of making the best uses of resources, especially so during the pandemic. We saw evidence of enhanced use of

technology to support people's safety as well as reduce loneliness and isolation. Bespoke individualised equipment was provided to support people's well-being with plans monitored through proactive calls and a 24/7 welfare response focusing on community based solutions. This enabled people to be supported at home and whenever possible, avoiding the need for admission to hospital or residential care.

Practitioners said there was a focus on preventative services in the local authority, with the availability of step down and community resources to support people. Many of these services have not been available during the pandemic, but we heard of communities coming together and developing services.

In response to the pandemic there has been investment to support acute and field hospitals, with the local authority appointing a team manager to facilitate hospital discharges from West Wales General and Prince Phillip hospitals and support field hospitals. Since November 2020 the Well-being officers have been facilitating hospital discharges especially for people who do not have eligible needs for care and support. The community responders is another service the local authority has commissioned via Delta, using Transformation funding. Community responders have supported people to remain at home rather than be admitted to hospital and have also supported people to settle back home following a hospital admission.

We identified an encouraging culture of staff working together to the same aim. The approach to working with families was understood, there was a shared understanding in children's and adult services. In children's services, the pod meetings were embedded and highly regarded by all staff as an effective and supportive mechanism for themselves and the families they supported. These meetings combine a systemic and strengths based approach to evaluating work with families.

Our review of files found timely and proportionate interventions to support people's independence and to remain at home with families when it was safe for them to do so, taking in to account individual wishes. In children's services risks were dynamically evaluated to ensure decisions to instigate moves into care were made at points when relevant thresholds were met. We found early intervention to address problems before they escalated; this is an important contributor to improved stability of placements and security for children. Placement support was evident in many files we reviewed.

Partnership and Integration - We asked: To what extent is the local authority able to assure itself opportunities for partnership working are positively exploited to maximise person centred planning and ensure integrated service delivery and service sustainability?

At the individual level we found services co-produced based on a relationship of equals between practitioners and people who needed care and support and carers who needed support. Success was measured by gathering information about whether support was achieving the things that matter to people. There was evidence of practitioners developing professional working relationships with people built upon co-operation and shared understanding of what matters. People were supported to identify what matters to them and how they might achieve their personal well-being outcomes. The outcomes were clearly described and the actions to achieve them identified.

We had conversations with care leavers about their positive experiences; many of whom were still being supported by foster carers, others were in *When I am Ready* arrangements, and in further education.

Partnerships were found to be working well at all levels and delivering an integrated sustainable approach to meeting need and promoting well-being in line with legislation and expectations. Co-production was advanced and communities were engaged.

The local authority demonstrated opportunities for partnership working with health colleagues have been positively and successfully promoted to produce positive outcomes for people. Integrated services and posts have provided the foundations for joint working across health and social care. We found practitioners from different sectors and services working effectively together. This is significant as effective partnership working contributes to strengths based, person-centred plans that maximise potential for increased independence. We were told there could be disagreements about funding between health and social care packages of care and different interpretations about the lead care management practitioner. There was no evidence we found of adverse impact on people because of this.

Our review of files identified information sharing taking place, we were advised multi-agency regional training is being planned to further promote information sharing across agencies. When children or adults were identified at being at risk of harm, strategy meetings were convened in a timely manner and information to inform decision making was shared by professionals in attendance. For both children and adults, even where decisions were not necessarily welcomed, a focus on engagement between practitioners and people ensured these were accepted in good faith and people understood what was expected of them.

We found a strong emphasis on professional disciplines working together; for example an education psychologist being part of the 0-25 Disability Team and other specialist posts in this team providing specialist knowledge. We received positive responses from staff about the 0-25 Team structural changes that occurred last year.

We saw how school and education staff worked closely with social workers; teachers providing a nurturing environment for vulnerable children and fully contributing to care and support. We found services commissioned through education colleagues making a positive difference to children's outcomes. In children's services we heard about good relationships with paediatricians but more limited benefits from interactions with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Providers told us about good communication and positive meetings with local authority commissioners during the pandemic. They said there was good communication and a culture of working collaboratively and making decisions together. We heard how the relationship between providers and care management teams had been strengthened during the pandemic.

A challenge for the local authority has been the reduced capacity of some partner organisations during the pandemic; for example we were told school nurses had been redeployed and local authority practitioners found this hindered the assessment and planning process. Some Third Sector services were limited in their offer of support due to

strict Covid rules; this caused additional burden for front line practitioners. Conversely, we found safeguarding meetings had continued through the pandemic period and practitioners said remote meetings had resulted in improved attendance by partners.

Well-being - We asked: To what extent is the local authority promoting well-being, ensuring people maintain their safety and achieve positive outcomes that matter to them?

The local authority has exercised its functions under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 to ensure it makes a positive contribution to the well-being of people who need care and support and carers who need support. At an individual level this has included seeking out the person's wishes and feelings, respectful practice, building upon their circumstances and capabilities. Working in partnership with people to develop creative solutions was evident, improving the quality of care, securing well-being and preventing the development of people's needs for care and support. Identifying people's outcomes was a priority rather than process.

There was a collaborative response by all agencies to the pandemic including the development of a regional Escalation Policy for care homes. The Regional Safeguarding Board provided oversight and assurance in relation to safeguarding practice for vulnerable children and adults. During the pandemic we saw efforts made to maintain contact with people, with statutory visits and meetings taking place virtually but also some risk assessed face to face contact as appropriate.

The local authority has effectively promoted the well-being of people to ensure timely care and support was available to maintain their independence and safety. This was evident as we found assessments clearly recorded views in plain language with emphasis on personal circumstances, strengths, risk, barriers and what needs to happen to achieve personal outcomes. Care First prompts were helpful, they enabled practitioners to clearly articulate what they were worried about. The elements the person seeking support and protection brings to the process were recognised and valued.

Co-produced solutions were evident and there were positive outcomes for people subject to safeguarded interventions. From the files we reviewed, we found safeguarding enquiries and investigations conducted in line with statutory requirements. Strategy meetings and discussions were effective and involved relevant agencies. We found good analysis of risk, protection plans in place and action taken when necessary. Providers and partners said they were supported by the adult safeguarding team; their willingness to offer advice, guidance and assist with training of social care workers was acknowledged. Health colleagues indicated when things went wrong, social care and health would work collaboratively and openly to identify learning opportunities.

The pod meetings in children's services clearly promoted a holistic and strengths-based approach to working with families. This was demonstrated in records that clearly articulated outcome focused planning. Plans outlined clear achievable goals to safeguard children and improve their well-being through the provision of a range of services best suited to their needs. We reviewed a plan that included stringent risk measures to ensure a child's safety over the pandemic period. This comprised daily unannounced visits which focused on risk whilst also evidencing the quality of a positive working relationship between family and practitioner.

We saw care and support being adapted to meet peoples' changing needs and agencies contributing to the review process. Relationships and communication with people was collaborative in this process. Strengths-based conversations had replaced the traditional needs-based assessments with voice and choice prominent in the practice reviewed in both adult and children's services.

The files we reviewed demonstrated that whilst every effort was made to sustain independence, adults were also supported to make pragmatic decisions about when the time was right to move into care homes so they and could be more safely supported.

In children's services we found effective support from the multi-agency group and a good standard of reviews for care experienced children led by Independent Reviewing Officers. They had a mechanism in place to seek assurance about well-being in between formal reviews and hear from children and their carers.

Care Leavers were highly complementary about Personal Assistants (PAs) on the whole; they valued the dedicated support provided by PAs. There was, however, some feedback about inconsistency in support.

Methods

- we reviewed documentation supplied in advance of our visit
- we spoke with carers and people who were receiving or had received care and support, including nine care leavers
- we reviewed 30 files
- we held ten case tracking interviews with practitioners, managers and carers
- we held four focus groups
- we administered nine surveys
- we observed a carers champion meeting

Next Steps

We have identified strengths and areas for priority improvement and we will review the progress of these areas through our performance evaluation review meetings with the heads of service and director. We expect the areas of improvement we have identified to be included in the local authority's improvement plans. We would like to extend our thanks to all those who helped with the arrangements for this assurance check and to those people and staff who spoke with us.

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Yours sincerely,



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Care Inspectorate Wales

Review of Carmarthenshire County Council's Support to Care Homes during the Covid 19 Pandemic

June 2020

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PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW:

Carmarthenshire County Council requested an independent review of its approach to supporting Care Homes through the Covid-19 pandemic, with a view to creating an evidence base of approach taken and identify any lessons learnt that need to be addressed or implemented going forward.

The picture is still emerging with considerable pressure on homes at the time of producing this report as the second/third COVID wave has a significant impact on the functionality of homes. Whilst there were significant challenges across all sectors nationally in March to May the purpose is not to apportion blame but to ensure early lessons are learnt and areas for further investigation are identified.

TIMESCALE:

The period under consideration is from March 1st leading up to lockdown through until 31st of August 2020, when the lockdown restrictions were lifted, and regulations eased.

I have also made reference to the current period from 31st Aug through to December as it is having an impact on responses as we hit a second wave of the pandemic.

METHODOLOGY:

Interviews: 16 staff across the Local Authority, Commissioning and Health partners were interviewed individually via Teams. I also attended 2 meetings with Senior Managers, again via Teams. A small number of staff were unable to be interviewed due work pressures and commitments.

A Snap Survey was distributed to all Care Homes in the Adult Services and 3 establishments within the Children services sector.

Response was good.

41 Adult Care Homes and 3 Children Residential settings were approached.

30 establishments completed the survey which saw 68% response rate

All 6 Care Home settings who experienced Covid-19 outbreak were approached for further information regarding the support process. 3 responded and were interviewed via Teams.

I had access via Teams Files to the numerous Policies/Procedures and processes adopted to deal with Covid-19. A key document that I referenced was the **Nursing & Residential Care Homes, Supported Living and Extra Care Risk & Escalation Management Policy v1.5**; This document developed initially in Carmarthenshire is now jointly agreed between Hywel Dda University Health Board and the 3 partner Local Authorities.

I also had sight of the Chronology of Communication to Care Homes detailing information, support and guidance offered to the sector.

I adopted a broad Signs of Safety methodology in formulating the questions. What worked well, what didn't work so well and what were/are the challenges.

The Scoping and discussions commenced on 22nd October, with the Questionnaire and interviews commencing on 10th November and running through November and early December. The last interview took place on the 10th December.

The key areas covered were as follows:

- Provision of overall advice and guidance to independent and Local Authority care homes.
- Infection, Prevention and Control.
- Sourcing and supply of PPE.
- Facilitation of hospital patient discharge to care homes.
- Management of outbreaks in care homes, to include involvement of other agencies including medical professionals.
- Identification, management and escalation of safeguarding concerns.
- Management of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.
- Testing in care homes.
- Overall support to care homes, including support to the workforce and financial support.
- Overall support to care home residents and families.
- Partnership working, particularly with Hywel Dda Health Board, surrounding all of the above.

Leadership surrounding all of the above

LEADERSHIP/SUPPORT/GUIDANCE

The universal feedback for the Local Authority from the Snap Survey and the interviews held with Staff across the Local Authority, Health and Care sector is of a County Council that displayed strong, decisive leadership. This is referenced as applicable from the Chief Executive and Statutory Director down throughout the

organisation. There is evidence of the effectiveness of the Gold/Silver/Bronze Command structure, staff were clear where they fitted into the structure and the roles they had to play. It has been noted on countless occasions in interview and survey that the ability to make agile decisions, responding swiftly in a solution focussed way; that staff had autonomy to make decisions and were able to problem solve.

The Leader of the Council and Lead member demonstrate considerable support for the sector in particular advocating nationally in relation to PPE supply and testing with ministers throughout the early days of the pandemic

The effectiveness of Inter-agency working was evident from the outset to all staff and daily SITREP meetings established. Senior Managers within CCC met 2 x daily and this pattern was replicated further down the management structure to ensure staff were fully briefed. There has been an effective audit trail of decision making and policies have been adapted as the situation has changed.

Safeguarding has continued to be a consideration during the Covid pandemic. The Regional Safeguarding Board has led on the discussions and considerations around safeguarding at what has been an extremely difficult time for the Care sector. There were weekly meetings held to consider the safeguarding requirements, with a Covid focus. There have been challenging discussions around safeguarding issues, at what point does the organisation become concerned about practice etc; these have been addressed at all senior management meetings. The Care Homes Escalation meetings did consider what was needed in the Care homes to support and promote safe practice whether that be staffing/equipment/support or advice. The safeguarding concerns that did come through have been around poor practice where processes weren't followed correctly.

The Coronavirus Act 2020 did not make any changes to the relevance or application of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. It did however mean that Local Authorities had to make significant changes to how it addressed meeting the requirements of the law. Carmarthenshire worked with its regional colleagues to produce guidance for staff. Work was undertaken to review the assessments and the review process. Skype and Teams

meetings were facilitated, although they did pose questions around the independence and efficacy of the process. Carmarthenshire sent its Guidance to Welsh Government for its consideration and it was commended. The Regional Group has continued to meet and consider whether the policy remains relevant and that the principles of the MCA 2005 are still being met.

The setting up of a dedicated Commissioning Team which was available 24/7 to advise and proactively support was also universally welcomed. They provided a centralised response, reporting and decision/discharge mechanism for the Care sector that was vitally important. The Local Authority was also ahead of the curve in recognising the potential impact of Covid-19 on market stability and introduced payments to help cover voids and extra costs such as deep cleaning and extra care

costs in the sector. Covid positive homes were offered extra support and assistance and this was highly valued.

Carmarthenshire CC also adopted a Safe Hospital Discharge Policy to support the Care Homes sector, insisting on Covid- tests prior to discharge. All discharge requests were processed through the Commissioning Team to help ease the burden on the Care Homes. This process appears to have been less well understood by Health colleagues within the Hospital setting and is something that will need addressing jointly going forward.

The focus was very much on keeping residents safe and on their care needs. Staff across the Local Authority were quick to pull together and that feeling of unity and support has remained; Staff were re-deployed to new roles to support efforts across the services. A number of challenges have emerged that will need attention in the longer term. Most staff spoken to feel it is too early to even contemplate an exit strategy yet, still feeling very much in the eye of the storm as the second wave hits our communities.

Monitoring of the Care Homes was suspended during the first lockdown. There were restrictions on visitors to the care homes. Staff from within Health were re-deployed to other Covid response roles, this continues to date. Health staff did note that when they did go back in to undertake mass TTP testing they were able to have some oversight. The Commissioning Team has been dedicated to focussing on the Covid Response as well. The CCC and Health were dependent therefore on any other professionals who went into the homes to be the eyes and ears and to report any concerns. CIW/HIW have undertaken their visits virtually. There haven't been any concerns reported.

There are concerns about future financial austerity impact on the Care Sector and Health & Social Care in general post the pandemic response. Carmarthenshire acted before National funding was agreed, at risk, with a formula that was then largely adopted by Welsh Government. Subsequent national funding providing top ups and void payments has been effective in stabilising the sector financially. The Care sector has depended on this support to sustain it.

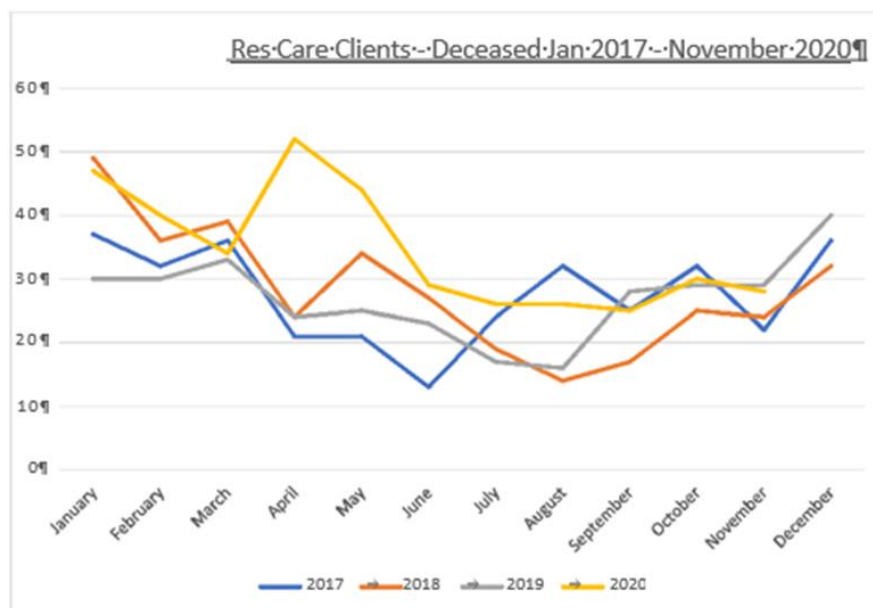
RECOMMENDATIONS

The Exit Strategy needs to be as equally robust and well planned as the Pandemic response- recovery will take longer

Consider a Review of the Safeguarding response during Covid Pandemic, possibly as a Regional Safeguarding Board with a focus on what worked well/what has been the learning

Build on and maintain the extended partnership working, maintaining the ability to make pragmatic agile decisions, with less bureaucracy.

Mortality in Commissioned Residential Placements for Older People



	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	37	49	30	47
February	32	36	30	40
March	36	39	33	34
April	21	24	24	52
May	21	34	25	44
June	13	27	23	29
July	24	19	17	26
August	32	14	16	26
September	25	17	28	25
October	32	25	29	30
November	22	24	29	28
December	36	32	40	

There was significant challenge in March to May 2020 with a specific spike in the mortality rates of residents. A small number of homes were tragically severely affected with a significant number of residents dying within 28 days of a positive test and further work on how improved care. Addressing this and protecting residents has been the highest possible priority across homes, health, and the local authority. This work across infection control, intervention in homes, testing, treatment, intervention, and care has dramatically improved the position with a lower rate of mortality in homes than pre COVID periods despite a rise in the number of homes affected

COMMUNICATION

In March and April of 2020 communication and guidance nationally was widely seen as inconsistent around the supply and use of PPE and admissions. There was significant challenge for all care homes as the evidence base of what was needed to protect staff and residents was seen to run ahead of appropriate national guidance being released. This left local authorities/ commissioners unable to be clear and consistent with homes. At this early stage considerable concern was raised with Welsh Government as to the vulnerability of care staff and residents where guidance and supply fell short of what was needed. Whilst some Care Homes highlighted that information and guidance was too slow in the first few weeks of the pandemic (leaving some care homes feeling somewhat adrift and confused) they do acknowledge that this was a completely new scenario for everyone.

All staff acknowledged that the volume of information flowing from various sources, the changing guidelines and pace at which the information was coming through was a significant challenge nationally. It has been commented on in several interviews that once the CCC machinery swung into action and started getting a handle on the information flow from central government then the support was evident and effective.

As noted above communication with the Care sector was viewed positively. At the early stage improvements could be made in co-ordinating phone contacts. Managers talked of 5/6 daily phone calls asking for similar data/information when they were stretched. Managers felt conflicted between dealing with administrative matters when they were needed on the floor to support caring duties.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Consideration for a Regional Communication Team comprising LA & Health to craft clear joint communication from one source

HEALTH & HOSPITALS

The role of the Frailty Consultant in supporting Care Homes with Covid outbreaks during the early weeks was been particularly commended. Health colleagues report that the swift ability to make decisions on hospital discharges without overly worrying about funding stream/splits was also critically important. Improved co-ordination and clarity on roles between this consultant and GP'S assisted as there were some risks of a lack of clinical coordination.

There were varied responses in terms of GP support to the Care homes during the pandemic; some Managers advised that GP practices were reluctant to attend the Care Homes; others felt the service was supportive. Some practices managed their patient lists virtually over the phone, with weekly surgeries undertaken remotely.

One area worthy of note raised by a number of staff was the issue of DNACPR forms. Some Care Homes felt a “blanket” approach had been taken with regard to their residents and they have since removed the DNACPR at the resident’s request. There was also concern from a Manager spoken to about a letter issued by a GP cluster very early on advising that residents would not be proactively treated. This caused tremendous upset for residents, families and staff. I believe the matter was raised with the Health Board and addressed rapidly.

The Hospital Discharge Policy has also been a hot topic for the Care Homes and Commissioning Team and evoked quite a response. What is clear is there appeared to be a lack of understanding and sometimes, even, an acknowledgement of the existence of the policy by ward-based Hospital staff. The Care Homes have felt very well supported during the pandemic with the Commissioning Team co-ordinating and agreeing hospital discharges. This will need to be closely monitored as we go into the second wave of the pandemic and the pressure on both Hospitals and Care Homes increase from staffing pressures or Covid positive perspective.

Several of the care homes also noted that they have been unable to get Occupational Therapy/ Physiotherapy or Dietician visits into the Care Homes since lockdown lifted in August.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Consideration be given to offer joint training with GP clusters to manage expectations of Care Homes around the support they need

To review the DNACPR processes and procedures and ensure that they are applied in a person-centred way with the needs and best interest of the residents at the heart of the decision.

Discussion between the Local Authority and Health regarding the Safe Discharge Policy and how Care Homes can be supported to feel confident and trust the Hospital assessment of patients in future

PPE/CONSUMABLES

Carmarthenshire CC had clear objectives on what they were trying to achieve for the Care Homes and care sector across Health and Social Care. Evidence from the Team suggests they achieved this from the outset. Prior to a centralised store supplied by Welsh Government the county managed its supply well, getting close to running out, but never actually doing so. There is evidence that seconded staff worked tirelessly to ensure all Care Homes were supplied. No care homes lacked supply once effective national guidance was established.

The changing guidance caused anxiety, conflict, uncertainty and upset in the early weeks. Considerable time politically and at the most senior levels was spent trying to resolve the challenges in this area. Senior council officers report significant political

support from the Lead member, Leader and Chief Executive in trying to resolve these very difficult issues. Once shared services were established and up and running the PPE supply has not been an issue. The PPE Team have worked closely with Commissioning, Environmental Health and Infection Control Team. They have modelled the demand across the Care Homes, accounting for multiple scenarios and have ensured that a consistent supply of PPE has been maintained. There was proactive support from across the Council to source suitable storage sites. Dispatch of PPE has been efficient and responsive.

Corporate Health and Safety have complemented the work of the Infection Control Nursing Team by providing online training for staff on the “donning /doffing” procedures and clear instructions on how to prevent cross contamination. This was a good example of effective joint working with the health board responsive to the care sector.

A weekly survey is sent out to establish a baseline of PPE stocks held in each Care home. Where care homes have tested positive for Covid- the PPE team have calculated the number of likely changes by the number of interventions likely to be required and sent out Booster packs.

The challenge going forward as we emerge from the Covid Pandemic will be to ensure we continue to maintain good PPE practice and protocols. There will also be a challenge for Care Homes in the private sector who are currently being provided PPE from the Welsh Government central supply; again, something for consideration in the exit strategy around extra costs and fee setting structures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Local Authorities to consider holding sufficient stocks of PPE/Consumables (such as dedicated waste bins) that could be quickly deployed in the event of any future infectious outbreak. To be included in any Emergency Plan going forward.

INFECTION/PREVENTION CONTROL

This has been a front-line service that has been universally praised by all. The Team have been in direct contact with the Care homes, on the floor offering, support advice and guidance. They have made themselves available at all times of day and night to support staff. Their input has been critical in ensuring the Care Homes have responded as well as they have in mitigating the risks as far as possible.

Environmental Health became more involved from the May period onwards to support the Infection Control effort. They developed an effective working partnership with Infection Control. There were challenges for the Team in terms of the layout of some of the Care Homes; many are in older buildings, not purpose built. Zoning the residents care in Covid positive homes became quite a logistical challenge. It was made more difficult in Care Homes where you had residents who

“walk with purpose”. Moving residents out of their rooms was also a challenge, leaving their personal effects and the comfort of their own rooms.

The necessity for deep cleaning in Covid Positive Care Homes also became an issue and highlighted how in some homes the Carers also double up as the cleaners. There has been a significant amount of learning in this area on the impact of good infection control.

The challenge will be in ensuring that Infection Control remains a high priority and its importance maintained in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

LA Commissioning & Health to work with the Care Home sector going forward to ensure that clear policies, procedures, advice, training and guidance re PPE and Infection Control remain central to good quality practice within Care Homes/Dom care

The role of Environmental Health in Infection Control to be established and resourced as a permanent function

STAFFING

The first priority is to acknowledge and commend the dedication of the Care Home staff and their Managers- they have gone above and beyond any job description. They have been honest about their fears, anxieties and struggles; they have kept providing quality care in a loving compassionate way to people who have been separated from seeing loved ones. They have sat with residents who were facing the final journey and ensured they didn't pass alone. They have displayed a “can do attitude” and have supported each other.

Other Local Authority staff have elected to be re-deployed into the care sector and have provided invaluable support. All have adapted to what was required of them, be that changing shift patterns to working extra shifts. Many have undertaken roles that were completely outside their normal experience.

Many Care Homes noted that the Local Authority supported swiftly when there were staffing issues. There appeared to be more challenges in the Nursing Homes where it was more difficult to get qualified Nurses. Bank agency rates were £3,000 per shift and this cost was prohibitive to most Nursing homes.

It has also been noted that Care Home staff are being called upon to assist in the assessment and review processes of residents in a different way to previously. Social Workers and Nurse Assessors are assessing & reviewing virtually which necessitates a member of the care Home staff providing them with updates and information from the files and care notes. Prior to Covid this would have been done by the Social Worker/Nurse Assessor when visiting the home. Managers find

supporting this a challenge when staffing numbers haven't been increased to support the extra demands.

There is a wider mental health issue to be considered when looking at the exit strategy. Staff, especially those in Covid hit homes, have been emotionally stretched and many are left traumatised at seeing so many deaths in a short period. The fear of Covid and its impact has been very real for all.

From a broader Local Authority perspective all staff spoken to have acknowledged that the notion of a 5-day working week disappeared when the pandemic hit. The Council has made sure that staff were available 7 days a week from very early on. There were teething problems early on when the scale of the pandemic and the impact wasn't known, e.g., being able to access stores for supplies. Once the scale of issues was understood the Local Authority responded effectively.

There is a greater sense that staffing may well become an issue during this second wave. Increased testing of people is seeing an increase in numbers needing to self-isolate. Also, an increase in community transmission which will inevitably put pressure on services. Added to this Managers talking of increase in staff anxiety/ Covid fatigue in the approach to this second wave. During the first wave people were running on adrenalin.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff support and counselling should be considered

Lead on the parity of esteem debate for Care Home sector workers that will inevitably arise post pandemic

Consideration is given to creating additional mental health capacity as part of the COVID exit strategy.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

From a Care Homes perspective one of the major areas of concern is the lack of internet access across the homes. It appears to be the same picture pretty much across the Local Authority and Private sector.

Care Home Managers have laptops and have been able to attend Teams Meetings etc with their line manager and also with fellow Managers. This was seen as extremely useful as a source of support and information sharing and the meetings have continued at the behest of the Managers.

It was reflected that much of the work in the care homes is paper based and as they tried to address this by trying to adopt a paperless system, they were hampered by the lack of available equipment. In the Local Authority homes the senior care staff and the carers do not have access to laptops. The carers themselves have not had local authority e mail address. This caused problems if staff were self-isolating and could potentially work from home writing or updating care plans. The frustration felt by Managers was evident.

Wi-Fi connectivity was an issue highlighted by the majority of Care Homes. Ensuring that relatives could remain in virtual contact with families and friends during lockdown this was problematic. Several homes had the equipment but it's ability to be used was patchy; either there was no internet access, or signal would drop off mid-conversation.

There was also an issue in the private sector of residents being told if they wanted internet access then they would need to pay. Many Managers felt given the required use of technology that Wi-Fi access should be a given.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consideration should be given to an investment programme in the IT infrastructure in Local Authority Care Homes, enabling all staff the opportunity to access work e mails, information relayed digitally, access online training etc in line with the majority of the Council's workforce.

Similar scoping and consideration with the independent sector Care Homes- although resolving that might necessitate Welsh Govt support to grant fund such a scheme.

Consider Wi-Fi access and increased use of smart technology to improve people's lives and maximise independence within care settings and include as part of the contractual requirements/negotiations. IT/Internet access to be a consideration when formulating care plans, how will prospective residents maintain contact with family and friends

TRACK, TRACE & PROTECT

Once the service got over the initial teething problems the co-ordination has worked well. There has been swift mobilisation into care homes, with proactive calls and advice & guidance.

All have commented that the Health Board testing service was consistently reliable with a swift turnaround. Staff were on fortnightly testing; some have resumed weekly due to the spike in community transmission.

There was an early challenge with Local Authority unable to get the test results of employees from the Health Board due to confidentiality and governance issues.

It seems the "Lighthouse testing" is proving more of a challenge from a resource intensive perspective as well as accuracy & reliability. There is also now the challenge of mass testing and finding higher numbers of cases; all has an impact on the Care Homes, staffing wise.

There is understandable caution from care homes with regard to the testing of visitors to Care Homes especially now we are seeing a rise in infection rates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NONE

CHILDREN SERVICES/MENTAL HEALTH & LEARNING DISABILITIES

Whilst Children Services, Mental Health and Learning Disability services were not included in initial core meetings, which focussed on older adults because of the high level of risk on older persons, they did nevertheless follow the same protocols. There were 3 specific units within Children Services and the RI/ Managers held their own meetings with the site managers. Children Services sits within Education but has the same regulatory requirements from a Residential care perspective as Adults. The Senior Managers ensured they were the direct contacts with their care homes to be able to offer the support and guidance. All the children that accessed the facilities had their care needs reviewed and arrangements put in place to support. There were some concerns as to where Children Residential services would have accessed staffing support if it had been a necessity due to the specialised nature of the client group- children with complex learning disabilities. However, an escalation process was in place should that have been needed.

Strategically the Head of Children's services and Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities attended strategic meetings with adult services colleagues and the Statutory Director to ensure the response was inclusive.

The Children services are now developing a specific Operational Policy for Children's Residential Services.

From a Mental Health and Learning Disability perspective Health worked closely with the Local Authority to ensure that hospital beds were reduced to take pressure from the acute sector. There was a great deal of proactive work undertaken to find suitable placement options; all the Mental Health and the vast majority of Learning Disability options are in the private sector. Funding agreements were reached, and it highlighted how quickly services can act when necessary.

One area that was highlighted as a risk if any Learning Disability Care home had to close down or people needed hospitalisation. There would be a requirement for specialist LD nurses to care for the more complex cases. It is acknowledged that the services are talking about lower numbers but significant needs, but this was seen as an area that sector specific contingency plans could be developed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure Children Services/Mental Health & Learning Disabilities are included from the outset in any future Emergency planning around residential care

Mapping the support needs of Children services/MH & LD

Children services to develop a specific Operational Policy for Children's Residential Services

FAMILIES/FRIENDS/VISITS

Some care homes have been extremely innovative and resourceful in how they have facilitated visits once the lock down was lifted. It has, nevertheless, been and continues to be a challenge for the majority of Care Homes to facilitate and support safe visiting arrangements.

During the summer it was far easier with some able to erect marquees or facilitate outdoor visits. Winter has made things far more difficult and challenging. Some homes have been able to create safe spaces in conservatories, others in their Day Care site which is closed to day users. Some have managed to utilise Skype/What's App more successfully than others.

End of life visits have been supported across the care sector, with one relative being able to be present, wearing the correct PPE. For families who could not attend staff have provided assurances that their loved one has not passed alone and had a staff member there with them.

What is clear is that all Care homes are seeing the negative impact on residents of loss of contact with family and friends. Those with cognitive impairment cannot understand the lack of visits and struggle with virtual meetings. The impact of increased testing and staff testing positive there is a real issue in care homes rolling from one 28-day period of closure to another.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Work with National Advisors/Regulators/LA & Health to consider and develop guidelines on how to promote and maintain safe visiting to Covid free residents when staff & other residents on site have tested positive. Consideration as to how to support Care Homes to develop safe visiting spaces and other innovative ways of maintaining contact

+++++

I would like to thank all the staff who participated in the interviews and all those who contributed by completing the survey. I have been impressed and truly humbled by the sheer hard work and dedication of all to work together during this pandemic. The overriding thought for everyone has been to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the people they serve and the care of the most vulnerable in our society.

Diolch yn fawr/Thank you

Carys James B.A.HONS; CQSW; Dip SW

YMGYNGHORYDD ANNIBYNNOL/INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT

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SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7th July, 2021

Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2020/21

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- That members consider and approve the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee's annual report for the 2020/21 municipal year.

Reasons:

- The Council's Constitution requires Scrutiny Committees to report annually on their work.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: **NO**

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Cllr. J. Tremlett, Social Care & Health

Directorate

Chief Executive's

Name of Head of Service:

Linda Rees-Jones

Designations:

Head of Administration & Law

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SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7th July, 2021

Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2020/21

The attached report has been prepared in order to comply with Article 6.2 of the County Council's Constitution which states that a scrutiny committee must:

"Prepare an annual report giving an account of the Committee's activities over the previous year."

The report provides an overview of the workings of the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee during the 2020/21 municipal year and includes information on the following topics:

- Overview of the forward work programme
- Key issues considered
- Issues referred to or from Executive Board / Other Scrutiny Committees
- Task & Finish Review
- Development Sessions
- Member attendance at meetings

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities – In line with requirements of the County Council's Constitution.

2. Legal - In line with requirements of the County Council's Constitution.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

1. Local Member(s) - N/A
2. Community / Town Council - N/A
3. Relevant Partners - N/A
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A

**EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**

NO

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee Reports and Minutes		Meetings from September 2015 onwards: http://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeed=169

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Chair's Foreword



As another Municipal year draws to a close, it's time, once again to write a foreword to the Health and Social Care Annual Report. This is my 6th report as Chair of the Committee and it's a pleasure to present the Report for the year 2021 - 2022. The report gives a comprehensive summary of the items discussed by the Committee during the year.

As everyone recognises, this past year has been a very extraordinary year with the Corona Virus Pandemic affecting all aspects of life and being the main news headline on a daily basis. The main responsibility of the Government in Cardiff and that of Carmarthenshire County Council has been ensuring the safety of the public and reducing the spread of the Virus. County Council Officers and Staff have worked tirelessly to make sure that the Social Services and Health needs of the people depending on the service continue to be met. All Staff, particularly those on the front line were ready, on all occasions to go the extra mile to ensure a first-class service was maintained. Many of those working for the Local Authority were prepared to be redeployed - to step into totally new roles, volunteering in order to help out where there was the greatest need. As a Committee we pay tribute to our Staff and thank them most sincerely for their willingness, their commitment and perseverance in the face of an epidemic - an emergency situation the like of which had never been experienced previously.

The Local Authority is keen to encourage partnership working with other organisations and during a normal year the Committee undertakes visits to those providing services. This gives Members an opportunity to speak to both front line staff and service users. Unfortunately, this year, due to COVID-19 restrictions this has not been possible.

Again, during the Pandemic, it has not been possible for meetings to be held in the Council Chamber and it became necessary to learn new ways of communication. We are indebted to the Staff of the Information and Technology Department for all their extra work in ensuring that Council meetings could be held remotely. "Zoom" was not a word widely used by most Members prior to 'lockdown' but over the past year "Zoom" has been given a prominent place in our vocabulary! A special thanks to the IT department for providing the resources and training required to enable Council meetings to continue 'virtually' during these unprecedented times.

Once again, this year, the Committee discussed a wide variety of topics and we are very thankful to Officers for attending our meetings and for their comprehensive and informative reports. The information received concerning the Local Authority's aims, objectives and priorities enables us, as Members, to appreciate the commitment and dedication of our Officers.

During 2020 - 2021 Members' Development Sessions were arranged, topics included 'Scrutiny Training', 'Befriending Service' and 'Older People's Day Services Recovery Plan'. The Committee also received regular updates with regard to the

COVID-19 Pandemic within Carmarthenshire, for example details concerning testing within our Care homes and the wider community and progress in respect of the vaccination programme.

Pre- meetings remain an important part of the Committee's work, these informal meetings allow any minor queries to be dealt with prior to the main meeting, thereby allowing additional time for agenda items to be thoroughly scrutinised.

In consultation with Officers, the Committee prepares a Forward Work Programme, with an opportunity for all Members to contribute. The programme is regularly updated throughout the year with additional items added as required.

As Chair of the Committee, I am very thankful to Councillor Ieuan Davies, my Vice-Chair, for his continued support, also every Member of the Committee for their enthusiasm and interest and for their faithful attendance at our virtual meetings. I would also like to extend my thanks to Councillor Jane Tremlett, the Executive Board Member for Social Care and Health for regularly attending our meetings and for her valued support to the Committee throughout the year.

As Committee Members we are very appreciative of the contribution of our Democratic Support Officer, Emma Bryer. A special acknowledgement and gratitude to Emma for all the preparation work in advance of meetings, for ensuring the smooth running of meetings and for her professional support at all times.

In closing, I would like to add a very big "Thank you" to our Officers for their valued contributions at Committee meetings, for their advice and support during the year and for their tireless work in ensuring that the residents of Carmarthenshire continue to receive Social Services of the highest standard possible

Councillor Gwyneth Thomas

Chair of Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee

1. Introduction

The scrutiny function is a key element of the County Council's governance arrangements and decision-making process. Although not a decision-making body, Scrutiny is at its most effective when it grasps the potential to influence and inform decisions made by both the Council and partner bodies affecting the County.

Article 6.2 of the Council's Constitution requires all Scrutiny Committees to “*prepare an annual report giving an account of the Committees activities over the previous year.*”

The Committee is chaired by Councillor Gwyneth Thomas and is made up of 14 Elected Members. Support is provided by the Democratic Services Unit and other Council officers as and when required.

This report provides an overview of the work of the Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee during 2020/21 municipal year. It gives Members the opportunity to reflect on the achievements during the year and to identify what worked well and where improvements could be made. This analysis is instrumental in developing scrutiny.

2. Overview of the work of the Committee in 2020/21

2.1 Number of Meetings

The Scrutiny Committee held 5 meetings during the 2020/21 municipal year.

The meetings scheduled between April and September 2020 were cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. The meetings recommenced in November following Welsh Government passing temporary emergency regulations to relax some of the rules relating to the conduct of council business. The joint meeting with the Environment & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee was also cancelled due to Health Board resourcing constraints during the pandemic.

2.2 The Forward Work Programme

The Scrutiny Committee develops its own Forward Work Programme (FWP) which, for 2020/21 was not confirmed by the Committee until its meeting on the 19th of November 2020 due to the cancellation of meetings.

The Committee consulted with officers to identify items to be considered by the Committee for the forthcoming year. This involved the inclusion of standard items such as performance, budget and action plan monitoring reports.

Additional reports and updates were also requested by members at meetings throughout the year and the Forward Work Programme was amended accordingly. In the main, meeting agendas were consistent with those outlined in the FWP.

The concept and development of the Forward Work Programme and the process for its agreement has allowed each Scrutiny Committee to determine its own agendas. The benefits of such an approach has led to an improved level of debate and input during Scrutiny Committee meetings.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places long term sustainability at the forefront of how public services are designed and delivered and it places emphasis on public bodies to work in partnership with each other and the public to prevent and tackle problems.

The Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee's key responsibilities are:

- Social Care – care and support services for adults including Learning Disability and Safeguarding Services
- Mental Health;
- Integrated Services - Health

To compliment the work undertaken during formal meetings, the Committee also undertakes other scrutiny functions such as Task and Finish, visits to establishments falling within its remit together with member development sessions.

Due to the pandemic and the resulting redeployment of staff the current Task & Finish project was put on hold. The Committee has now decided to review the scope of the Task & Finish Group. Additionally, no site visits were undertaken.

2.3 Performance Monitoring / Strategic Issues

Performance Monitoring Reports - One of the principal roles of Scrutiny Committees is to monitor the performance of services and functions within its remit. They undertake this work mainly through the consideration of performance monitoring reports and various action plan monitoring reports. The performance monitoring reports provide a balanced picture of performance across the relevant service areas.

Carmarthenshire County Council's Annual Performance Report (Half Year – 1st April to 30th September 2020) - As part of its performance monitoring role the Committee received relevant information from the Council's key strategies and plans. In January 2020 the Committee considered the Council's 2020/21 Half year Performance Report (1st April to 30th September 2020) which included an overview of performance, progress reports for all Well-being objectives relevant to the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee. The report highlighted that a half year Covid-19 Community Impact Assessment had been produced to enable services to focus on dealing with emergencies instead of the previously set actions.

Department for Communities Business Plan 2021/22 – In April 2021, the Committee considered the Communities Departmental Business Plan which

detailed the department's aims, objectives and priorities. This provided the Committee with an opportunity to consider and comment upon the priorities outlined which were relevant to the remit of the Committee – Commissioning and Business Support, Integrated Services, Adult Social Care and Care Homes. The purpose of the plan is to support the delivery of the Corporate Strategy.

[Corporate Strategy 2018/23 - Update April 2021](#) – In March 2021, the Committee considered the draft updated Corporate Strategy 2018-23 together with the relevant Well-being Objective delivery plans. The documents had been updated to reflect the developing priorities and the impact of COVID-19, Brexit and climate change.

2.4 Revenue & Capital Budgets

[Budget Monitoring Reports](#) - The Committee received quarterly reports on the departmental and corporate revenue and capital budgets at the meetings held in November, January and April. These reports enabled members to monitor the level of spend in each area and the progress made in connection with any capital works.

[Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation 2021/22 to 2023/24](#) - As well as monitoring the current budget, the Committee was also consulted on the Revenue Budget Strategy 2021/22 to 23/24. The report provided the Committee with the current proposals for the Revenue Budget Strategy for 2021/22 together with the indicative figures for the 2021/22 and 2023/2024 financial years.

2.5 Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments Report

The Committee considered the above-mentioned report at the Committee meeting in April which summarised the number and type of complaints and compliments received in relation to the Adult Social Care Team for the financial year 2020-21 (Quarter 3).

2.6 Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection of Integrated Services (Progress Update)

The Committee considered the above-mentioned report at the Committee meeting in December which provided an overview of the County Council's action plan in response to the Care Inspectorate Wales inspection and the progress on actions to address the issues identified.

2.7 Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2019/20

The Committee considered the above-mentioned report at the Committee meeting in November which in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Council's Constitution provided an overview of the Committee's activities over the previous year.

2.8 COVID-19 Updates

At its meeting in November 2020, the first since lockdown restrictions were imposed in March 2020, the Committee received an update report. This provided a position statement regarding how adult social care services had managed the first phase of the pandemic and highlighted the services priorities going forward.

In March 2021, another update was received describing how the Authority had managed adult social care services during the second wave of the pandemic.

Outcomes

Committee received verbal updates regarding COVID-19 Testing and the Vaccination Programme.

2.9 Unpaid Carers In Carmarthenshire – Strategic, Local & COVID-19 Related Developments

The Committee considered the above-mentioned report at the Committee meeting in March which provided a position statement regarding the work undertaken in 2020/21 in relation to unpaid carers by both the Regional West Wales Carers Development Group and the Carmarthenshire Strategic Partnership Board for Carers.

2.10 Learning Disability Strategy (2020- 2025)

The Committee considered the above-mentioned report at the Committee meeting in April which provided an overview of progress made since the Committee last received an update in April 2018.

Outcomes

Committee to engage with RVS regarding the Country Cars service.

3. Other Scrutiny Activity

3.1 Task and Finish

“A review of the impact of loneliness in Carmarthenshire”

At the Committee’s Scrutiny Meeting held in July 2019 the Committee approved the above report. This report was then presented to CMT in July and approved by the Executive Board in September 2019.

Due to the departure of the Interim Head of Integrated Services who had been assigned responsibility for the delivery of the recommendations and the COVID-

19 pandemic there has been no reported progress on delivery to date. It is hoped that once resourcing pressures have eased the committee will receive progress updates.

“Early Intervention & Prevention of Suicide in Carmarthenshire”

At the Committee's Pre-Meeting held in September 2019 the Committee considered a number of potential suggestion and agreed to undertake a Task & Finish review into Early Intervention and Prevention of Suicide in Carmarthenshire. The membership of the Task & Finish Group are as follows:

- Cllr. Gwyneth Thomas (Chair)
- Cllr. Ieuan Davies (Vice Chair)
- Cllr. Emlyn Schiavone
- Cllr. Dorian Williams
- Cllr. Louvain Roberts
- Cllr. Ken Lloyd
- Cllr. Amanda Fox

Due to the coronavirus pandemic and the impact on resources the Task & Finish Group meetings have not been reconvened. Additionally, it was decided by the Committee that the Scope of the Group should be reviewed. The work of the Group will be on hold pending formal agreement of the revised scope.

3.2 Development Sessions

The following all-member development sessions /seminars were held during 2020/21, to which Committee members were invited: -

- Microsoft Teams Training for online meetings – numerous sessions June 2020
- Zoom Training for online meetings – December /January
- Mod.Gov New App training (Delivered by Civica) – October
- Scrutiny Training (Delivered by Centre for Governance and Scrutiny) October
- Online Scrutiny (Delivered by Centre for Governance and Scrutiny) November
- Section 106 Agreements and Unilateral Undertakings – February
- COVID-19 Vaccination Briefing (Hywel Dda University Health Board) - February
- Introduction to Ash Dieback Disease and the County Council's Roles and Responsibilities – March
- Growing Carmarthenshire: Progressive Procurement, food supply chains and Future Opportunities – March
- Rural Enterprise Dwellings – March
- One Planet Developments - April

In addition to the above, several budget seminars were held during January as part of the Council's consultation process on the 2021/22 Revenue Budget and the five-year capital programme.

The Committee also received the following Scrutiny Committee specific updates / presentations at development meetings during the course of the year. Many of these items were requested following the scrutiny of reports: -

- Forward Work Programme Development – November
- COVID-19 Testing (including care home testing) - December
- COVID-19 Vaccination - December
- Community access to hot meals – January
- Transformation/ICF Programme Update - January
- RPB update - January
- Older People's Day Services Recovery Plan – January
- Food Poverty / Tackling Poverty - February
- Befriending Service - March
- Connect to Kindness – March

4. Challenges

The past year has been a challenging period for the Authority and the Committee has continued to be constructive in its role in scrutinising performance and contributing to policies and decisions. Social Care & Health area was placed under significant pressure during the Coronavirus pandemic, but everyone involved performed over and above expectations to ensure the continuation of business as usual

The second wave brought a different set of challenges especially in relation to the care home sector. The Authority supported a number of independent care home who experienced staffing difficulties. Resources were also re-deployed to support the testing and TTP process.

The Authority has also experienced an increase in safeguarding activities and a regional approach to managing safeguarding authorisations agreed.

It has been a balancing act for the Committee in undertaking its scrutiny duty without impacting on the resourcing of front-line services.

5. Future Work

The Committee has made significant progress and will continue to concentrate on topics where Members' input will result in positive outcomes to drive forward service improvement. To ensure that the best use is being made of meeting time and with the benefit of the added value of pre-meetings, the Committee is keen to achieve a more streamlined scrutiny process.

The future work of the Committee will be considered as part of the Forward Work Programme planning session. The FWP will continue to be monitored during the course of the year, together with the Executive Board Forward Work Programme.

6. Support for the Scrutiny Function

Support for Carmarthenshire County Council's Scrutiny function is provided by the Democratic Services Unit, based in the Administration & Law Division of the Chief Executive's Department.

Support for the Scrutiny function includes:

- Formulating, in accordance with the FWP, and despatching agendas for Scrutiny Committee meetings a minimum of 3 clear working days prior to the meeting;
- Providing support and constitutional advice to the Scrutiny Committees and to members of those Committees as well as producing minutes of their meetings and ensuring items arising from those meetings are actioned;
- Giving support and advice in relation to the functions of the Council's Scrutiny Committees to executive and non-executive members of the Council and its officers;
- Managing the strategic development of Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire through engaging in national and regional Scrutiny networks and initiatives, supporting the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Forum and meetings of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs with the Executive Board;
- Advising and supporting the implementation of the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 as and when guidance is published;
- Managing the co-ordination and development of the Scrutiny forward work programmes in conjunction with Scrutiny Committee members;
- Managing and co-ordinating Scrutiny review work, including the administration of scrutiny task and finish groups, assisting in writing reports in conjunction with the groups and assisting in the implementation and monitoring of completed reviews;
- Assisting with the Scrutiny member development programme.

For more information on Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire including forward work programmes, task and finish reports and annual reports, visit the County Council's website at: www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/scrutiny

To contact the Democratic Services Unit, please call 01267 224028 or e-mail scrutiny@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

7. Attendance

Attendance by members of the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee during the 2020/21 year is shown in the table below. A total of 5 meetings were held between 1st May 2020 and 30th April 2021. During the same period a total of 5 development meetings were held.

Scrutiny Committee Member	No. of Scrutiny meetings attended	%	No. of Development Sessions attended	%
Cllr. Sue Allen	5	100%	5	100%
Cllr. Kim Broom	5	100%	4	80%
Cllr. Ieuan Wyn Davies	4	80%	3	60%
Cllr. Karen Davies	5	100%	3	60%
Cllr. Rob Evans	4	80%	1	20%
Cllr. Tyssul Evans	5	100%	4	80%
Cllr. Amanda Fox	1	20%	1	20%
Cllr. Jean Lewis	5	100%	5	100%
Cllr. Ken Lloyd	5	100%	5	100%
Cllr. Kevin Madge	2	40%	3	60%
Cllr. Louvain Roberts	3	60%	2	40%
Cllr. Emlyn Schiavone	5	100%	2	40%
Cllr. Gwyneth Thomas	5	100%	5	100%
Cllr. Dorian Williams	3	100%	5	100%
Substitutes	No. of meetings attended			
Cllr. Deryk Cundy	3			
Cllr. Rob James	2			
Cllr. Dot Jones	1			
Cllr. Daren Price	1			
Executive Board Member	No. of meetings attended			
Cllr. Jane Tremlett	5			
Cllr. Linda. D Evans	1			
Cllr. David Jenkins	3			
Cllr. Mair Stephens	1			

EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORTS

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE : Social Care & Health

DATE OF MEETING : 7th July 2021

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	EXPLANATION	REVISED SUBMISSION DATE
Covid-19 update	Alex Williams	A Covid update report was considered by the committee on 11 th March 2021. Whilst a further update is due to the Committee on 7 th July 2021, very little has changed in the intervening period in terms of management of Covid and recovery plans. Therefore, it is proposed that the item is deferred until the October meeting when there will be more of substance to update and hopefully there will be greater clarity about the potential to restart some services that have been on hold during the pandemic.	5 th October 2021
Annual Safeguarding Report	Cathy Richards	The report has not yet been circulated to DMT for approval, which is required prior to submission to Scrutiny.	5 th October 2021
End of Year Budget Monitoring	Chris Moore	Due to the delay in producing the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts, this has had an impact on the timing of the End of Year Budget Monitoring reports being presented to Scrutiny Committee.	5 th October 2021

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SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7th July 2021

FORTHCOMING ITEMS TO BE HELD ON 5TH October 2021 [10.00 A.M.]

In order to ensure effective Scrutiny, Members need to be clear as to the purpose of requesting specific information and the outcome they are hoping to achieve as a consequence of examining a report. Limiting the number of agenda items may help to keep meetings focused and easier to manage.

Discussion Topic	Background	Reason for report
Budget Monitoring Report 2021/22 x 2 (including end of year report)	This item enables members to undertake their monitoring role of the Health & Social Care revenue and capital budgets.	The Committee is being requested to scrutinise the budget information as part of their scrutiny role.
Communities Department Business Plan 2021/22 – 23-24	The Committee is consulted on the Business Plans for the Communities Department on an annual basis.	This item will enable the Committee to consider and comment on the Communities Departmental Business Plan relevant to its remit.
Performance Management Report (Q1)	To report on the Well-being objectives and Improvement objectives as set out in the Corporate Strategy.	This item will enable the Committee to consider and comment upon progress achieved and to enable members to exercise their scrutiny role.
Adult Social Care Compliments & Complaints Report (Q1)	This item will provide the Committee with a report providing details of the compliments and complaints received in relation to Adult Social Care.	To enable the Committee to understand and review the complaints and compliments received and identify any areas of concern or good practice.
Covid-19 Position Statement	The Scrutiny Committee received a report on the impact of Covid on the 19 th November 2020 and 11 th February 2021. This is an update on these reports.	For Scrutiny to consider the immediate and longer-term impact of Covid.

Annual Report on Adult Safeguarding	This report relates to last financial year and summarises the national policy context of adult safeguarding at that time including the implications of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014.	To inform the Committee on progress being made and provides the Committee with the opportunity to consider and comment on the report. .
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Items circulated to the Committee under separate cover since the last meeting
1. Budget Monitoring Report

Briefings provided to the Committee since the last meeting
1. Overall approach to supporting flow through hospital – 21/05/21

The following document(s) attached for information
1. The latest version of the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee's Forward Work Programme 2021/22.
2. The latest version of the Executive Board Forward Work Programme 2021/22.

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SC&H Scrutiny Committee – Forward Work Programme 2021/22

21 st May 21	7 th July 21	5 th October 21	29 th November 21	20 th December 21	26 th January 22	10 th March 22	20 th April 22	Joint Scrutiny E&PP + SC&H (Date tbc)
Mental Health - General Update	Draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services 20/21	Performance Management Report (Quarter 1)	Covid-19 Position Statement	Revenue Budget Consultation 2021 – 2023	Budget Monitoring 2021/22	Domiciliary Care Update	Carers Update	Area Planning Board's Drug & Alcohol Misuse Annual Report
SC & Health Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme 2021/22	Annual Report on the Wellbeing Objectives	Communities Department Business Plan 2021/22 – 23-24 (TBC)	Dementia Action Plan - (Moved from April)	Mental Health Update – inc impact of Covid	Autism Update	Adult Social Services Complaints and Compliments Report (Q3)	Learning Disability Strategy (2021-26)	Area Board Substance Misuse Service Annual Report
Budget Monitoring 2021/22 – to be circulated via email	SC&H Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2021/22	Adult Social Services Complaints and Compliments Report (Q1)	Residential Care Update (in-house & independent)	Services & Support for Children & Young People (Multi Agency Forum Update)				
	Annual Safeguarding Report moved to October	Budget Monitoring 2021/22	Budget Monitoring 2021/22 – to be circulated via email					
	Covid-19 Position Statement – moved to October	Covid-19 Position Statement – moved from July	Task & Finish Group Revised Planning & Scoping Document (TBC)					

21 st May 21	7 th July 21	5 th October 21	29 th November 21	20 th December 21	26 th January 22	10 th March 22	20 th April 22	Joint Scrutiny E&PP + SC&H (Date tbc)
	End of Year Budget Monitoring moved to October	Annual Safeguarding Report-moved from July						
		End of Year Budget Monitoring moved from July						

ITEMS CARRIED OVER FROM PREVIOUS WORK PROGRAMME:

- Services & Support for Children & Young People (Multi Agency Forum Update)
- Mental Health of Carers and Young People (incorporated into General Mental Health Update)
- Annual Safeguarding Report
- Dementia Action Plan

ITEMS FOR JOINT MEETINGS IN 2021/22: DATE TBC

- Area Planning Board's Drug & Alcohol Misuse Annual Report (E&PP and Social Care & Health)
- Area Board Substance Misuse Service Annual Report (E&PP and Social Care & Health)

TASK & FINISH REVIEW (on hold pending re-scoping exercise):

- Early Intervention & Prevention of Suicide in Carmarthenshire.

{NOTES: Age group 18-24/ males. 1 area of national strategy – PREVENTION (what are we doing). 6 priorities in WG National Strategy}.

TASK & FINISH REVIEW – FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

- Mental Health of Children – joint with Education (Chair to arrange with E&CS Chair)
- Social Care in the Home – Review of how other Countries are working / Best Practice

DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS:

21st May

- Overall approach to supporting discharge to hospital – Alex

7th July

- Shared Lives Placement (inc. Living Units for people with learning disabilities) – Avril
- Day Services & Respite Service – Avril
- Overview of Delta Wellbeing & Social Care Services Delivery [Alex to confirm date with Sam]

5th October

- Overall approach to right sizing and review of domiciliary care – Alex
- Recruitment and Retention of OT & Social Workers – Alex / Avril

1st December

- CHC / Citizens Voice Body [Chair to confirm date]

REPORTS REQUESTED / CIRCULATED VIA E-MAIL:

- Budget Monitoring Report (18/05/21)

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EXECUTIVE BOARD FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21
–as at 23/03/2021 (For the period March 21 – February 22)

Introduction

This plan is published to encourage and enable greater understanding between the Executive, all Councillors, the public and other stakeholders. It assists the Scrutiny Committees in planning their contribution to policy development and holding the executive to account.

The plan gives the public and stakeholders a chance to see the forthcoming major decisions to be made by the Executive Board over the next 12 months. It is reviewed and published quarterly to take account of changes and additional key decisions.

WORKING DRAFT

EXECUTIVE BOARD FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21
–as at 23/03/2021 (For the period March 21 – February 22)

CHIEF EXECUTIVES				
Subject area and brief description of nature of report	Responsible Officer	Executive Portfolio	Scrutiny Committee to be consulted	Date of expected decision by Executive Board
INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND COVER SHEET	Wendy Walters, Chief Executive/Gwyneth Ayres	Deputy Leader	No	May 2021
ANNUAL REPORT	Noelwyn Daniel -Head of ICT & Corporate Policy	Deputy Leader	VARIOUS IN JULY	27/09/21
WELLBEING OBJECTIVES	Wendy Walters Chief Executive	Communities and Rural Affairs		
WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS	Wendy Walters Chief Executive	Deputy Leader	If applicable	If applicable
REVIEW OF COMMUNITY COUNCIL BOUNDARIES & ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS	Wendy Walters, Chief Executive	Resources		As and when required
REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION (LEGISLATION CHANGES) - CRWG	Linda Rees Jones Head of Administration & Law	N/A CRWG - FEB	N/A	As And When Required
CITY DEAL UPDATE (INCLUDING PENTRE AWEL)	Wendy Walters Chief Executive	Leader		As & When Required
CARMARTHEN WEST RESIDENTAL	Jason Jones Head of Regeneration	Regeneration / Property	Not applicable	26/04/21
BURRY PORT RELEASE OF LAND	Jason Jones Head of Regeneration	Regeneration / Property	Not applicable	26/04/21
8/12 VAUGHAN STREET, LLANELLI	Jason Jones Head of Regeneration	Regeneration / Property	Not applicable	26/04/21
WELSH LANGUAGE ANNUAL REPORT	Wendy Walters, Chief Executive/Gwyneth Ayres	Culture, Sport & Tourism	Yes	March 2022
CORPORATE STRATEGY	Noelwyn Daniel -Head of ICT & Corporate Policy	Deputy Leader	Yes	March 2022
STRATEGIC EQUALITY REPORT	Noelwyn Daniel -Head of ICT & Corporate Policy	Deputy Leader	Yes	March 2022
NET ZERO ACTION PLAN - REVIEW	Jason Jones, Head of Regeneration	Communities and Rural Affairs	Date to be confirmed	March 2022

EXECUTIVE BOARD FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21
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COMMUNITY SERVICES				
Subject area and brief description of nature of report	Responsible Officer	Executive Portfolio	Scrutiny Committee to be consulted	Date of expected decision by Executive Board
DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW TENANT TYPE CHALLENGE PANEL	Jonathan Morgan – Head of Homes and SCr/Les James	Housing		24 TH May 2021
UNIVERSAL CREDIT AND RENTS UPDATE RENT ARREARS POSITION STATEMENT	Jonathan Morgan – Head of Homes and Safer Communities/ Jonathan Willis	Housing		26 th April 2021
ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY	Jonathan Morgan – Head of Homes and Safer Communities /Les James / Sue Watts/Robert David Williams	Culture, Sports & Tourism	E&PP Scrutiny 18/05/2021	07/06/21
CHS+ DELIVERING WHAT MATTERS BUSINESS PLAN	Jonathan Morgan – Head of Homes and Safer Communities/ Rachel Davies/ Gareth Williams	Housing	January 2022	February 2022 (Budget)
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20	Jake Morgan – Director of Communities/Silvana Sauro	Social Care & Health		TBC
DOG BREEDERS LICENCE UPDATE (Change of Policy / Legislation – awaiting WG confirmation)	Jonathan Morgan – Head of Homes and Safer Communities/ Roger Edmunds	Public Protection		TBC

EXECUTIVE BOARD FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21
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CORPORATE SERVICES

Subject area and brief description of nature of report	Responsible Officer	Executive Portfolio	Scrutiny Committee to be consulted	Date of expected decision by Executive Board
BI-MONTHLY REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services	Resources	N/A	SEPT NOV JAN MARCH
QUARTERLY TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services	Resources	N/A	SEPT/OCT JAN APR
ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT & PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR REPORT	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services	Resources	N/A	JULY
5 YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services	Resources	ALL JAN/ FEB	JAN
COUNCIL TAX BASE	Chris Moore / Helen Pugh	Resources	N/A	DEC
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Chris Moore / Helen Pugh	Resources	N/A	FEB
BUDGET STRATEGY (Revenue and Capital)	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services	Resources	ALL JAN/ FEB	JAN
HIGH STREET RATE RELIEF	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services /Helen Pugh	Resources	N/A	March
CORPORATE RISK REGISTER	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services / Helen Pugh	Resources	– Audit Committee March & SEPT	
TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services	Resources	N/A	FEBRUARY – BUDGET MEETING
FINAL BUDGET Revenue & Capital	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services	Resources	N/A	FEBRUARY – BUDGET MEETING
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND RENT SETTING REPORT	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services	Resources	HOUSING	FEBRUARY BUDGET MEETING
BUDGET OUTLOOK	Chris Moore Director of Corporate Services	Resources	N/A	NOV

EXECUTIVE BOARD FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21
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EDUCATION & CHILDREN				
Subject area and brief description of nature of report	Responsible Officer	Executive Portfolio	Scrutiny Committee to be consulted	Date of expected decision by Executive Board
PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE YSGOL HEOL GOFFA AND TO INCREASE ITS CAPACITY (STAGE 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	17/03/21 (stage 3)	12th April 2021
PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE YSGOL GYNRADD BLAENAU AND TO INCREASE THE CAPACITY AND CHANGE THE NATURE OF PROVISION AT YSGOL GYNRADD LLANDYBIE (STAGE 1, 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	N/A	TBC (Stage 2) TBC (Stage 3)
PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE YSGOL RHYDYGORS (STAGE 1, 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	N/A)	TBC (Stage 2) TBC (Stage 3)
PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE AT YSGOL SWISS VALLEY (TBC) (STAGE 1, 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	N/A	TBC (Stage 2) TBC (Stage 3)
PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE YSGOL GYNRADD MYNYDD Y GARREG (STAGE 1, 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children	N/A	TBC (Stage 2) TBC (Stage 3)
PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE NATURE OF PROVISION AT YSGOL Y FELIN (STAGE 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children		TBC (Stage 2) TBC (Stage 3)
PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE NATURE OF PROVISION AT MODEL VA PRIMARY SCHOOL (STAGE 2 AND 3)	Simon Davies – Head of Access to Education	Education & Children		TBC (Stage 2) TBC (Stage 3)
SCHOOL UPDATE REPORT- COVID 19, SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN AND FINANCE	Gareth Morgans – Director of Education and Children	Education & Children	N/A	
LA EDUCATION SERVICES SELF EVALUATION	Aneirin Thomas – Head of Education and Inclusion	Education & Children	tbc	TBC
POST 16 EDUCATION	Aeron Rees – Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing	Education & Children	tbc	TBC
RESULTS OF 2021 EXAMINATIONS”	Aneirin Thomas – Head of Education and Inclusion	Education & Children	tbc	N/A
CHILDREN’S SERVICES PAPER- TBC	Stefan Smith - Head of Children’s Services	Education & Children	N/A	tbc
CARMARTHENSHIRE 10 YEAR STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION	Gareth Morgans – Director of Education and Children	Education & Children	tbc	TBC
NEW 10 YEAR WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGY	Aeron Rees – Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing	Education & Children	tbc	TBC

EXECUTIVE BOARD FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21
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ENVIRONMENT				
Subject area and brief description of nature of report	Responsible Officer	Executive Portfolio	Scrutiny Committee to be consulted	Date of expected decision by Executive Board
PUBLIC REALM	Steve Pilliner / Richard waters	Environment		26/4/21
LDO	Llinos Quelch / Ian R Llewellyn	Environment		10/5/21
BUS REFORM	Steve Pilliner	Environment		24/5/21
PACE MAKING CHARTER	Llinos Quelch / Ian R Llewellyn	Environment		24/5/21
HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE MANUAL	Steve Pilliner - Head of Transportation & Highways/ Chris Nelson/ Richard Waters	Environment	EPP 4/10/21	25/10/21
EQUESTRIAN STRATEGY	Steve Pilliner - Head of Transportation & Highways/ Caroline Ferguson	Environment	EPP 4/10/21	25/10/21
GRAFFITI POLICY	Ainsley Williams	Environment	EPP 4/10/21	25/10/21
FLOOD RESPONSE	Ainsley Williams	Environment	4/10/21	25/10/21
LEQ	Ainsley Williams	Environment	EPP 4/10/21	25/10/21
ELECTRIC VEHICLE STRATEGY	Steve Pilliner / Simon Charles	Environment	EPP 12/11/21	6/12/21
PUBLIC CONVENIENCES	Ainsley Williams. Head of Waste & Environmental Services Rhys Davies	Environment	EPP 16/12/21	January 22

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Friday, 21 May 2021

PRESENT: Councillor G. Thomas (Chair)

Councillors:

S.M. Allen, K.V. Broom, I.W. Davies, K.Davies, R.E. Evans, J.D. James (In place of A.L. Fox), M.J.A. Lewis, K. Lloyd, K. Madge, B.A.L. Roberts, E.M.J.G. Schiavone, D. Thomas (In place of W.T. Evans) and D.T. Williams

Also in attendance:

Councillor J. Tremlett, Executive Board Member for Social Care and Health

The following Officers were in attendance:

A. Bracey, Head of Social Care

A. Williams, Head of Integrated Services

S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator

M. Evans Thomas, Principal Democratic Services Officer

J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer

E. Bryer, Democratic Services Officer

Virtual Meeting - 10.30 am - 12.20 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors W.T. Evans, A.L. Fox and B.A.L. Roberts.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.

Councillor	Minute No (s)	Nature of Interest
Kevin Madge	4. Mental Health Update Report	Daughter works in Social Care.

There were no declarations of any prohibited party whips.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

[**NOTE:** The Chair advised the Committee that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2(3) she was going to vary the order of business on the agenda to enable agenda item 4 – Mental Health Update to be considered as the last agenda item].

4. MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE REPORT

The Committee considered a report providing a position statement regarding the impact of the pandemic on mental health and wellbeing and highlighting the service priorities and developments going forward.

The Executive Board Member for Health and Social Care highlighted that the Authority was investing in Mental Health and had increased staff capacity utilising the funding approved by Council. It was noted that collaborative work was being undertaken with the third sector and Hywel Dda University Health Board to develop a Single Point of Contact for mental health services. Additionally, the roll out of the Twilight Sanctuary service was continuing across the West Wales region.

It was noted that Covid was continuing to take its toll on mental health and wellbeing and that the lasting effects would be felt by many. It was acknowledged that we were yet to reach the peak of the mental health crisis and that prioritising mental health had never been more critical.

The following questions/observations were raised on the report: -

- It was asked how the Authority would cope with the increasing demand for mental health services.
The Committee was advised that additional staffing, new initiatives, and joint working would help the Authority manage the increasing demand and that the emphasis would be on joint working to improve the available provision.
- Reference was made to the 136% increase of contact with the mental health team and that Carmarthenshire was one of the worse authorities for suicide numbers.
The Head of Adult Social Care advised the rural aspect had an impact for men and that this was a priority for the region. It was also stated that it was fortunate that organisations such as the DPJ Foundation and Tir Dewi were also providing support.
- It was asked how much collaboration takes place between the various organisation such as the Police Authority and the Health Board regarding mental health.
The Head of Adult Social Care advised that collaboration was taking place between the various organisations. Work was being undertaken regarding a 24/7 crisis response service which would involve an out of hours service potentially co-located to respond to those in crisis.
- Reference was made to the fact that each year approximately 325 people in Wales die from suicide. It was asked what the trend was in Carmarthenshire and particularly the farming community?
The Head of Adult Social Care advised that Carmarthenshire was 3rd in the table of suicide rate and stated that one of the priorities for the national advisory group was to look at the real time data. The Committee was advised that while Scotland was still higher the figures were reducing and

were also reducing for England, however worryingly this was not the case for Wales. Reassurance was given there were plans to improve early interventions access to service and crisis services would include strategies to respond to the suicide and self-harm in Carmarthenshire.

- Concern was raised regarding the issues with alcohol and drug misuse in the communities.
The Committee was advised that there had been an increase in substance and alcohol about in the last 12 months. The area planning board was undertaking awareness campaigns and that the social workers and substance misuse teams worked closely together to mitigate.
- It was noted that staffing levels had remained relatively stable during the pandemic and staff had demonstrated remarkable resilience. However, concern was expressed regarding staff retention and pressures.
The Head of Adult Social Care acknowledged that the Social Workers had been resilient but were now very tired. Staff wellbeing had been an on-going priority with various pathways of support in place.
- An update was requested regarding the waiting times for referrals as prior to the pandemic there were concerns regarding waiting lists.
Officers informed the Committee that counselling was provided by the Health Board and that unfortunately the waiting list was long. However, Welsh Government was providing additional funding towards this. In addition to counselling, alternative ways of intervention and prevention were being introduced such as the running group work which was piloted in 2019.
- It was asked if data was available regarding the number of people who had visited their GP before committing suicide.
The Committee was advised that the data was not available but many who take their life are not known to services however, some have presented to GPs with other health issues. It was stated that GPs were receiving training and that this was one of the national priorities. It was suggested that Professor Ann John (chair of the National Advisory Group) could update the committee regarding the national priorities.
- It was asked what services were in place to assist people with dealing with bereavement.
The Head of Integrated services advised that there had been some developments including investment from Welsh Government during the pandemic. The Committee was advised that there were areas of good practice such as Ty Bryngwyn and Ty Cymorth but that support was not consistent across the region. A review was currently being undertaken by the Health Board of palliative care, and bereavement services would be looked at as part of this.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

5. SOCIAL CARE & HEATH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2021/22

The Committee considered its Forward Work Programme for 2021/22, which had been prepared in accordance with the Council's Constitution which required Scrutiny Committees to develop and publish annual forward work programmes identifying issues and reports to be considered at meetings during the course of the municipal year.

It was suggested that an update on day services provision be included in the development session on the 7th July, 2021.

RESOLVED that the Forward Work Programme for the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee for 2021/22 be confirmed.

6. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 7th July, 2021 be noted.

7. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 20TH APRIL, 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 20th April, 2021 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE