



Annual Report of The Director of Social Services

2017/18

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Director's Introduction



It gives me great pleasure once again this year to present my annual report which offers an overview of the performance of 2017/18, but also appraises

how Gwynedd Council Social Services has promoted the welfare of the people who require care and support, and that of their carers, in Gwynedd. By virtue of my job as Statutory Director of Social Services, I am required to inform you every year of how good the general performance of the Council's Social Services is for adults, children and their families.

It has been a year of positive performance, in a context where there is higher demand and increasing complexity. As you can see when reading the report, a great deal has been achieved over the year and we have a great deal to be very proud of in Gwynedd.

This, to an extent, is a reflection of the good relationship we have with our key partners within the field and certainly, we will need to build on this good relationship in the future, and ensure that we all, as partners, work together to place what matters to people at the centre of everything we do. In addition, the Council continues to benefit from strong leadership across the adults and children services, with good stability and effective support for our workforce. I would also like to express my gratitude to the two Cabinet members who work with me in this key area, namely Councillor Gareth Roberts and Councillor Dilwyn Morgan.

The Children and Supporting Families Department was recently the subject of a full inspection by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). Although the official Report is yet to be agreed and published by the CIW, the verbal feedback received by the Chief Inspector at the end of

the field-work was very positive and praised the work that happens within the Council. This is a reflection of the hard and ongoing work done by a number of staff and agencies to support children and their families in Gwynedd.

In January 2018, Welsh Government published a Parliamentary Review on Health and Social Care in Wales. As a Council, we welcomed the review. The Review makes a recommendation about new care models, which focuses the services around the individual and the family, as close to their home as possible. It emphasises the need for high quality preventative services that can be easily accessed. This was the exact focus of our transformational projects over the past five years and we can be confident in moving ahead with our 're-designing Adult Social Care' programme that has started, and the 'family support strategy' that will be starting imminently, by using this report as confirmation that we are on the right track.

The coming years will continue to be both exciting and challenging. Resources continue to be scarce and people's requirements are intensifying. We must continue on our journey to transform, together with our key partners, and place people at the centre of everything we do.

I really hope that you will enjoy reading this annual report, and that it presents a fair overview of the performance of social services in Gwynedd.

Morwena Edwards,
Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol a
Chyfarwyddwr Statudol
Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

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1. Introduction

At the end of every financial year, every Statutory Director of Social Services is required to provide and publish a report regarding the duties of social services within the local authority over the previous year.

Therefore, the purpose of this annual report is to evaluate the performance of the local authority in relation to achieving social services' duties and drawing attention to any lessons that have been learnt or improvements that need to be introduced.

The report should also set out aims for the coming year in relation to promoting the well-being of people requiring care and support, and carers requiring support.

This report has been set out in relation to how Gwynedd Council has achieved against six quality standards of well-being as noted within the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The form of the report is now a requirement, and every local authority is required to measure the performance of their social services by using the relevant indicators and performance measures against the quality standards.

In order to draw-up this report, I obtained observations and support from focus groups, and I thank everyone for their contributions. After reading the report, if you have any specific observation to make on its contents, or on how to draw-up services in the future, I am very eager to hear from you.



2. Director's Summary of the Performance

2017/18 has been a year of good performance and a great deal has been achieved in Gwynedd Council's Social Services over the year gone by. Despite the challenging financial context, I am glad to report that we have been able to provide services of quality to the people of Gwynedd.

As a Council, we have an ambition to achieve the best for the people of Gwynedd, by being innovative and effective in our work to provide services. With the principle of placing the people of Gwynedd and what matters to them at the centre of what we do, we have attempted to transform our ways of working along with how we collaborate with our key partners. We are extremely proud of the good work that happens with our local partners.

We are attempting to move to a whole-system culture where 'What Matters' to individuals drives everyone. We have developed performance measures that looks specifically at how well we are achieving against what matters to people. This year, we can see that our 'What Matters' performance measure in the Older People field is 80%. As these measures are new, it is not easy to compare performance with the years gone by. Nevertheless, we have been focusing on understanding the reasons that have prevented us from achieving what matters to individuals, and attempting to remove these obstacles where possible. I can report that I am able to see a marked change in the desire and eagerness within teams and managers to remove these obstacles that prevent us from achieving what matters to people. By doing this, we are looking at performance through people's eyes, and we are passionate about attempting to improve people's experiences.

This report provides an overview of the work that is happening to attempt to improve

experiences for the people of Gwynedd. I trust that you will see a number of areas progressing and that good progress has been made since last year.

As well as our internal arrangements in terms of checking performance, social services receives regular inspections from the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). It was pleasing to receive confirmation from the CIW recently, following a full inspection of the county's children's services, that these services are of quality. Although the official report has not yet been released, the verbal feedback noted that we have a committed workforce and robust safeguarding structures in place, although it was acknowledged that there was some work to be done to develop our preventative services.

In terms of the Adults Service, we have responded to the Older People Commissioner and her follow-up report, A Place to Call Home, and we were assessed against its recommendations. Although very good progress has been made, we acknowledge that further work is to be done to ensure that older people have a good quality of life in our homes and we are working on the recommendations made by the Commissioner.

This report outlines the performance in full for the year, but I can confirm that I, as Director, can see progress in many areas. I can also confirm that the work done to change and transform is robust and that we are seeing an actual change in practice within adult services.



3. How People Draw Up Our Services

The voice and opinions of Gwynedd residents are key so that we can respond to what matters to them.

It is also an important part of the North Wales Population Needs Assessment Report. The aim of the Population Assessment is to improve our understanding of our population, along with how it could change over the coming years, to assist us to provide better public services in North Wales. Following the publication of the regional version, Gwynedd Council was of the opinion that it was important to have a more local version that explicitly expressed the voice and views of Gwynedd residents specifically. The work for the period in question will be completed soon.

In accordance with the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014, members of the Community Resources teams are already holding conversations with individuals and their families to discover 'what matters' to them in order to identify their personal goals and support them to meet these goals to enable them to 'Live their lives as they wish'.

As a specific part of this assessment, an analysis of information from individuals in terms of 'what matters' to them will come to hand. Very valuable information will be obtained here in terms of the matters requiring attention that prevent us from achieving 'what matters' to people.

One of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) is the creation of a Public Services Board for every local authority in Wales in order to ensure that public bodies are working together to create a better future for the people of Wales. The Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Assessment has been completed and in an attempt to understand 'what matters' to the people of Gwynedd, public sessions were held and on-line questionnaires were developed. The well-being assessment has provided a taster of well-being in Gwynedd and has led to identifying what

matters to residents and work has progressed during the year to use these assessments, along with other sources, to draw up a Well-being Plan.

One essential element of our way of working is ensuring that we have suitable engagement arrangements. The Council prioritised this in its strategic plan for 2013-18. In the current financial climate, engagement has become increasingly important as the relationship that any Council must have with the people whom it serves, must change. It will not be possible for us to continue to act in the way that everyone has become accustomed to and there will be a need to ensure, not only that we have better understanding of the aspirations of our people, but that they in turn understand the new financial reality and what that means. The Council has a vision of ensuring that the people of Gwynedd are at the centre of everything we do and to ensure that this happens, the Council will promote a whole-Council culture that reflects that vision.

It is vital for us as a Council not only to provide opportunities for the people of Gwynedd to express their opinions about our services, but also to listen and respond positively to their priorities. Between 2013 and 2018, over 17,000 people in Gwynedd participated in shaping over 24 public consultation exercises; including approximately 4,400 young people aged 11 to 25. We expanded our work of consulting with young people in 2017/18 and the input by the young people has led us to greatly increase the use of social media as an effective way of sharing information and gathering their views.

Technology has also facilitated our Citizens' Panel in communicating with the Council, 67% of whom now choose to complete questionnaires on-line.



4. Promoting and improving the Well-being of those we are assisting

As outlined in chapter one above, the six quality standards noted by the Government will be used here to outline what we intended to do, what happened and what difference we saw. In addition, for each standard, we will provide an outline of what we intend to do in 2018/19. It is important to note that an assessment of the population's needs in Gwynedd has been completed and this has fed into the priorities proposed for 2018/19.

Quality Standard 01

Working with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes that people wish to achieve

In order to achieve this, local authorities should:

- ensure access to clear and comprehensible information, advice and assistance to support people to maintain their well-being and make informed decisions
- work with individuals, their carers and partner organisations, to support and maintain the independence of an individual without the need for care and assistance
- complete well-being assessments in a timely manner
- ensure that decisions respect individual circumstances across the entire range of needs and that they give due attention to the United Nations' conventions and principles for children, older people and disabled people
- ensure that people are treated with dignity and respect
- enable people to have control over the planning and provision of care
- promote a healthy lifestyle and support them
- enable access to services and activities that maintain mental health and emotional well-being
- encourage and empower people to control their own health and well-being, to be active and benefit from care and proactive preventative assistance
- arrange independent advocacy where needed or refer to other types of advocacy to enable people to overcome obstacles to participation when reviewing and meeting needs
- arrange contact names and share relevant information with partners in order to allow for the smooth transfer of care and assistance across the services
- facilitate multi-disciplinary care and assistance plans
- put arrangements in place for assessing needs and deciding on eligibility
- explain challenges as well as achievements
- measure the impact of the care and assistance, and assistance to carers, on people's lives and well-being outcomes
- ensure that people are aware of the arrangements for paying and charging for care

Evaluation of progress against Standard One

One of the main issues that people report to us is the complicated and frustrating nature of the health and social care. In an attempt to respond to this we, in partnership with the Health Board, have experimented with a new method of working by drawing up work systems by placing people at the centre and ensuring that care is close to individuals' homes. It was encouraging to read the recent 'Parliamentary Review'. The Review confirmed that the direction taken by Gwynedd within adult services was the correct one to take.

The new way of working has been operational in one part of Gwynedd (Eifionydd Area) for some years and the rest of the county has now adopted the same arrangements. You may have seen coverage in the press and social media that five locality teams have been located in the Llŷn, Caernarfon, Bangor, Eifionydd/North Meirionnydd and South Meirionnydd areas. This change means that the people who require a service, and their families, can make direct contact with the relevant officers. Working in smaller areas also means that it is easier for staff to gain a better understanding of what is happening within local communities, and in turn, this will improve the individuals' experience.

As part of this change, health staff, the Council's care staff and third sector representation are working as a single team. Developing a people-centred multi-disciplinary system across health and care and relevant partners has meant that 'what matters' to people is the driving force behind it. They share the same principles and offer a lead person to individuals to facilitate their pathway through the care and health system. This is a huge change, and is based on a fundamental change in the way we are all working. It is early days, nonetheless, this is clearly the way forward.

This way of working is proving to be very successful in terms of outcomes and the feedback of individuals. We are continuing to develop our systems to gather data from adults and we are using this data to learn and improve our services on an ongoing basis.

The percentage of older people and people with Physical Disabilities where an increase is seen in achieving what is important to them is 80%.



Map: Timau Gwasanaethau Gofal Newydd yng Ngwynedd

I reported last year that we are aware that some people in Gwynedd have to travel far to receive some dementia care services. In response, the Council has prioritised the development of specialist dementia provision within the Council's in-house homes, in partnership with the Health Board.

We identified Llys Cadfan in Tywyn as the first home to be invested in. Initial work on the Llys Cadfan project has been completed and individuals started to move into the Early Dementia Unit in September 2017. Further construction work has been completed and once joint recruitment with the Health Board has been established the development will lead to an increase in the number of short-term care beds in the home from two to seven. Day care facilities will also be upgraded in order to ensure the best care for service users across the site.

In collaboration with the Health Board, plans to invest in early dementia beds are being developed for another three locations across the County. Plas Hafan in Nefyn on the Llŷn Peninsula is the latest of Gwynedd Council's care homes to benefit from an investment programme that will mean that we can offer better support to people living with dementia and other conditions that are associated with ageing. The investment will involve upgrading a part of the care home in Nefyn which will enable the Council's care team to work with the medical staff of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to care for up to eight people with dementia.

Whilst collaborating with our partners features very highly on our agenda, it is important for us to remember that our main partners when modernising our care provision are the people who use the service. Therefore, I am exceptionally proud that the services being delivered at Plas Hafan, as well as other areas of the county, are clearly responding to what local people have told us that they wish to see.

One of the requirements of the Act is to ensure that we provide information, advice and assistance to people in a simple and accessible way. To this end, we have incorporated this service within the five adults teams. This involves simple arrangements for the residents of Gwynedd, and also ensures that individuals remain in control whilst seeking information about what they need. Similarly, the Supporting Children and Families services have also been developing their information, advice and support services over the year. This service for children and their families builds on our ability to refer children and young people to preventative services. Over the coming months, the department will gradually develop their service and will build on the idea of having 'one front door' for all referrals.

We have been working to ensure that the information provided to the public is clear and up-to-date. Dewis Cymru does not meet with all of our requirements and therefore we aim to strengthen the information available to our staff using I-Gwynedd and for the people of Gwynedd through our Corporate Website. The website will provide a wealth of information to the people of Gwynedd and our staff on what

services/clubs and activities are happening in your area. We have also been working with Dewis Cymru to ensure that the bilingual website works effectively.

The Council and other key partners acknowledge that there is a need to continue to strengthen individuals' abilities to remain healthy for as long as possible, and that community resilience is an important factor if this is to be achieved. Therefore, one of the main improvement priorities for the next five years is to work with communities to attempt to ensure their resilience so that individuals can continue to live independently within their communities in line with their wishes. A key part of this is the contribution of preventative services within our communities, the valuable contribution of the third sector and, of course, the huge contribution of carers who are members of the family/friends.

Good work has happened over the year in pressing on with specific projects such as early intervention work and preventative work within children and supporting families services. The Supporting Families Strategy has been identified as one of the Council's main priority programmes, and it will be included in the Council's Plan for 2018 onwards. This work programme will lead us to transform traditional social services provision for children and families and will ensure that we offer early intervention and make a difference when addressing problems before they exacerbate. An officer has been identified within the Council's existing resources to lead on this work and follow the same principles as the adults services, namely to intervene early to prevent problems from exacerbating and providing services locally with our key partners by working in an integrated way.

As a part of this work, the current Families First programme in Gwynedd ended in March 2018 and so the department has been working on re-commissioning a programme from afresh. An independent consultant appraised the current Families First programme in Gwynedd, and a comprehensive report was submitted, outlining the successes of the provision over the programme period, as well as identifying models of good practice and identifying opportunities for a future programme.

As a Council, we are continuing to promote the use of Direct Payments in order to provide flexibility, choice and control to individuals to achieve their care goals. Currently, approximately 125 individuals benefit from using Direct Payments and we are eager to see the numbers increasing during the coming months. There will be a need to ensure that these arrangements are promoted so that individuals have every possible opportunity to benefit from flexibility, choice and control.

We continue to develop an outcomes framework for the statutory review of looked after children and child protection as a part of the development of a quality assurance model. The framework focuses on achieving outcomes for children and measuring the impact of the work taking place. The percentage of core assessments required for children and completed on time was 91% during 2017/18, which is a sustained performance compared with previous years. Robust performance management systems are in place and the late assessments have been scrutinised by the team managers and we are confident that there are valid reasons for the late reports. Having said this, it is essentially important that our assessments are accurate, are based on evidence and are comprehensive and due to the complex nature of some circumstances, we must acknowledge that a few reports will take more time.

Our Independent Reviewing Officers provide their views on the quality of children's placements as well as on social work. Again this year, they are of the opinion that the department is performing well, with the rate of risk assessments submitted to a Case Conference which were considered as exhibiting quality in decision making at 96%. An ongoing training programme is in place to support all of the social work department's workforce.

We need to ensure that we include the views of the child, where possible, when making decisions when planning for them. Ensuring that we listen to the voice of the child, and that it is heard in everything we do, is extremely important.

During 2017/18, the percentage of case conferences where the voice/views (excluding children under 7) was heard was 92%.



This performance has improved compared with the past two years, which shows that we act in a way that is based on the rights of children.

Priorities for 2018/19

- We recognise that it is essential to offer early intervention in order to assist children and their families to thrive and to reduce the need for more intensive services. In order to better meet the needs of children and their families, we need to work in an integrated way. To ensure this, in 2018/19, we will establish a vision and agreement with our partners in terms of integrated working within children and supporting families service.
- We recognise the added value that direct payments across the care field provides in order to offer flexibility, choice and control for individuals to achieve their care goals. Therefore, it will be a priority for us to attempt to increase the use of Direct Payments in 2018/19.



Quality Standard 02

Working with people and partners to safeguard and promote the physical and mental health and emotional well-being of people

In order to achieve this, local authorities should:

- **promote and support a healthy lifestyle**
- **support access services to maintain mental health and emotional well-being**
- **encourage and empower people to control their own health and well-being, to be active and benefit from care and proactive preventative support**

Evaluation of progress against Quality Standard Two

Last year, I reported on an exciting programme that was in place to ensure a sustainable provision for adults with learning disabilities for the future. I am very proud to report that the Learning Disabilities Service has made substantial progress to modernise the service during the year and has jointly developed a clear vision with adults who use the services and their families and key partners. Our vision focuses on developing preventative services across the County, which will include focusing on the needs of adults on the autistic spectrum. Work has also happened on a regional level to develop a lifelong autism service.

This new service was designed to assist citizens to focus on their strengths and on what they can achieve. The Council has secured funding from Welsh Government's Intermediate Fund to develop the new model of service provision that will benefit individuals. This is located at Arfon Leisure Centre. The new development was opened in May 2017, and this new Community Hub offers accredited training opportunities, and develops the skills and confidence of individuals, so that they can ultimately move on to a work placement or college. This is a very exciting programme and

our intention for the future is to ensure that this type of provision is consistent across Gwynedd.

As any change can be difficult, the staff are working closely with the individuals, as well as their families. We are confident that the new and exciting arrangements will address their needs and aspirations in full.

We have also ensured clarity regarding the Frondeg site and have made a decision on the way forward. A decision was made to develop a new accommodation model for adults with Learning Disabilities for 16 people. The existing registered home of Y Frondeg will remain open until the new development has been completed, and the current residents of the home will move into the new development as tenants. Grŵp Cynefin has been identified as a developmental partner and a great deal of work has been completed to develop draft joint plans with our main stakeholders.

The new project will be purpose-built to address the needs of the individuals and offer better opportunities to take control of their lives and play a part in society. The new accommodation model can support individuals with complex needs including individuals who currently receive their care outside Gwynedd. Therefore, there will be an opportunity for some individuals to return to the county to live, should they wish to do so.

As I promised, Mental Health has received attention during the year and it will continue as a priority over the coming years to ensure that we meet the needs of individuals. As a Mental Health Service, we collaborate with the Health Board by working on a multi-disciplinary basis, and we also act in line with the Mental Health (Wales) Act 2010. Work has progressed during the year to implement the 'Together for Mental Health' strategy, jointly with our key partners. Very good progress has been made, and Gwynedd is a full partner in the discussions to transform Mental Health services for the future, in order to ensure improved access to preventative services and place more emphasis on mental well-being for people of all ages.

During the year, we have developed the Gwynedd Mental Health Learning Partnership jointly with the Well-being Unit, Opus, Unllais and the Gwynedd Mental Health Manager, in order to promote collaboration and address the need for preventative work in the field of Mental Health. Consultation workshops were recently held in Meirionnydd, Dwyfor and Arfon and the partnership will produce an information booklet about well-being courses and services that will be available to people locally to assist them with their mental, emotional and social welfare. The Council's Libraries service and Arts Unit, as well as Ad-trac, will join the Partnership, to disseminate the contacts and valuable skills that are available to help our residents.

There has been an increase again this year in the number of children in care, compared with previous years.

Currently, there are 227 children in care (as at the end of April 2018), compared with 218 during the same period last year.



It is worth noting that this is a national trend and research work is being undertaken nationally at present to look in detail at the reasons for this.

Of course, children usually come into our care under very difficult circumstances. At times, they have many health and welfare needs that require addressing. I mentioned in my previous report that the Corporate Parent Panel had developed a new strategy for the 2017-2020 period in order to secure the best opportunities for children and young people and to probe further into some obvious issues such as health, emotional well-being and stability. The Panel has now developed five focus groups that are looking to develop practice in five fields, namely: Keeping Safe, Education, Health and Welfare, Making a Positive Contribution and Becoming an Adult. Councillors and officers across the Council, as well as officers from the Health Board, are members of these focus groups, and they focus on what is going well and what we can influence in order to improve outcomes for the children who are in our care.

Doing 'What Matters' to these individuals lies at the heart of the work and I am very glad that a child who is in our care is now a member of the Corporate Parent Panel as well.

In terms of the children being looked after, the percentage of health assessments held during 2017/18 is 65%. Although no deterioration has been seen compared with last year's performance, the progress made against this measure is disappointing. I trust that the Corporate Parent Panel's focus groups will address this problem this year. The percentage of statutory visits with looked after children held during the year is 90%. This is encouraging progress since last year.

In March this year, workers and partners who support young people in Gwynedd has the opportunity to meet and network with various agencies within the fields of employment, skills, education, training and volunteering. The event was an opportunity for organisations to promote their services to a key audience that supports young people daily.

The event was a part of a broader campaign of Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Development Framework to reduce the number of young people aged 16-24 years old who are not in education, training or employment. The aim is to ensure that young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), or who are at risk of disengaging from education, training or employment, are noted and receive the support they need to point them in the right direction once again.

The Council has already identified the need to focus more on supporting families, with a strong emphasis on preventative work and integrated working across key partners. The intention is for this to be done in a seamless way that strengthens the role and contribution of partners to improve outcomes for children and people of all ages. The ultimate goal will be to combine all skills, resources and commitment of every professional worker across departments and sectors in a coordinated way to achieve better outcomes for children and young people and families in Gwynedd. It is an innovative and ambitious programme that involves a huge change in the way we work; however, the 'Parliamentary Review' confirms that we are on

the right track.

Developments for disabled children and young people depend heavily on grants, and over the past year, the Derwen integrated team developed interventions such as sleep support under the Families First grant, and it has started to develop a variety of respite opportunities through the ICF grant. The Team is also able to offer leisure opportunities to families through the Carers Grant.

One of the highlights of the year was the opening of the Hafan y Sêr Respite Unit. Its doors were opened for the first time to disabled and ill children and young people, in April this year. Although slippage was seen in the original timetable, this new service offers respite provision that will provide care and support from specialist staff, to disabled children and their families. The Unit is located on the site of Ysgol Hafod Lon, Penrhyndeudraeth, which is a new school that educates children and young people with additional learning needs from the Dwyfor and Meirionnydd areas. It includes modern classrooms with the latest resources, as well as a hydrotherapy pool, therapy rooms, sensory equipment and an outdoor play area.

Nationally and locally, the provision of an Autism service remains a priority. This year, on a regional level, we have seen the introduction of the Integrated Autism Service which offers support to autistic individuals and their carers. It is a lifelong service that will attempt to overcome some of the obstacles being reported by families, namely the need for timely services, access to social activities and training and support. Clear themes are emerging in the field, e.g. individuals with autism without a learning disability or a mental health condition unable to access services. It is too soon to see how much difference this Service is making to families in Gwynedd and we will review the situation regularly.

The delay people experience when transferring from hospitals has been addressed by the Council and the Health Board during the year. We are working to ensure that the people of Gwynedd can be discharged from hospital as soon as they are ready. When they cannot be discharged on time, and where we cannot arrange the care and support required to



enable people to leave the hospital, this is referred to as 'delayed transfers for social care reasons'. We have been carefully scrutinising the reasons for the delays during the year and we, in collaboration with the Health Board, are working to improve the flow through the care and health system, by following cases from end to end and attempting to remove the obstacles arising. The rate of delayed transfers from hospitals for social care reasons has deteriorated, from 3.4% in 2016/17 to 4.9% in 2017/18. This performance reflects the general issues of the health and care system in terms of the high demand on hospitals, lack of nursing beds in the community and also a lack of capacity in terms of professional workers and home carers in some specific areas of Gwynedd.

The domiciliary care project under-way is trialling new and innovative ways of providing health and care services that focus on what matters to people who receive health and care services. It also seeks to respond to problems such as the lack of care and health service in some areas of the County, which could lead to people having to remain in hospital for a longer period than they should. The initial findings of this experiment has drawn the interest of local and national policy designers such as Social Care Wales and the Care Inspectorate Wales. Our aim for the coming year is to build on what we learnt and use the information as a foundation to draw up an alternative service for the future, and I look forward to providing further updates.

The above project is a part of our efforts to help people continue to be as independent as possible, and reduce the number of people who require support in residential care homes. In collaboration with the Health Board, we are providing short-term care for respite, enablement and intermediate care following a period in hospital or in order to avoid a hospital admission. With the support of an investment from the Intermediate Care Fund, 23 short-term beds have been established in care homes across the County over the past years. The collaboration required to support this provision has led to a better relationship between the staff of the residential homes, community nurses and social care staff.

Priorities for 2018/19

- The majority of people would prefer to be closer to home when receiving health and care services, and would prefer to stay in hospital for the least amount of time as possible. To this end, and in collaboration with our Health Partners, we will continue to develop new ways of anticipating the flows of hospital admissions and discharge to ensure seamless services that assist people before and after their time in hospital.
- We will also continue with our domiciliary care project as a part of our efforts to help people continue to be as independent as possible, and reduce the number of people requiring support in residential care homes.
- We are just as ambitious for the children in our care as we would be for our own children, and we want them to have the best possible opportunities as they leave care. During the year, through the work of the Corporate Parent Panel, we will develop the opportunities for the children who are leaving care by developing an apprenticeship/work experience scheme.

- An innovative modernisation programme is already in progress in the field of adults learning disabilities. We will review our in-house arrangements for the field of children learning disabilities during the year, to ensure that we provide the best service for our users across the age ranges.
- Good progress has been made locally on the Mental Health agenda and we will continue to collaborate with our partnership to ensure that we continue to implement the Mental Health Strategy. In collaboration with our partners, we will develop preventative services in line with the local need.



Quality Standard 03

Safeguarding and protecting people from abuse, neglect or harm

In order to achieve this, local authorities should:

- **Respond effectively to changing circumstances and regularly review the achievements of individuals' well-being outcomes**
- **Provide care and support to meet the assessed needs to protect people from abuse or neglect or other harm**
- **Develop protective procedures for those who put their own safety at risk to prevent abuse and neglect**
- **Manage risk in a way that empowers people to feel in control which is in accordance with safeguarding needs**
- **Work in partnership in order to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect in order to ensure that people are protected from harm**
- **Advocacy in relation to safeguarding**

Evaluation of progress against Quality Standard Three

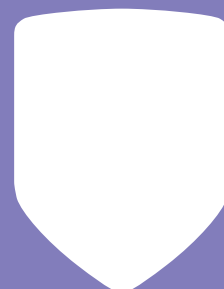
Efforts are continuing to raise awareness of safeguarding across the Council, and we have ensured that we have adopted safeguarding policies and procedures across all Council services and a great deal of work has been done to raise awareness and training has been held across the entire workforce.

We undertake an annual audit to measure the impact and improvement in levels of awareness in the safeguarding field, and we undertake annual inspections to ensure that our arrangements in the field are robust. The Awareness Audit has shown this year that an increase has been seen in the level of

awareness of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. Nevertheless, the audit shows that there is still room to improve awareness levels among field workers and the Safeguarding Panel will address this in the coming year.

The Council's Strategic Safeguarding Panel has expanded its focus during the year and has added the 'PREVENT' agenda to its work fields. This is the Home Office-led programme that attempts to prevent individuals from being radicalised. The violence against women and modern slavery agendas are also matters that area being addressed by the Panel. Matters such as crimes involving the supply of drugs into north Wales has also been given attention.

Specifically in relation to children, the rate of risk assessments submitted to case conferences which were considered as exhibiting quality in decision making is 96%, which is sustained performance compared with previous years.



By building on the innovation of the Children's Service with the development of the Risk Model some years ago, the service has developed a method to focus on the effectiveness of our child protection work. The programme coincides with the national practice development programme 'Collaborative Conversations, which places focus on having constructive and motivational conversations with families moving towards change. 'Effective Safeguarding' focuses on identifying and understanding the changes required by children and families to protect children in Gwynedd. In addition, it is possible to measure the outcomes of these changes with the 'Effective Safeguarding' model. Social Care Wales have visited in order to understand more about the development during this early developmental phase and what it offers to the sector nationally in terms of how to measure outcomes in the challenging area of child protection.

The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit is now fully established within the Adults Health and Well Being department. There has been a general increase in cases involving safeguarding issues recently; however, from discussions with other Authorities within the region, it is clear that we are all in a similar situation. This is likely to be the case as a result of a change in legislation with regards to what is identified under the guidance, as well as an increase in the general awareness. We have developed a Safeguarding 'hub' in the adults field. The hub receives all adults Safeguarding referrals and makes the initial enquiries in order to allocate the cases appropriately. We will review this arrangement to ensure that it makes a difference to the person being referred. A part of this will be to review experiences with individuals (and/or a member of their family) who have been through the Safeguarding system. This enables us to learn about what works well and what we need to improve.

Over the past year, the Unit has continued to monitor the quality of Care Homes within Gwynedd and considerable time has been spent on managing homes in "escalating concerns". Six homes were considered under the escalating concerns procedure this year. We are working closely with these Homes, in collaboration with the inspectorate, in an attempt to respond to the concerns. We will collaborate with the Health Board to monitor nursing care, and we intend to produce joint reports when appropriate.

Our measures within adults and children's services suggest a solid performance again in 2017/18. Of all the adult protection referrals completed during the year, we succeeded to manage the risk 99% of the time again this year.



The purpose of the Council's 'Safeguarding Children and Young People' project is to continually improve the safeguarding arrangements and culture for children and young people. During the year, the project has ensured that safeguarding procedures and policies are clearly understood by everyone who works within the Education field specifically. It also focuses on our response to the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) across North Wales. Gwynedd now has a panel that considers active cases who are at risk, or are suspected as being at risk, in Gwynedd, and it also looks after children placed in Gwynedd by other local authorities. Robust arrangements for gathering information are in place, which has improved our awareness and have assisted us to understand trends relating to Child Sexual Exploitation in Gwynedd. Multi-agency training has taken place in order to develop skills in identifying signs of CSE and how to recognise vulnerability in individuals exposed to exploitation. We are also continuing to contribute to this area of work both regionally and nationally.

Priorities for 2018/19

- In 2018/19, the Strategic Safeguarding Panel will review our governance arrangements to ensure that all Safeguarding procedures relating to the broader safeguarding field, are robust.



Quality Standard 04

Encouraging and providing support for people to learn and contribute in society

In order to achieve this, local authorities should:

- **Provide support for people to do the things that matter to them**
- **Assist people to gain the educational skills and achievements they need to participate in the things that matter to them**
- **Encourage people to be active members in the community and support each other to reduce social isolation**

Evaluation of progress against Quality Standard Four

One of the most exciting schemes that we have developed over the years is the DementiaGo Scheme and I am proud to report that it is going from strength to strength and is a catalyst for developing preventative support to people who are living with dementia and their carers. It has led to collaboration with a broad range of partners and a conference was recently held in Llandudno, chaired by Beti George.

The DementiaGo scheme has held exercise sessions for people living with dementia and their carers within leisure centres since 2015. This scheme has been very successful by encouraging people who live with dementia and their carers to keep active, and also to have the opportunity to socialise. We now have 14 classes across the County. The classes are also open to those who are concerned about their memory, who have a degree of cognitive deterioration and / or other chronic health conditions. The programme has also been extended and developed to offer experiences to residents within our care homes. The scheme will ensure that residents have the opportunity to be as active as possible to reduce the risk of falls, reduce depression and increase the



quality of life.

The role of the Corporate Parenting Panel is critical in ensuring that each of our looked after children succeeds to achieve his/her full potential. The Corporate Parent Panel has developed a strategy to ensure the best opportunities for the children and young people in our care and to probe further into some matters such as the health, emotional welfare and stability of children and young people. With an increasing number of looked after children we will be focusing particularly on ensuring that our children are given every opportunity to succeed in life.

As corporate parents we will aim to improve the opportunities for our children in all aspects of their lives. By listening to and seeking the views of children in our care, we will ensure that the support we provide meets their needs and that we take action to close any gaps. We will also ensure that those leaving our care are prepared and empowered for life as adults, ensuring that they receive suitable support to assist them to fulfil their potential. This could include agreeing on arrangements with our Housing partners to ensure that they receive every support to live independently.

The percentage of children who have left care who are in education, employment or training 12 months after leaving care is 75% this year, which is a marked increase to the 50% reported last year. Similarly, the percentage of children who are in education, employment or training after 24 months is 63%, and again, this is an increase compared with previous years.



These figures are very encouraging, although there is still room for improvement. Schemes such as Ad Trac will assist us to place the required emphasis on ensuring that the children who leave care are identified as a priority so they receive the support they require to secure further education, training or employment. It is an exciting programme which is moving forward to assist in raising the momentum of the work that needs to be done with the children who are in our care. We are acting upon the recommendations of the Children's Commissioner, Sally Holland 'Hidden Ambitions' to ensure that children who leave care receive the same opportunities, support and assistance to find their way in the world.

Gwynedd has participated in a pilot scheme for the 'When I am Ready' scheme since 2013 and, since April 2016, it has been a statutory responsibility for all local authorities in Wales. The aim is to offer stability and continuity to young people so that they do not move out of care before they are ready to do so. In 2017-18, 14 young people were involved in the scheme.

There is increasing demand to strengthen the part that individuals and the community play, by providing a voice and control in health and care and ensuring that people of all ages and from all communities are equally involved. Establishing robust communities is a central part of this. Our 'Resilient Communities' programme within the Council's Plan focuses on the investment in new or current preventative

services within primary and community centres that are relevant to children and people of all ages. The programme will offer new opportunities within preventative services in parallel with the 'business as usual' of the current system. The Council has included 'community resilience' as one of its main improvement priorities for the next five years, and it will be an important part of attempting to ensure that individuals can remain and continue to live within their communities and continue to live independently within their communities. A key part of this is the function of the third sector and the huge contribution made by unpaid carers.

During the year, we have funded the 'Community Connectors' pilot scheme through the ICF fund within our community teams, and the posts are going from strength to strength and are essential in order to understand the strengths of our communities. The purpose of these posts is to increase Teams' ability to identify preventative, community resources to support vulnerable adults from developing more intensive problems, as well as trigger community activity that promotes people's well-being. Community Connectors connect the workers in our locality teams with what goes on at grass roots level in order to support people within their communities.

During the year, the Connectors have managed to establish successful networks in their local areas, and have made access to community services easier to their colleagues and they have also managed to better highlight the gaps in service. Consequently, some activities have commenced in some areas in an attempt to develop more collaboration, e.g. the establishment of Cydweithio er lles Llŷn meetings which has brought sectors together to share information about new initiatives and hold consultations. Also, in Arfon, we have considered how to collaborate with social enterprises such as Menter Fachwen and Gisda to see how we can work collectively to serve people who are housebound.

Gwynedd libraries and leisure centres already carry out important work. Similarly, Ageing Well Centres in Gwynedd and Anglesey have proven to be a great success. Over 1000

older people already make use of the centres that have been established in Blaenau Ffestiniog, Llanrug, Nefyn, Bala, Cricieth, Penrhyndeudraeth and Dolgellau, with efforts in the pipeline to also establish a regular provision in Abersoch, Caernarfon, Bangor and Penygroes.

The Community Arts Unit is also offering a range of artistic activities across Gwynedd, some of which are specifically targeted towards older people. As part of these projects, the elderly residents of Awel y Coleg, Bala, and the elderly residents of the Gellilydan area, had the opportunity to attend a Music Memories session - a project which attempts to reduce loneliness through the arts. Two primary schools were involved and the statistics show that the scheme tackled loneliness, with over 90% noting that the scheme helped them feel less lonely, and that it had encouraged them to participate in other social activities. The Scheme has now been extended to the Deiniolen and Bethesda areas, and it will continue in 2018/19.



The work done by Gwynedd Council and the University, which was broadcast in a television programme, namely 'Hen Blant Bach', has certainly been a trigger to develop 'Intergenerational' programmes. During the year, a Partnership Group was established between Gwynedd Council (including the Adults and Education Departments), Bangor University, representatives from the Health board, the voluntary sector (North Wales Housing) and the private sector (Bryn

Seiont Newydd Home), to begin a new 'Intergenerational' project. Ysgol Nefyn and Plas Hafan residential home were identified, along with Cae Garnedd Extra Care Housing and Ysgol y Garnedd in Bangor, as two sites to hold the initial pilot scheme. A masters student from Bangor University will appraise the project. A resource handbook will follow, along with lessons learnt from the experience of bringing children and older people together in all types of situations across Gwynedd.



Flying Start is a Welsh Government funded project which is available in specific areas to support all families to give a better opportunity in life to children aged under 4 years. We know that a child's early years are very important and that it affects their lifelong well-being. The aim of the Flying Start scheme is to provide intensive support to children aged under 4 years and their families, by offering a broad range of interventions that have been tailored to the individuals' needs such as parenting, cookery, play, etc. During 2017-18, the Flying Start referral panel dealt with 404 service referrals. A number of the intervention packs were distributed to the multi-agency teams for implementation, including health, child care, supporting families, or early language development staff. During 2017/18, the attendance percentage of children who are two years old when starting Flying Start was 81%, which is consistent with last year's performance. The number of advanced parenting assistance packages which has resulted in travelling a positive distance is 76%.

Priorities for 2018/19

- A holistic method of providing health and well-being goes beyond providing care services in the home or in a residential home. Community activities and having regular contact with friends and family assists people to reduce loneliness and maintains their mental and physical health. During 2018/19, we will assess the existing Preventative Plans to satisfy ourselves that we are creating and increasing community resilience.
- As corporate parents, we will aim to improve the opportunities for our children in all aspects of their lives. By listening to and seeking the views of children in our care, we will ensure that the support we provide meets their needs and that we take action to close any gaps.



Quality Standard 05

Providing support for people so that they can develop safely and maintain healthy relationships in the home, with families and on a personal level

In order to achieve this, local authorities should:

- **Provide support for people to maintain relationships that are of importance to them, in accordance with the safeguarding needs**
- **Assist people to acknowledge unsafe relationships and to safeguard themselves from abuse and neglect**
- **Where appropriate, give consideration to the views of families, carers and other personal relationships when assessing care and support needs**

Evaluation of progress against Quality Standard Five

Carers of all ages have been identified as one of the Council's priority groups. We acknowledge that the contribution that carers make is valuable and we need to ensure that the experience of caring is much better. Our social workers assess carers' needs and our carer support workers offer them support.

We have undertaken an audit of support services for carers with mental health problems during the year. The general feedback is encouraging, with carers noting that they are satisfied with the support being offered to them, and that they appreciate the one-to-one time available for them.

Regionally, Carers has received considerable attention and collective work has been happening to ensure that the offer to carers is clear and consistent across the region. Carers have told us, by means of development sessions, that much simpler and more flexible arrangements are needed for the future, which responds to their unique situation.

Seeking to support families as soon as possible in order to avoid problems from intensifying is one of our goals. The Edge of Care Team was established in order to work intensively with children and their families when their situations at home are fragile. By working with the children and their families, the physical and mental health needs and the emotional well-being needs of the children and their families are met. Since the commencement of the plan, the Team has worked with 236 children. During 2017/18, 70% of children concluding with the team showed a reduction in the obvious factors prior to the team's intervention, and had therefore avoided a situation where children had to come into care in some cases. This type of support obviously has a very positive impact on a number of families and hopefully we will be able to continue to further develop this way of working.

One of the greatest challenges for the Children and Supporting Families Department are those individuals who are very difficult to place due to complex and intensive needs, mainly teenagers. During the year, the Department has faced a challenge when placements break down at short notice and where it has been very difficult to find placements for them. At times, children were unavoidably placed in placements in England, miles away from their communities and family connections. This situation is not ideal or unique to Gwynedd and the issue has been escalated to the Regional Commissioning Board. With the support of the Regional Commissioning Board, we have been looking at options for more local suitable solutions.

During the year, the Youth Justice Service has been focusing on their Restorative Justice service. Government research shows that Restorative Justice is having a positive impact on victims and perpetrators and that 85% of those who participated in a restorative justice process were satisfied with the outcome. The number of Restorative Conferences held in Gwynedd and Anglesey in 2017 increased 86% compared with 2016. Positive feedback is received from the victims and the young people who participated in the process. Over the coming year, we intend to work towards a services quality mark (RSQM). RSQM is a mark of quality that guarantees that the service

provides high quality and safe restorative justice. A great deal of preparation work is required to earn this mark and hopefully we will be in a position to apply at some point in 2018/19.

Families First in Gwynedd offers intervention to families with children who face difficulties, particularly those who experience low income and poverty problems. Families First deals with the provision of different types of support to the whole family, subject to their needs. They do this by means of projects, activities and training provided by sections of the Council, charities and other organisations.

A high percentage of families note that a positive difference has been made to their lives after receiving intervention. 92% of families report that they have seen a significant improvement in their family lives following intervention.



Social work in the field of Children and Families is challenging work which leads, nationally, to a workforce that can be unstable at times. However, in Gwynedd, the picture is very different within the children and supporting families service, as we have a stable, experienced workforce and this has been the case for many years. This allows us to ensure that no children or families have to change their social worker and this provides consistency, stability and enables us to nurture and develop positive relationships which is an essential element when offering intervention in an attempt to secure a positive change.

The Integrated Families Support Service (IFSS) provides specialist support to families affected by drugs and alcohol. Due to the intensive nature of this intervention, the service is prioritised for the families who need the greatest support. During the year, the service has worked with 31 families, including 62 children. The feedback from service users is very encouraging.

Our priorities in terms of standard five for 2018/19

- We acknowledge that the contribution that carers make to society is valuable and we need to ensure that the experience of caring is much better. We will review our in-house arrangements for carers in 2018/19, to ensure that we address 'What Matters' to them.
- One of the greatest challenges for the Children and Supporting Families Department are those individuals who are very difficult to place due to complex and intensive needs; mainly teenagers. We will continue to work with the Regional Commissioning Board in an attempt to develop a local solution.



Quality Standard 06

Working with people and supporting them to achieve better economic welfare, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

In order to achieve this, local authorities should:

Provide support for people to participate as active citizens, both economically and socially

Provide support for people to acquire meaningful work and retain that work

Provide support for people to receive financial advice and support and assistance with benefits and grants

Provide access to services through the medium of Welsh and other languages of choice

Provide support for people to acquire accommodation which meet their needs and to facilitate their independent living

Evaluation of progress against Quality Standard Six

As part of our efforts to address the demographic challenge and to ensure a sufficient provision for older people that promotes independence, we have been working on the Hafod y Gest Extra Care Housing scheme. The scheme, worth £8.5 million, is being developed by the Grŵp Cynefin housing association in partnership with Gwynedd Council. The new Hafod y Gest, which is located in the centre of Porthmadog town, is in an ideal site in the heart of the community and close to the town's shops and amenities and offers extra care housing for the area's older people. There will be 40 one and two bedroom flats with 24 hour care; a community hub for activities; hobby, fitness, beauty and therapy rooms; a lounge and dining room. The original timetable notes that the scheme should have been completed since October 2017. However, a delay has occurred and the timetable for completion has now moved

to October 2018. This is mainly attributed to problems relating to inclement weather and the availability of builders in the area.



We have been focusing on ensuring that there is a plentiful supply of suitable housing for the needs of the people of Gwynedd as high prices prevent local people from purchasing homes, and we are also aware of the lack of suitable rented housing. In response to the problem, the Council has attempted to provide a variety of affordable housing in the rural communities of Gwynedd, and a development of nine houses has been constructed in Mynytho. The Council also continues with the partnership with Grŵp



Cynefin, and hopes to develop similar schemes in the Penygroes, Bethesda and Waunfawr areas in future.

The Housing Service operates to prevent homelessness, but also to provide support to homeless families or individuals.

An increase of 35% was seen in the number of people who present themselves as homeless or at threat of becoming homeless, over the past five years. A substantial increase was seen in the demand last year and a service was provided for 760 individuals.



The unit's performance is amongst the best in Wales in homelessness prevention, and supports the emphasis placed on prevention.

With grant funding from Welsh Government, the homelessness service has funded a project to coordinate a service for prison-leavers. One officer in the team takes responsibility for people who return to Gwynedd to live following a period of imprisonment and attempt to identify and arrange accommodation for them to avoid homelessness as they are released from prison. The project has developed a good relationship with the prisons, the Probation Service, and a number of other agencies who work with the individuals. We have supported 101 individuals during the year.

We experienced a considerable amount of inclement weather over the past winter and homelessness issues have received considerable attention in the press. In Gwynedd, we have collaborated very closely with the North Wales Housing Outreach Service to address the needs of rough sleepers. During the periods of extreme weather, it was found that there were 33 rough sleepers. We managed to obtain a resolution for each of the 33 individuals by offering them temporary accommodation, although two individuals refused the offer.

The Supporting People programme provides support for vulnerable people to manage or retain their tenancy and live independently. During 2017/18, the programme in Gwynedd supported 2157 individuals (July 2017) to access and maintain permanent or temporary tenancies and prevent homelessness. Due to the change in legislation and the conditions of the supporting people grant, more emphasis is now placed on homelessness prevention by means of earlier and more creative intervention. We have developed a drop-in service in two areas that offer support for local people before the need for accommodation or more specialist support. Since the project began in 2016, we have supported 202 young people.

Mapping analysis confirm that our highest priority groups are the ones who flee from domestic abuse, young people, prison-leavers, homeless people between 25 and 54 years old, those who misuse substances and single parents. There has been an obvious gap over the previous years with an increase in the number of our clients with severe mental health problems and whom have either been homeless or at threat of homelessness. In response to this, during 2017/18, a new service was commissioned by 'Gorwel' that will be working intensively with individuals with complex needs such as mental health.

The Empty Houses Team has been helping people who are having difficulty stepping onto the property ladder to purchase their first home. The team's work has helped to breathe new life into houses that have been standing empty here in Gwynedd, and give an opportunity for first-time buyers to convert them into cosy homes. They will do that by offering a deposit for an interest-free mortgage so that they are able to purchase a house without having to save for years beforehand. They also offer a grant to first-time buyers to help them with refurbishment costs. As well as having a positive impact on the lives of first-time buyers in Gwynedd, the work of regenerating empty homes helps the community and the local economy to thrive.

Since the scheme started in 2008, the Council has invested over £3.9m on empty housing regeneration, helping to house 900 people across Gwynedd - often allowing them to remain within their local areas.



The OPUS project is now operational in Gwynedd. The project is open for individuals 25 years of age and older who are economically inactive or are in long-term unemployment with complex obstacles to employment, for example health, disabilities and mental health problems.

Our ability as a Council to place children with foster parents is a key part of the service for children. As a Council, we are extremely proud of our foster parents and the Fostering Team continues to ensure that we have enough foster parents to meet the needs of children who cannot live at home. We held several recruitment drives over the past five years to attempt to encourage more people to become foster parents. Approximately 120 foster carers have registered in Gwynedd so that children can find safe placements to live and grow up. They receive full training, with the support of specialist and experienced officers. These recruitment drives enable us to place children within our own resources and we have more foster parents registering with us than those who leave us. In their last inspection of fostering services (2016), Care Inspectorate Wales noted that feedback from foster carers in questionnaires by the service for their annual reviews showed that they appreciated the support they received from their supervising social workers.

The success of collaboration between families and the team means that a number of children have been able to stay at home with their families, some have been able to return home from foster and residential care, and it has ensured that vulnerable foster placements have been substantially stabilised. Although the number of looked after children increased

during the team's operating period, the number of children in foster or residential placements have remained stable.

231 children were in our care at the end of March 2018. Compared with the number of looked after children over a five-year period, the total has increased from 185 to 231, which is nearly a 25% increase. Nevertheless, the number of children who are either in residential or foster placements have remained consistent or reduced.

Priorities for 2018/19

- The picture in terms of the assistance involving housing needs is complex and the challenges people face vary greatly and, consequently, we must respond in a better way. We also acknowledge the substantial contribution that suitable housing could have on the health and well-being of our people. In 2018/19, we will ensure that we understand the demand for housing in Gwynedd, now and in the future and this will be reflected in our Housing Strategy.



5. How we work

The Welsh Language and delivering against the requirements of the 'More than Just Words' Framework

A core part of any care provision is the need to ensure that users can receive the service through the medium of Welsh. Since 1996, we have been operating bilingually in all aspects of our work. Our Welsh language policy has extended to recruitment processes and requirements, data collection, contracts, commissioning, procurement and training.

As a Council, we are fully committed to the requirements of 'More than Just Words'. We welcome the principles of the Follow-up Strategic Framework published in 2016. I am the national lead for the 'More than Just Words' agenda on behalf of the Wales Directors of Social Services and am a member of the Welsh Language Partnership Board, led by Welsh Government.

As a Council, we make a full contribution to the North Wales 'More than Just Words' Forum. The Forum shares ideas and is an excellent opportunity to collaborate with Health, councils and other organisations. In October 2017, the Forum was acknowledged in a national More than Just Words event in Cardiff by winning Special Recognition in the Leadership category.

The commitment of Gwynedd Social Services to the principles of 'More than Just Words' is a reflection of the commitment and priority given across the Council to offering Welsh-medium services. A senior officer was designated to promote the Welsh language within the care field. This officer is also known as a 'Business Ambassador' to collaborate with Careers Wales.

Currently, approximately 88% of the service's staff are able to speak Welsh and we are very confident in the Council's ability to provide the Active Offer.



We are now in a better position to record the linguistic data since the new WCCIS computer system was introduced this year. In the future, reports from the WCCIS system will allow us to identify the weaknesses and shortcomings of the provision in terms of the Active Offer that will then be fed into the planning and commissioning process.

Recently, when reviewing Residential and Domiciliary Care contracts, we have placed an expectation on providers to prepare a Language Policy to demonstrate how they will achieve the principles of 'More than Just Words' and draw-up an improvement plan. Consequently, we can ensure that the principles of 'More than Just Words' will mainstream into all aspects of the services we commission.

The Council undertook broader research over the past year as well, which helps us obtain a better picture of how services succeed to offer bilingual services. A language audit was undertaken, which involved gathering information from managers regarding the ability of their teams and units to act and provide services bilingually. On the whole, a very positive picture was painted. Since then, we are aware of shortcomings in some areas and we are continuing to plan in an attempt to respond to this.

Our workforce and how we support their professional role

Social care in Gwynedd is provided by a number of agencies from the private sector, third sector and by statutory services. Recent

research shows that the social care sector creates broader economic value and in an attempt to attract more career interest, we will need to raise the profile and work status of social care.

To this end, we have identified the need to do further work on this and a project within the Council's Plan for 2018-23 will address this matter.

Approximately 3,000 staff members have been employed in the Social Care sector in Gwynedd during the year. 122 social workers work for the Council across the children and adults field and we are fortunate in Gwynedd that we manage to retain experienced staff.



The Qualifications framework for the Social Care Sector in Wales sets a foundation for suitable qualifications in social care and social work. As part of the service registration process, the inspectorate expects care workers to complete a suitable qualification for their jobs, and a high percentage of workers have completed the necessary qualifications. The Workforce Development Unit offers a range of training programmes for in-house providers and their partners. Additionally, we have a comprehensive training and support programme for social workers during their first year of practice, as well as a three-year programme for newly-qualified social workers.

The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 outlines an expectation for domiciliary care staff to begin registering as a registered workforce from 2018 and residential workers from 2020 onwards. As a Council, we have now begun work to ensure that our workforce have the necessary qualifications in order to register.

Staff turnover continues to be a problem within

the Domiciliary Care workforce and has been identified as a priority for the Council. A number of recruitment drives were held during the year, including work with local colleges to identify individuals to sign-up to the Apprenticeship in Care Scheme. We have also been coordinating work experience to attract young people to the field and have attended recruitment fairs. In partnership with Bangor University, and nearby counties, we offer 16 placements a year to social work students, on average.

The recent follow-up report of the Older People's Commissioner, A Place to Call Home, reported on the need for all employees in care homes to receive dementia training. Training that focuses on dementia has been held for the entire workforce during the year. In addition, the Council's Training and Development Unit has been running a 'Morals, Excellence and Engagement' programme. The aim of the programme is to ensure the long-term continuation of the service and make the most of communities' capacity to support people and families who live with dementia to enjoy the best possible quality of life. To this end, we are introducing a purposeful training programme that works towards excellence.

The 'Collaborative Conversations' training for social work teams has continued during the year and the training has focused on identifying what matters to individuals and supporting the 'Ffordd Gwynedd' vision.

Our financial resources and how we are Planning for the future

As Social Services, and as a whole Council, we have attempted to collaborate to continue to provide the services that the people of Gwynedd need, whilst also planning conscientiously for the future within our financial envelope.

We must bear in mind that the Council's budget has reduced over the past years, mainly due to the reduction in the grant received from Welsh Government. Whilst the money we receive is reducing, the demand on our services, and on our budget as a Council, is increasing. People are living longer, and often with complex health conditions, and this in turn can lead to the need for higher spending.

Therefore, keeping a balanced budget to ensure that we are able to provide essential services to the people of Gwynedd, is no mean feat.

As a result of these challenges, we have attempted to be more flexible and creative in the way we provide our services. Consequently, we have attempted to keep the impact on the people of Gwynedd to the minimum, and have sought to achieve more in those priority fields. A part of this is attempting to ensure that we look at better and seamless methods when providing our services to people. The Parliamentary Review noted that we could work in an integrated way and by making use of technology and that this would improve the quality of health and care services for people. Often, following the original investment, a change like this can also be more sustainable in the future.

Therefore, our priority is to understand and achieve what matters to people and this has been our driver over the past year, and will be our driver in the future. As a Director, I am seeking this assurance on a regular basis from service units, through our in-house arrangements.

Working in partnership

For two years, governance arrangements in the field of health and care within the public sector in Wales has changed, mainly because the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014 and Future Generations Act have come into force.

Section 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places the responsibility on us to make arrangements to promote collaboration with their partners in order to improve people's well-being outcomes. The North Wales Regional Partnership Board has now been operational for some years, and Councillor Gareth Roberts, Gwynedd Council Cabinet member, is the Chair of the Board. The Board is proceeding to ensure that collaboration and integration arrangements with Health will take place and gather momentum.

This year, the Regional Partnership Board approved the Social Care and Community Health Workforce Strategy for 2018-21, and the Partnership is working on many work-streams deriving from the Strategy, such as efforts to improve the image of the Care sector and improve career pathways in the care field. The Board will collaborate closely with the North Wales Ambition Board on its 'skills' work-stream in order to maximise the importance of the care sector across the region.

The Partnership Board must satisfy itself that it is responding to the needs of the people of North Wales, and the Population Needs Assessment is a tool that will assist regional and local discussions. The aim of the Population Assessment is to improve our understanding of our population, along with how it could change over the coming years, to assist us to provide better public services in North Wales. The Partnership Board has welcomed the Parliamentary Review, and work streams are being developed regionally in response to the Plan published by the Government.

Also, on a local level, and in accordance with the Future Generations Act, we will continue to work hard on our plans with health and our key partners, by reporting to the Public Services Board on our attainment. Two main objectives of the Public Services Board include social care matters and the Integrated Health and Care Group will drive the relevant changes forward and report to the Public Services Board on a regular basis.

A key partner in order to achieve what matters to people, is the Third Sector. A Liaison Group is in place within the Council with the aim of having an overview and assurance that effective collaboration is taking place between the statutory organisations and the third sector. The group's arrangements have been strengthened recently in an attempt to ensure that the governance arrangements are clear.

Political and Corporate Leadership, Governance and Accountability

It is important for me to draw your attention to Part 8 of the Act, which notes the requirements imposed on me as the Statutory Director of Social Services. Gwynedd Council Cabinet

has approved the 'Director's Protocol'. This is a document that outlines how we will ensure that we address the legislative requirements. This protocol ensures robust governance arrangements along with strong lines of accountability. This protocol is available on the website and it is important that staff and members also familiarise themselves with the requirements.

The Council has robust governance arrangements in place to support the effective management of social services. As well as submitting reports to scrutiny committees, we also have a robust departmental performance challenging structure in place. We also hold regular meetings with the Inspectorate to ensure that our procedures are sound. The Scrutiny Unit has made a substantial contribution again this year in scrutinising particular fields and offering us important perspectives in order to continually improve.

The Council has appointed two Cabinet Members for the fields within Social Services, namely Councillor Gareth Roberts for the fields of Adults, Health and Well-being, and Councillor Dilwyn Morgan for the fields of Children and Supporting Families.

Learning and Development

As previously noted in this annual report, learning and improving is key if we wish to improve our performance and achieve what matters to the people of Gwynedd.

Arrangements are in place to report back regularly on complaints arising from the care field, and every effort is made to resolve them, respond to them and learn from them as soon as possible. Hearing the views of our service users about the quality of our services is very important to us as we continually improve, and complaints are a part of this. A specific annual report is published on complaints, which offers an overview of all complaints received during 2017/18; however, I wish to take the opportunity to summarise the main messages in this report.

Within Adult Services, complaints continue again this year in respect of the lack of provision in South Meirionnydd. We are attempting to respond to this problem in many

ways and I have referred to our plans within this report. In addition, a number of enquiries were received from Members of Parliament and Local Members expressing concern on behalf of electors for the delay before domiciliary care could be provided so that people could be discharged from hospital. This trend follows on from the main trend in 2016/17 and work is continuing within the Department to resolve these supply problems. In the children field, unavoidable complaints have been received in respect of the expectations of parents in difficult situations and one request was received to escalate a complaint to Step 2 of the Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure. As I noted, every complaint is taken seriously and the Departments ensure that continuous learning happens following any complaint.



6. Contacts and Key Documents

Well-being and Population Assessments

Gwynedd Well-being Plan:

<https://www.llesiantgwyneddaron.org/Uploads/Pages/Documents/3-5-3-94-1-Gwynedd-and-Anglesey-Well-being-plan.pdf>

Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Assessment:

<https://www.llesiantgwyneddaron.org/Uploads/Pages/Library/3-3-9-66-1-Gwynedd-Well-Being-Assessment.pdf>

North Wales Population Assessment:

<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Health-and-Social-Services/North-Wales-Population-Assessment/NW-Population-Assessment-1-April-2017.pdf>

Gwynedd Policies

Training Information:

<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Businesses/Help,-support-and-training/Workforce-development-Partnership/Workforce-development-partnership.aspx>

Welsh Language Policy:

<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Strategies-and-policies/Education/Language-Policy.aspx>

Listening, improving, responding:

<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Residents/Documents-Residents/Health-and-social-care-documents/Listening-responding-improving.pdf>

Ageing Well Plan:

<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Health-and-Social-Services/Ageing-Well-Plan-Gwynedd.pdf>

National Reports

More Than Just Words Report:

<https://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/160317morethanjustwordscy.pdf>

Report of the Older People's Commissioner - A Place to Call Home:

<http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/Libraries/Uploads/A Place to Call Home - A Review into the Quality of Life and Care of Older People living in Care Homes in Wales.sflb.ashx>

Report of the Children's Commissioner - Hidden Ambitions:

<https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Hidden-Ambitions.pdf>

Parliamentary Review of Health and Care in Wales:

<http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/180116reviewen.pdf>

Access to further information

Dewis Cymru:

<https://www.dewis.cymru/>

Concerns about an individual.

If you are aware of an individual who is at risk of abuse or who is being abused, it is very important that you inform the Council or the police.

If the individual is in imminent danger, call the police on 999. If not in imminent danger, call Social Services as soon as possible to share your concerns.

Child:

01758 704455

01248 353551 (outside working hours)

Adult:

01286 682888

01248 353551 (outside working hours)

Appendix 1 - Performance Measures 2017-19

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

| | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Enablement - Percentage of cases that have received a period of enablement who leave without a care package | 54% | 45% | 55% | 59,3% | - |
| Number of users of adults services who receive direct payments | 104 | 121 | - | 121 | - |
| Percentage of Older People and People with Physical Disabilities where an increase is seen in achieving what matters to them | - | - | - | 88% | 80.5% |
| The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over | 1.55 | 1.05 | 2.38 | 3.40 | 4.9 |
| The proportion of older people (65 years old or over) receiving assistance to live at home per 1,000 of the population aged 65 and over | 46.21 | 45.07 | 43.10 | 44.70 | 41.2 |
| The proportion of older people (65 years old or over) receiving assistance to live at home per 1,000 of the population aged 65 and over (including adaptations and equipment) | 79.41 | 78.17 | 73.00 | 89.30 | 82.5 |
| The proportion of older people (65 years old or over) that the authority assisted in care homes per 1,000 of the population that was 65 years old or over on 31 March | 25.59 | 24.15 | 22.69 | 22.60 | 23.2 |
| The proportion of older people (65 years old or over) that the authority assisted in care homes per 1,000 of the population that were 65 years old or over on 31 March except for those who are self-funded | 20.08 | 18.48 | 17.10 | 16.40 | 17.8 |
| Percentage of the adult protection referrals completed during the year, where the risk has been controlled | 95.72% | 100% | 96.7% | 97.9% | 97.6% |
| Of the % of the adult protection referrals completed during the year, the percentage where the danger has been controlled (except for those who have refused intervention) | - | - | 99% | 100% | 99.4% |

| | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| The average number of calendar days taken to issue a Disabled Facilities Grant | 242 | 316 | 271 | 281 | 204 |
| The percentage of private sector dwellings that had been empty for more than six months on 1 April which were returned to occupation during the year as a result of direct action by the local authority | 5.24% | 5.7% | 5.13% | 3.68% | 4.82% |
| Number of affordable units secured for Gwynedd | 70 | 144 | 48 | 71 | 77 |
| Time taken (number of days) for the Homelessness Unit to achieve a prevention plan for those at threat | 145.85 | 84.94 | 69.08 | 77.73 | 101 |
| Length of stay in temporary accommodation (number of days) | 113.78 | 75.82 | 126.02 | 104.44 | 92 |

Children and Supporting Families Department

| | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Percentage of 2 year olds in attendance at Flying Start | 84% | 82% | 83% | 84% | 81% |
| Number of the senior parenting assistance packages which result in travelling a positive distance | 57% | 38% | 48% | 89% | 65% |
| Percentage of families who have reported progress after receiving a service from the Team Around the Family (Gyda'n Gilydd) | 15% | 30% | 25% | 95% | 92% |
| Transitional plan agreed for disabled children aged 16 years | 100% | 100% | 100% | - | 100% |
| Pathway plan agreed for looked after children | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 99% |

| | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| The percentage of looked after children on 31 March, with experience of moving school once or more during their period or periods of receiving care and if that move was not because of transition arrangements in the 12 months up to 31 March | 22.8% | 18.7% | 18.1% | 17.1% | 10% |
| The percentage of looked after children at 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year | 4.9% | 6.2% | 7.7% | 6% | 7.5% |
| Percentage of reviews of looked after children held within the statutory timetable during the year | 94.3% | 93.8% | 91% | 91% | 89% |
| The percentage of child protection reviews to be held within the statutory timetable during the year | - | - | 85.5% | 92.0% | 90% |
| The percentage of statutory visits with looked after children that were supposed to be held during the year that were held in accordance with the regulations | 83.7% | 89% | 86.9% | 90% | 92% |
| The percentage of eligible, relevant children who were relevant and who have pathway schemes as required | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| The percentage of eligible, relevant and previously relevant children that have been allocated a personal advisor | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Percentage of case conferences where the voice/views of the child were heard (except children under 7 years old) | 81% | 83% | 85% | 84% | 92% |
| The rate of children who were discussed in supervision, where significant harm had been considered (and the answer recorded) | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Percentage of risk assessments submitted to a Case Conference which were considered as exhibiting quality in decision making | 95% | 98% | 97% | 94% | 96% |



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