

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Date Written	11 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
Report Author	Lisa Curtis-Jones
Service Area	Social Services
Committee Date	7 <sup>th</sup> September 2021

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

### **Annual Report on Social Services 2020-21**

#### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report is to provide information and consultation for the Social Services Annual Report for 2020-21.
- 1.2 In April 2016 we saw the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. This was a significant piece of legislation designed to change the relationship between the Local Authority, its partner organisations and the public. As part of the Act, a new Performance Framework was introduced. The new framework resulted in a change to the data and information we collect and the way in which we collect it. We will now be required to gather additional information and report on the difference we are making on peoples' lives.
- 1.3 A workshop took place with Scrutiny members in July 2021 to explore the summary of the report, looking at the progress we had made on last year's priorities and consulting on the priorities set for the year ahead.

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Scrutiny Committee Members note and debate the contents of the Social Services Annual report for 2020-21.

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Local Authority is required to report annually to Welsh Government on performance across its Social Services.

3.2 The Chief Officer (Social Services) in her role as Statutory Director of Social Services is responsible for publishing an annual report on performance and the effectiveness of social care services across the County Borough. The Annual Report on Social Services 2020-21 has been produced in accordance with the Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) and is intended to provide an overview of our performance for the period April 2020 to March 2021; highlighting what we are doing well, areas for improvement and our priorities for the year ahead.

## **4.0 WHERE WE WERE**

4.1 The report focuses on wellbeing in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014). We are required to provide information on the following:

- Working with people to define and co-produce personal wellbeing outcomes that people wish to achieve.
- Working with people and partners to protect and promote people's physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Taking steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm.
- Encouraging and supporting people to learn, develop and participate in society.
- Supporting people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships.
- Working with and supporting people to achieve greater economic wellbeing, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs.

## **5.0 WHERE WE ARE NOW**

5.1 In July 2021 we carried out a workshop with Scrutiny members to look at the progress we had made following last year's report and considered the priorities moving forward. There was also discussion around how the data and report should be presented, all comments were taken on board. Following this the draft report was shared with partner agencies and service user groups to gain views on the content of the report. Feedback will be included in the final version of the report to Welsh Government. We will also take forward any learning from comments made.

5.2 This year's report for 2020-2021 sets out our achievements in promoting and improving the well-being of those people needing our support. As part of this report, I have set out how we are performing, the developments and challenges we have encountered and our priorities for the next 12 months.

5.3 As in previous years, local authorities continue to face significant financial pressures. We have continued to work hard to achieve the savings the Council needs to make whilst doing our best to ensure that the services we provide are not adversely affected. Due to COVID the Local Authority received funding through the Welsh Government Hardship Fund and this has helped the care home sector over the past year.

5.4 We want to help people to achieve a higher level of well-being. It also means helping people to help themselves, to make better choices and access different types of support. The Council has adopted 5 ways of working which are designed to

ensure we are in a position to provide sustainable services now and in the future. These principles ensure we take a 'Long Term' view to plan for the future, a focus on 'Prevention', ensuring our services are 'Integrated' with local communities and other partner agencies, that we 'Collaborate' with and 'Involve' the people who use our services and our partners in their development. These 5 ways of working were introduced with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

- 5.5 We continue to be committed to implementing the 'Five Year Welsh Language Promotional Strategy for Merthyr Tydfil (July 2017)' and actively encourage staff to attend Welsh Language courses which we provide in order that the residents of Merthyr Tydfil have the opportunity to communicate and receive services in Welsh. New starters are expected to have the level 1 Welsh Language training prior to commencing employment or commit to carrying the training out within the first few weeks of employment.

## **6.0 WHERE WE WANT TO BE**

- 6.1 As outlined in the Annual Report in my role as Chief Officer Social Services, I play a key role in ensuring the successful delivery of the Council's well-being objectives. This includes responsibility for the 'Living Well' objective which seeks to ensure 'people are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health'. I am also responsible for the Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan, which clearly links to the priorities we have set ourselves within the Annual report.
- 6.2 Within the Annual Report we have highlighted areas we considered last year and the improvements or changes we have made. We have also outlined key priority areas for 2021-22 in respect of social care services.

## **7.0 WHAT WE NEED TO DO NEXT**

- 7.1 The Annual Report is being presented to Scrutiny and Council. It will be scrutinised and reviewed by Care Inspectorate Wales. We have the priorities set out as part of our Social Services Strategy and we will monitor and review progress throughout the year.
- 7.2 The Full report is attached at Appendix 1.

## **8.0 CONTRIBUTION TO WELLBEING OBJECTIVES**

- 8.1 The Annual Report on Social Services for 2020-21 links with the theme Living Well and has one main objective:
- People are empowered to live independently within their communities, where they are safe and enjoy good physical and mental health
- 8.2 This main objective seeks to prioritise activities which focus on early intervention and prevention. The priority is to deliver services that support people to lead healthy independent lives in a safe environment. We want to motivate and support people to

develop positive physical and mental health behaviours, build resilient communities where people live free from harm and have a good quality of life.

- 8.3 The Annual Report also links with the Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan. Key goals have been set for Social Services and monitored closely by the Improvement Board.

**LISA CURTIS JONES**  
**CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

**COUNCILLOR TONY ROGERS**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Annual Report on Social Services 2020-21	August 2021	Unit 5, Pentrebach
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		No