

Annual Statutory Director's Report on the Performance of Social Services

DIRECTOR'S OVERVIEW

2017/18



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Introduction by the Director of Community Services

As the Council's Statutory Director of Social Services it is a requirement for me to report annually on the performance of social services for adults and children. This is my third report as a Director for Carmarthenshire and my fifth as a Statutory Director of Social Services.

I am pleased to be able to report that Carmarthenshire County Council continues to provide good quality Social Care Services despite a backdrop of declining resources and increasing demographic pressures.

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act are now impacting on service delivery. A consistent theme across all client groups is a growing move of provision towards early intervention and prevention. The aim is for this to reduce demand for care and the evidence in this report indicates we are having success in this refocus of services.

The financial outlook remains stark for the Council, staff in the older persons division in particular have worked hard to deliver budget savings whilst minimising the impact on vulnerable users. The county's Older People's Strategy is now three years old and its impact is being felt as the demand for residential care falls, more people are supported at home. Through more intelligent commissioning and effective cost recovery services for older people we will be underspent for the third year in a row with spend now lower than it was in 2012/13.

Clearly this cannot continue indefinitely and I welcome the national discussion through Welsh Government's recent parliamentary review to find ways to meet the expected growth in demand on social care of 4.1% a year over the next 15 years. There is a greater understanding of the inter-dependence between health and social care even if the relative funding levels does not always reflect this understanding.

Children's services have continued to reduce numbers of looked after children with further improvements in placement and school stability demonstrating clear impact of the refocussing of social work across the division. Signs of safety is increasingly embedded in the region through our regional Safeguarding Board.

There is a small rise in the number on the child protection register. There is a significant reduction in the repeat registration of children. The information from the register is used to help us understand the business and this gives us confidence that the system is working.

A disappointing reduction in the compliance with timescales for new child protection case conferences in the final quarter of the year is one that we will monitor closely to ensure there is a rapid correction.

Budget pressure remains high for children's services with costs in specialist placements; boarding out; care leavers and for children with complex needs escalating.

In recent months in accordance with the duty under the new Act, we have been transitioning our 'Careline' service into Carmarthenshire's Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) service. This is the 'front door' for adult services in Carmarthenshire, this has provided an integrated multidisciplinary point of contact which has provided a real opportunity to transform our community service model. There has been a greater emphasis on prevention through the timely provision of advice and assistance to empower people to help themselves. We have developed Pathfinder for national '111'



service, enhanced the use of assistive technology, improved co-ordination of care by the appropriate disciplines and improved intelligence in relation to 'demand and capacity' to inform commissioning of care and workforce requirement. There is now evidence that this is meeting need without the intervention of more expensive social work services. With our Careline services now finding their feet as a Local Authority Trading company this service is able to expand and develop into prevention as we consider using an evidence base from Spanish Social Care and Health to expand our preventative offer.

We will further increase the supply of housing and care at the Delta Lakes development, building on the success of the extra care developments in Ammanford and Carmarthen. We are retaining our current in-house residential provision and work is now proceeding on confirming what capital investment will be needed to improve the physical environments to meet future needs. We maintain our commitment to invest more than £20 million for a new leisure centre in Llanelli which will promote health and wellbeing in one of our most challenged areas of the county.

We use many sources of information and evaluation to understand the quality and impact of social services functions on people's lives. We have a robust Performance Management Framework to ensure we balance the relationship between service demands, the allocation of resources, cost efficiency and service user satisfaction. The framework has a suite of measures which are monitored at monthly meetings and are proven to improve outcomes.

We are continuing to progress regional working with a joint commissioning structure with Pembrokeshire forming a key part of our approach in delivering pooled budgets across the region. Over the next year we will continue to lay the foundations for delivering and developing services that place those who use our services at the heart of the planning process.

The Parliamentary Review into Health and Social Care which was established in January 2018, sets out the vision over the next five years across Wales and should aim to deliver against four mutually supportive goals the "Quadruple Aim" One system of seamless health and care for Wales'.

Despite the need for difficult decisions within a climate of financial austerity, the Social Services and Wellbeing Act provides us with opportunities to be more collaborative, innovative and creative in finding solutions with those who use our services and within the wider community. Increasing levels of collaboration with the health board bodes well for us to rise to the challenge and deliver the transformation that is required across health and social care.

I am pleased that in the Wales Audit Office's Annual Improvement Report 2016/17 Carmarthenshire County Council's Annual Audit Letter (Issued June 2017) said:

“

I am satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources but there remains scope for the Council to make further improvements.

Performance - the Council, in collaboration with partners and despite increasing pressure on budgets, is continuing to improve performance across its priority areas and has complied with the Local Government Measure 2009.

”

I am the Chair of the Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Children's Board (CYSUR). This is a strategic partnership that consists of statutory and non statutory agencies who have the responsibility to ensure the people and citizens of Mid and West Wales are appropriately safeguarded. The CYSUR Safeguarding Board works very closely with the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board for Adults (CWMPAS).

This annual report published at the end of July, outlines the progress we made against the outcomes that were set by CYSUR as part of our Annual Strategic Plan published on 31st March 2017. The board has matured in the last year to one where effective co-operation and challenge are part of everyday business.

We can demonstrate how we have influenced the national agenda on elective home education as well as standardising the application of thresholds in child protection locally. Managers and staff are now collaborating well across agencies and the region. It is particularly pleasing to note the progress of our Junior Safeguarding Board. The prospect of them being attendees at every board in the future is an exciting one and reflects well on the work they have done and the confidence the board has in these fantastic young people.

The position of Powys children's services was a concern to us all but the signs of improvement are now showing with outcomes clearly improving. Lessons on how sensitive services are managed, the critical need to retain frontline staff and for agencies to avoid disproportionate and unrealistic budget cuts are all lessons that Carmarthenshire and the region has taken from the experience of Powys. I am confident that the safeguarding board is now in a stronger position to challenge partners. Crucially we now have the data and audit system to enable us to provide support and challenge to each other much earlier to prevent things going wrong.

Joint working with CWPAS has been positive as we now have an agenda that is richer and the different areas of practice in adult and children's services are now starting to enrich each other with practitioners seeing the benefit of an all age approach to protecting vulnerable children and adults.

There will always be challenges in delivering such complex services across such a large geographical area but this annual report clearly demonstrates good progress in demonstrating how CYSUR is now impacting on outcomes for children and young people in Mid and West Wales.



Jake Morgan, Statutory Director of Social Services

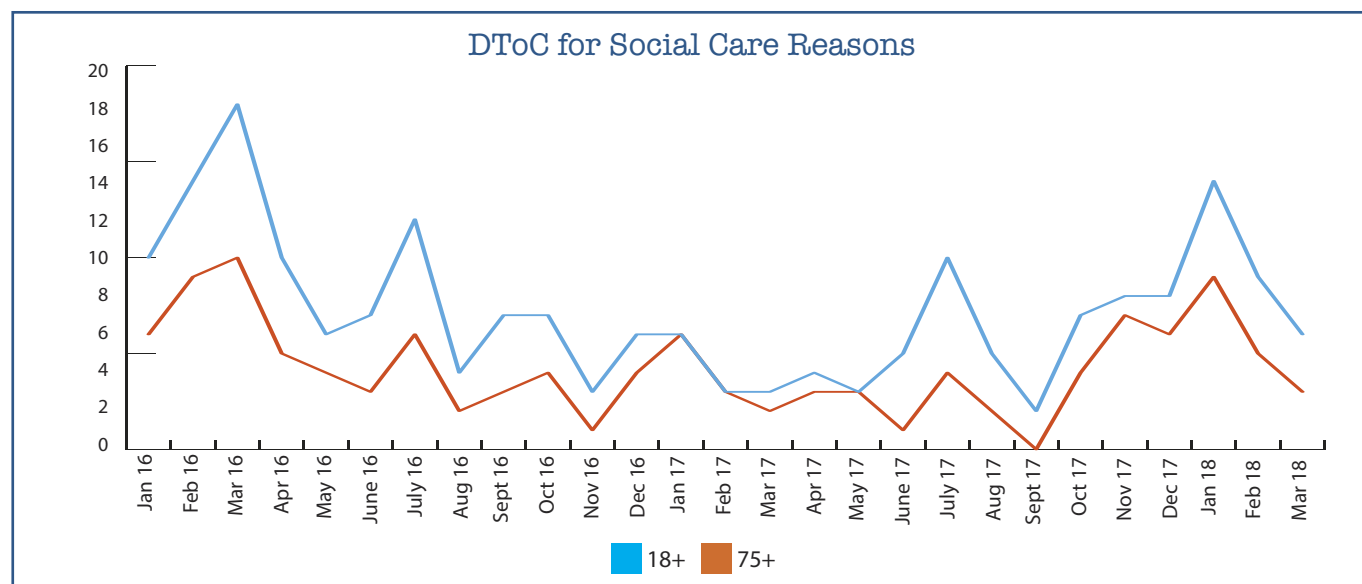


2. Summary of Performance

Adult Services Performance

The total number of people we supported during the year was 5,412 with a total number of 14,446 commissioned services.

The graph below is a demonstration of the rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over within Carmarthenshire.

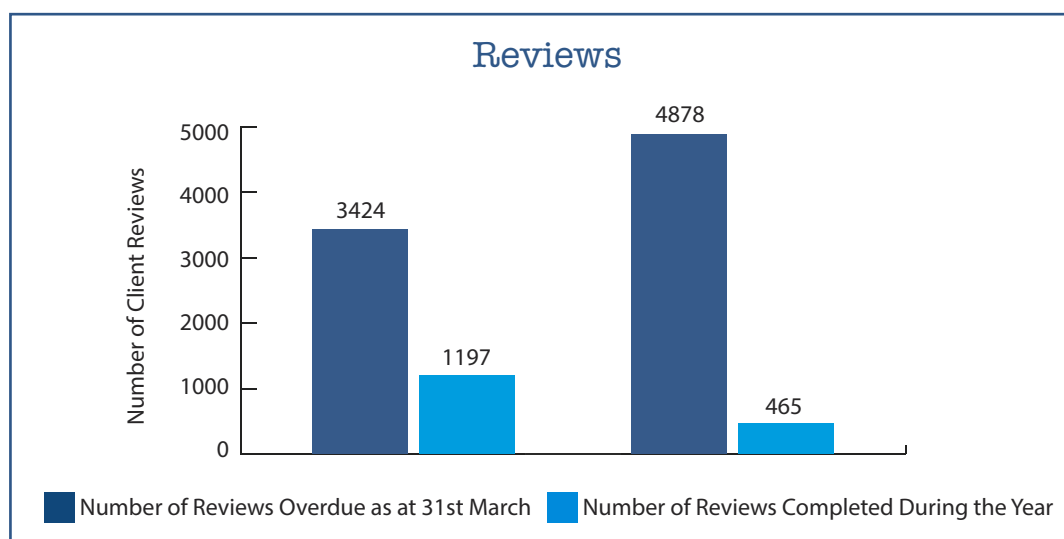


There has been a slight increase in delayed transfers of care for social care reasons, although numbers remain the same as the previous years.

Reviews

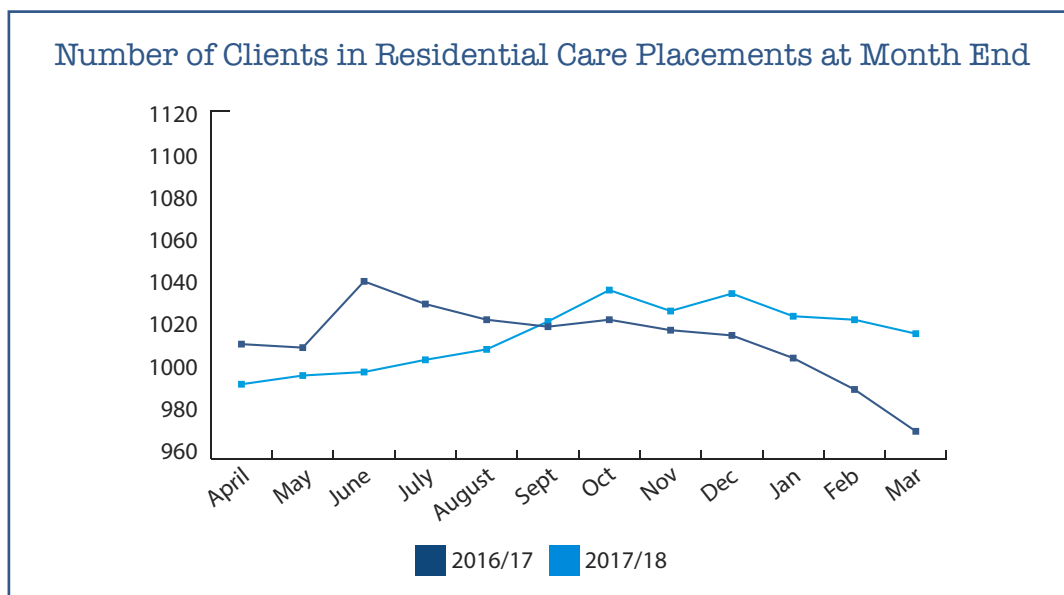
At the end of the financial year the number of outstanding statutory reviews requiring completion are low across the department, with data showing a significant improvement in performance compared to 2016/17.

The Older Adults division have completed a total of 3,251 reviews, with 465 reviews outstanding as of the end of March. The Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Complex Needs division have undertaken a total of 1,627 reviews, with 3 reviews outstanding at the end of the financial year.



Residential Care

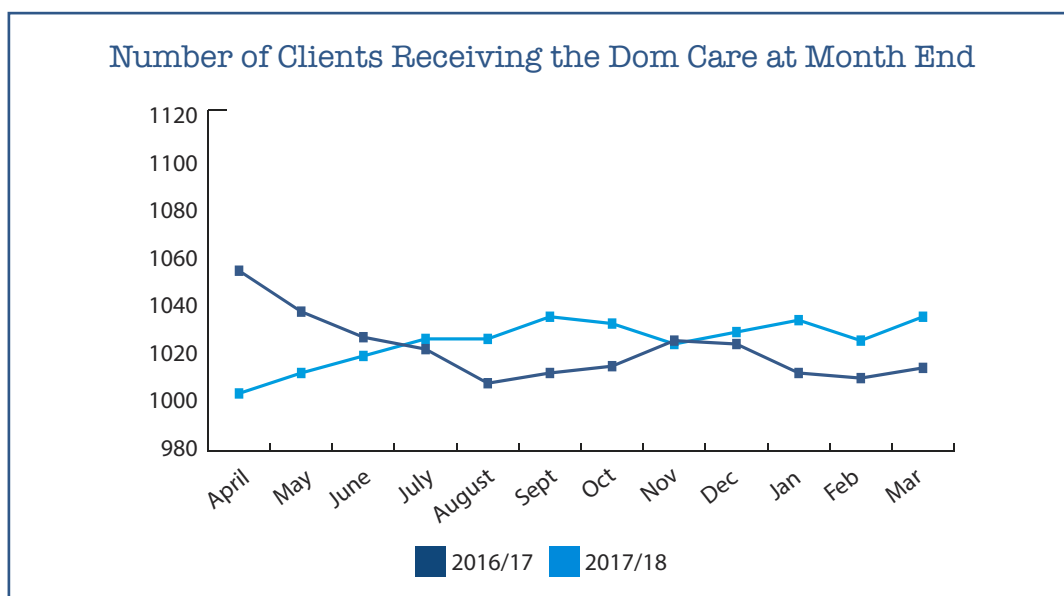
- Reduced admissions to long term residential care from 1066 to 1016. This year's data depicts a downward trend in number of admissions when compared to 2016/17's data reflecting our emphasis on community support and prevention.



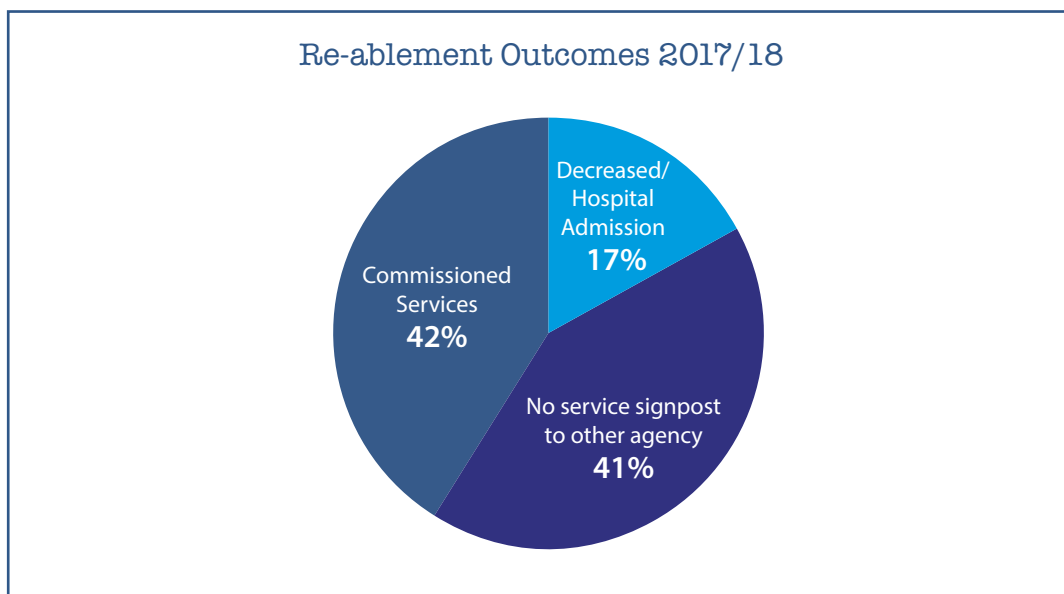
- Average length of stay in residential care was 860 days in 2017/18, down from 989 days in 2016/17. This reflects the delay in residential admissions that our care management and preventative strategy has driven. We are supporting people longer in their own homes.

Domiciliary Care

- There was a very small reduction in the commissioning of domiciliary care and support from 1106 to 1049 in 2016/17. Comparatively 2017/18 showed a rise in commissioning of domiciliary care from 1034 to 1079.



Re-ablement



Following a re-ablement intervention, 41% of service users were successfully discharged with no service needs.

42% progressed to receive a care and support plan for long term services although domiciliary care was provided the number of commissioned hours were reduced.

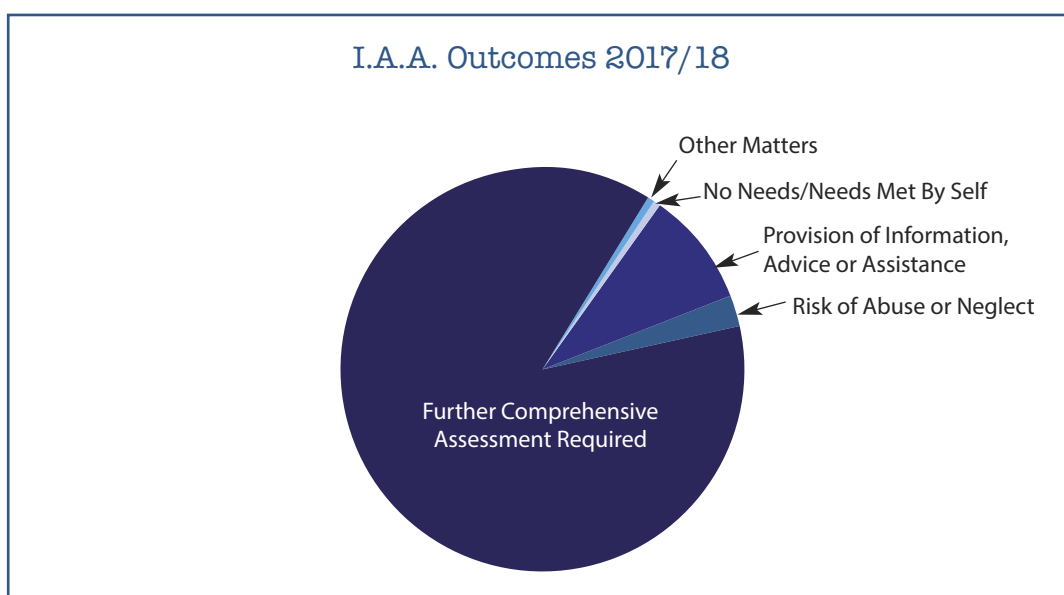
Assessments

We completed more assessments this year than last. The number of assessments completed for adults/carers were:

- Adult SSWBA assessments completed = 5,147
- Carers SSWBA assessments completed = 387

IAA

The Careline IAA team took a total of 10,565 calls, assisting and advising 6,244 people. Below is a chart of the logged outcomes of all calls taken by Careline staff:

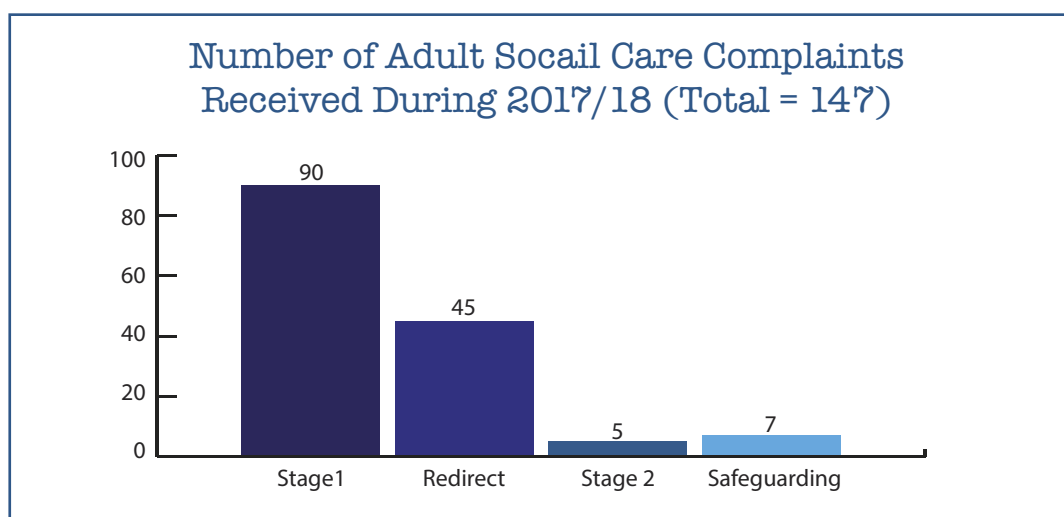


88% of outcome for assessments conducted by the IAA service is "Further Comprehensive Assessment Required" – the call handlers in the IAA team trigger an assessment with the relevant team who then assess the individuals needs further. The Careline staff also provide Information, Advice or Assistance where necessary, and this accounts for 9% of outcomes where enquiries are directed to the best place to meet the assessed needs. There is also a Duty Safeguarding Officer located alongside the IAA team and where a call handler identifies any risk of abuse or neglect, the case is transferred to this specialist post.

Complaints and Compliments

We always strive to resolve complaints at an early stage ensuring face-to-face meetings with complainants. When a new complaint is received, service managers are informed at an early stage to help them identify any issues, and this provides us with useful feedback. The complaints and compliments received from service users and their families help us determine areas in which we could improve and areas in which we are performing well.

During 2017/18, the number of individuals who received a service was 5,839. The number of complaints received in regards to adult social services was 147 and the number of compliments received was 106. Of these complaints 61% were investigated at the local resolution stage 1, and 3% proceeded to a stage 2 formal investigation. 31% of complaints received were logged as redirected either as the complainant did not wish to go through a formal complaints procedure or as the complaint did not fall under the statutory requirements.



DOLS

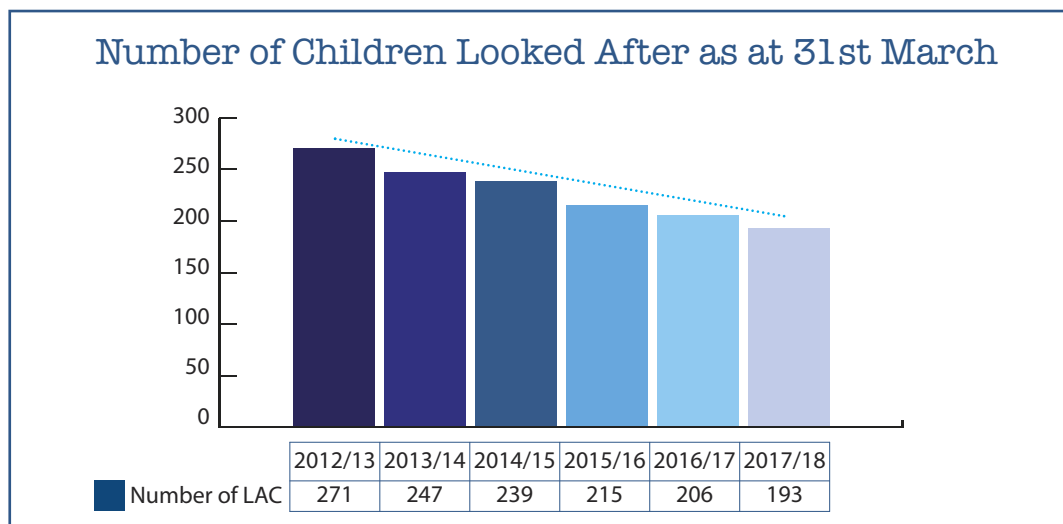
Performance in relation to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards has improved significantly over the year. The Supreme Court Judgement lowering the threshold for DOLS in 2014 has had a significant impact on the social work teams with the number of referrals increasing tenfold in Carmarthenshire. As of March 31st, the current waiting list figure for a DoLS assessment is 395, this is down from 623 the previous year and reflects the national position.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding processes have been streamlined and new systems introduced to monitor performance more effectively and to enable more informed and timely decisions. The percentage of adult protection enquiries completed within the 7 day timeframe has increased from 75.3% in 2016/17 to 92.54% in 2017/18.

Children Services Performance

We have continued to see reductions in the number of looked after children year on year (despite the numbers continuing to rise nationally) from 271 during 2012/13 to 193 as at 31/3/18 (a 28.7% reduction). Our rate of LAC per 10,000 of the population aged under 18 in Carmarthenshire is one of the lowest at 56 compared with 95 (all Wales result 16/17). Refocusing the work of front-line social work teams into pods, and an increased emphasis upon preventative work has helped achieve this.

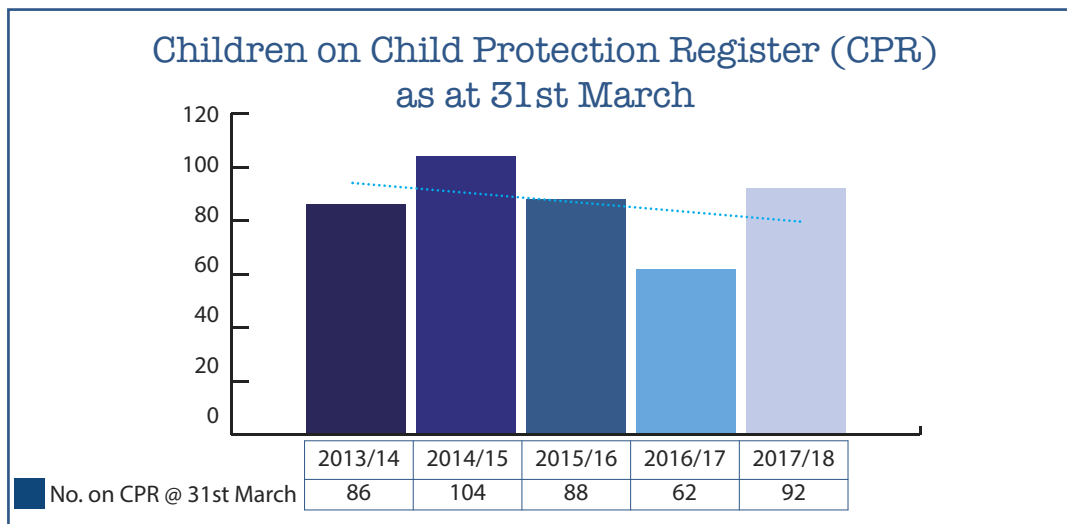


All childcare teams have now implemented the systemic model of delivering social work services, incorporating the Signs of Safety (SoS) model of practice. Monthly audits of assessments by senior management is on-going and feedback provided to managers and workers about strengths and areas for improvement. Workshops have been held with social workers which provided an opportunity to explore ways of improving the quality and timeliness of assessments in line with the Social Services and Well-being Act.

- 89.7% Assessments were completed in statutory timescales during 2017/18 (compared with 82.9% during 2016/17)
- During 2016/17 - 99.5% of Child Protection Reviews were completed in timescales compared with 95.7% during 2017/18
- During 2016/17 - 93.5% of Looked After Children Reviews were completed in timescales compared with 88.9% in 2017/18
- During 2016/17 - 80.9% of Care & Support Reviews were completed in timescales compared with 71.2% in 2017/18

All of the above are multi-agency reviews. They may need to be cancelled at short notice due to numerous reasons e.g. insufficient agency attendance, sickness – parent/child/other agency/childcare worker etc. The reviews are no longer a Welsh Government measure therefore non-comparable nationally but we felt they are important measures and are kept locally.

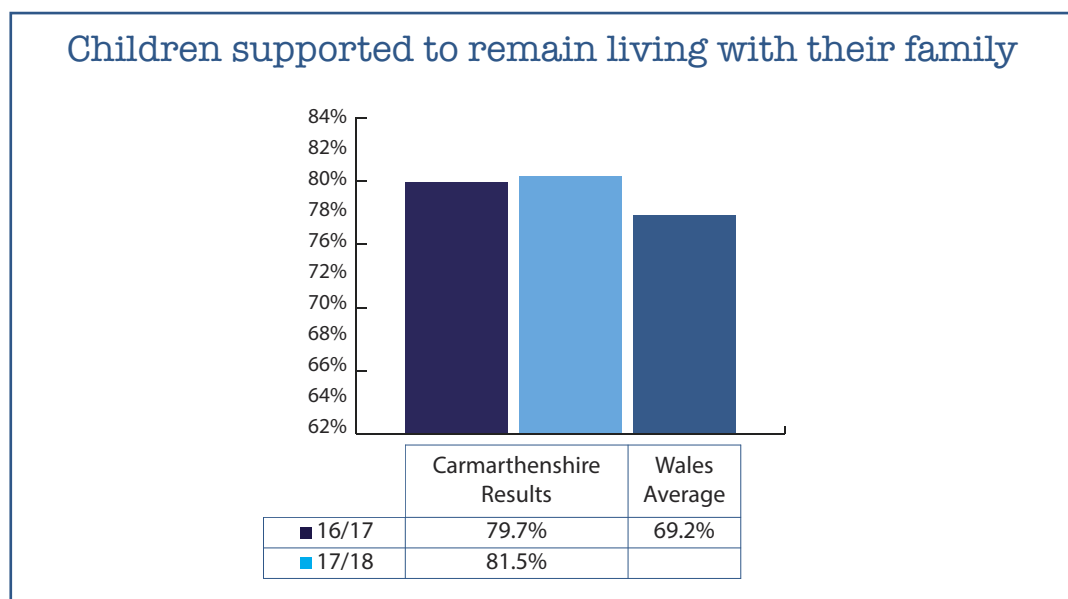
There was a significant decline in the number of children on the child protection register during 2016/17 following initial implementation of Signs of Safety. However, despite numbers having risen again this year (92 as at 31st March 2018), this is not unexpected as numbers can fluctuate as systems are embedded. It is also important to note since the introduction of family network meetings at an early stage and intensive support where necessary the percentage of re-registrations has seen an improvement from 10.4% (10 children) during 2016/17 to 0.7% (1 child) during 2017/18.



- 82% of Parents felt they had been actively involved in all decisions about how their child(ren)'s care and support was provided.
- 81% of children reported being satisfied with the care and support that they have received.

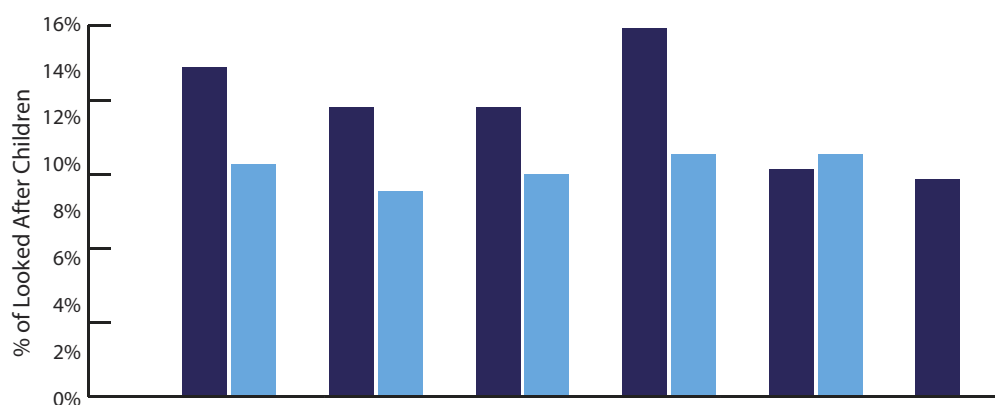
(Annual Survey of Care & Support Services 2017/18)

Our focus on preventative services has been effective and has enabled us to support more children at home, preventing the need for more formal intervention.



During the last two years we have seen a significant improvement in placement stability for our looked after children with the % of looked after children having experienced 3 or more placement moves reduced by 6%, from 14.9% as at 31/3/16 to 8.8% as at 31/3/18.

% of Looked After Children on 31 March who have had 3 or more placements during the year

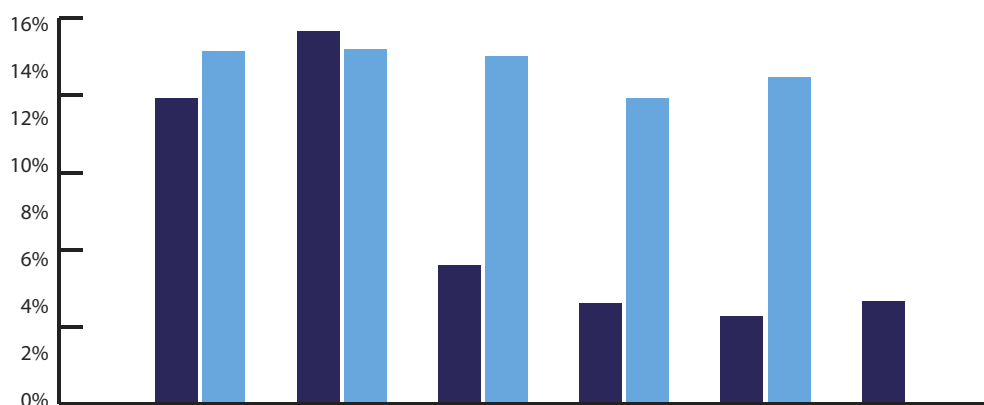


	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
■ Carmarthenshire	13.3%	11.7%	11.7%	14.9%	9.2%	8.8%
■ Wales Average	9.4%	8.3%	9.0%	9.8%	9.8%	

(* above data excludes V1 planned series of short-term breaks)

We have continued to perform well in maintaining looked after children (LAC) within the same school. 4.0% children had one or more changes of school during 2017/18 (5 out of 124 children). We performed better than the Wales average during 2016/17 (12.7%).

% of Looked After Children on 31 March who have experienced 1 or more changes of school during the year

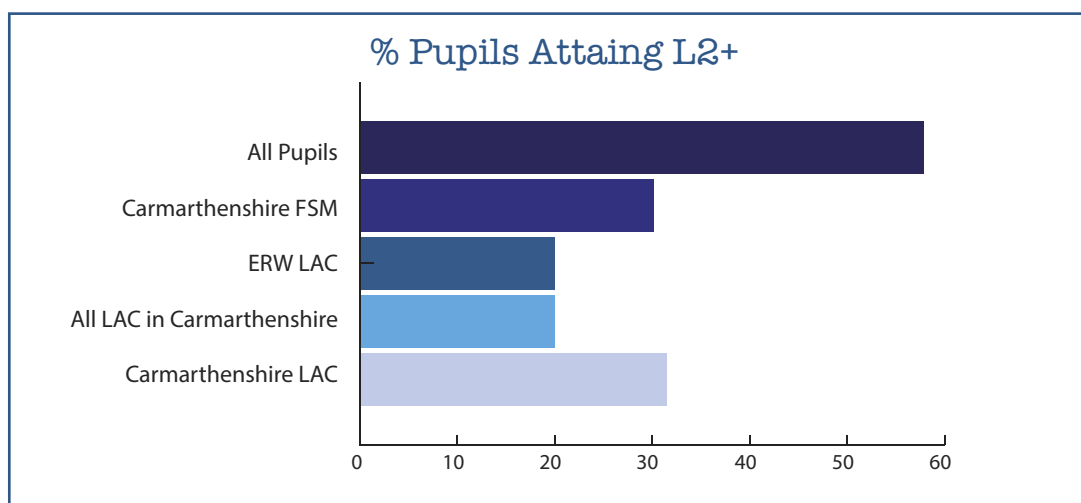


	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
■ Carmarthenshire	11.9%	14.5%	5.4%	3.9%	3.4%	4.0%
■ Wales Average	13.7%	13.8%	13.5%	11.9%	12.7%	

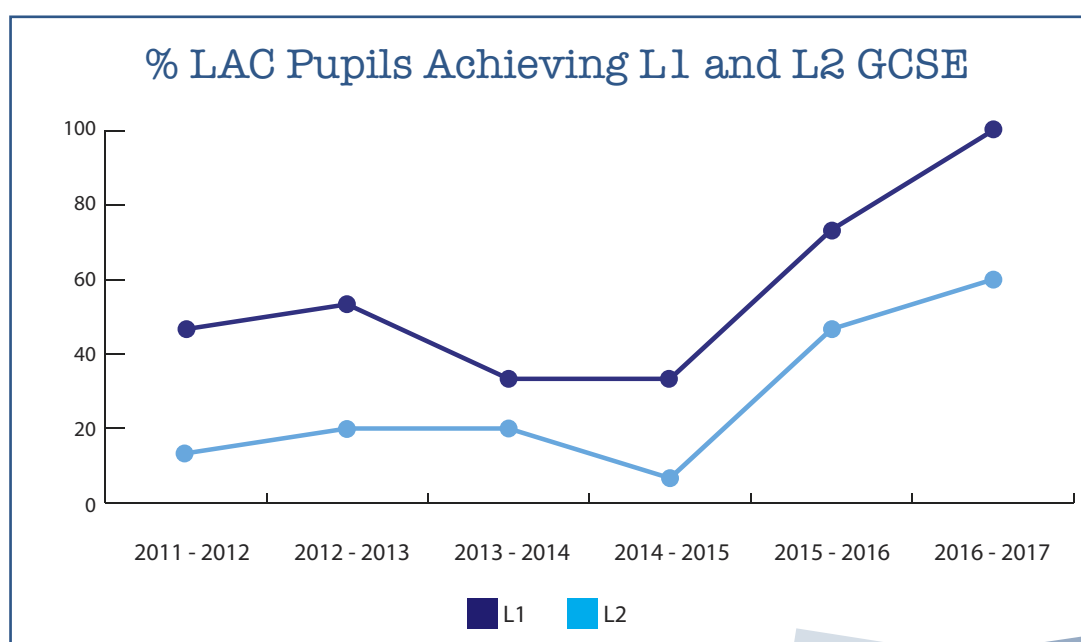
All children including those looked after at age 15 (as at the preceding 31st August) achieved an approved external qualification.

The educational attainment of looked after children in Carmarthenshire has been consistently above the all Wales average for a number of years. In 2017 less than 20% of year 11 pupils that were looked after in Wales left statutory schooling with the level 2 inclusive (Estyn 2017) compared to 54.6% of all pupils in Wales.

However, in Carmarthenshire 31.5% of looked after pupils attained the level 2 inclusive. While we need to improve on this in Carmarthenshire when 57.8% of all pupils achieved level 2, we are pleased that we have exceeded the all Wales average as well as the average of 20% across the ERW consortia.

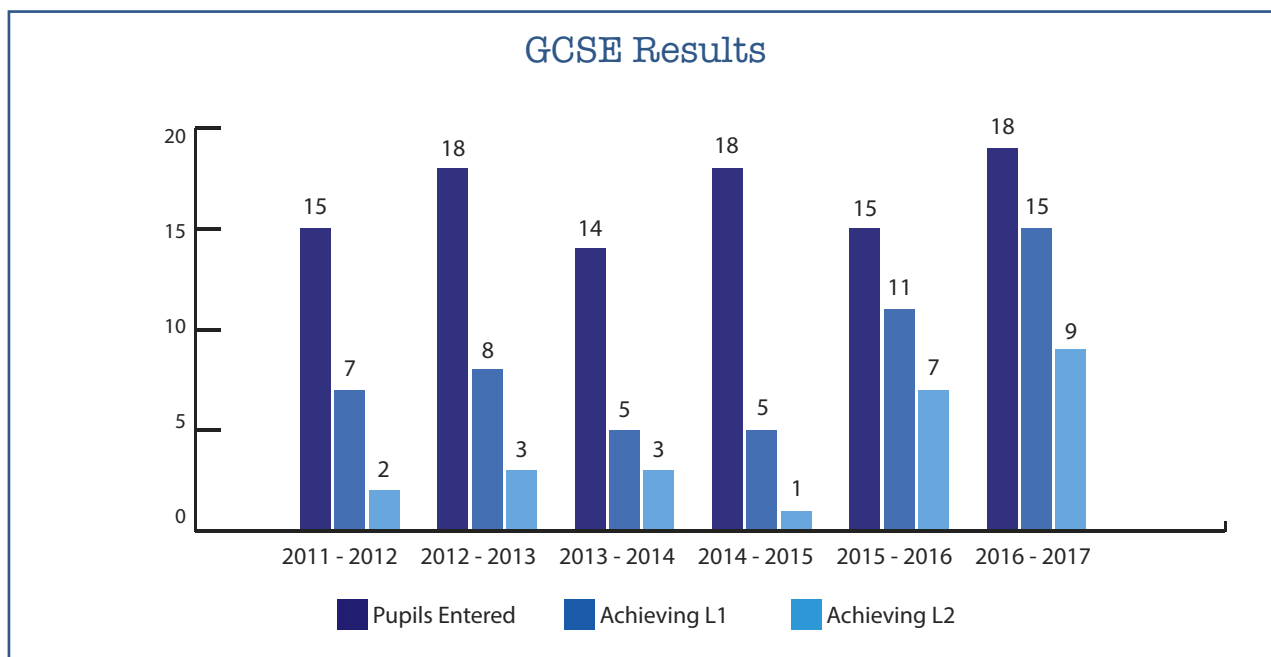


The local authority has, over the years, explored multiple ways to support and improve the educational attainment of looked after children. Currently pupils are offered a range of educational resources, additional tuition, enrichment activities and mentoring. In the last 3-4 years Carmarthenshire has utilised its pupil development grant for looked after children to support and train school staff. This appears to have had the most significant impact when compared to other initiatives. Key stage 4 (GCSE) results are also on the rise.



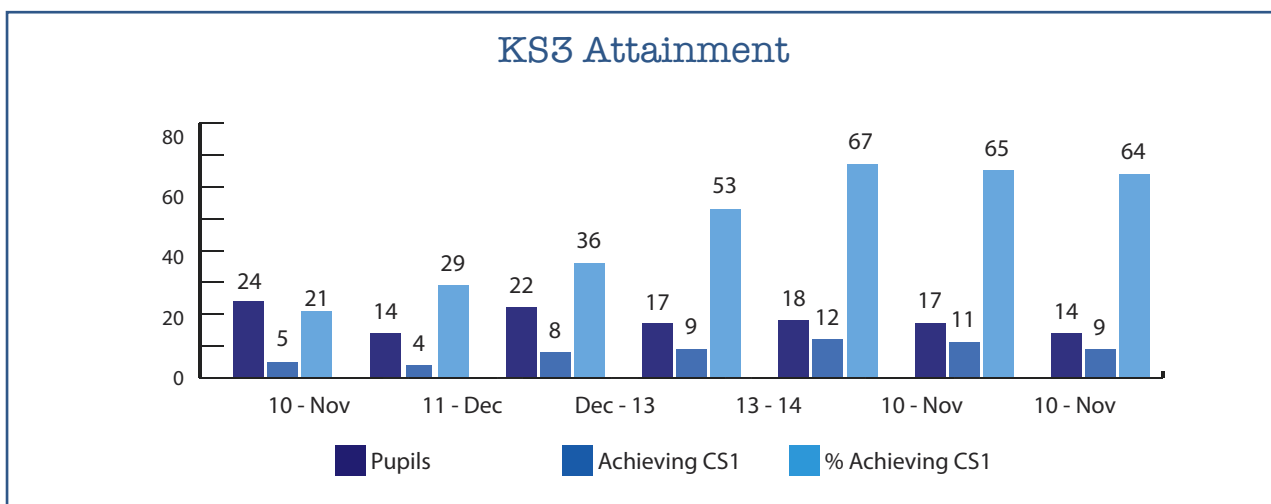
Currently 73 schools in Carmarthenshire have looked after pupils. Staff within all 73 schools have accessed training in understanding the impact of trauma, abuse and neglect on learning. 54 schools have accessed whole school training. A total of 1,689 school staff have accessed a range of related training in applying attachment aware principles within the classroom including emotion coaching, relational play, mindfulness and lego therapy.



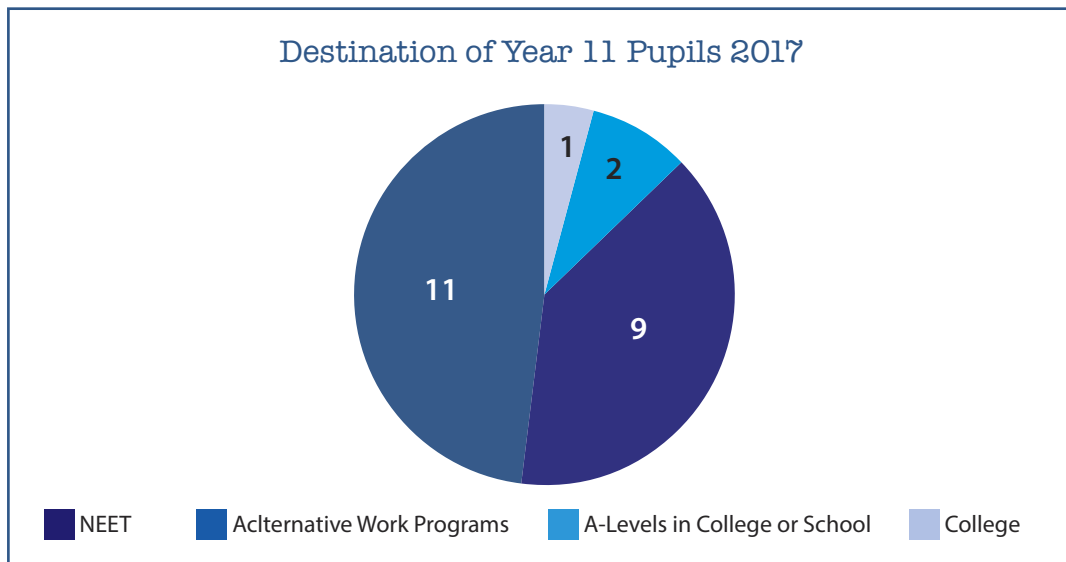


In addition to receiving training 289 staff have received 1:1 support in the classroom to implement positive interventions for children who are experiencing behaviours that challenge. This level of intensive support has been warmly received by schools and initial data monitoring appears to demonstrate that it is having a significant impact on improving outcomes for looked after children.

At Key Stage three 88.4% of pupils in Carmarthenshire attained the core subject indicators compared to 87.4% across Wales. The all Wales average was 46% of looked after children achieving the core subject indicators in 2016/17 and in Carmarthenshire 64% of our looked after children attained this, well exceeding the all Wales average.



Across Wales 45% of children who are looked after were not engaged in education, training or employment (NEET) on their 19th birthday (Estyn 2017). Only 1 year 11 looked after pupil in Carmarthenshire was NEET in September 2017.



Intensive support and training has been provided to the **Carmarthenshire Teaching and Learning Centre** where 38% of pupils are looked after. This intervention has reduced the number of pupils refusing lessons and reduced the number of incidences requiring exclusion.

Education Welfare Service (EWS) has continued to provide on-going support to schools on attendance issues. They continue to have a successful interface with the Team Around the Family and utilise family engagement models to re-engage families in education and learning. The Corporate Parenting Next Step Team are increasingly providing a range of training and support for care leavers helping to reduce the number of NEET.

In respect of our care leavers - during 2017/18:

- 72.2% of those who became care leavers during 2016/17 remain in education, training or employment 12 months after leaving care (i.e. 13 out of 18 young people). (SCC/34a)
- 64.3% of those who became care leavers during 2015/16 still remain in education, training or employment at 24 months after leaving care (ie. 10 out of 12 young people). (SCC/34b)
 - 38 care leavers Enrolled onto Further Education (college or 6th Form)
 - 14 achieved permanent employment
 - 17 attending full time training
 - 6 enrolled on undergraduate university courses
 - 5 attending paid work placements
 - 10 passed theory or driving test
 - 28 achieved employability qualifications
 - 35 young people living independently

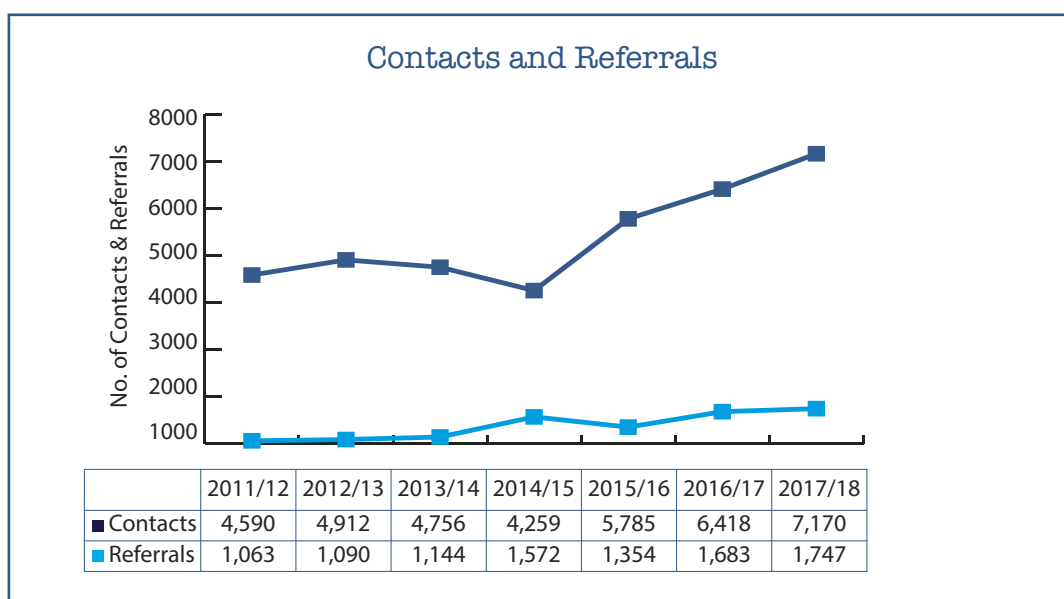


The Regional Mid & West Wales (MWW) Adoption Service continues to perform well, despite the challenges of the size and diversity of the region. This year saw a significant increase in children with a plan for adoption both regionally and nationally. Therefore the priority for 2017/18 has been to increase the recruitment of adopters to avoid delay for children and ensure wherever possible they can be placed within the region. As well as increasing the number of adopters, the implementation of the Life Journey Framework and the Adoption Support Framework are priorities for the service going forward.

During 2017/18:

- 46 'should be placed' for adoption decisions made
- 43 placement orders granted
- 35 children were 'placed for adoption'
- 22 adoption orders granted
- 38 children matched with adopters

The year has been a challenging one with increased demand for services against a climate of financial austerity. We have seen an increase in referrals again this year, which has been due to increased awareness-raising across agencies, including training in schools, together with the publicity following implementation of the SSWBA.



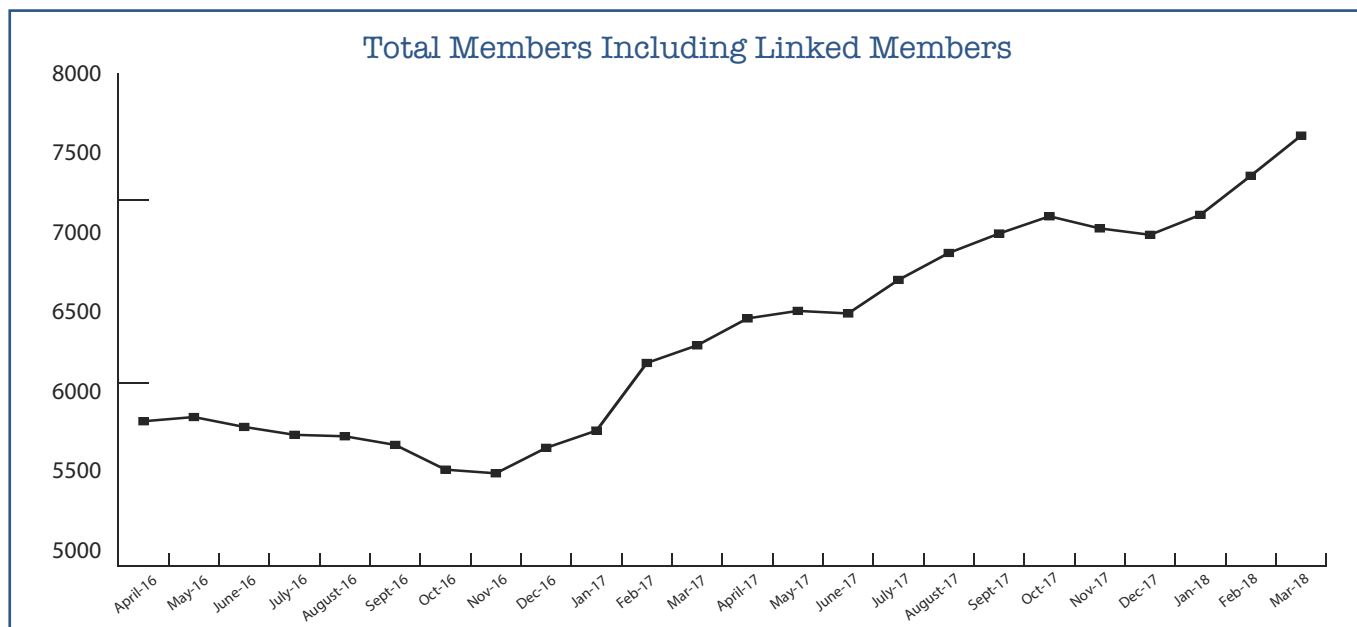
Our aim is to provide every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences. 1832 children (0-3) living in deprived communities are able to benefit from the Flying Start (FS) programme across 17 geographical areas in the county. Expansion into Ammanford is now complete. Capital investments received has enabled the creation of new Flying Start offices in Ammanford town with a combined Contact Centre for families, plus a new childcare facility at Pen Rhos Family Centre (at the newly opened Ysgol Pen Rhos school).

- 9771 individuals received support from Families First (FF) during 2017/18, which is an increase on the previous year (8,626). 4860 new individuals were supported.
- 1224 single agency JAFFs were undertaken, of which 119 escalated to TAF.
- FF projects Key Workers worked with 184 TAF Plans.
- 873 JAFFs were closed with a forward movement of 703 (80%) on the distance travelled tool.
- 60 cases were stepped up to children's services and 127 cases were stepped down from Children's Services to Families First.
- The majority of TAF plans were Key Worked by a Families First commissioned project.

During the last two years we have seen a significant improvement in placement stability for our looked after children with the % of looked after children having experienced 3 or more placement moves reduced by 6%, from 14.9% as at 31/3/16 to 8.8% as at 31/3/18.

Health & Well-Being Performance

Following a million pounds of investment to enhance the county's Health & Fitness offer, creating more space and bringing in brand new state of the art fitness equipment, the impact has been extremely well received by new and existing customers transforming the environments and workouts. Enabling connectivity to social media and fitness apps, allowing personalisation of settings and a huge range of TV/radio channels and streams, providing capability to exercise 'virtually' in a range of engaging locations across the world and so much more. This has resulted in increasing the number of members by 18% (6206 to 7346) and income by 23% (from £978k to £1.2m).



The National Exercise Referral Scheme

The National Exercise Referral Scheme is funded by Public Health Wales and run in partnership with the Local Authority, aiming to reduce those at risk of developing Coronary Heart Diseases, increase physical activity, and improve mental health and wellbeing.

The Local Authority takes an innovative and effective approach to GP referrals referred for physical activity intervention (based on function rather than their condition), while upskilling mainstream leisure fitness staff in order to keep these referrals active throughout the life course.

We had 1510 referrals in 2017/18, 53.8% of these engaged with the scheme and 45.6% of these completed the 16 week programme.

We also have expanded the pathway to cater for 'mums-to-be' and putting emphasis and investment into those at high risk of falling. As a result of the latter, falls-related referrals have increased by 104% in the past year. Health sector savings are estimated at £35k per fall prevented, thus savings of up to £2.4m

Quotes by people that have completed the NERS programme:

“

The scheme has really been a life saver. It has totally transformed my life not just physically but emotionally.

My blood pressure is lower and so is my cholesterol. I have lost two stone and can't believe I was 59 when I discovered the real benefits of exercise. Thanks to all the instructors for their continuing patience and support.

”

3. What do others tell us about our services?

Surveys and Consultations

Following implementation of the Social Services and Well-being Wales Act, local authorities are required to collect qualitative information about people who use their social care services via an annual questionnaire. The adult care survey was conducted between September and October 2017. All recipients had a support plan or were receiving services from the local authority. In total 1023 questionnaires were dispatched.



The number of responses to the survey was 537. This is a high response rate of 53%. We received 145 responses from people who lived in a care home.

89% feel that they live in a home that best supports their well-being.

55% answered 'Yes' they could do the things that were important to them.

58% felt that they were part of a community.

88% were happy with the support they received from family, friends and neighbours.

85% stated they felt safe from any kind of abuse, physical harm or from falling both inside and outside their home.

78% of people stated they thought they had the right information or advice when needing it.

81% of respondents were involved in decisions.

91% were able to communicate in their preferred language.

93% felt they were treated with dignity and respect.

87% were happy with the care and support they had received.

78% made their own decision to live in a care home.

99% felt they had advice, help and support to prepare them for adulthood.



Some comments reported from the survey are listed:

“My carers are wonderful and are very supportive. They deserve to be mentioned and praised for what they do. Giving me confidence to get well and be as normal as I can.”

“I am very satisfied with the care and support I am currently receiving”

“Staff always treat me with dignity and respect at all times”.

“This was not my first choice to live in a residential home, but I was failing to look after my needs and I come to appreciate and accept I had to live in a residential care home where I now feel safe and looked after.”

A consultation with 1,337 parents/carers/families took place via a questionnaire survey as part of our childcare sufficiency assessment (2017/22).

Parents and carers told us:

- **87%** were satisfied with quality of childcare.
- **79%** of working parents told us cost was a significant barrier, reporting that they considered childcare to be too expensive, and would like it more affordable both during term time and school holidays.
- **67%** of parents/carers used registered childcare for some or all of their children.
- **27.8%** of parents/carers not using childcare due to cost being an important factor.
- **67%** wanted more childcare available during weekends and after 6pm.
- **52.7%** of parents/carers who took part in our Survey received no financial help towards childcare costs.
- More satisfied with their term time childcare arrangements than their holiday childcare arrangements.
- Parents reported it difficult to find affordable holiday care for 11+ age group in Llanelli.





Below is what children of Carmarthenshire have told us about their experiences of playing out as part of the 2016 Play Sufficiency Assessment:

1,437 individuals took part in the consultation

- **45%** of the children feel they can do what they like best when playing out with only **12%** feeling they hardly had anything to do.
- They **most enjoy** chatting and being with friends running and chasing, games, ball games, climbing, being with families.
- **Mostly they will play** in the park, local grassy area or field, on the beach/seaside, and near the river.
- Having **opportunities** to play makes them feel happy, excited and active.
- The **barriers** to play are darkness, bad weather, homework.
- **Children suggest that** roads are made safer, dog mess is cleared up, people need to stop smoking in our play space.



Carmarthenshire's children's care and support survey was undertaken between September 2017 and March 2018 and included children between the ages of 7-17 years subject to a care and support plan, including young carers, plus a separate questionnaire for parents. 438 questionnaires were distributed to children, plus a further 651 to parents. Unfortunately, it was disappointing, but not unexpected, that despite attempts by workers to try and engage families, the response rate was low at 20.1%, (88 children), and 13.5% (88 parents).

- **84%** of children reported they live in a home where they are happy.
- **76%** are happy with those they live with.
- **61%** of children answered 'yes' they can do what matters to them.
- **79%** said they feel a part of their community.
- **87%** were happy with family, friends and neighbours.
- **86%** children stated they feel safe (3 children answered that they didn't feel safe – two felt this was due to the area where they live and the other as they 'sometimes got into trouble outside').
- **81%** children said they know who to contact about their care and support.
- **74%** children felt they have received the right information or advice when they needed it (**17%** said sometimes).
- **80%** felt their views about their care and support have been listened to (**14%** reported sometimes).
- **94%** of children said they were able to communicate in the language of their choice (no children said they were unable to communicate in their preferred language).
- **82%** felt they were treated with dignity and respect.
- **81%** are satisfied with care and support they received (16% were sometimes satisfied).
- **50%** of 16/17 year old respondents said 'yes' they have received the advice, help and support that will prepare them for adulthood. A very low response rate of just 21 young people was received in respect of this question (10 answered yes, 6 sometimes; 4 said 'no'; and the other 'didn't know').
- **82%** Parents reported they had been actively involved in all decisions about how their child(ren)'s care and support was provided. A high number felt they had been involved in all decisions (69 out of 88 respondents), a further 15 answered 'sometimes' and four parents said they didn't think they had been actively involved in all decisions.

Some additional comments received:

"Yes I know who to speak to – I can speak with my social worker and teacher"

"I get all my advice I need"

"I live in a home I am happy because they are lovely people I live with"

"Myself and my husband are both actively involved in decisions about the children"

"I can't speak highly enough of how wonderfully supportive our worker has been"

"I am happy with the services I received"

"I have been very happy with the support we have had"



Analysis of Outcomes for Children and Young People 4 to 5 Years after a Final Care Order

Children services participated in an independent review on the outcomes for children 4-5 years after Carmarthenshire secured a care order.



Key findings



- Generally **good outcomes** in Carmarthenshire.
- When placement disruptions occurred in Carmarthenshire, we were much more proactive compared to other LA's. As a result; even where a child had a series of moves the **final outcome was positive**.
- **60%** of our children that came into care at that time, were adopted. This is compared to the **32%** adopted across Wales. This again is a high number and a positive feature.
- We had some really good foster placements that saw the children through into their teenage years.
- There were also good examples of children benefitting from **therapeutic support**.
- Impressive work by the therapeutic Social Worker that is described as a really good role.
- Evidence of really good **Life Story Work** and some stand out outcomes for children.
- **16** out of our **17** children at the end of the five years covered by the research were shown to be **stable, happy and attached**. All were either in education or training; 13 achieving well, 3 achieving particularly well and only 1 child struggling.
- Children in Carmarthenshire had **much better outcomes** due to the level of planning and support they were receiving at the time of breaking down and post break down in settling in a new placement.
- There is clear evidence of **very good performance in Carmarthenshire**. IPC had already offered workshops to other Authorities to focus on their deficits, however felt that there was not a need for one in Carmarthenshire.

Awards and Recognition

Celebrating the Achievement of Children in Care

Looked after children in Carmarthenshire and their carers have been celebrated respectively for their educational achievements and hard work. Education Secretary, Kirsty Williams, attended a special celebratory event at Ffos Las joined by Children's Commissioner, Sally Holland, council leaders, carers and school teachers to pay tribute to the county's looked after children who come from a background of family crisis or breakdown. The children and young people were presented with awards for good school attendance and educational achievement as well as their contribution to sports, music and volunteering.



Kirsty Williams said:

“

Children who enter care often come from very difficult family circumstances. We cannot change their personal experiences, but we have to mitigate the impact and support them into a rewarding, fulfilling and independent adulthood. Research shows that too often simply being ‘in care’ lowers the expectations placed on these young people. This culture impacts negatively on their ability to achieve in all aspects of their lives, including education. The awards ceremony proves that this needn't be the case and showcases just what our looked after learners are capable of given the right support.

”

Awards were presented for primary, secondary and further education students of the year; care leaver of the year; volunteer of the year. There were special awards for music, sport and art. All GCSE and A Level students were also presented with awards.

“

It was an opportunity to thank foster parents, school and service staff for their valued work and support.

”

Before the celebration luncheon the children, young people and their families enjoyed a range of activities provided by both Council and partner organisations including Coleg Sir Gar and the fire service.

'Careline' Information, Advice and Assistance service was recognised and commended at the Welsh Language Standards Awards for implementing the 'Active Offer'. 'Careline' was also a Guardian Public Sector Awards finalist for its achievement in the Learning and Development category.

“ Branded 'trailblazing' by an independent audit, Carmarthenshire County Council's Dewis Sir Gar – Choice Carmarthenshire – which provides a single point of access for social care enquiries, has quickly become a proven success.

The Council's Advice and Assistance manager, says that thanks to the strategy to train existing Careline call-handling staff to expand their expertise and work alongside health and social care professionals, callers can now access a tailored 24/7 service. The service means that frontline staff are better able to filter enquiries, directing the most vulnerable clients to where they can seek help, while also creating capacity within the department. Staff feel more motivated and better supported.

”

A social worker from the safeguarding team received an award from the British Association of Social Work for their contribution to social work.

The Bevan Commission has recognised two Carmarthenshire initiatives as 'Exemplars'; these are 'Fulfilled Lives' and Social Prescribing.

Feedback and Reviews

CSSIW have undertaken a thematic review of safeguarding and have commented positively on the new systems and structures in place to improve performance and in particular timescales.

Carmarthenshire County Council have been used as an example of how to utilise a regional board effectively in the National Independent Safeguarding Board's Annual Report 2016-17 (Published December 2017).

“ Carmarthenshire County Council's Director of Communities has Chaired and provided consistent strategic leadership to the children's board for several years. The County has implemented Signs of Safety – a model for undertaking child protection case conferences and the reduction in the number of children on the Child Protection Register is attributed to the implementation of this model. It has undertaken specific work on missing children, with the police; and on electively home educated children; it has created a group to share good practice and resources concerning Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards; and having successfully piloted a dedicated Safeguarding Officer in the “front door” team, this role has become a permanent arrangement.

”

Scrutiny has noted progress during 2017 in relation to the transformation of mental health services, carer support and progress in relation to DOLS.

A thematic review was undertaken in relation to carers and feedback was positive. Since that review, a number of initiatives in relation to carers have been introduced:

- Identifying carer's champions in all social work teams.
- Establishing a carer's information and assessment post.
- Collaborating with the Mental Health Carers Network to develop an information-sharing leaflet and protocol.

As part of the Mental Health Transformation led by Hywel Dda University Health Board, officers have contributed to a number of engagement events in order to consult on a new model of service. Feedback from those who use services and their carers has been a critical element of this programme which has now moved to implementation stage.

Officers regularly attend service user and carer forums in order to ascertain the views of those who use our services, with the aim of continuously improving services. For example, a number of meetings were held with parent carers, Mencap and People First in order to ascertain their views on the remodelling of day services.

Service users and carers have contributed to the TIC review of residential commissioning and highlighted the need to ensure the process becomes more person-centred.

The Welsh Government Grant received has proven to be an excellent resource for many carers who have traditionally found it difficult to access a break from caring. In particular Young Adult Carers, a very under recognised group, have benefited from a variety of activities that have evidenced great outcomes.

Some comments for example:

"It's been
amazing
opportunity"

"It was great to
spend time with
each other"

"It was lovely
to see everyone
happy"

"Thanks!"

"I'd like to
do a trip
like this
again"

"It was
very
relaxing"

"It was a
really lovely,
fun trip"

Carmarthenshire Local Authority was an active partner in contributing to the Transforming Mental Health Programme which led to HDUHB receiving a National Health Service award for the collaborative effort.

A TIC Review of the Community Inclusion Team has moved into the implementation stage. A project management structure has been established to implement the recommendations of the review.

We commissioned a TIC review of residential placements from assessment to placement. Staff have really embraced this review, which has highlighted significant areas for improvement. Currently we are collaborating with health to redesign the process.

Carmarthenshire County Council has been highlighted as a positive example in two Wales Audit Office Reports. In the Good Governance when Determining Significant Service Changes Report (Published May 2017):

“

The Council has well developed processes in place to seek the views of stakeholders, including councillors and citizens, regarding proposed service changes. The restructuring of social work practice which aimed to place the family at the heart of the service, in-depth ongoing engagement is an essential part of the service change process, producing essential information and views from service users and families to help directly shape the changing service formats going forward.

The Corporate Parenting Team visited Social Work ‘pods’ to speak directly to social workers in the field to find out what impact the significant restructuring of the social work service has had on clients and their families;

The Council is strengthening its arrangements to capture information on the impact of service change - The Council has well established and accessible performance management monitoring arrangements in place, mainly through its Performance Information Management System (PIMS). The PIMS System enables the extraction and reporting of detailed performance monitoring information, which is used to track and assess service changes and evaluate their impact.

”

In the report titled ‘*How Local Government Manages Demand – Homelessness*’

(Published January 2018):

“

The authority’s Housing Options and Advice Team’s approach to coping with incoming activity provides a good example of how to deal with service demand. In 2013, the Council had limited information on customer satisfaction and addressed this with the introduction of five evaluative questions asked to each person who contacted the service. These were focussed on the quality of advice, resolution of issues and communication methods. The Council also analysed the numbers of calls being dealt with, and found that only 40% of calls were being answered at the first point of contact.

The Council installed a screen to show the demand coming in and to allow team members to better manage the demand, enabling the use of data to match callers to the best suited staff members. The new approach contributed to increasing the proportion of housing options calls dealt with at first contact to 96%.

”

“

The Council strives to resolve issues at the first point of contact wherever possible – in ‘making every contact count’, the core team dealing with incoming calls is made up of officers with a variety of backgrounds who can provide solutions to people’s problems. This is also found to be more satisfying for team members who actually help and advise on housing options for people as a result, rather than taking and diverting calls to more suitable departments.

”

Care leavers in Carmarthenshire are now exempt from Council tax payments until they reach the age of 25. The Council agreed the proposal. It will currently affect over 80 young people who have left Local Authority care in Carmarthenshire.

Cllr David Jenkins, Executive Board Member for Resources, said:

“

The Council seeks to support young people that have left its care in order that they may live independently as adults.

Providing council tax discretionary discounts which waives any council tax liability faced by care leavers and therefore ensures the care leaver does not face potential council tax debt.

”



Speaking at Executive Board, Cllr Glynog Davies said:

“

As councillors we are corporate parents. That care should continue after the young people have left our care.

Going out into the real world can be a struggle - many care leavers struggle to manage, so this exemption will be of great assistance to them.

Our own children often boomerang home and want help and advice at times. We should show the same compassion to care leavers, even if it's a telephone call every now and again to see how they are getting on.

”



Compliments and Complaints

Complaints are now coordinated by the Performance Team and robust systems are in place to have robust data in relation to complaints. Compliments are used as feedback to improve performance. Some of the positive comments received over the last year have included:

A person who attended safeguarding training provided by the Safeguarding Team.

“

Just a quick email to say thank you for your time this morning and to tell you that we had a phone call this afternoon from one of the lady taxi drivers who attended. She said that she wanted to phone to say how good she thought the training was.

”

A parent of an individual with mental health issues following a collaborative intervention with housing:

“

My son and I would like to thank you for your assistance in helping him to secure temporary accommodation. It is a relief for his mother and I and a huge comfort for him knowing he is off the streets and into a safe secure flat.

”

A comment from an Executive Officer from HDUHB concerning our engagement in the mental health transformation programme.

“

It has been quite a journey and it has been a pleasure to have had the opportunity to work together so closely and arrive at a point where we can now plan to realise our future model – it will always be in collaboration because that has been the success of the progress all the way.

Thank you for your helpful, professional and sound advice. You have been a great advert for social workers and a very reassuring presence during at a time of great uncertainty for my Dad.

”

“

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to take the time to thank your staff for dealing with an issue concerning a disabled relative.

On this occasion I had the help of AJ and CT.

This letter of thanks however is not only as a relative of a disabled person.

I work as a discharge liaison nurse and I deal across 4/5 counties from and including Cardiff to Carmarthenshire.

I know I am speaking to the county of Carmarthenshire from the tone, kindness and helpfulness of staff as soon as they answer the phone.

It's often from a place of confusion and unknown people call the Council and such services.

It is also most often met with abruptness, shall we say. This, I am happy to note, is so far removed from yourselves.

I am actually relieved when I have to arrange services with Carmarthenshire Council and, although a few other councils are accommodating, you not only hold the gold star, you set the standard.

I am not sure if the county generally has nicer people!

Or if the general ethos and management is different.

It both does and does not matter.

Whatever you are doing just keep doing it.

Again thank you for making difficult situations easier for many people.

Your staff, you certainly must be proud of.

Yours sincerely

Staff Nurse

”



4. Promoting and improving the well-being of those we help

Progress has been made during the year in respect of our three year business plan improvement objectives. As with last year, progress needs to be balanced against the backdrop of a tighter financial climate. Managing resources effectively has therefore been a key area of activity during 2017/18.

We are implementing the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and the opportunities this brings to collaborate with colleagues in the statutory and voluntary sector. Our current strengths are that we have an established team management structure and senior management structure that acknowledges their responsibilities to deliver the business objectives and priorities. We also have an articulated vision for our service developed following consultation with staff.

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act does present challenges, as does the need to modernise our services in order to establish a sustainable future position. Despite this, we have been able to maximise opportunities and deliver real progress against many of the priorities set. Areas where progress has not been made will receive focussed attention during the year ahead. This report is based on a range of information including feedback from people who use our services, performance indicators, audit and inspection reports and case studies and complaints.

Overall performance in relation to performance indicators over the last year is positive and I am pleased to report improvement in the timeliness of safeguarding investigations, a significant reduction in the backlog of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications (DOLS) and much improved performance in relation to reviews.

'Careline' has been developed to provide Carmarthenshire with its 'Information, Advice and Assistance' service. This integrated single point of access provides a 24/7 bilingual service to receive community health and social care enquiries. In May 2017, Carmarthenshire became a 'pathfinder' for the national '111' service and 'Careline' provides a seamless pathway for '111' to community care pathways to avoid admissions to hospital. Our 'Careline' model has been recognised as exemplar by the Telecare Services Association. It has been commended by Welsh Government in relation to its provision on the 'Active Offer' and also a finalist in the Guardian Public Sector Awards for its achievement in workforce learning and development.

We continue to work with partners to develop public information on the Dewis Cymru website (www.dewis.wales). The site is a public information site which provides advice and support on well-being issues from health to family life.

The divisions are represented on a number of projects and programmes associated with the Regional Partnership Board's programme of modernisation and funded by the Welsh Government's Integrated Care Fund (ICF). These are overseen by the County's Integrated Service Board and is contributing to the Health Board's Transforming Clinical Services Strategy which is currently out to consultation.

These include a supported living project in collaboration with housing colleagues, improving respite provision, enhanced facilities in relation to sensory integration, a positive behavioural support service and a resource to facilitate the review of disability services.

The County's intermediate care provision that supports us to be able to care for frail older adults in their own homes rather than being admitted to hospital has benefited from ICF. These areas of practice include the award winning Transfer of Care Advice and Liaison Service, and the Rapid Response Domiciliary Care Service.

Our Community Resource Teams have also benefited from an increased number of occupational therapists and physiotherapists to ensure that individuals receive a timely assessment.

Capital Funding from ICF has allowed the development of the existing Community Integrated

Equipment Store (CICES) into an Independent Living Centre (ILC) where individuals are able to get advice on and view aids and adaptations that are available to support them to maintain their independence. Similarly staff are supported to try out new equipment available on the market and to receive appropriate training programmes in a suitable environment.

In partnership with colleagues in Public Health, we have developed a Framework for Action to progress and implement a Community Resilience Strategy in the county. ICF through the appointment of Community Resilience Coordinators, has allowed us to identify support networks in the community which can go some way to providing individuals with improved wellbeing. In an innovative approach, public health, community health and social care and the third sector is working with primary care to develop a social prescription scheme.



Four social prescribers have now been appointed who work directly with GPs to support people to engage with their communities and reduce loneliness and isolation. This is done through a time-banking scheme, where credit notes are issued to the patients to spend time in the community doing things that keep them well. The initiative is delivered through SPICE Time Credits and evidence has shown that Time Credits lead to sustainable improvements in quality of life. 65% of members reported that Time Credits have helped to improve their quality of life within the first year, and this figure rises to 75% for people who have been members for 18 months to three years.

Our Community Resilience Coordinators are also working closely with communities to become dementia friendly. To date Pontyberem and Llanelli Market have been afforded this status and work is underway in Llandovery, St Clears, Laugharne, and Whitland.

Our relationship with the Mental Health Directorate of Hywel Dda and Dyfed Powys Police has been very positive and we are collaborating on a number of projects.

- We are fully involved in the Regional Hywel Dda Transforming Mental Health Programme and associated subgroups. This is now at implementation stage.
- We are collaborating with HDUHB and third sector colleagues to develop a number of innovative projects linked to the Transforming Mental Health Grant which include a crisis facility.
- We are collaborating with HDUHB, Dyfed Powys Police and third sector partners' across the region to implement a number of strategic initiatives such as VAWDASV, Safeguarding, Suicide and Self harm and a number of criminal justice forums.
- We are also represented on the Regional Learning Disability Programme group and associated sub groups. This group is progressing regional priorities.

We have developed an exciting project in collaboration with our leisure colleagues and Run Wales during 2017. Several individuals with mental health issues are training alongside health, social care and third sector staff to complete the Swansea Half Marathon in June. We are piloting this project in Llanelli in the first instance with a view to rolling it out across the county. Research has shown that getting involved in physical activity can improve mental and physical health and well-being. The project is addressing issues of social isolation and stigma in mental health, but the ultimate aim is to provide positive outcomes for those who currently use our services.

A review of disability services has been undertaken. Following the review we have established a working group with parents and are consulting with families, stakeholder groups and children's services who will commence a pilot on a new way of allocating resources via the Resource Allocation

Tool. Lessons from this pilot will be applied to adult services with a view to establishing a new model of services during 2018.

Considerable progress has been made within our Accommodation & Efficiency Project across all work streams resulting in the combined financial efficiency target (Full Year Effect) being exceeded.

Towards the end of 2017 an Accommodation Development Officer was appointed and this new post has already had an impact in securing appropriate accommodation for people across the division. Work has commenced on a number of projects to enable individuals to have access to a wider range of accommodation opportunities and reduce the current reliance on residential placements and improve performance in relation to voids.

The Substance Misuse Team has continued to provide a good service which has been valued by those who use the service and externally recognised by receiving a BASW award last year.

Work has commenced to analyse demand in order to develop a workforce plan for Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Services. A safeguarding resource has been placed at IAA following a successful pilot and Children with Disabilities, and Transition are about to pilot an intake arrangement for Disability Services.

Overall our performance during 2017 has improved, but we acknowledge that remedial action is required in relation to the number of individuals placed in residential placements and this is a top priority. We are making good progress and whilst there are areas which need attention; the infrastructure is now in place to enable us to continuously improve and achieve the business objectives set for 2018-2021.

Money for Welsh Independent Living Grants (WILG) now comes directly to the Local Authority rather than being administered by Welsh Government. Because of this change we're reviewing all care and support plans for WILG to ensure they achieve the outcomes they want.

In 2017 meetings of the Practice and Policy Board which is overseeing implementation of the SSWBA continued. Senior officers across adult social care are represented on this group. We have agreed a common assessment for adult social care and piloted this within learning disability teams. The Heads of Service regularly attend the Adult Practice Board which has strengthened the links with the operational team.

We have reviewed the structure in the Substance Misuse Team so that it reflects the structure across the division. The team has also moved to Ty Elwyn, which has improved links with the community teams.

We are implementing the preventive agenda within the Mental Health and Learning Disability teams, since April 2017 e.g. the Community Mental Health Teams have responded to SSWB Act referrals.

Our plan to improve placement stability continues to be reviewed through placement panel and permanency panel and through our placement strategy. The appointment of a new Placement Officer post within the fostering team will assist with placement stability as the main duties will be to look at matching. Placement support meetings are held on a regular basis to identify any risk of a placement breakdown and focus on additional support needs of carers.

In the long-term our continued focus will remain on prevention and maintaining children at home with families and friends and out of the care system wherever possible, through our new 'Edge of Care' service and utilising an integrated approach in collaboration with others.

All child protection case conferences are carried out under the Signs of Safety model and practice is developing across all teams. All staff have received the briefings, and further advanced training for several practitioners who champion and act as lead practitioners within the service. The Fostering Service have also developed this model within its working practice.

Independent Reviewing Officers Service (IRO) is functioning in a more pro-active way and moving towards embedding outcome focused practices.

All our care leavers are allocated a Personal Adviser who visits regularly in accordance with what is agreed in their pathway plan as each child's visiting is individual to them. A joint commissioning work plan has been put in place with Supporting People and a steering group established.

We have continued to work with partners to improve appropriate accommodation options and housing support for all vulnerable young people aged 16-25. A plan is in place to develop, decommission and re-commission appropriate accommodation. The St. Basil's Care Leavers Accommodation Pathway is being explored in line with Welsh Government recommendations.

We have continued to explore the potential of utilising school grounds outside of teaching hours to enable children greater access to play opportunities. Ysgol Beca, Llys Hywel and Gyfun Emlyn have already implemented it. The Play Pod at Ysgol Brynteg is now in full use and access is available outside of teaching hours. New schools are being designed to allow this access.

The Education and Well-being (LAC) Team are continuing to deliver Attachment Awareness Training, advice and support to all schools to better equip them in being able to meet the emotional needs of vulnerable children. The Young Carers Services is supporting families and schools to improve outcomes. They are working collaboratively with schools, health, and voluntary sector to ensure they are 'young carers aware' and to deliver a range of initiatives for young carers. Schools are engaging in the Young Carers Awareness Award.

Transformation programmes are ongoing in Mental Health & Learning Disability Services and the division is actively involved in both programmes. The Mental Health programme has moved to implementation stage.

A Learning Disability programme has been established during 2017. Priorities and opportunities for joint commissioning have been agreed with stakeholders. Both of these programmes are also priorities within the Regional Partnership.

The Regional Safeguarding Adult Board is well established as well as the subgroups for training, policy and practice and Adult Practice Reviews. The Local Operational Group is working well, is well attended by all partners and relationships have developed between key agencies. As a result, there is greater confidence in the multi-disciplinary approach to safeguarding.

There has been a significant improvement in the timeliness of safeguarding investigations and systems and processes have been redesigned so that data and performance can be monitored more effectively. Enhancements have also been made to the referral form to enable staff to make more informed and timely decisions.

During 2017 a regional strategic group was established to respond to the enactment of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015. Our decision to develop a regional, Mid and West Wales approach aligns with the regional approach to safeguarding and the strong partnership and collaborative working culture already established across such a large regional footprint.

The Mid and West Wales region comprises of four Local Authority areas; Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Powys and two Local Health Boards; Hywel Dda University Health Board and Powys Teaching Health Board and it is these authorities that are required by the Act to jointly publish a Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy.

The regional group is chaired by the Head of Service for Mental Health and Learning Disability Services who is also leading on this work for the region. Recruitment is also underway for a Regional Adviser who will progress delivery of the strategy and delivery framework to achieve the prevention of violence and abuse, the protection of victims and the support of all those affected.

A draft strategy and a delivery plan has been completed and will be out to consultation between April and June 2018. One of the key mechanisms to deliver the Act is the National Training Framework. Welsh Government has issued statutory guidance which outlines who must be trained according to nationally agreed learning outcomes and within certain prescribed timeframes.

It identifies six target groups for training and the requirements for refresher/update training over a period of five years. To date 3,353 have been trained in Carmarthenshire local authority on the e-learning module, Group 1,2 and 3 training will commence in April 2018.

Partners have collaborated to agree a threshold document which will be consulted upon and implemented during 2018. This work has been led by the Senior Safeguarding Manager. The way safeguarding processes are recorded has been streamlined and new systems introduced, which enables us to monitor and measure performance more effectively.

There has been an extensive range of learning and development opportunities both within and between organisations. This includes "Train the Trainer" capacity from within the Council to implement the SSWB Act (including the safeguarding specific elements) and joint training with Dyfed Powys Police on the new (SSWBA) Adult Protection Support Orders.

There are well established processes for monitoring provider performance both in terms of the care home sector and domiciliary provision. A number of providers have been subject to Escalating Concerns during 2017. In these circumstances, commissioning, safeguarding and care management staff have collaborated to ensure individuals have been safeguarded.

A most significant achievement during 2017 has been that the TIC review of day opportunities has moved to implementation stage. The review has been led by those who use our services and front line staff. A project management structure has been established to implement the recommendations of the TIC review which will inform a future model of service that is sustainable and will provide better outcomes and progression pathways for individuals.

A TIC review of the commissioning of residential placements from assessment to placement has also been undertaken. Staff have really embraced this review, which has highlighted significant areas for improvement. Currently we are collaborating with health to redesign the process.

The division has been fully involved in the development of the Market Position Statement and the Local Area Plan which is informing the development of a Learning Disability Strategy and proposals for submission to the Integrated Care Fund for 2018/2019. This work is ongoing and will be core business for the division for 2018/2019 as part of the regional partnership agenda.

The local authority is leading on the Delta Lakes Development in Llanelli. The Wellness Village which will include leisure facilities, extra care, and health and nursing provision will be a regeneration project that aims to transform our approach to health and wellbeing in Llanelli. The Mental Health and Learning Disability Services division has also been involved in this development ensuring that the Wellness Village will accommodate the needs of people with learning disability and mental health issues.

We have collaborated with partners to develop a Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disabilities which will be presented to Scrutiny in April.



We will be supporting the approach of developing an overarching advocacy strategy for children and adults. We are considering an approach with Powys County Council to become part of a broader regional advocacy service for both children and adults to take account of the four county regional safeguarding arrangements. This gives us the principle support to the provision of funding to the West Wales Regional Advocacy Network to facilitate user engagement.

Currently we have our own local authority advocacy commissioning arrangements, we currently commission specialist advocacy i.e. for people with learning disabilities, mental health, dementia, children and carers. We currently contract with Carmarthenshire People First and Eiriol. Ceredigion County Council commission advocacy from us.

In partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council we have undertaken self-assessments for the implementation of the code of practice on advocacy. There is evidence to suggest that there is scope for building upon and improving current arrangements. We have identified that arrangements for commissioned advocacy for older adults without dementia and those with physical disabilities could be improved.

With our partners in the Hywel Dda University Health Board who are currently undertaking a review of advocacy provision in relation to Mental Health and Learning Disabilities, this presents a good opportunity to ensure that both strands of work are tied together.

5. How we deliver for our citizens

(a) Our workforce and how we support their professional role

A staff survey for adults was circulated during September 2017 the theme was communication, appraisal and engagement. There are 1,886 staff within the department and the number of responses received were 653. This equates to 35%.

Following on from the staff survey and the People Managers Event we asked all staff in the Department to *'Rate Your Division as an Employer'*.

How likely would you be to recommend your division as an employer to someone you know?

Our overall score for the Department for Communities result is. "Good"

We have had 558 responses, 30% of our whole workforce within the department.

We arranged a People Manager Event and a variety of managers from each division were in attendance 194 people managers in total, this equated to 72%

The theme of the event was based on Well Being. Feedback from the event was positive.



A staff survey in Children's Services was conducted in 2017:

- **37%** had worked for Carmarthenshire 10+ years.
- **89%** of staff felt senior managers were visible and accessible.
- **66%** found their job role satisfying; **26%** very satisfying.
- **16%** of staff felt frustrated about outdated IT equipment/systems/ data base and processes.
- **93%** of staff (154) asked that if they had a problem (either work or personal) felt that they could go to someone for help and support within the local authority.



Overall staff appeared generally happy and their job satisfying. An overwhelming response was that staff felt valued for the work they do in helping and supporting families, and are making a positive difference. Workers are involved in identifying and contributing to improving the service via the Feedback Improvement Group (FIG) which includes representation from each of the child care teams.

As lead agency for child protection it is important to ensure our staff and the systems in place serve to safeguard the welfare of children. We consider very important the need to retain social workers trained and experienced in child protection, with caseloads that enable them time to focus on assessment and risk, maintaining and building upon links with other agencies, and driving forward safeguarding throughout the authority.

We value the contribution, dedication and hard work of the workforce in continuing to deliver a high standard of service and ensuring improvements and efficiencies despite the number of recent changes to practice brought about by the implementation of the new Act and new models of working.

We continue to monitor caseloads monthly to ensure they are appropriate and manageable. We have a strong commitment to ensuring regular supervision, training and development.

Our children's social services workforce remains stable with vacancy levels low at just 4.3% (as at 31/3/18).

Keeping vacancies to a minimum is crucial in ensuring all our children and adults in need of care and support, and looked after children are being safeguarded. The care management workforce in older adult services has been remarkably stable over the years, during the last 12 months however, we have seen a number of staff leave. Recruitment of replacement staff also appears to have its difficulties, particularly in relation to attracting experienced staff and staff with an interest in working in the 3Ts Locality.

Recruitment and retention for our social care provider workforce also remains problematic. We have been progressing the development of a health and social care worker role which has seen social care providers undertaking tasks that traditionally have been undertaken by health care providers.

The Welsh Government has promoted the professionalisation of the workforce in part to give confidence to the public that they will receive a service from a competent, professionally accountable individual. Social Workers are now registered and there is a CPEL framework in place to support practice development. A planned programme of induction is provided to all staff commencing in adults and children's services.

Peer support groups and a mentoring scheme is provided to newly qualified social workers along with a 'first year in practice' programme as part of our Social Care Workforce Development Partnership (SCWDP).

Our commitment to on-going learning and development to ensure a professional and skilled social care workforce has continued through the SCWDP (social care workforce development programme), and the Social Care Wales.

The Head of Integrated Services is the Welsh Language Champion for the Department. A strategic group has been established to ensure adherence against the Welsh Language Standards. The group has overseen the analysis of our current position in Carmarthenshire in relation to the 'active offer' and each division has plans in place for improvement.



The social care workforce in Carmarthenshire is supported by the Social Care Wales Workforce Grant SCWWDP and additional local authority matched funding. Workforce plans are developed in consultation with the sector and the strategy is endorsed via the West Wales Regional Partnership Board. The work plan is managed by the SCWWDP team who offer a wide range of learning and development opportunities for the whole sector divisional People Management Organisational Development Service.

In 2017-18, SCWWDP delivered over 11,557 learning and development opportunities to employees across the whole of the social care workforce which included 1,802 attendances from independent care sector staff.

Training is delivered locally or regionally to help practitioners improve and develop their skills. These included the following programmes for:

- 342 staff received training on a range of dementia programmes.
- 467 staff attended a range of sessions on Safeguarding.
- 3,353 staff across the Council accessed e-learning on the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence [VAWDASV] Act 2015. This included staff from Community Services, Education & Children Services, Environment, Corporate Services and Chief Executive's.

For 2017-18 the following areas will be key priorities:

- Supporting the domiciliary care workforce to prepare for registration and supporting knowledge/role of responsible individuals.
- Support the training, development and qualification of social care managers.
- Outcome Focussed Care and Support Practice.
- Qualifying programmes for Social Work.
- Post Qualifying (PQ) programmes for Social Work.
- Support frontline social care workers to develop their skills overall in relation to social care.
- Enable the workforce to meet regulatory requirements for qualification and/or registration.
- A range of regional and local programmes.

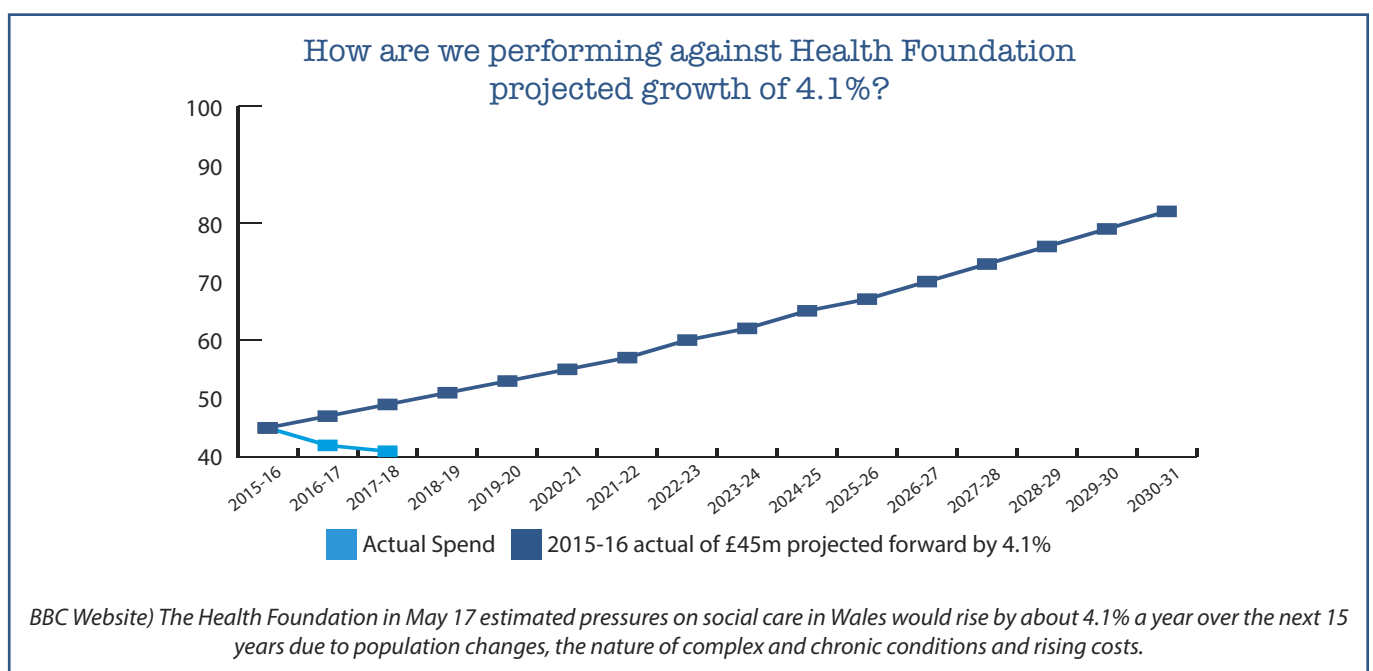
The SCWDP Team supported people to undertake a range of qualifications for staff working in social care. In 2017-18, 44 social care workers gained QCF Health and Social Care Units, Certificates and Diplomas. In addition to this, a range of management & post qualifying qualifications were supported from Level 2 to Level 7.

In 2017-18 Carmarthenshire hosted & seconded 41 people to train as Social Workers. The training is over 3 years for degree students and 2 years for master's students. In 2017-18, 2 Carmarthenshire seconded staff achieved their qualification. The Team also support the delivery of Continuous Professional Education & Learning [CPEL] for qualified social workers and during 2017-18, 5 Social Workers commenced CPEL courses. In addition to these, 22 Social Workers started the Consolidation Programme after successfully completing their first year in qualified practice. We continue to implement our first year in practice support & development programme which includes a range of training opportunities and mentoring support extending to their first three years in practice.

(b) Our financial resources and how we plan for the future

Base Budget 2018-2019	Expenditure	Income	Net
	£k	£k	£k
Homes & Safer Communities	19,253	-5,593	13,660
Integrated Services	44,275	-14,032	30,243
Mental Health, Learning Disability and Safeguarding	46,656	-12,345	34,311
Performance, Analysis & Systems	329	-23	306
Support	4,066	-1,873	2,193
Commissioning	903	-19	884
Regional Partnership	1,163	-964	199
Children's Services	25,111	-5,762	19,349
Total	141,756	-40,611	101,145

The biggest pressure on the departmental budget to manage is the growth in the number of older people in the county combined with increasing complexity of need for the very frail and elderly. If unmanaged this leads to both growing numbers of service users and an increase in the size of packages each individual has. When allied with the growing costs for providers because of increased costs (minimum wage) and ever growing expectations on standards through regulation, this produces a potentially disastrous budget profile for all Councils.



We have been successful in the last few years in containing our spend with proportionate commissioning of care which promotes person centred care and independence.

The development of pooled budgets across health & social care for care homes is mandatory by April 2018. Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) and Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDUHB) already have effective working relationships, this includes pooling budgets and further integration of the management and provision of services for social care and community services for older people.

A project board has been established to oversee this piece of work and a project manager appointed. The Regional Partnership Board has identified Carmarthenshire as a 'pace setter' for this West Wales Care regional priority and learning from this will be shared with colleagues in Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.

Officers have undertaken a detailed analysis of provider costs and entered into a series of negotiations with the 5 largest supported living providers.

Due to the intelligence developed around staffing costs and an open and transparent approach, these negotiations were successful and have also led to improved provider/commissioner relationships.

(c) Our local political leadership, governance and accountability

The Director of Social Services Chairs the CYSUR Operational Group.

The Children's Services Division is located within the Department for Education & Children's Services which is well embedded and promotes strong links with schools, education welfare and educational psychology services.

There is clear strategic direction for the service with a formal protocol in place for social care governance linking children's services with the wider social services, health and housing agenda, and the director of social services has good oversight of children's services issues with regular meetings taking place between the Head of Children's Services and Director of Social Services.

An effective relationship exists between Executive Board Members and the Heads of Service. The Executive Board Members are supportive of services and regularly visit front line teams, service providers and attend appropriate community groups as well as relevant national conferences. Similarly, there are regular opportunities to liaise with the Community Health Council.

Carmarthenshire has had an overarching Section 33 agreement in place since 2007. This provided the necessary governance to develop an integrated community health and social care service infrastructure to support the health and wellbeing of older adults and adults with physical disabilities and / or sensory impairment. Specifically this applies to the Integrated Services division and has allowed us to develop an integrated management structure. Our Head of Service and the Locality Managers are responsible for the health and social care services for Carmarthenshire and its Localities.

West Wales Care Partnership has been established since 2016 as per duty under Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014) and stipulates a requirement for Councils and Local Health Boards to establish and maintain pooled funds – underpinned by legal agreements:

- The exercise of their adult care home accommodation (residential and nursing) functions (by 6th April 2018),
- the exercise of their family support functions
- Specified functions exercised jointly in response to Population Assessments, where such arrangements are considered appropriate

The Council is represented at senior level on the statutory Regional Partnership Board by the Director of Communities and Executive Board Member for Social Care and Health, who is vice chair.

The Council hosts a small Regional Collaboration Unit which provides strategic and programme support to the partnership and is funded through the Welsh Government's Integrated Care Fund alongside contributions from the three local authorities in the region.

It has also been a key player in the development of enhanced regional governance arrangements, aimed at streamlining integrated decision making across partner agencies through a joint committee structure. These arrangements are expected to take effect from mid-2018.

Carmarthenshire, as the pacesetter for the 'pooled fund' strategic priority of West Wales Care Partnership, is also exploring other opportunities to pool funds across our region. This includes Integrated Equipment Stores and Intermediate Care Services.

Another priority area for the Partnership is 'Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) and prevention'. Here Carmarthenshire has led on commissioning external capacity to review current arrangements across the West Wales region with a view to developing a Prevention Framework for West Wales, supported by shared regional standards.

The pioneering work of Dewis Sir Gar has directly informed this piece of work. Collaboration between the authority and Pembrokeshire County Council in relation to strategic commissioning also provides a foundation for ambitions to develop integrated commissioning across the three local authorities and Hywel Dda University Health Board in the future.

Under section 14A of the Act, Local Authorities and Local Health Boards also are required to develop an Area Plan jointly, to create consistency with the combined population assessment process and contribute significantly to the objective of integrated and sustainable care and support services. The West Wales Area Plan has been developed over the past 12 months with key stakeholders from Carmarthenshire County Council contributing to the process. The plan is due to be published on the West Wales Care Partnership and Partner's web site by April.

The Carmarthenshire Integrated Services Board reports directly to the West Wales Regional Partnership Board and ensures that regional priorities for both organisations are delivered efficiently and effectively at an operational level.

The Public Service Board (PSB) has been established as the duty under the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act (Wales). The PSB has identified key wellbeing objectives, which have been consulted and published. Thematic Groups have been established to oversee their implementation and all actions are included in the business plans.

Our Corporate Safeguarding Policy promotes greater understanding among staff, councillors and people working on our behalf about guidelines in place for safeguarding children and adults.

We have action plans for the Safeguarding People Team, Adult Protection and Corporate Safeguarding, and these are given high priority.

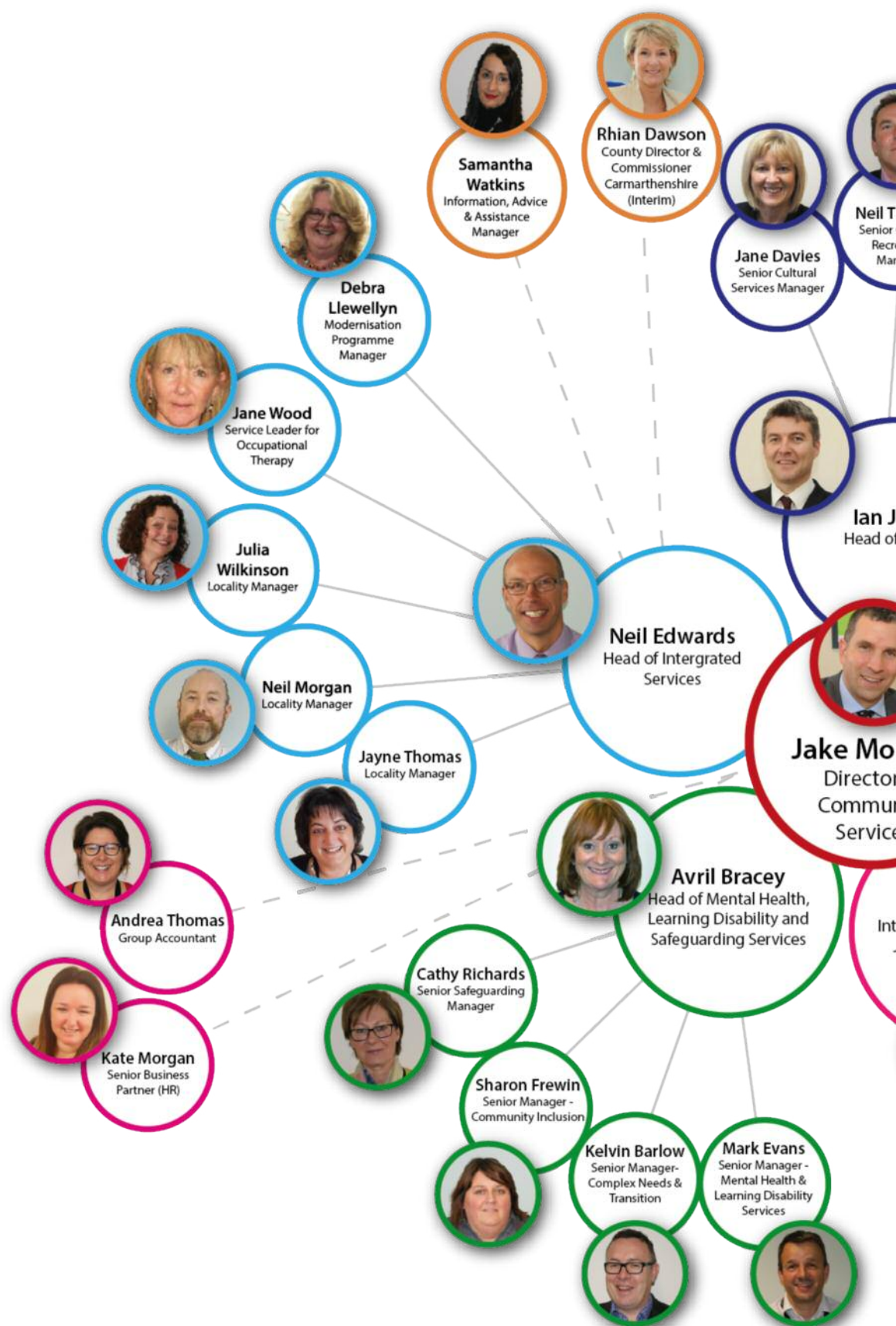
The Council also remains compliant with the 'prevent' duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

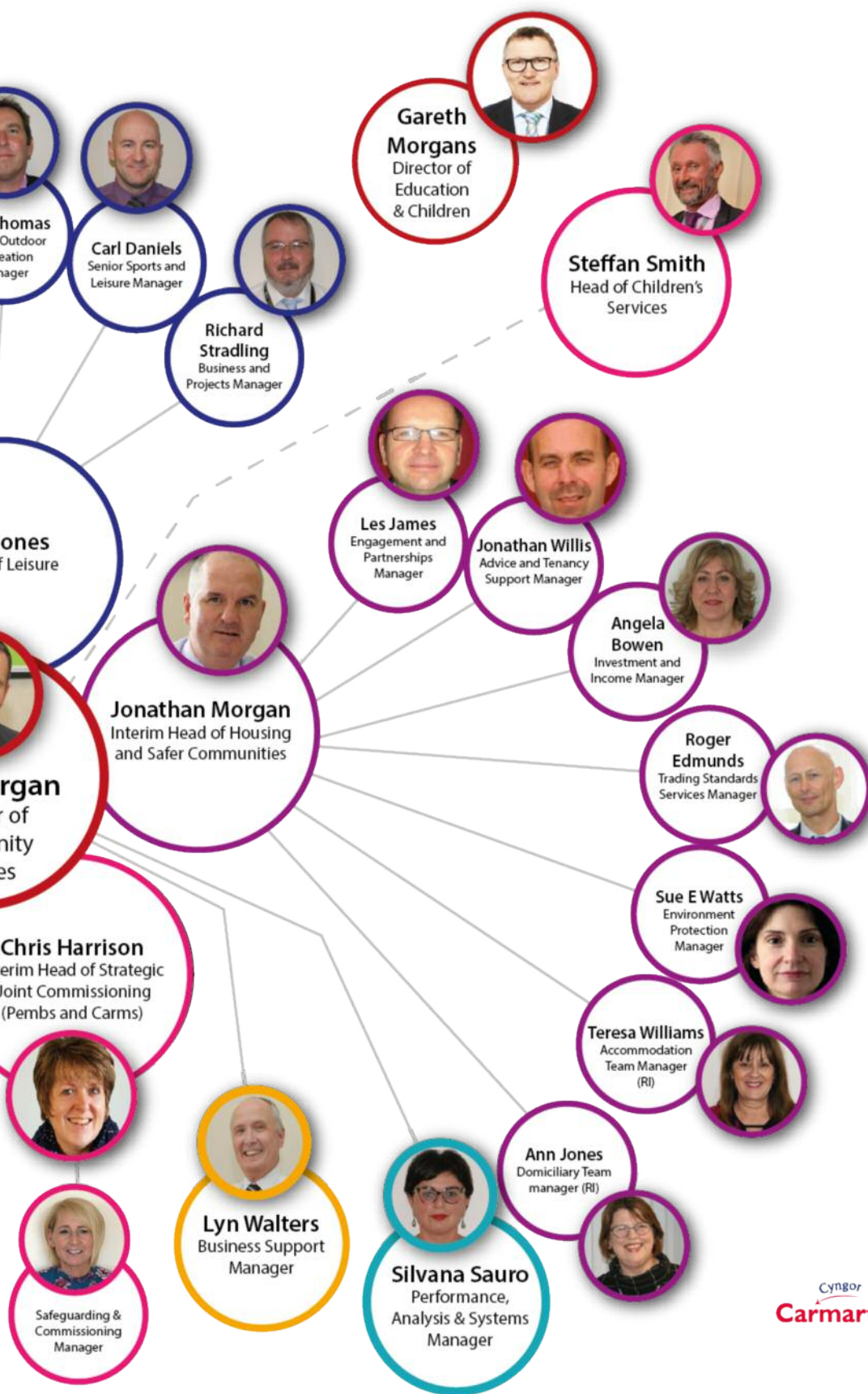
This requires Councils to play a part in responding to the ideological challenge – including giving advice and support to help prevent people being drawn into terrorism. So if we think a person is at risk of radicalisation, we'll work with other organisations to assess the situation, and develop a support plan for the individual concerned.

The following structure outlines leadership and governance for Social Services and how we operate within the Council's decision making process. All major decisions and policies are made by the County Council.

Carmarthenshire County Council	74 elected members
Executive Board	10 elected members, the Council's cabinet. Chaired by the leader, Cllr E. Dole
Our Executive Board members	Councillor Jane Tremlett - Adult Services
	Councillor Glynog Davies - Children's Services
Scrutiny Committees	The decisions that we make are also scrutinised by elected members. We have the following scrutiny committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Care & Health • Education & Children's Services
Corporate Management Team (CMT)	Chaired by the Chief Executive and includes the Assistant Chief Executives and Directors
Departmental Management Team (DMT)	Communities Department, Chaired by the Director
Senior Management Service and Performance Meetings	Chaired by the Heads of Service
Team Meetings	Each team within the division has team meetings which feed into the decision making process. Managers update their teams with decisions made through a combination of group meetings and individual 1-2-1's/supervision.

6. Management Structure





Appendix 1

What are our Strategic Priorities for 2018/2019

Adults

1. Ensure the Council fully responds and complies with the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act including:
2. Developing 24-hour access to Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) services.
3. Introducing a pooled budget between social care and health for residential care.
4. Establishing a regional joint committee for social services with relevant partners.
5. Continue to improve the provision of day opportunities for people across the County.
6. Assess residential care arrangements in the Llanelli area to ensure appropriate accommodation provision in the area.
7. Maintain a strong and sustainable in-house Council provision for domiciliary and residential care.
8. Further strengthen the provision and use of the Welsh language within social care services to be able to provide services in the language of service users' choice.
9. Work with partners including Hywel Dda University Health Board and third sector providers to ensure appropriate mental health care services and support are available.
10. Provide support for carers, and young carers in particular, to enable them to continue providing the invaluable care they offer to family and friends in need.
11. Work with partners to provide more opportunities for vulnerable and older people to socialise in order to reduce loneliness.
12. Continue to support residents affected by dementia and support the development of more dementia friendly and supportive communities across the County.
13. Prepare for the implementation of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act.
14. To implement a robust strategy for successfully managing new and historical DOLS applications.
15. Increase Direct Payments and use of citizen directed cooperatives at operational, commissioning and contracting levels.
16. To develop an overarching strategic commissioning document to guide commissioning policy and practice.
17. Continue to review and monitor processes to ensure Reviews for clients are undertaken on an annual basis in accordance with regulation requirements.

Children

1. Ensure the Council fulfils its Corporate Parenting role by ensuring that our looked after children and care leavers take full advantage of opportunities available to them to reach their full potential.
2. Ensure the Council fully responds and delivers key childcare and play requirements moving towards delivering 30 hours of free education and care for working parents.
3. Continue to reduce the number of children becoming Looked After and the number of care proceedings.
4. Continue to aim reduce the number of children on the Child Protection Register.
5. Continue to develop the “Signs of Safety” model and incorporate into practice in all children services teams.
6. We will continue to improve placement stability in line with the Carmarthenshire Children's Services Action Plan in respect of Looked After children (LAC) subject to 3 or more placement moves, and our Recruitment and Retention Strategy 2016-19.
7. We will work with partners to ensure that the regional Integrated Autism Service complements our local services for children, young people and adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
8. We will continue to develop the Mid & West Wales Regional Adoption service in line with national, regional and local priorities.