



Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2012/2013

Local Authority Name **Cardiff Council**

This report sets out the key areas of progress for the year 2012/13 in Cardiff Social Services Department and areas for future improvement

Summary

Cardiff social services continues to face significant demands and challenges in meeting the needs of a diverse population. The loss of senior managers and the use of interim arrangements at a time when the department was going through change provided opportunities for development. However, it also created challenges in the day-to-day delivery of social services.

Plans for restructuring across the council were progressed during the year and the new appointments to director of children's services and director of health and social care are due to commence in August 2013.

Partnership working with the Vale of Glamorgan Council remains a strong feature of the planning and delivery of services. Arrangements to implement a joint safeguarding children's board have progressed during the year and it is anticipated these will become operational in the coming year.

The annual report of the director of social services highlights a range of achievements and developments in service delivery. It is a positive report which references improvements over the last year. The report outlines priorities for action and improvement in both adult and children's services, but does not fully reflect the risks associated in both the delivery of services and the restructuring of services in key areas.

Adults

Work has been undertaken with the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff, and the Vale University Health Board to develop a web based bed bureau of available care home beds. This initiative has been developed to support providers in identifying vacancies in their service.

Partnership work has been strengthened with the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff, and the Vale University Health Board with the joint appointment of a senior manager to manage the adult learning disability services.

The council has taken steps to consider the retendering of domiciliary care services. It is currently looking at innovative ways to improve the quality of care and modernisation of services and the workforce through the development of a community interest group. This work is progressing and is being supported and led by cabinet members.

Children

The Children's Access Point has now been implemented as the first point of contact for all referrals for initial assessment.

The council has continued to review services and internal performance systems have been improved. This, in turn, highlighted serious practice issues in relation to decision making in some areas of service delivery. The council has taken decisive corrective action.

A new children's strategy is being developed and will be launched in 2013. Progress has been made on the merger with the Vale of Glamorgan Local Safeguarding Children's Board in response to the wider development of regional collaboratives.

Performance indicators for looked after children are of concern and suggest the council has weaknesses in planning for children, achieving permanency and in supporting their school placements.

CSSIW has identified the following potential risks:

- Budget pressures and the sustainability of current management structures.
- The projected increases in demand from a rising population.
- The impact of welfare reform and potential increase in demand for council services.
- Ability to reduce the number of delayed transfers of care from hospitals.
- Restructuring and the need to establish consistent and experienced leadership with clear direction.
- Weak performance in planning ahead for looked after children and the consequent rise in the number of children the council continues to look after.

Response to last year's areas of development

The council has provided evidence of efforts made to improve its service planning and delivery.

It has invested significant resources into the intake and assessment team with eight additional social work posts being allocated to the team. The council's evaluation letter for 2011/12 indicated that this service would be an area for CSSIW to follow up in 2012/13.

The establishment of the Children's Access Point to respond to initial enquiries and referrals brought about some early improvements which were not sustained as well as anticipated. Efforts continue to ensure that this "front door" can deliver a good quality service for children and families.

The council has made progress with its work with carers and continues to afford this some priority. A consultation exercise was undertaken during the year and the council is working with local partner agencies to develop a clearer strategy for the future.

Work has also been progressed in engagement with black and minority ethnic groups, which had been identified as an outstanding area for improvement for some time.

Good practice identified

CSSIW has identified the following areas of good practice:

- New Families First service to address the shortfall in assessments of young carers.
- Continued strengthening of partnership work with neighbouring authorities, the local health board and third sector partners.

Visits and inspections undertaken during the year:

In addition to the programme of regulatory inspections carried out by CSSIW, the following work was also undertaken:

- Site visit to Cardiff reablement service.
- Site visit to intake and assessment team.
- Meeting with young carer's strategy group.
- Attendance at scrutiny committees.
- Attendance at provider forums.
- Engagement meetings with lead officers for social services

Areas for follow up by CSSIW next year

A number of specific areas for improvement have been identified in the body of this report. The council's progress in relation to these will be discussed with the council during regular engagement meetings in the coming year.

- Site visit to child protection team, in particular to review Part 4 professional meetings.
- Site visit to children and families disability team.
- National thematic inspection of looked after children.
- National thematic review of commissioning of social care for older people.

PERFORMANCE

Shaping services:

Last year's council review identified the need to strengthen commissioning to shape services for the future and to further develop an engagement strategy for black and minority groups.

2012/13 has seen the council develop services and strategies for minority ethnic groups. The council has increased their engagement with minority groups and identified 11.3% of service users are from a minority ethnic group.

The council now undertakes equality impact assessments for new strategies and policies and has significantly revised policies and procedures.

Engagement with children's services is monitored to ensure that ethnicity and cultural needs are reflected in the council's response to both planning and delivery of services.

The director's report demonstrates an extensive consultation exercise undertaken with carers over the past year. In addition, a joint initiative with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and Cardiff's third sector council, together with the Vale of Glamorgan has developed a carers information and consultation strategy. It aims to improve support and information to carers.

Adults

The council has continued to strengthen its partnership arrangements with Vale of Glamorgan Council and the University Health Board. A successful joint bid with the Vale of Glamorgan Council has led to the implementation of a regional collaborative fund to deliver improved service models to service users.

The council's commitment to promoting and supporting people to retain their independence in the community remains a priority and performance indicators show that this is being progressed. The success of reablement services and the increase in people receiving direct payments has provided people of Cardiff with real choices about the way services are delivered and received.

The council is also working closely with housing partners through the Cardiff accessible housing project to seek appropriate rehousing for people where this might enable them to be discharged from hospital and remain in the community for longer. The use of extra care housing in supporting people to remain at home is proving successful. A new close care facility was opened by the council in 2012, providing independent flats and additional respite care for older people.

The council has developed a learning disability commissioning strategy for 2012 to 2017 with an action plan on their commissioning intentions. The focus is on developing an individualised service for people through increased use of direct

payments, respite services, supported housing and the use of adult placement schemes.

Children

The council is looking at new and innovative ways to improve outcomes for young people and is currently exploring the use of social impact bonds. This is an area of development that CSSIW will be interested to explore over the coming year in terms of the range of services provided and the potential benefits for young people.

The council has undertaken a marketing campaign to increase the number of foster carers recruited by the council. The benefits of the campaign have not yet been fully realised and it is hoped that the year ahead will see a marked increase in the number of carers recruited and providing local placements.

The council has also started to examine new ways of improving performance in its adoption services. The potential for working in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan and Rhondda Cynon Taf Councils to develop a regional adoption panel is being explored in preparation for a proposed national adoption service for Wales.

The council recognises the challenge in both identifying and assessing young carers. The young carers strategy has been signed off and an implementation and delivery plan is in place. Cardiff Council continues to work in close collaboration with a range of voluntary and third sector providers in addressing the needs of young carers.

Areas of progress

- Engagement with people from minority ethnic groups in developing services.
- Partnership work with housing to support children and adults in appropriate accommodation.

Areas for improvement

- Recruitment of foster carers.
- Continue improving availability of direct payments.

Getting help:

Adults

The council has continued its work to support people to remain at home through reablement services, supported housing initiatives and community based support and intervention.

The use of direct payments has increased. The council acknowledges that the increase in the number of people using direct payments has fallen short of their

target; however, progress is undoubtedly being made in this area. There is good partnership work being undertaken with Diverse Cymru to support people who wish to take advantage of direct payments. As well as empowering people to manage their lives and control their own care, there is evidence that direct payment arrangements managed through this service are also delivering some cost savings to the council.

CSSIW has confirmed that the council has significantly invested in developing the reablement service in order to maintain people in their own homes and to support the discharge of patients from hospitals. Service users have spoken positively about their experience of using the service. However, the council needs to ensure a smooth transition following discharge from reablement where care packages are still needed. It is important to ensure that domiciliary care agencies have sufficient information to follow through on the benefits gained from rehabilitation programmes.

The council is making every effort to improve outcomes for people admitted to hospital by enabling domiciliary care agencies to pick up existing packages of care in a 72 hour window without having to be reassessed for a service. This is proving successful with providers and brings benefits to people who can be discharged from hospital more effectively and safely.

In spite of these initiatives, the number of delayed transfers of care has risen slightly and is currently almost twice the all Wales average. The council is aware that it will need to continue to work with partners in health to tackle this problem.

The number of adults with a physical disability receiving a service in Cardiff is relatively low when compared with the rest of Wales. The council may wish to explore the possible reasons for this and be assured that thresholds are not set so high that people in need are being denied a service.

The physical and sensory impairment team has been restructured and the director reports that no-one with a physical impairment is currently waiting for assessment.

Performance indicators show the council is performing well in providing community based services for people with a learning disability.

The council is part of a regional monitoring and support project currently led by the Vale of Glamorgan Council to develop assistance to people with autism who do not require formal social care provision.

The impact of the Government's welfare reform has yet to be determined. The council is aware of the significant impact that this could have upon people in Cardiff and upon the demand for services and support. A report to this effect has been considered by the cabinet.

Children

The Children's Access Point is now operational and is the initial contact point for all referrals into the team. Approximately 1600 contacts are made in a month. The capacity of the team to deal with the number of referrals is stretched. Performance statistics indicate that there is an increase in the percentage of re-referrals made in a year which might suggest that the quality of decision making is in need of additional analysis and oversight.

The council has invested significant resources into the intake and assessment team but third quarter performance figures provided by the council show a decline in the initial improved performance of the team and an increase in re-referrals in the first year. The percentage of referrals where a decision is made within a day is below the Wales average, which indicates that there is still work to be done to improve and sustain good performance in this service area.

The impact of additional resources provided to intake and assessment has led to some delays in transferring cases following initial assessment, particularly to the looked after children's team. This is in addition to reported pressures arising from a multi-cultural population and asylum seekers living in the city.

The Integrated Family Support Service developed in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Vale University Health Board has become operational. The benefits of this service will need to be evaluated as the service becomes established.

Areas of progress

- Increase in resources allocated to intake and assessment.
- Partnership work with Diverse Cymru in supporting people with direct payments.
- Work with domiciliary care providers in supporting people discharged from hospital.
- Increase in use of direct payments.

Area for improvement

- Reviewing capacity of the Children Access Point team in order to respond to initial contacts in a timely manner.
- Assuring the quality of decision making at initial contact.
- Reducing in the number of re-referrals in a year.
- Reviewing thresholds for people with a sensory and physical impairment.

The services provided:

Adults

The council has invested significantly in developing in-house reablement services. There are two services that come under the umbrella of reablement

with each providing time limited support to vulnerable people to regain or maintain independence.

CSSIW undertook a site visit to the reablement service. Overall we found the council is providing a good service to the people of Cardiff but there remains a high volume of demand placed on the service to support hospital discharge. The council needs to ensure that the correct balance is maintained between supporting people to remain in the community and supporting the hospital discharge programme.

The council has a good history of promoting independence with the use of assisted technology and in partnership with the community alarm service and has now appointed a telecare link officer. Working in both community and reablement services, this role is designed to assist in the assessment of people and support service users in using the telecare system. This should strengthen the reassurance and security for service users using these services.

Statistics indicate that the majority of people receiving services in Cardiff are in receipt of community based services, with a relatively small proportion of people being supported in residential care. The importance of continuing to promote self help and developing models for independent living is vital where future population trends and projected need analyses indicate a significant rise in the number of people who may require support.

The council has developed a learning disability strategy in partnership with the Cardiff and Vale local health board and Abertawe Bro Morgannwg health board. Plans to provide integrated services with Cardiff and the Vale health and social services are being explored.

Expenditure for 2012/13 shows a third of the social services budget was spent on learning disability services. There is evidence that specialist services for people with a learning disability do historically cost significantly more than other services provided by the council. However, the projected budget spend on services for people with a learning disability shows a reduction in cost with the council's own revenue monitoring report shows some savings made from staff vacancies. This may need further review and attention to ensure that such savings are not impacting on the quality of services being delivered.

The use of direct payments to enable people to have a real choice on how services are delivered has again shown an increase. This area of work in partnership with Diverse Cymru provides people with real choice and support to manage payments. Benefits to people using the service are more choice and the opportunity to be involved in the community with a service that fully meets their needs and offers choice and control. The council has adopted a partnership approach to direct payments which both saves the council money in terms of management of payments and protects people who are both vulnerable and at risk of exploitation.

The city has a large number of regulated care settings operated by the independent sector with a wide range of services of variable quality. The cost

to the council of commissioning and providing residential care in terms of the number of people supported is relatively high when compared with other councils. This appears to be in relation to the level of fees paid for placements, which the council may wish to explore.

This year has seen CSSIW increase enforcement action against a number of services in the Cardiff area in respect of poor quality of care provided to service users. Whilst there have been examples of good partnership working to secure improvements in services, there have been occasions when CSSIW has found the council slow to act on concerns. This is particularly in relation to the quality of residential services provided to people with mental health needs. The need for the council to strengthen its review processes and contract monitoring for particular service areas has been identified in the past and remains an area of concern.

The council has undertaken an innovative piece of work in the commissioning of adult social care. A task group has been established under the leadership of a cabinet member to explore the development of a community interest group in the commissioning of domiciliary care. This is an innovative piece of work that CSSIW will be interested in as it progresses. It is clearly important that the council is satisfied that any new models of service delivery can deliver on the priorities of the council to improve both the quality of the work force and the quality of services being provided.

Children

The council has a range of services available to children and their families. The council provides residential placements for some looked after children. Recent regulatory inspections have found the service is providing good outcomes for the young people using the service, although educational attainment remains relatively poor.

In addition, the council has worked in close partnership with CSSIW to bring about improvement in a private residential provision where concerns had been identified.

The council has focused attention on promoting its fostering service and has undertaken a marketing campaign to increase the number of carers. CSSIW's recent inspection found that improvements were required in some areas of the service. The council has responded positively to the recommendations made in the report and has acted to improve the monitoring of statutory visiting and the commissioning arrangements in relation to children placed by the fostering service.

The number of children in need identified by the council has fallen significantly in the past year. The director's report has not provided any evidence of analysis undertaken to understand the reasons behind this. It is possible that the reduction in numbers could be due to the realignment of the family support strategy and young carer's strategy through the Cardiff partnership arrangements and its focus on early intervention. However, the council will

wish to be assured that its overall performance in their important work with children in need is not declining

Urgent attention to the performance of reviewing children in need plans in accordance to the statutory timetable is also required. Although some improvement has been made, continued progress is necessary in this area.

The Flying Start initiative for families and children under four in identified areas of deprivation is one of the Welsh Government's top priorities. There is emerging evidence that across Wales children engaged in the Flying Start programme have reached or exceeded their developmental milestones. Within Cardiff approximately 16% of children under four receive a service. This is slightly higher when compared with the rest of Wales.

The council's performance in ensuring their statutory responsibilities in relation to looked after children presents a mixed picture. A decrease in the number of looked after children with a care plan in place at initial placement is a concern as care providers need to understand young people's needs in order that they can fully meet them. Performance in this area has dropped over the past year and could impact negatively on the experience and potential for early progress of children received into care.

Partnership work with Action For Children provides a much needed resource for respite services for families and children with disabilities. Demand for the provision is increasing and the council will, no doubt, be considering the potential for expansion of the service within its current resources.

Transition work with children moving into adulthood from children's services remains an area for further attention and improvement. The director's report highlights the part played by the restructuring of partner agencies in the delay in improving the transition process. There is an agreed protocol with Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board in place which should ensure that young people identified as in need of continuing health care funding are identified in a timely manner.

In view of the attention given to work with young carers in Cardiff during the year, performance in the assessment of young carers known to social services has fallen and is markedly lower than similar authorities and the Welsh average. However, the percentage of young carers who went on to receive a service has significantly increased.

The council is aware of the shortfall in the assessment of young carers and has put in place arrangements to ensure that the needs for young carers can be addressed by the new Families First service. This service was due to commence from April 2013.

CSSIW undertook a site visit to the young carer's strategy group. This group is tasked with the oversight and implementation of the young carer's strategy delivery plan. We identified that Cardiff work closely with the voluntary and third sector providers and found that, while a number of young carers receive some

form of service, they were not included in the performance figures as no formal assessment had been undertaken. This could account for the low numbers of recorded formal assessments and therefore not fully reflect the work of the council with young carers.

Areas of progress

- The council's reablement service.
- Additional post to support the use of telecare services.
- Anticipating the impact on welfare reform.
- Innovative commissioning approach in domiciliary care services.
- Marketing campaign for fostering services.

Areas for improvement

- The quality of reviews and commissioning of services for people with mental health needs.
- Reviewing of children in need plans.
- Meeting the council's statutory responsibilities in the fostering service.
- Ensuring care plans are in place for looked after children at the point of admission.

Effect on people's lives:

Adults

Cardiff has continued to take forward its commitment to enabling more people to remain living in the community for longer. Support provided through telecare, domiciliary care and partnership work with housing and local health boards has reduced the need for people to consider residential care as the only option to meet their needs.

Last year saw Cardiff improve performance in the use of direct payments. Performance indicators show this is an area of continued growth which provides people with increased choice in the way they have services delivered. The director's report highlights that although the council did not achieve its own target of doubling the number of people using direct payments, it did increase performance by 29%. This is an area that the council will want to continue to develop.

Delayed transfers of care for people from hospital was an area identified for improvement in 2011/12. Performance indicators show only a marginal improvement in this area in spite of strong efforts of the council and its partners.

The reablement service supports people over the age of 18 who meet the threshold for the service and recognises the benefits of the service in reducing delayed transfers of care. However, the volume of demand to support hospital discharges suggests a significant imbalance between supporting and maintaining people in the community and supporting the discharge of people from hospital. The impact of reduced availability of service in the community

has the potential to increase the demand for residential care, which would be contrary to the objectives of the council.

The majority of people with a sensory and physical impairment receive community based services in Cardiff. However, the cost of the service provided appears to be significantly higher when compared with similar authorities and the all Wales average. The council should consider exploring the reason behind this apparent anomaly.

The council reports there are close working arrangements with the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Vale Community Safety Partnership in respect of people with substance and alcohol misuse difficulties. The multi-disciplinary area planning board, which operates across the two councils, has led to a significant reduction in the waiting list for services.

There is a close partnership arrangement between the council, university health board and CSSIW in protecting vulnerable people. The council has invoked the escalating concerns procedure on a number of regulated services over the past year to bring about improvement.

Only three quarters of people receiving services had their needs reviewed last year. Reviews are important to ensure that people's needs are being met and that resources are allocated appropriately. This is an area that requires attention and improvement.

CSSIW's experience is that adult protection procedures work well in improving outcomes for vulnerable people using services.

Children

The number of looked after children has reduced to 544, a reduction of 21 over the past year. Performance in ensuring care plans are in place at the point of entry has fallen. In addition, the percentage of children with three or more placements in a year has increased. These indicators demonstrate further work is required by the council to ensure that children who are looked after receive a service best suited to their needs. The council must also ensure service providers have sufficient information to ensure that these needs can be fully met by the service.

CSSIW's inspections of regulated children's settings in Cardiff have confirmed that the council has not always provided care plans for looked after children at first placement. This is an area of performance that has slipped from last year and one that the council needs to address. We also found that some care plans that were in place were very limited in setting any objectives to be achieved on behalf of the child.

Where reviews were taking place, we found that reports on the reviews including any recommendations were not provided in a timely manner. They were commonly being provided at the next review meeting, typically six months later causing potential delay in progressing plans for children.

The director's report comments on the development of closer relationships with the looked after children's education team which has provided better outcomes in preventing looked after children from being excluded from school.

The importance of educational attainment for looked after children cannot be underestimated. The council needs to ensure that all looked after children have a personal education plan to secure and maintain academic progress. This is one area that needs to significantly improve and progress to date can only be described as poor.

The council has made significant progress in ensuring care leavers are supported in appropriate accommodation, achieving 100% of all care leavers in suitable housing. Some progress has been made to ensure young people who are entitled to a personal advisor have one, but further work is still required. Discussion with the council indicates this is a matter they are trying to address but have been unable to recruit suitable people to the post.

During the year there has been a significant increase in the number of children on the child protection register. The director's report comments on the quality and consistency of responses to referrals with the introduction of the CAP team. However, it does not provide any information or analysis on the increase in children on the child protection register. It has been suggested that the increase may be due to the number of referrals now being made by the police. The council should examine the reasons behind this increase and consider meeting with the police to explore how this might be best managed.

Performance in the number of child protection reviews carried out within the statutory timescale has remained constant at 98%.

Through inspection of children's regulated services, a number of concerns have been raised by providers about the delay in providing feedback and outcomes following a child protection referral. These matters have been raised by CSSIW with the director and merit further attention to ensure that all parties feel engaged, committed and valued in this process.

The director's report provides evidence of positive outcomes in reducing the number of young people entering the youth justice system. Partnership work and early intervention strategies have brought benefits in terms of a reduction of first time offenders and the number of young people being charged and taken to court.

Areas of progress

- Direct payments.
- Adult safeguarding arrangements.
- The reduction in the waiting list for services for alcohol and substance misuse.

Areas for improvement

- Delayed transfers of care.
- Understanding and, where appropriate, addressing any reasons behind the increase in child protection referrals.
- Statutory reviews for looked after children.
- Completion of children's care plans at the point of entry to a service.
- Personal education plans for looked after children.
- Recruitment of personal advisers.
- Part 4 professional meetings.

CAPACITY

Delivering Social Services:

Cardiff has a more diverse multi-cultural population than other authorities in Wales. Efforts are being made to ensure no group is disadvantaged in the delivery of services through the council's strategic equalities plan and the implementation of the equality impact plan on new and developing policies.

To respond to the impact of welfare reform, the council has implemented a task group to understand the impact on welfare reform for the people of Cardiff. It is anticipated that inner city areas in Cardiff are likely to be disproportionately affected by the change, as already one fifth of people in Cardiff are living in areas of deprivation. The council has started to identify the potential impact and cost of welfare reforms on the budget for the coming year.

The council will need to continue to support community based services if the projected population increase rises to the levels reported in performance indicators. This rise could have a significant impact on the council's future resources and capacity to deliver the same level of services to people.

The budget for 2012/13 was overspent in adult services and more significantly in children's services. The director reported why overspending has been necessary and how this has been managed to support service delivery.

The council has progressed on the recruitment to the new heads of service posts and the development of the new management structure. The sustainability of the cost of new additional posts will be a matter for the council to consider over the coming year but the need for strong and consistent management capacity to deliver services and drive improvement is very clear.

Adults

This year has seen a rise of 21 social workers employed in adult services. Workforce training initiatives are being offered to service providers by the council. This is a service that is valued by providers and gives them access to relevant and accredited training to meet the needs of people supported in regulated care settings.

A successful joint bid with the Vale of Glamorgan council has led to the implementation of a regional collaborative fund to deliver improved service models to service users.

Children

The additional resource allocated to the intake and assessment team has been maintained over the past year. The need for a sufficient, experienced and competent workforce to deliver sustainable and quality services to children and families cannot be underestimated. The council should continue to review its front line and management capacity to support and drive the improvements necessary to deliver good services as well as to consider the need for resilience and succession planning.

Partnership arrangements are strong and these provide opportunities for joint and shared learning.

Progress has been made on the merger of the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff local safeguarding children's board. It is hoped the new board will become operational over the coming year.

Areas of progress

- Joint partnership arrangements in identifying new models of care.
- Additional adult social worker posts.
- Maintenance of additional resources in the children's intake and assessment team.
- The move towards regional children's safeguarding board.

Areas for improvement

- The implementation of a sustainable management structure.

Providing direction:

2012/13 was again a year of significant organisational and management change in the council. Progress has been made on advertising the director posts for children's services and for health and social care. The overall responsibility for the statutory duties of the director of social services has more recently been clarified and sits with the director for children's services.

The director's report has highlighted a number of priorities across service areas to be taken forward by the new directors and senior leadership team.

Corporate support for social services remains strong and resources have been made available to support specific areas of practice. There have been changes within the council with dedicated council leads appointed for both children's and adult services.

CSSIW has attended scrutiny committees, both to present information by invitation and to observe the committee in operation. On these occasions there has been effective challenge and good oversight in social service policies. Some particular council initiatives have benefitted from the support of scrutiny leads in taking forward new initiatives.

Areas of progress

- Members involvement and lead in innovative projects around commissioning and partnership work.

Areas for improvement

- Strengthening the management and leadership capacity with the appointment of permanent and experienced senior managers.