



Annual Review and Evaluation of Performance 2012/2013

Local Authority Name: Pembrokeshire County Council

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

Summary

2012/13 marked a year of consolidation in social services in Pembrokeshire County Council.

A new statutory director of social services was appointed in September 2012. This person also fulfils the role of director of children's services and education. A new role of director of adult care was created and the appointed person took up post in May 2013. The head of children's services left recently and a new appointment has been made. A new post of Head of Joint Strategic Commissioning has been appointed to.

The council has made a substantial investment in the social services workforce in both adults and children's services to implement recommendations from its recruitment and retention strategy for social work.

Adult services

Adult services continued to benefit from the council's emphasis on supporting people in the community and progress on this is being maintained. The integration agenda between the council and the health board is pivotal in helping people to remain independent and provide access to community based services.

Children's services

Children's services continued to sustain steady improvement and performance. There has been significant investment with the necessary appointment of qualified social workers to embed quality in practice. Whilst organisational change has been ongoing in children's services, performance has improved in a number of areas. A new head of children's services has been appointed to.

A Ministerial board was appointed to monitor progress following the previous serious concerns about the safeguarding of children in education. A recovery board, established under the Education Act 1996, has replaced the Ministerial Board and will continue to monitor the implementation of the post inspection action plan.

The director's report gives a comprehensive account of the council's performance and clearly reflects the evidence provided to CSSIW.

CSSIW has identified the following potential risks:

- The sustainability of services during the embedding of the new management structures.
- Establishing a sustainable framework for long-term commissioning.
- Sustainability of services in times of financial challenge.
- Maintaining effective collaboration with health as budget pressures increase.

Response to last year's areas of development

The council continued to make progress in areas identified for improvement. The appointment of a new director of adult care has resulted in a review of capacity and, as a consequence, a new role of head of joint strategic commissioning has been created. This will be central to the continued modernisation of services. The council acknowledged the need to develop additional leadership capacity within the safeguarding team and an additional post has been created.

The Just Checking telecare system has been purchased, and will be trialled and evaluated as a response to the need to develop its telecare service. The council has responded positively to the recommendations of the Alder Review into learning disability services.

Progress has been made in most of the areas for improvement identified for children's services. The council reports that it has now implemented new arrangements for permanency planning for looked after children. A permanency panel meets monthly to monitor existing plans and to confirm that appropriate permanency plans are in place for children and young people approaching their third looked after children's review.

Good practice identified

CSSIW has identified the following areas of good practice:

- As part of the implementation of the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion Councils and Hywel Dda Health Board have developed an information and consultation strategy. This was approved by the Welsh Government and sets out partnership priorities for engagement with carers.
- The carer's newsletter is now distributed in hospital departments, wards and community pharmacies. Carers information packs have been piloted in

community settings that included pharmacies, leisure centres and libraries and the council will develop this further during 2013/14.

- The use of integrated teams with health in the in Flying Start programme, IFST and Family Support.
- The implementation of a comprehensive quality assurance framework in children's services

Visits and inspections undertaken during the year

CSSIW undertook a site visit in adult services to follow up the findings of the Alder Review of learning disability services and to gain an understanding of the work of the community resource teams.

We also undertook site visits in children's services. These included the intake and assessment team, the corporate parenting team, children in need team and a visit to the family centre at Pennar.

We met with senior management of the council at routine engagement meetings and completed the annual programme of inspections of the council's regulated settings and services for both adults and children. We also inspected independent regulated provision within the Pembrokeshire area.

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 during regular engagement meetings in the coming year.

CSSIW intends to conduct a series of site visits in adult services to consider progress in relation to:

- Carer's assessments.
- Integrated structures and joint working within the community resource teams and care closer to home project.

We will also undertake site visits and meetings with children's services to monitor the progress of the council in the following areas:

- How the council delivers its corporate parent responsibilities including looking at the role, purpose and clarity of direction within the corporate parenting team.
- How the council supports care leavers.
- Scrutiny and governance arrangements in children's services.

In 2013/14 CSSIW will be completing a national thematic inspection of looked after children and a national thematic review of commissioning of social care for older people.

PERFORMANCE

Shaping services:

Adults

The integrated management structure with health has produced effective working arrangements resulting in benefits for service users, although there are challenges posed by incompatible IT systems and different governance arrangements. This is reported to be causing difficulties both in practice and relationships. The local authority is aware of these difficulties but is confident that all staff are clear about what information is to be recorded and by whom.

The council believes that there could be significant benefits to service users and improved outcomes of care to be achieved through the collaborative approach with health. The Care Closer to Home project which commenced last year aims to identify and manage people in the community who are most at risk of an unplanned hospital admission. The project group is working with the Kings Fund on two initiatives: patient and family centred care and co-ordinated care for people with complex chronic conditions. The family centred care project will focus on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and the discharge of these patients from hospital is one of the priorities identified.

Commissioning and contract monitoring arrangements require review to meet strategic aims. The council reports that the overarching community health and social services commissioning plan has been developed which, prior to further consultation, will be presented to cabinet in September 2013. It is envisaged that work from this will be taken forward by the head of integrated commissioning when appointed. CSSIW inspectors have noted good responses to the monitoring and review of contracts following individual safeguarding referrals. There is good engagement with providers of services which includes established forums for domiciliary care, learning disability and care homes.

Research to compare good practice in contract monitoring has been undertaken. The council says the outcome of this will form part of a wider quality framework development. An outcome based contract has been developed for people with learning disabilities who require day services. It had been anticipated that the current contractual agreement with domiciliary care providers would be retendered this year. However, this has been extended to August 2014 to incorporate the development of quality outcomes. Residential and nursing care contracts and individual service agreements will be reviewed within the same timeframe. Customer specific contracts are being developed on a case-by-case basis for people with complex conditions.

Children

The council implemented the integration of children's services and education into a new directorate for children and schools, with the aim of strengthening consistency of care for children and young people, and providing a stronger awareness of safeguarding in the authority's schools. The council now reports

more effective joint working, and shared ownership and understanding of safeguarding issues in education.

The Flying Start centre at Pennar comprises two playgroups, the integrated family support team, team around the family, parenting team, youth workers and community nursery nurses. These teams are integrated with both local authority and health colleagues co-located, and are reported to be working well. They are better able to deliver more rounded packages of support to children and families.

The integrated family support team is a recent development and a resource which comprises an acting consultant social worker, a seconded social worker, a community psychiatric nurse and a health visitor. The service has been established collaboratively with other authorities in Mid and West Wales. The model provides for services to be delivered locally, with centralised business support, training and good links with social work teams. The service has specific referral criteria and focuses on families where substance misuse compromises parenting. It has embarked on awareness raising across the authority, the voluntary sector and partner agencies.

Areas of progress

Adult services:

- Integrated management structure with health and the functioning of the four community resource teams.
- Increase in the number of qualified social workers in community teams for learning disability as a result of the Alder Review.

Children's services:

- The ongoing development of the integrated family support team.

Areas for improvement

Adult services:

- The council should consider how the proposed overarching commissioning plan will deliver a reduction in cost in adult services.
- The council should improve commissioning arrangements and contract monitoring in order to shape the market.
- The council should ensure that adult safeguarding arrangements are reviewed within the new team structure to ensure quality outcomes and consistency of practice.

Getting help:

Adults

The council's review of the professional helpdesk provided valuable information to reconfigure the location of front line teams and services to improve access for people. The Care Closer to Home Project and the development of an overarching Section 33 agreement (necessary to pool health and social care budgets) is progressing and will facilitate further integration of appropriate policies, practice and processes.

An operational policy for the community resource teams has been developed. CSSIW met with team members and their commitment to providing enhanced services to citizens was evident. The team is integrated, managed strategically despite not all being co-located, and appears to be professionally cohesive. Future work will include the management of complex care, care closer to home and the establishment of a "virtual ward". The main barrier is shared ICT systems but the council is working to address this. Customers can self-refer to the contact centre with the community resource teams being the immediate access point. There is voluntary brokerage with the Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services whose representative attends weekly team meetings.

Last year the council revised its Guide to Better Care and Support publication which includes information on adult safeguarding. This has been particularly useful for people requiring advice and support and is available in patient bedside cabinets in hospitals. The guide has been distributed to all GP surgeries and has been made available to Pembrokeshire patients who attend hospitals in Carmarthenshire.

The council reports that the carer aware e-learning module aimed at health and social services staff has been implemented during 2012/13 and it intends to continue to roll this out. To better address the requirements of the Carers (Wales) Measure, the council plans to consolidate all of the information and funding streams with a view to commissioning information, advice and advocacy services.

Children

The access arrangements for children's services have been successfully remodelled allowing qualified social workers more time to undertake direct work with customers. Access is through the council's contact centre and all referrals, other than child protection, come into the team. The team ensures that all referrals requiring action are dealt with the same day. There has been an increase in the number of referrals which is felt to be due in part to the impact of the review of safeguarding in education.

The council reports that all initial assessments are being undertaken by qualified social workers. This is a positive step resulting in an increase in the percentage of initial assessments that took place where there is evidence that the child has been seen by the social worker. Last year we reported in our inspection work that the quality of analysis in assessments needed to improve.

As a result, the council developed a revised integrated assessment tool and it is confident of improved consistency. It intends to evaluate its use during the next year, to evidence that overall standards of assessment continue to rise.

The council has improved the timeliness in referrals to children's services which was a key priority this year. This was a considerable task to achieve considering the high reliance on agency social workers. Corporate investment into the recruitment and retention of staff has resulted in an additional 10 social work posts and the council expects to be fully staffed by the end of the year. The increase in resource should result in sustaining the upward trend in performance around the timeliness of referrals and assessments.

The percentage of referrals during the year on which a decision was made within one working day has remained high. There has been an improvement in performance on the timeliness of initial and core assessments despite a significant increase in activity on the previous year. A high proportion of both initial and core assessment timescales were completed on time. A review of the core assessment format was carried out. Further staff training and an audit process is now in place, together with a revised case file audit. This will be further strengthened by the introduction of an independent auditor, who will also use the process of audit as a means of coaching and mentoring staff.

The looked after children population has fluctuated with a slight decrease. The rate of looked after children per 10,000 continues to be lower than the Wales average and that of comparable councils. The council has achieved its aim to improve the overall timeliness of reviews of looked after children, children on the child protection register and children in need. In particular, there has been a significant increase in the timeliness of reviews of child in need.

Areas of progress

Adult's services:

- Further development on the integration of health and social care.
- Access to services through the community resource teams.

Children's services:

- Continued improvement in timeliness for access to services.
- An upward trend in the overall timeliness of reviews of looked after children, children on the child protection register and children in need.
- Timely completion of initial and core assessments.

Areas for improvement

Adult's services:

- The council should consider how it can build on the work undertaken this year with carers in order to increase the uptake of carer assessments.

Children's services:

- The council needs to analyse the reasons behind the increase in child protection referrals and the impact of this on the caseloads of social workers.
- Following the development of the revised integrated assessment tool, an evaluation of its effectiveness in improving outcomes for children and young people should be undertaken.

The services provided:

Adults

The Care Closer to Home project continues to progress and has had some success in identifying and managing people in the community who are most likely to have an unplanned hospital admission. Case management of these people is co-ordinated by the integrated community teams. Hywel Dda Health Board has invested in the acute response team. This provides a nursing care response for calls received during the night. Evaluation of this service may inform further service development in the future.

The council reports that good progress has been made in several areas in response to the Alder Review of learning disability services, in particular changing the skill mix by increasing the ratio of qualified social workers. A transition worker post has also been established. Health colleagues now have access to the CareFirst database and are using it to keep customer records updated. This was seen as an area of progress when CSSIW met with the team this year.

Last year CSSIW reported that whilst day services for people with a learning disability were valued and provide a good level of support and engagement for people, it was acknowledged by the council that a new model of service was required to meet current and future need. As a result of that commitment, the council held focus groups to gather views to inform the design of a new service model. A further development from this review is a new day services contract which has been developed and implemented that includes a tiered model of provision based on customer needs. The council reports that it reviewed 25% cohort of high cost cases and, following this, it expects to undertake further reviews during 2012/13. Performance data indicates that current expenditure in learning disability services is in line with spending in similar authorities.

Children

Family support services have now been completely restructured into a centrally based team which focuses on targeted interventions. This approach aims to provide a more equitable service and to respond to the challenge of meeting a range of needs within the dispersed geography of the county. This relatively new service has embarked on awareness raising across the authority, the voluntary sector and partner agencies. The development of practice, processes

and procedures has all taken place and we were pleased to see the outcome of the successful work carried out with one family.

The numbers of young carers assessed during this year compares with the previous year. The authority commissioned Action for Children to deliver a service to young carers in Pembrokeshire from September 2012. The service offers one-to-one support, support groups, focus groups and holiday activities. Support groups have been developed in line with geography and age group of children referred. The support group programme is designed by young people and therefore differs from group to group.

Areas of progress

Adult's services:

- Positive response to the recommendations of the Alder Review in learning disability services.
- The implementation of the acute response team which provides nursing care response for calls received during the night.

Children's services:

- New service models to support young carers.
- The integrated family support team service at Pennar.

Areas for improvement

Adult's services:

- The review of high cost placements should consider the development of future care, support, accommodation and the modelling of different options for people with a learning disability.

Children's Services:

- Progress the work in supporting young people developing independence skills and IT support to access work opportunities.
- Improving the support given to young people at 18 and consider how transition working can be improved.

Effect on People's Lives

Adults

Generally it is reported that collaborative health and social care services in the community, alongside specific projects and initiatives, are contributing to better outcomes. The council has significantly improved its performance on the delayed transfers of care from hospital. The rate is low in comparison to other similar councils. People leaving hospital are supported by a choice protocol and planning for discharge advice. People continue to benefit from the integration of

nurse practitioners for chronic conditions within community nursing teams with specialist advice and support readily available.

Vulnerable adults continue to be protected by well-established safeguarding processes. The safeguarding team benefits from an experienced and professional co-ordinator who, until recently, chaired all strategy meetings. A deputy co-ordinator role has now been established and designated lead managers are also trained to chair strategy meetings. The council will need to ensure that the new arrangements will maintain the previous effective leadership at operational level.

The adult protection committee is well established with active membership from all relevant statutory and third sector agencies. Preliminary workshops have been held with neighbouring authorities to begin to scope the regional adult safeguarding board. The council will wish to assure itself that local arrangements for safeguarding remain robust whilst any transition to a regional board is in progress.

CSSIW inspectors report that Welsh Government guidance for addressing escalating concerns in care homes is not implemented effectively. The need for further work to strengthen operational procedures locally and ensure all staff have clarity about responsibilities has been acknowledged. Decision making is not always consistent and evidence based.

The council has changed and simplified the way it offers assessments to carers following engagement with carers and their support groups. CSSIW are interested as to whether this results in assessments being undertaken and what the outcomes for carers are. The Looking After Me course was well received by carers. Replacement care is organised for carer's support who attend.

The council's Good Neighbour scheme has proved to be very successful and supported between 40 and 70 people per month. There are now 11 schemes in operation with 111 volunteers, and a further four communities are considering setting up schemes. The council has mapped befriending provision, following which interested stakeholders formed a group to consider how to develop a sustainable befriending provision across Pembrokeshire.

Children

The council has established a Performance Management Board in response to serious concerns about safeguarding in education identified by CSSIW and Estyn. The purpose is to oversee the implementation of a comprehensive improvement plan to address all of the issues contained in the inspection reports. The Ministerial intervention board set up initially to oversee the required improvement completed its work on the 31 March 2013, their conclusion at this time was that the direction of travel was right, significant progress had been made and the prospects for permanent, embedded change were good.

Child protection processes are considered by the council to be clear and well established, with partner agencies having a good understanding. There has

been a substantial increase in the number of children on the child protection register from 87 last year to 123 this year. This increase in activity around child protection has impacted upon capacity to chair and minute meetings. As a result, there has been a slight decline in the timeliness of initial child protection conferences. Reviews of children on the child protection register are mostly held within the timescales as are initial core group meetings. Additional social work capacity in the teams should support improvement in this area.

The council intends to undertake an evaluation of the integrated family support service. Practice, processes and procedures have been established. The successful outcome of work carried out with one family was evidenced by CSSIW. Staff are clearly committed to its success, seeing great value in the work being done.

Supporting People funding has been secured, enabling the development of a core and cluster supported housing outreach support project to support young people moving to independent living. The council has made a commitment to involve young people in the development of the service specification for this project.

The council has identified key priorities for the year ahead including improving the management of professional abuse allegations and the integration of services with education to provide safeguarding advice to schools. It has created a single point of contact for advice and referral for schools on safeguarding, and implemented a cross authority quality assurance framework for safeguarding children's services. These are important priorities for the authority as they strive to deal with the legacy issues around children's safeguarding in education.

The council used monies from the Flying Start initiative to support the provision of child care and play opportunities especially to children in the poorer and more socially deprived areas. Five Flying Start playgroups currently operate in Pembroke Dock, Pennar and Monkton. Three nurseries also have Flying Start provision. New Flying Start initiatives are planned and will cover the Milford Haven area and Fenton in Haverfordwest. It is clear that the council is developing services in line with Welsh Government Families First and Flying Start programmes. There is a clear preventative strategy, its emphasis is on prevention and early intervention for families targeting vulnerable groups and addressing child poverty.

The corporate parenting team comprise of social workers and personal advisors supporting mainly looked after children in long-term fostering placements and care leavers. As a result of management changes, the clarity around the role and purpose of the team is still in development. This includes reassessing and re-evaluating existing cases to ensure that the correct support is in place. The council has already identified this as an area for improvement and has drawn up a corporate parenting improvement action plan. This is an area we will follow up during the year with specific focus on support for care leavers.

The arrangements for providing an adoption service have been under review for the last two years and the council had planned to withdraw from the West Wales consortium arrangements with Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire. However, this has since been reviewed and the director is leading on a model which includes an extension of regional arrangements to include Powys. There is evidence of increased numbers of children placed for adoption.

Areas of progress

Adult services:

- Increased capacity in the adult safeguarding team.
- Greater support for people leaving hospital.
- Improvement in engagement with carers.
- Establishment of the good neighbourhood scheme.

Children's services:

- Continued improvement in the reporting and monitoring of children's safeguarding.
- Development of services in response to Families First and Flying Start.

Areas for improvement

Adults:

- The council should continue to develop clear procedures for local use around escalating concerns in care homes to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities and decision making is consistent and evidence based.
- Be assured that robust local adult safeguarding governance arrangements are maintained during transitional process to regional safeguarding board.

Children:

- Progress its development in supported housing options for young people.
- Continuing to improve the working arrangements between education and social services to address the safeguarding legacy.
- The council needs to ensure that the role, purpose and direction within the corporate parenting team is clear and supported, together with addressing the team culture.

CAPACITY

Delivering Social Services:

Adults

Inspectors report that the council's adult settings regulated by CSSIW continue to be well run with staff that are well trained and supported.

The council has made substantial additional investment in the social services workforce.

As a result of the Alder Review in learning disability services, the ratio of qualified social workers was increased, including the establishment of a new post specifically to support service users through transition from children's to adult services. This has been welcomed by the team.

Good progress is being made to integrate community health and social care services with the ongoing development of the four community resource teams. Management structures are integrated and they are responsible for the delivery of integrated community services.

There is an effective structure for performance management and the council reports that it has continued to maximise the use of the Ffynnon system. The head of service reviews performance against performance indicators regularly and underperformance against targets is interrogated and discussed at team through to corporate level, and remedial action taken where required.

Children

The council recently increased staffing capacity in order to drive improvements in the quality of assessments and care plans. The council reports that payment of a market supplement to all qualified and registered permanent social workers has had a positive impact on filling posts. It approved recruitment to posts across children's services, but some difficulty was experienced in making appointments. Agency staff are being used to support the shortfall. The children in need team was unable to fully function due to the number of vacancies and the lack of permanent staff. This impacted on other teams placing pressure on them in absorbing additional work.

The council has now made significant changes to its staffing. The restructure of children's services is now complete and, as a result of corporate support and investment, 10 additional social worker posts have been recruited to. There has been considerable change for children's services in the past year and, as such, the council should keep under review the impact of the changes on the workforce.

Areas of progress

- Increased investment in the workforce in both adult and children's services.

Areas for improvement

- The council should monitor the ongoing capacity and performance of the children in need team.

Providing direction:

A new statutory director of social services was appointed and took up post in September 2012. This has been a positive development and the council has already begun to benefit from the clear direction he has established. There is corporate and political support to implement the modernisation of social services successfully. The single improvement plan and the corporate improvement plan clearly identify the aims and vision for social care. The plans identify the priorities in the directorates and illustrate how individuals, teams and departments work towards the shared outcomes.

Good working relationships exist with cabinet members and members receive regular updates regarding service developments and performance. The council responded to the recommendations of the Wales Audit Office's (WAO) special inspection report (January 2012), including clarifying roles and responsibilities and ensuring that scrutiny programmes are aligned to the strategic business of the council. The council reports that, in line with an overall improvement in governance, arrangements for scrutiny of social care have improved greatly. There is a protocol between cabinet members with lead safeguarding responsibilities to ensure effective co-working and to avoid duplication.

CSSIW has met with the safeguarding committees and it is clear that they now have a shared understanding of the importance of the safeguarding agenda as part of statutory responsibilities in social care. Members have received safeguarding training to raise awareness and have a clear understanding of their role. The overview and scrutiny group regularly monitor the work of the safeguarding team, and the co-ordinator reports monthly to the director and cabinet member at the adult services safeguarding monitoring board.

Historically, the council failed to respond with sufficient speed and rigour to the safeguarding issues. However, the WAO in its annual improvement report for 2012/13 found that the council is developing its improvement programme and management arrangements, and has embarked on cultural change.

Following recognition of a required change in leadership and culture, the authority has completed a corporate reorganisation of children's services, education and adult services. Services are now organised under a directorate for children and schools and a directorate of adult care. The council recently appointed a new director of adult care whilst the director of children and schools is also the statutory director of social services. A protocol establishes the governance arrangements and provides assurance and clarity around roles and responsibilities.

Three new heads of service to the directorate for children and schools, head of education, head of inclusion, and head of performance and community have been appointed to drive improvement and achieve cultural change. A new post of head of joint strategic commissioning has been recruited to and will continue to build on capacity in adults services. The council believes that it now has a structure to enable it to provide clear leadership across services.

Areas of progress

- Strengthened senior management structure in both adult and children's services.
- Establishment of a safeguarding overview and scrutiny committee and training for members adult services.
- Revised and strengthened processes for recording and maintaining information relating to professional abuse allegations.

Areas for improvement

- Continued oversight of scrutiny arrangements to ensure they are effective in delivering improvement and good governance for all safeguarding services.